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*The Aquino
Assassination*

The Criminal Must Pay



A year of upsurge, a year of crisis

Aug. 21, 1983 - Aug. 21, 1984 marks a year of remarkable growth of the anti-dictatorship resistance movement as well as the extreme crisis and isolation of the US-Marcos regime.

It was a year of unprecedented upsurge in the open democratic protest movement as the people's pent-up anger and hatred for the tyrannical regime exploded in massive, militant and bolder mass actions. Millions took to the streets, not only to protest the treacherous killing of opposition leader Benigno Aquino Jr., but more so to demand an end to fascist dictatorial rule. Traditional politicians, professionals and even sections of big business and the upper crust of society linked up with the toiling masses, the students and with the more cause-oriented groups in a broad anti-dictatorship movement that continually dealt stunning political blows on the Marcos regime.

On the revolutionary armed front, the year saw the military offensives of the New People's Army increase in size and frequency and gain greater strength from the ever-increasing support of the peasant masses and other sectors in the countryside and urban areas. Armed partisan activity also intensified and extended to a number of towns and cities. NPA partisans punished the most notorious enemy soldiers, officers and spies and their operations contributed to the growing arsenal of the guerrilla army.

It was also the year when the Marcos regime, buffeted by the most acute economic crisis, was rendered extremely isolated and politically defensive. The economy, already bankrupt and near total collapse, was wracked by an intense crisis of confidence among foreign and local businessmen following the massive demonstrations in the wake of Aquino's slaying. Further worsening the regime's besieged position were the surging open protest movement, the armed struggle raging in the countryside and the international uproar and condemnation of its obvious complicity in the Aquino murder.

Even within its own ranks, the regime was beleaguered by widespread disenchantment and demoralization. Not a few AFP soldiers in the field defected to the NPA or simply deserted and dropped out of service. Civilian and military personnel, disenchanted with the Marcos clique's greed for power and wealth, profligacy and moral bankruptcy, either participated openly in protest activities or engaged secretly in propaganda and organizing work in their offices. Cracks began to show even within Marcos' chief political organization, the Kilusang Bagong Lipunan.

Alarmed by the severity of the crisis battering the dictatorship and anxious over the stability of its vast military and economic interests in the country, US imperialism invigora-

ted its political meddling and maneuvered to prevent the fall of its puppet regime. Not only did it precipitately absolve the latter of responsibility for the assassination, it swiftly sent its US embassy and State Department representatives to make the rounds among opposition leaders and personalities in a bid to win them over to continue supporting Marcos' tottering rule.

Together with its chief puppet Marcos, US imperialism concocted the Batasang Pambansa electoral scheme in order to split the anti-dictatorship forces, to stem the people's growing militancy and draw them into the controlled arena of parliamentary reformism. The US dangled a slice of the fascist pie to the traditional opposition, even allowing them seats in the rubber-stamp parliament.

However, the increased sufferings and hardship inflicted on the people by the successive peso devaluations have totally blotted out the initial euphoria over the opposition's "election victory." Once more, the toiling masses are stepping up their struggles for higher wages and better living conditions; the middle classes are loudly protesting IMF-World Bank impositions on the Philippine economy as well as the regime's distorted sense of priorities that have aggravated the economic crisis even more. Even some of the opposition assemblymen have been forced to take stands on pressing issues and have occasionally joined the parliament of the streets.

It is against this renewed strength and vigor of the anti-dictatorship movement, in the face of a crippling economic crisis, that the US-Marcos dictatorship is unleashing violence in its starkest forms — from breaking up peaceful marches and rallies with the use of tear gas, truncheons, water cannons and more recently, sniper fire, to kidnaping, murder and massacres. With another round of devaluation coming soon, fascist repression is bound to further intensify.

As this year of crisis and struggle gives way to a new year of more intense crisis and militant struggle, the National Democratic Front therefore takes this opportunity to reiterate its call to the people and all anti-dictatorship forces to *unite and overthrow the US-Marcos dictatorship*. If the Filipino people are to be freed from the current worsening conditions of poverty, exploitation and oppression, we believe that nothing less than the toppling of the present regime is necessary. And the only way of ending this rabidly brutal regime is through people's war — a war waged by the people themselves. We thus call upon everyone to employ and promote all positive forms of struggle — armed and non-armed, illegal and legal, secret and open — to hasten the dictatorship's downfall.

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COVER PHOTO: Aug. 21 rally and Aquino assassination

Cover story: Some thought the storm of protest following Sen. Aquino's assassination would not last long. But a year after, the political ferment is still going strong. Last Aug. 21, Filipinos returned to the streets in massive numbers in a scene reminiscent of last year's outpouring of anger and protest. This year's rally, however, was markedly different in many ways.

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The National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDF) is the framework or channel for the unity, cooperation and coordination of all national democratic forces in the country. It traces its beginnings to the establishment of the Preparatory Commission for a National Democratic Front on April 24, 1973. The 1973 NDF Ten-Point Program upholds armed struggle as the main form of struggle to overthrow the US-Marcos dictatorship. **LIBERATION** is the official publication of the NDF.

Zeroing in on the regime

Aug. 21 mammoth rally targets dictatorship as the people's enemy

"Ang araw na ito ay hindi lamang araw ng paggunita. Hindi lamang araw ng protesta. Kundi araw ng paninindigan. Paninindigang ipagpatuloy ang ating pagkilos banggang makamit ang kalayaan at demokrasya ng Inang Bayan."

— *KMU manifesto*

It was a most propitious day for protest. The long period of inclement weather was surprisingly broken on that fair day of Aug. 21 when one million Filipinos again took to the streets in a long, colorful march that started from various points in Metro Manila and ended in the spacious grounds of the Rizal Park.

As the marchers sang, waved, chanted and cheered under the burning sun, housewives hurriedly looked for yellow sheets, towels and dresses and displayed these on their windows and rooftops. Children danced and marched to the beat of a tireless drum band and people raised their clenched fists and shouted greetings at the passing marchers.

In tall buildings, youths beat the metal bars of windows to the tempo of the slogan, "Marcos, Hitler, diktador, tuta!" They rained confetti on the mass of workers, students, urban poor and professionals who wended through Manila's streets, holding high their streamers which proclaimed, "Lansagin ang diktadurang US-Marcos!" "Repeal Amendment No. 6," "End Tyranny!"

The marchers came from various points: the biggest contingent consisting of workers, urban poor groups, students and professionals came from Sto. Domingo Church in Quezon City; one other group came from Caloocan; another from Makati; and the last from the Manila International Airport. Like a huge serpent crawling on its belly, the march slowly snaked its way to the Quirino Grandstand in Rizal Park where, according to one newspaper account, its "head" touched the park even while its "tail" was still inching past the Welcome Rotonda.

When all of the marchers finally reached Rizal Park, red and yellow ribbons could be seen waving side by side in a sea of tired but jubilant trekkers. Speakers from the various shades of the opposition — Kilusang Mayo Uno Chairman Rolando Olalia, Nationalist Alliance Secretary General Fr. Jose Dizon, former Sen. Lorenzo Tanada, Eva Estrada Kalaw, Salvador Laurel, Cory and Butz Aquino, among others — stood up to reiterate their protest against the Marcos regime and its multiple crimes against the people. In various ways, they cited Ninoy Aquino as a courageous and reso-



The people's pledge: Struggle until justice is obtained for Aquino and other martyrs

lute fighter whose murder served as the catalyst that unleashed the pent-up anger of a great number of people against the Marcos regime and hastened the forging of a wide anti-dictatorship movement. His death in the hands of the regime underscored the latter's merciless and ruth-

less ways with power and further showed that nothing less than its overthrow could bring justice for Aquino and for all of the people.

By the time dusk had caught up with the rallyists, the celebration-cum-protest action was not yet over. In a move dra-

LIBPHOTOS



Sea of protest: Luneta brimming with Aug. 21 demonstrators

matizing the people's firm assertion of their democratic right of free assembly, thousands of marchers moved on to Liwasang Bonifacio — a protest venue whose use has stubbornly been denied by the government in preceding mass actions. There, speakers lambasted the dictatorship as the marchers flowed past them.

Another group of rallyists headed for Ugarte Field in Makati bearing the two statues of the slain oppositionist. Through the night, protests went on even after the marchers from all contingents had dispersed. In a spontaneous show of defiance and anger, residents in various areas in Manila burned tires in the middle of the roads and held noise barrages in their communities.

As Metro Manila simmered in celebration and protest, several other cities in the provinces staged their own activities marking Aug. 21:

► in Baguio City, about 8,000 people marched through the main streets and held a rally in Burnham Park;

► in Zamboanga City, at least 1,000 students held a demonstration at Plaza Pershing while hundreds of residents, led by city Mayor Cesar Climaco, gathered in another rally;

► in Cebu City, about 10,000 people participated in a concelebrated mass for jus-

tice, freedom and democracy;

► in Iligan City, students of Marawi State University boycotted their classes and staged a demonstration; and

► in Tacloban and Bacolod cities, students and other sectors joined protest actions to vent their anger at the Marcos government.

All over the country, various sectors sought numerous means of making known their opposition to the dictatorship. A total of 114 schools nationwide declared a boycott of classes while an undetermined number of school administrations unilaterally suspended classes. This, despite a warning from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports that such acts would be in violation of ministry rules. Many private offices also called the day off to enable their employees to join the rally while vital service companies such as banks sent token delegations. By the morning of Aug. 21, the streets were almost clean of traffic as a holiday was practically observed, courtesy of a different sort of PD — the People's Decree.

Aug. 21 then and now

People remember Aug. 21 with dark memories of a popular opposition leader who was gunned down in cold blood and of a metropolis immersed in near-panic

and confusion during the first few days following the assassination. But the panic, the fear and the confusion soon gave way to a massive outpouring of grief and anger as hundreds of thousands of people turned out for his funeral and the mammoth rallies that followed.

It was particularly on these occasions that the nation's urban centers seemed to come alive as the middle class, a heretofore passive segment of the population, took to the streets, carrying placards and banners. Symbolizing their entry as a political force in the anti-dictatorship front were the confetti showers that poured from high-rise buildings in Makati, the country's premier business district. The practice soon caught on with other business areas, drawing in the support of anti-Marcos big businessmen and other upper reaches of society.

The ways in which the urban middle class registered its newly-voiced protests were varied and creative: they walked, jogged or biked over long distances as they shouted out, "Marcos resign!" They donned yellow T-shirts, caps, badges, pins and stickers to spread the message of protest and demand justice for the slaying of Aquino.

The spontaneity and massiveness of the protest actions greatly shook the dictatorship which had been thrown in a defensive and extremely isolated position. So stultic-

fied were the dictator and his wife at the frequency of such protests that the only reaction they could muster was at once scornful and wistful: "Mapapagod din ang mga iyan." But no such wearing out took place. Not only did the rallyists come back in greater numbers. As suburban residents and office workers linked arms with workers, peasants and students who had long been registering their opposition to the regime, protests became more organized, frequent, massive and militant.

The first anniversary of the Aquino murder held a faint similarity with the massive rallies held last year and recalled the temper and fever of those days but it held a special character all its own. While there has been a considerable thinning out of onlookers that lined the streets in the Aug. 21, 1984 march, there was a burgeoning in the number of marchers who actively took part in the protest action. From the Sto. Domingo Church which served as one of the assembly points, no less than 150,000 rallyists — marching 10 to 15 abreast — gathered. Their number was boosted to about half a million by the time they reached Rizal Park. This is in striking contrast to the rallies last year where the onlookers outnumbered the rallyists.

As more marches were held last year, the rallyists began crying out not only against the assassination of Aquino but also against the numerous other crimes committed by the dictatorship, such as driving the country into bankruptcy, militarization of the countryside, the enforcement of repressive decrees and the arrest and imprisonment of dissenters. More importantly, the rallyists began to train their guns at the US, whose precipitate exoneration of the regime just days after the assassination, and whose unabashed support for Marcos marked it as a target alongside its puppet. The reality of US sponsorship and domination of the country's politics and economy led more people to launch protest actions assailing US imperialism and tackling issues in a comprehensive manner. It was this heightened opposition to a host of national ills that came to characterize subsequent mass actions, as it did in this year's first anniversary celebration of Aquino's death.

Demands for Marcos' resignation were accompanied by more active calls for the total dismantling of the dictatorship. Criticisms of the First Couple's extravagance and largesse toward their cronies as well as the regime's subservience to the dictates of the IMF-World Bank evolved into a rejection of the government's economic policies and calls for a nationalist economic strategy. Disdain over the arrogance and caprice of those in power became a loud denunciation of the repression of the people's democratic rights. Awareness of continued US support for the regime led to persistent demands for an end to foreign dominated politics in the country. The call for a change in government lea-



Frontline warriors: Workers bracing up for police attack



True grit: Staying put despite water cannon bombardment

dership underwent radical transformation as the demand for the creation of a democratic coalition government was raised. From disparate, specific issues arose a unified demand which, in effect, sought to achieve the goals of national democracy.

The handful of organizations that sprang immediately after the Aquino assassination has mushroomed into more than a hundred. At the center of these groups was the broad coalition known as the Justice for Aquino, Justice for All Movement. For the Aug. 21 celebration in Manila this year, a total of 122 organizations prepared and mobilized their members for the affair. The dedication of these groups, which cover the range of concerned citizens in business, the arts, health services and other fields, was tested and honed in a series of campaigns, notably that which was launched to boycott the Batasang Pamban-

an elections.

But even as there was a remarkable upsurge in the formation of organizations among the urban middle class and an equally notable rise in their participation in the mass movement, this year's protest actions saw the heaviest turnout ever from the ranks of workers, the urban poor, the students and even the peasants. Coming out in numbers greatly surpassing the participants from the middle and upper classes, these sectors eventually took the lead in the marches against the dictatorship.

Tightening the lid on dissent

The message was not lost on Marcos. For as the year 1983-84 became known as the year of the upsurge of protest actions, the government retaliated in kind by tightening the lid on dissent.

From its "tolerant" attitude toward demonstrations immediately after the Aquino assassination, the regime shifted gears by becoming increasingly repressive as the unsolved murder was about to reach its first year.

Before the Aug. 21 rally, other peaceful gatherings were unceremoniously dispersed by the police who did not hesitate to use violence against the unarmed rallyists. Almost without exception, peaceful protest actions held from July to August were ordered blocked or broken up by the government for the flimsiest reasons.

But it was on Aug. 12 that the most brutal of these violent dispersals took place. About 3,000 rallyists led by the Kilusang Mayo Uno gathered at the intersection of Taft Ave. and San Andres to start their march toward Liwasang Bonifacio. The occasion was called to commemorate the 81st birth anniversary of labor leader Felixberto Olalia but even a harmless tri-

held that day, and with the Supreme Court eventually "settling" the matter by allowing the mass action to be held in another venue, the Ugarte Field in Makati, the protesters showed up at their own designated place, the Welcome Rotonda.

As a phalanx of policemen and several firetrucks blocked their way and ordered their dispersal, the rallyists stood their ground. Invoking their constitutional right to peaceably assemble, they moved instead to strengthen their ranks. A contingent of workers advanced, arm-in-arm, to the head of the march, ready to take on and meet any attack from the anti-riot squads.

The Aug. 17 rally clearly bannered the people's own efforts to assert their will and legitimate rights. Despite the half-hearted ruling by the court, the marchers proceeded to hold their mass action at the place and time originally set by them. Their daring attempt to challenge the government's ruling yielded a victory of sorts

ures by unconditionally declaring that it was the citizens' right to gather and express their grievances. So it tarried and quibbled about the time and place for such rallies and mumbled something about the tendency for violence to erupt.

It was the people's daring spirit, their will to defy, that played a big role in the government's decision not to put any stumbling block to the Aug. 21 rally which, previously, it had desperately tried to stop at all costs. Faced with the fact that the people's will to resist had risen to a level that can no longer be controlled even with the climate of fear it has been trying to build up, the regime was finally forced to back down. When Aug. 21 came, police and military forces were pulled out of demonstration sites. The regime virtually abdicated the streets that day as it attempted to keep a low profile.

But how long this low profile will last with the stormy days ahead is doubtful. Sept. 21, ever a big red-letter day in the



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War of nerves: Tanada and Butz Aquino lead column of demonstrators last Aug. 17 despite opposition from Manila's finest

bute such as this could not be allowed by the regime. It was apparent that any event that would remind the people of the correctness of resisting despotism, such as that exemplified by Olalia, was considered by the regime as a poison that would shorten, if not end, its borrowed and ailing life.

As the marchers stood their ground and unflinchingly faced the anti-riot squads who ordered them to disperse, they were subjected to the merciless blasts of high-powered water hoses directly trained at them. Several minutes passed, and when it became clear that the water sprays were not enough to break up the assembly, the phalanx surged forward with truncheons, shields and guns, hitting the rallyists who by then had seated themselves on the ground and huddled together to fortify themselves against the attacks of the regime's guard dogs. The explosion of tear gas bombs followed and gunshots were fired into the air to disperse the rallyists.

On Aug. 17, as Marcos' minions harriedly passed the buck on the issue of granting a permit for the rally that was to be

for them when the rallyists were allowed to go past the police blockade after the authorities realized that stopping the protesters could end up as a costlier political gamble.

As the pattern of suppression became intolerably clear, the dictatorship came under fire from critics on all fronts. The opposition took the Marcos government to task for enforcing a no permit, no rally policy — a rule that practically amounted to a no-rally policy. By invoking this rule, the government needed only to cite "intelligence reports" of "infiltration by subversive elements" to deny a permit and equip itself with the excuse for dispersing a rally. Legal groups and concerned individuals sued Manila Mayor Ramon Bagatsing, PC chief Maj. Gen. Prospero Olivas and Western Police District Superintendent Brig. Gen. Narciso Cabrera for refusing to allow mass actions and ordering their dispersal.

The Supreme Court, besieged by demands to take a stand on the issue, was forced to uphold the people's right to peaceably assemble. It could not, however, stray too far from the dictator's pleas-

ure protest calendar of anti-dictatorship forces, is likely to push the regime to shift back to open suppression. Deteriorating economic conditions will not help any in easing the turbulent political situation. In fact, problems like new and increased taxes will further fuel the people's smoldering anger and protest actions.

Meantime, the controversy-ridden Agrava investigating board has still to make public its decision regarding the Aquino assassination. In an attempt to counter widespread fears of a whitewash, it may conclude that there was a military conspiracy involved. Many, however, are skeptical as to how high the board will go in targeting the military brass.

But as the massive demonstrations this year and last year have prove, the people have already made a judgment on Aquino's real assassins. And their finger of guilt unerringly points to Marcos and his closest hatchetmen. Any decision of the board short of this judgment will be bound to unleash greater protests. For certain, any which way you look at it, it's a no-win situation for the Marcos regime. **Minda Rodrigo**



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NPA guerrillas: Rekindling hopes for struggle and revolt

main, a military solution.

In retaliation, the regime deployed five battalions of 5,000 to 6,000 troopers in Samar. The military build-up directly focused on combatting and wiping out the NPA and winning peasant support in the three provinces of the island. But far from gaining the Samarens' allegiance, the military antagonized the barriofolk with their brutal methods ranging from the widespread extortion of food and money to the forcible mass evacuation of barrios to the merciless salvaging of farmers merely suspected of helping the NPA. Not surprisingly, the military counter-insurgency operations only drove the peasant masses closer to the side of the revolutionary movement. As the highest gesture of support, the most advanced among them joined the growing ranks of the NPA, in the belief that revolutionary armed struggle offers the most viable solution for change and liberation from oppression.

Today, despite the continuing massive counter-insurgency operations in Samar, the regime has failed to wipe out the NPA. Even more than before, the island remains "NPA country." A concrete measure of this is the series of NPA offensives staged in the first half of this year. From January to June, according to LIB correspondents, the NPA launched 36 tactical offensives (consisting of six ambushes, 11 raids, 11 sparrow operations, six snipings and two encounters), seized 89 high-powered firearms, and killed 44 AFP troopers and wounded 25 of them. On the side of the NPA, six guerrillas were killed and 12 wounded. These were the biggest victories in the battlefield:

- ▶ Feb. 23, MacArthur, Eastern Samar. Two AFP soldiers killed and 3 M16 rifles captured in an ambush.
- ▶ Apr. 5, San Vicente, Catubig, Northern Samar. Two soldiers killed, five wounded and nine M16s captured in an ambush on a 15th Infantry Battalion (IB) unit.
- ▶ Apr. 15, Las Navas, Northern Samar.



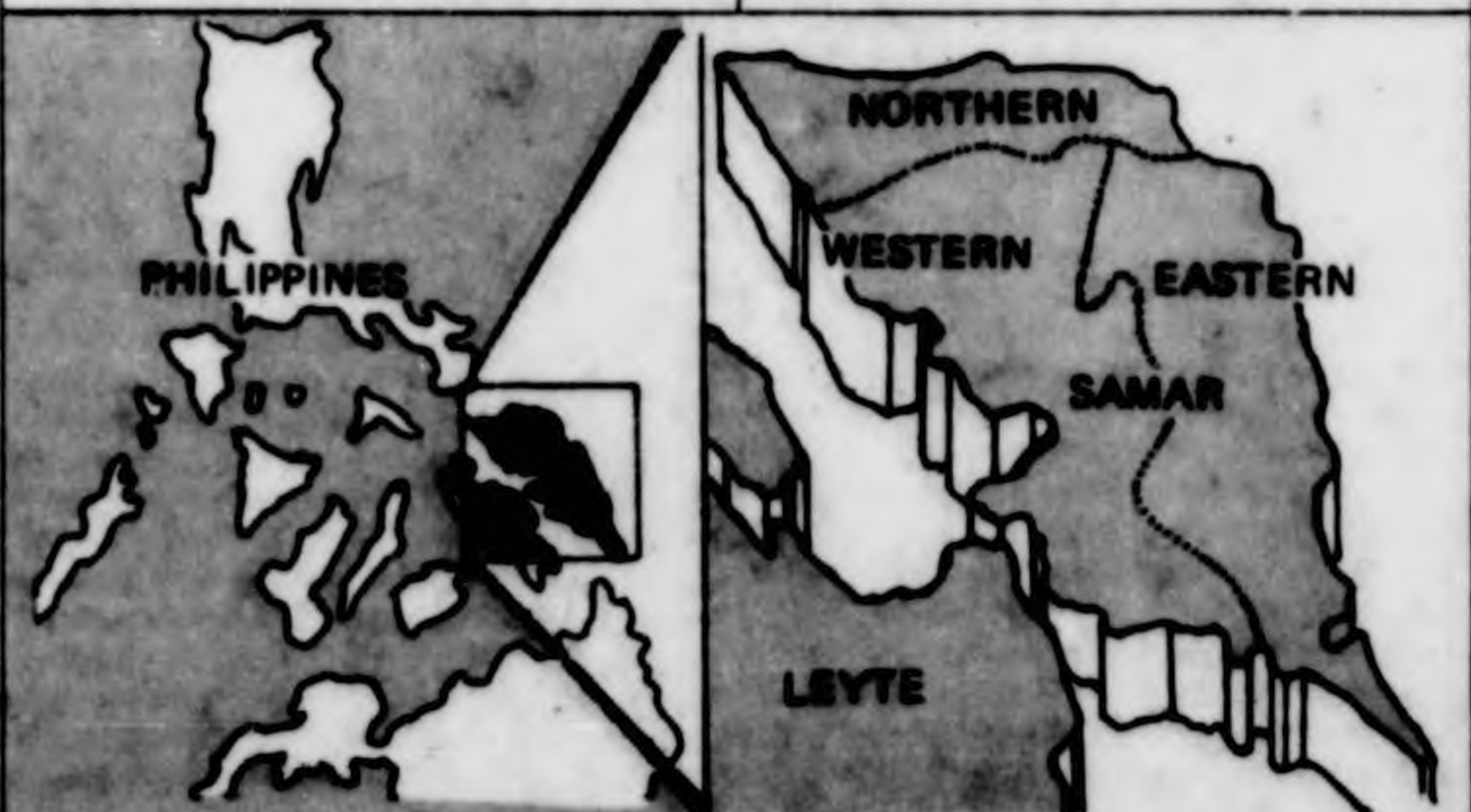
Trailblazer

Samar NPA continues to advance guerrilla warfare

Mired in poverty and backwardness, the remote island of Samar never seemed important for the government in Manila to worry about. True, rich mineral, timber and fish resources abounded in the island, but the government largely left these to the grasping ventures of foreign and local businessmen. Government officials were more interested in the pay-offs they could skim from these business deals; no one seemed to care about the 1.3 million population of Samar, majority of whom lived in extreme poverty and suffered from its consequent maladies — malnourishment, high infant mortality rate, illiteracy and unemployment.

Things somewhat changed in 1979. That year, offensives of the New People's Army flared up like wildfire in the island, lurching Samar into the front pages of Manila dailies. The unprecedented and intensified NPA assault sent shudders of alarm through the Marcos regime; on the other hand, it rekindled hopes for struggle and revolt among restive sectors and disenfranchised peasants. Forced to sit up and pay attention to a land and people it

had severely neglected for years, the regime hurriedly adopted measures to stop the spiralling conflict. The measures, however, were not targeted at eradicating the social roots of insurgency but were, in the



NPA country: Ideal terrain and conditions for guerrilla warfare

One soldier killed and six M16s, one M1 Garand, one M1 carbine seized in a raid on a PC-INP-CHDF detachment.

► May 4, Lawaan, Paranas, Western Samar. Five soldiers killed, three wounded and seven M16s, one M60, one M79 seized in a raid on the 20th IB (PA) detachment.

► May 13, Piliw, Llorente, Eastern Samar. Four soldiers killed, three wounded and two M16s, one M203 captured in an ambush on a 34th IB unit.

► June 4, San Jose de Panauagan, Gandara, Western Samar. Four soldiers killed and four M16s, one M60, one M79 seized in a raid on the 19th IB detachment.

► June 28, Maslog, Eastern Samar. Six AFP soldiers killed and six M16s, eight M1 Garands captured in a raid on a PC-INP-CHDF detachment.

Last July 15, on a dull Sunday afternoon, NPA guerrillas struck again. They raided the municipal hall of MacArthur town, seized an undetermined number of firearms and office equipment. Two policemen who tried to fight back were killed, reported LIB Samar correspondent Lando Amigo. During the raid, the Red fighters blocked both approaches to the town, stopping all traffic. This was the second time the town was raided. In 1979, guerrillas occupied the town for more than three hours, confiscated the firearms of the policemen and CHDF members and conducted a meeting in the town plaza.

One major factor stands behind the swift progress of guerrilla warfare in Samar: the formation of full-time guerrilla units and militia units. Under the leadership of the Communist Party of the Philippines in Eastern Visayas which has consistently unified and guided its military forces since 1971, the NPA has rapidly developed and raised its formation levels. From the first seven-man armed propaganda unit in 1973, by early 1979, there were already six guerrilla platoons in two guerrilla fronts, while militia units were being formed and trained.

The formation of CPP organs on the front and district levels as early as 1976-78 enabled the NPA to be relieved of mass work by the time its first guerrilla platoon was set up in 1977. *Ang Bayan*, official CPP publication, reported in its March issue that by early 1979, the Red fighters were concentrating on military work (although mass work continued to be a secondary task), and the lines of command were defined from the CPP's Regional Committee to the front operational command, and from these, down to the platoons.

With the heightening of their readiness and capability for war, so did the NPA boldly step up guerrilla warfare over wide areas in Samar in 1979. That year, in a deadly war of attrition against the regime's military forces, Red fighters mounted more than 40 tactical offensives against the regime's military troops. Many of these were big raids on enemy forces right in the town centers. The momentum



Red fighters in target practice

of these offensives was sustained until mid-1981. However, from the middle of 1981 to 1983, the staging of tactical offensives, especially big military operations, slowed down.

Ang Bayan cited two main reasons for this temporary slowdown of NPA military activity. First, to enable cadres and fighters in Samar to assist in the consolidation of other guerrilla fronts, particularly in other islands in the Visayas and even in Mindanao. In this period, a number of platoon- and squad-level commanders and political officers, including several high-powered rifles, were deployed to these places. Second, heavy enemy pressure made it difficult to sustain the previous pace of tactical operations. To adjust to the tight situation, revolutionary forces instead concentrated on the further strengthening and consolidation of the NPA, including the formation of district guerrilla units and many more militia units.

For certain, the NPA in Samar owes much of its progress to solid mass support. A revolutionary war is a mass undertaking and no better case illustrates this than the Samarenos' support of the NPA. In fact, reports *Ang Bayan*, one of the NPA's early and notable gains in Samar was the unification of the people on a wide scale and the fruitful efforts to prepare them for the effective advancement of their revolutionary tasks. "The systematic, solid and extensive development of a mass base served as a firm foundation for the advancement

of revolutionary struggle."

From only a few hundred people banded together into barrio organizing committees in 1976, their numbers had swelled to 40,000 people by 1979-80. They directly influenced no less than 300,000 or roughly one-fourth of the island's population. "The depth and breadth of the organized mass force could be measured through the establishment of full-fledged mass organizations in 122 barrios, organizing committees in 255 barrios and organizing groups in 480 other barrios. Added to these were the militia units set up in 450 barrios to foster and protect the basic interests and rights of the masses," said *Ang Bayan*. Several hundred support groups were also set up by rich peasants, small merchants, professionals and enlightened landlords. By September 1983, the organized masses numbered more than 500,000, directly influencing and activating 400,000 other people or one-third of the population.

The NPA and revolutionary movement also gained significant headway in the implementation of the revolutionary agrarian reform program. According to *Ang Bayan*, from 1977 to 1980, more than 8,000 peasants succeeded in secretly or openly reducing the land rent; 13,000 peasants and farm workers moved collectively and were able to have farm wages increased; and 3,300 small producers acted in concert to raise the prices of their products against the schemes of a few middlemen-usurers to lower the prices and cheat them. Thousands of people also prepared and signed petitions, or marched and held rallies in the barrios, town centers and capital towns of the three Samar provinces, to condemn and fight oppression and terrorism by the AFP.

No doubt, the favorable terrain of Samar also contributed significantly to the advance of guerrilla warfare. With its long shoreline, more than 70 percent mountainous areas and vast forests, the island has provided the NPA wide areas for maneuver. These advantages are maximized by the fact that more than 80 percent of Samar's population live in the countryside while poor fishermen abound at the shorelines and nearby islets. Further boosting these ideal conditions are the intense poverty and oppression of the masses and the relatively weak state machinery on Samar.

Samar's consistent achievements in key areas of revolutionary work have earned it an enviable position. It has emerged as one of the NPA's spearhead fronts in the country where guerrilla warfare is most advanced. Early this year, Samar scored another breakthrough — the setting up of company formations on the island. Today, many regions, Red fighters, cadres and activists look up to this former poor country cousin that has blazed the way for the advancement of guerrilla warfare in other parts of the country.

Leon Fortaleza



Reaping the grains of success

Peasant masses benefit from implementation of the revolutionary land reform program

Ka Dante is a 25-year-old peasant who hails from Western Samar. In 1977, members of the NPA visited his barrio. This marked the start of his involvement in the revolutionary movement. In an interview with LIBERATION, Ka Dante related his experiences in revolutionary work, specifically in the implementation of the revolutionary agrarian reform program in Samar. He related the bows of land rent reduction, a major facet of the revolutionary land reform program which is now being implemented widely in Samar. He said that land rent has been greatly reduced in areas where the organizing committees, a tightly knit group responsible for the different aspects of revolutionary work, have been fairly established and where mass organizations have been set up in the municipal level. Excerpts from the interview:

L: How do you achieve the reduction of land rent?

D: When the "asosasyon" or mass organization is already formed, we confront the landlord and present our demands to him.

L: Are there steps you take before such confrontation?

D: Preparations, which take about six months to one year, are made before the actual confrontation. During this span of time, asosasyon members visit the landlord, talk to him and explain to him the objective and importance of our kind of agrarian reform. In short, we establish good relations with the landlord and persuade him. If he does not favorably regard our demands, then we confront him.

L: Do members of the New People's Army accompany you in your confrontations with the landlords?

D: Not at all. Members of the asosasyon are the ones who confront the landlord.

L: By how much has land rent been reduced so far in your area?

D: In 1983, a minimum of 10 percent land reduction was prevalent in Samar. But there are also cases wherein tenants do not pay a single centavo of rent anymore.

L: Do you exert pressure on the landlord for him to reduce rent?

D: As far as my experience goes, I have yet to encounter a landlord who has refused to reduce rent when confronted although there are instances when they bargain for a lower percentage of rent reduction. For example, we confronted one and asked for a 20 percent rent reduction. He said he couldn't afford this, so we bargained with him until we reached an agreement. However, I've heard of cases wherein the landlord bared the farmers' demand to the military which led to harassment of farmers. The peasants were beaten up, arrested or even killed. In 1981, there was one instance when a landlord in southwest Samar paid the military to harass the farmers. The NPA later sought him and he in turn paid for his crime with his life. His land was also confiscated.

L: Is land confiscation a part of the revolutionary agrarian reform program?

D: What I've just related is the only case I know of but there are landlords who voluntarily abandon their land. They don't visit their properties anymore nor do they assert their ownership of these lands.

L: So what happens to such lands?

D: The asosasyon assumes jurisdiction over these lands. Schedules are set for a group of peasants to work on the land. We call this "tiklos" (collective farming). Work on the collective farms is usually done in the afternoon. In the morning, peasants till the land owned by other peasants. The "bayanihan" spirit operates in these instances. There is a fixed schedule on what lands will be worked on certain days.

L: How is the harvest divided in the collective farms?



The peasants' partners: Helping out during harvest season

D: The production cost is first subtracted from the gain. The balance is divided into three parts — 50 percent goes to the peasants, 25 percent to the asosasyon and 25 percent is earmarked for support for the people's army.

L: Aside from confronting the landlord, are there other means of reducing land rent?

D: Well, there is what we call Operation Sukot or Operation Singil. Part of the harvest is hidden from the landlord so that the basis of sharing would be lesser than usual. This is usually done if the peasants are not yet prepared to openly confront the landlord.

L: Doesn't the landlord retaliate when he learns about this?

D: Actually, he will never know unless someone reports to him. He sees only what is presented to him by the peasants. Besides, the peasants are always ready for any attack against them.

L: What about the increase in the wages of the poor peasants? What steps have you taken to raise their standard of living?

D: First, they are recruited into the asosasyon so they can be organized. The policies of the asosasyon encompass them. Before, they would approach the rich peasants individually for work. Now, the asosasyon approaches the rich peasants in behalf of the poor peasants. The organization is authorized to ask for higher wages for the poor peasants so they have stronger bargaining power. After the wage has been settled, they work in groups rather than individually. A spirit of oneness and solidarity is developed.

L: By how much have their wage increased?

D: They used to receive P5 to P7 per day on the average. Now, they get P25 per day.

L: How is the revolutionary land reform program doing in your area?

D: Well, we have made big steps this year, especially since the founding of Section One last May 24. Section One is the first municipal level mass organization not only in our area but in the whole of Samar. We proudly greeted this development in a song which was composed by a comrade. It goes like this:

*Ano 1984, petsa 24 bulas ban Mayo
Gintukod an maso
Dinbi ba Seksyon Uno.*



Rico, a Waray Red fighter

Interview with an NPA guerrilla

Ka Rico is a bright-faced but soft-spoken young man in his early twenties who, in between shy smiles, speaks in slow, halting Waray. Born and raised in his native Samar, Ka Rico still has the well-built frame of a peasant used to working in the fields. But it has been some time since Ka Rico was seen tilling the fields near his barrio. For the past three years, he has been a Red fighter, attached to one of the district guerrilla units in the guerrilla front in southern Samar.

Like many Red fighters, Ka Rico first started as an activist by joining the Organisasyon ang Kabatan-unan, a revolutionary organization of barrio youths in Samar. As a youth activist, Ka Rico's tasks included sending letters and material support to the NPA as well as organizing other youths to join the revolutionary movement.

After more than a year of working as a part-time activist, Ka Rico decided to devote his full time to the movement. For the next three months, he worked with the communication and transport group, again serving as a courier. Later, he was transferred to a propaganda organizing team of the NPA where he became a peasant organizer.

At first, Ka Rico recalls, he found it difficult to handle the mass courses given to the peasants they were organizing. But he eventually learned, and has since been adept at giving educational instructions about the goals, direction and program of the national democratic revolution.

His stint as a peasant organizer soon came to a close when, after six months, he was transferred to the district guerrilla unit in his area. For Ka Rico, this was the fulfillment of a desire he had nurtured since he became a mass activist two years back.

"Many of those who join revolutionary mass organizations in the barrios soon express a desire to become Red fighters," said Ka Rico in an interview with LIB. "In the mass organizations, they are tempered by the various experiences they gain, and become ready for higher levels of struggle. For most, this means joining the New People's Army."

Today, Ka Rico is a seasoned guer-



Keeping fit: Exercising in makeshift big bar in NPA camp



Forest warblers: Guerrillas take time out for singing

rilla fighter, but he still remembers how he felt during his first few days with the NPA. "Of course, I was a little worried because I didn't have any previous combat experience. But I drew confidence from the thought that, in time, I would learn how to fire a gun and shoot the enemy."

One thing Ka Rico never forgets to recall with laughter is his first ambush. "We received reports of enemy movements in the area and we made plans to spring an ambush," he said, grinning. "For two days we waited at our assigned positions for the enemy unit to pass by. I guess I must have grown tired of the long wait because I was asleep when the enemy entered the killing zone and was only awakened by the sound of gunfire. Startled, and still in a daze, I

darted up and was ready to lunge forward. It was a good thing a comrade beside me pulled me down and brought me back to my senses. After a while, I was able to fight well enough."

"The ambush went according to plan. We were able to kill two soldiers, confiscate a garand and an armalite, and withdraw with no one killed or wounded among us," recalled Ka Rico.

Ka Rico has come a long way since that first ambush. After a year as a Red fighter, he became a vice squad leader and this year, was promoted to squad leader.

The raid on the town of Balangiga, Eastern Samar last May 12 was the eighteenth tactical offensive in which Ka Rico participated. He recounted the preparations the NPAs took before

LIBPHOTOS

LIBPHOTOS

the raid: "As early as April 28, the masses in the area reported the movement, number and level of alertness of enemy troops in the town. The NPA then sent a three-man investigating team which, along with a peasant, spent two weeks in Balangiga gathering more information about enemy movements. The team also drew a map of the area. After studying the team report, we planned our attack."

Ka Rico narrated that on the night of May 11, an advance unit composed of the best fighters in the platoon was positioned 1.5 kilometers from the town. Its task was to ascertain if there were any new developments among the enemy troops. "Meanwhile, the NPA main force stationed several kilometers away began a two-and-a-half hour walk to Kagulango, a small barrio on the way to Balangiga town," he said. "When we reached the place at 12:30 a.m., we held a half-hour mass meeting, urging the people to boycott the polls. After this, we walked for another three hours before joining up with the advance unit outside the town."

"From 4 to 4:30 a.m., we listened to a talk from the platoon's overall commanding officer who reminded us of the objectives of the tactical offensive, our experiences in previous military operations, and the fascist acts of the enemy against the masses and the NPA," Ka Rico said. "After this, we were ready for the raid. We reached Balangiga at 5 a.m. and engaged the PC, CHDF and police units in the town in a three-hour gunbattle."

It was about an hour later when an enemy bullet hit Ka Rico, shattering a bone in his right arm. Blood gushed from his wound and a searing pain pierced through his shoulder. With some effort, Ka Rico took some Hemostan tablets he had in his pocket and swallowed these to help control the bleeding. Meanwhile, he asked a peasant from a nearby house for a piece of cloth which another Red fighter tied around Ka Rico's arm and served as a crude tourniquet.



On the lookout for enemy troops

Despite the pain and the bleeding, Ka Rico continued to fight with his squad for another hour and a half. At the end of the battle, a policeman, a PC trooper and a CHDF member were killed while two garands and a .38 revolver were confiscated. Later, Ka Rico and the other wounded guerrillas were evacuated by members of revolutionary mass organizations in the area, who drove them by motorcycles to another barrio. It was only at their regrouping point that Ka Rico was able to receive medical treatment.

Today, three months after the gun-

battle, Ka Rico is far from regretting what has happened. Instead, he has expressed his desire to return to the front as soon as possible to continue the struggle. Though he knows that the nature of his injury disqualifies him from resuming combat duty, he is not fazed. "If I could, I would rather go back to being a Red fighter," he said, hopefully. "But if not," said Ka Rico, still smiling, "there are other tasks I could accomplish in the revolution. Wherever I am transferred, I will do my best."

Victoria Manalo

NPA mounts first ambush in Northern Leyte



Deep in Imelda country: Guerrillas challenging military might

The First Lady may still think of her home province of Leyte as "sacred ground" untouched by the enemies of the regime. But last Aug. 23, Red fighters based in the newly opened guerrilla front in northern Leyte launched the first military operation in the area by raiding Binulho, Javier, a place less than an hour's ride from Imelda's hometown of Tolosa.

According to *Pop-aha*, underground mass newspaper in Leyte, members of the recently formed front guerrilla unit took advantage of the slight confusion in the barrio resulting from the holding of a wedding reception. They raided the house of the town mayor, disarmed the local police force and conducted a mass meeting of the barrio residents. The hour-long operation netted three M16s, four shotguns, one M1, three .38 revolvers, several rounds of ammunition and other military equipment. One of three policemen who foolishly tried to resist was killed by the Red fighters. But except for this brief skirmish, the operation went on with the guerrillas hardly firing their guns.

The town mayor, who was not around when his house was raided, later admitted that he was impressed with the Red fighters' iron discipline. He noted that the guerrillas only took the firearms but did not take the money found in his house. The NPAs also paid for everything they took from the mayor's store.

The successful raid in what used to be considered Imelda country caused the regime some jitter, however. Soon after the raid, it ordered the concentration of company-size troops, including a unit from the Presidential Security Command, in nearby La Paz and other neighboring towns. But as the people's support for the NPA heightens, neither the Acabayan mentality nor the regime's show of force will stop the advance of the armed struggle in Leyte.

SPARKS

News about the resistance movement

KM URGES YOUTH TO JOIN STRUGGLE

On the occasion of the first death anniversary of Benigno Aquino Jr., the Kabataang Makabayan (KM) issued a statement calling on the people to participate in the revolutionary struggle to overthrow the US-Marcos dictatorship. KM urged the youth in particular to join the struggle on all fronts — be it armed or non-armed, illegal or legal — in order to hasten the dictatorship's demise, establish a democratic coalition government and attain national freedom and democracy.

The KM said, "it is imperative to forge the strongest and broadest unity among the various democratic forces and elements, for we are all bound by a common desire to end the dictatorial rule of the US-Marcos clique." The revolutionary youth organization, an NDF member, also pointed to the Marcos regime as the mastermind behind the Aquino murder and condemned US imperialism for its "installation and prolongation of the fascist dictatorship."

KA BERT REMEMBERED



Labor leader Olalia

Workers took time out last Aug. 5 to mark the first death anniversary of Felixberto "Ka Bert" Olalia, founding leader of the Kilusang Mayo Uno. Held at Ka Bert's grave site at Himlayang Pilipino, the rites included the offering of a mass and a militant cultural presentation. Progressive trade union leaders took turns in paying tribute to Ka Bert and cited his significant contributions

to the development of a nationalist labor movement in the Philippines.

JAYCEES HIT AMENDMENT 6

The repeal of Amendment 6 and other autocratic laws and decrees and the reduction and rechanneling of the military budget to "higher productivity development programs" were among the resolutions adopted by the Jaycees for Justice in the 4th Metro Jaycees Area Conference last Aug. 18-19. The civic group also demanded an accounting of foreign debts, disclosure of conditions imposed by the IMF-WB and the dismantling of the sugar and coconut monopolies, the immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners, and a stop to militarization.

URBAN POOR MARCH TO NHA

Some 500 urban poor belonging to the Coalition of Urban Poor Against Poverty (CUPAP) marched to the office of the National Housing Authority (NHA) to protest the government's indifference to their plight. The marchers called for a stop to all on-going squatter demolition operations and also to the high resettlement cost imposed by the NHA. CUPAP officials said they should not be the ones to shoulder the cost of government resettlement projects since they already pay...

CHURCH PEOPLE HOLD PRAYER RALLY

Some 400 members of the Promotion of Church People's Rights/Response braved the rains and held a prayer rally outside the Quiapo church last Aug. 16 to reaffirm their role in proclaiming "the gospel of justice and value of human life." They protested military harassment of militant church people and averred that "the gospel cannot be separated

from the action for justice, involvement in the struggle of the people and participation in transforming society."

ST. JOSEPH'S FACULTY URGE MENTORS' RELEASE

About 300 students and teachers of the St. Joseph's College picketed the Philippine Constabulary headquarters at Camp Crame, Quezon City last Aug. 11 to demand the release of arrested faculty members of the school, Cynthia Nolasco and Mila Aguilar-Roque. The protesters at first requested permission from the gate guards to visit the detained mentors but were denied entry. Nolasco and Roque, director and deputy director, respectively of St. Joseph's College's extension services, were abducted by PC intelligence agents last Aug. 6.

MEDIA HARASSMENT PROTESTED

Some 250 journalists signed a statement decrying recent developments which they said tend to stifle "the exercise of free and responsible journalism." The statement expressed concern over the increasing number of libel suits filed against journalists by military and public officials. It cited two separate cases of libel suits involving P220 million in damage claims filed recently by Army chief of staff Gen. Fabian Ver, and Eduardo Cojuangco, a wealthy businessman and a Marcos crony, against the publisher, editor and contributor of *Panorama* and against the Galman family lawyer for an article allegedly implicating the two in the Aquino assassination. The journalists appealed to the courts to uphold the people's right to a free press.

JAPANESE IMPERIALISM SCORED

Filipino artists and journalists joined visiting members of two Japanese cultural groups last Aug. 7 in protesting Japanese imperialism in Third World countries at a gathering held at the Heritage Art Center in Quezon City to commemorate the 39th anniversary of the US bombing of Hiroshima. The representatives of Tama Jiman and Group U and their Filipino hosts also vowed to continue opposing governments whose policies promote the possibility of a nuclear holocaust. The participants called for stronger ties between the protest movements of their countries.

PCHR ASSAILS REGIME'S TERRORISM

Human rights activists denounced the Marcos dictatorship's intensifying terrorist campaign and called for an end to US support for the dictatorship in a conference at the Pope Pius Catholic Center last Aug. 19. In a statement, the Philippine Conference for Human Rights (PCHR) assailed the increasing military abuses in the countryside and the use of brute force to disperse peaceful mass actions. The US, the PCHR added, continues to assist the present repressive regime through economic aid and military assistance to ensure the protection of American investments and its military bases.

TANADA FETED IN "AMAYAN"



Fearless fighter Tanada

The Grand Old Man of the Philippine opposition Lorenzo Tanada attended a different kind of birthday celebration last Aug. 10. Fellow nationalists staged an "Ama ng Bayan" (AMAYAN), a tribute program for the 86-year old former senator and staunch nationalist. AMAYAN highlighted patriotic songs, protest plays and militant speeches assailing the dictatorship. The celebrant thanked his well-wishers and took the occasion to call on the Filipino people to continue the struggle against the anti-national and anti-people Marcos regime.

CRACKS

Indicators of the regime's crisis

THE TECHNOCRACY OF IGNORANCE

Prime Minister Cesar A. Virata has repeatedly implied in press statements that he is blameless in the gross mismanagement of the Philippine economy. As representative of the cream of Filipino technocracy, he has set it upon himself to refute allegations made against the failed wizards of development planning. He is at present projecting technocrats as mere designers of socio-economic programs and innocent tools in the irresponsible use of government funds. Virata's attempts to clean up the technocrat's bungling image led him to order an investigation on the \$26-billion foreign loans that brought us to our present debt misery. The task fell on the lap of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) whose researchers were shocked to find out that they could only account for \$10 billion disbursed to government and private sectors. The remaining \$16 billion simply cannot be traced from official records. Although this revelation may bolster the claim of technocrats to blissful ignorance, it however, still does not free them from accountability to the Filipino people who they are supposed to serve.

US-TRAINED DOGS OF WAR HOUNDING SAMAR

The San Jose Timber Company employed the services of American mercenaries in training a 150-man army to protect its logging interests in Northern Samar. The San Jose concession extends hundreds of miles from the mountains of Catubig to Calbayog. The American mercenaries are known to have been members of special forces that fought in the Vietnam War. They were flown secretly from the United States to Northern Samar for this special mission. The trained private army is now known as the Special Operations Group (SOG). A member of this local elite force was interviewed by NPA guerrillas and said, "We were trained in jungle warfare and survival. The Americans even taught us to identify edible plants that grow in the forest area." But the real task of the SOG was principally to counter the efforts of the NPA to resist the illegal exploitation of the forest and food resources of the people of Northern Samar. Previously, NPA Red fighters staged successful ambushes on the timber company's operations, especially when the cut logs are being towed downriver to the Lac-ang wharf. The San Jose Timber Company is reportedly owned by defense minister Juan Ponce Enrile, whose office recruited the American mercenaries to train his own private army. The defense minister's son Jackie, manages the logging operations and is often seen in the company headquarters in Northern Samar.

OVERSELLING THE BOLINAO DENDRO PROJECT

Hard-sell promotion of the Bolinao Dendrothermal Project in the mass media is again proving how the regime exceptionally outwits itself in the art of deceptive advertising. While Marcos has continuously praised the success of the dendro project, the truth is the project is not yet operational, as everyone in the entire municipality of Bolinao and the province of Pangasinan knows. French consultants and their local counterparts are still feverishly working on how to produce cheap energy in the dendro plant, the very rationale for establishing the project. Unknown to the President and government image-manipulators, foreign dignitaries and guests who have visited the dendro plant have left Bolinao unimpressed by the technical briefing and site tour for the simple reason that the plant is not yet operating. To what extent the President is privy to this particular de-

ception is the mind-boggler of the month considering that he himself inaugurated the dendro project this year. How the government media can dare proclaim the project a fine example of "Sariling Sikap" is another eye-brow raiser considering that the financing came from foreign loans. Still another nutty feature of the project is the megalomania of its officials. A tour of the dendro site includes a visit to the Gen. Pedro Dumol waterfalls — named in honor of the project director. Not to be outdone, general manager Arnulfo Cabrera had a street in barangay Balingasay named after him because his resthouse happens to be located in the same place. Meanwhile the ipil-ipil trees planted in hundreds of hectares around the plant site have grown to more than 10 feet tall and are waiting to be cut and fed to the dendro furnace. Unconvinced about the whole project are hundreds of families who have been evicted from the ipil-ipil plantations to make way for a dubious form of development.

MILKING THE MERALCO COW



Concerned Meralco employees have reported that the company keeps two books of accounts. In the real and confidential book of accounts, a list of government officials who receive a monthly payola from Meralco is recorded. The list includes government ministers who are paid an average of P70,000 monthly, favored army generals and KBL interim Batasan members who get about P50,000 monthly, and mayors whose cities and towns are covered by Meralco who collect about P10,000 monthly. The Commission on Audit has access to the secret accounts but regularly buries the anomaly to allow Meralco to increase power rates — always at the expense of unknowing public and private consumers of electricity.

IMELDA'S PET PEEVE

The Americans are currently the object of Imelda Marcos' capricious ire. What got her dander up are the strong moves of American advisers of the IMF and World Bank to dissolve the Metro Manila Commission and the Ministry of Human Settlements. Considered Imelda's personal fiefdoms, these agencies have been identified as major sources of unaccounted, wasteful spendings by government. Recently, Imelda's wrath for the Americans has been aggravated when the United States embassy turned down her request for \$50,000. The paltry sum is the annual allocation of the US embassy to Malacanang under the category of "intelligence funds." Technically, it is the embassy's modest contribution in maintaining the Presidential Security Command.

\$10 BILLION DOLLAR QUESTION

A statement by US ambassador Stephen Bosworth that there may be "upwards of \$10 billion held abroad by Filipinos" caused a stir among Batasan oppositionists who demanded that the envoy name names and that Filipino officials who failed to monitor and control the dollar outflow be prosecuted. Before the uproar died down, Dr. Bernardo Villegas of the Center for Research and Communication revealed in a talk that the amount salted away and invested by Filipinos could easily reach \$30 billion. He said statistics gathered by several international agencies show that 20 to 40 percent of Filipino exported earnings the past 15 years were not reported. In logging alone, he added, at least 40 percent of export receipts were not recorded by the National Economic and Development Authority.

The major economic policies of the NDF

The most asked questions regarding key areas of the economic alternative program

Unbridled corruption, gross mismanagement, misallocation of resources, extravagant and wasteful spending, and the distortion of the economy to suit foreign economic interests have been among the most damning indictments of the current regime. In the midst of the rising political ferment, these charges have given rise to discussions about economic alternatives to the failed strategy of the Marcos dictatorship. As early as 1973, at the time of the founding of the Preparatory Commission for a National Democratic Front, the NDF had already drawn up the broad outlines of its economic alternative program. Through the years, in the course of the anti-dictatorship struggle, this program has gradually been fleshed out. The following article attempts to answer the most asked questions about the economic alternative program of the NDF. Consisting of 12 questions and answers, it is based on the economic program of the democratic coalition government that the NDF aims to establish to replace the present tyrannical Marcos government. This article is the second of a series explaining particular aspects of the general program of the NDF.

1. What are the most significant features of the economy of the people's democratic republic?

The people's democratic republic will have an independent, self-reliant and strong economy. The development of this economy is premised on the liberation of the Filipino people from the political and economic oppression they suffer from imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. There will be three major sectors of the economy – the state sector, the cooperative sector and the private sector.

The state sector, the economy's leading sector, will be made up of all enterprises run directly by the democratic coalition government. These include enterprises generating raw materials and public utilities and those that are monopolistic in character or too big for private management. Businesses currently owned or controlled by Marcos and his cronies, big compradors, and transnational corporations are likewise included.

The cooperative sector will include peasant owner-cultivators, handicrafts men, and other petty producers. These can take such forms as peasant mutual aid organizations and supply, marketing and producers' cooperatives.

The new economy shall be properly planned to ensure a well-balanced and well-paced development of industry and agriculture, heavy and light industries, centralized and dispersed industries, government revenue and expenditure, supply and demand, capital formation and per capita consumption and other important factors of the economy.

2. What will be the policy on direct investments and profit-making enterprises owned by Americans and other foreign big capitalists?

As a rule, direct investments and profit-making assets of the US and other foreign big capitalists must be nationalized with compensation. Nationalization therefore in this case means government takeover or control of foreign business.

They shall be compensated on the basis of book value, previous profit remittances and capital repatriation. Transfer pricing, tax exemptions, manipulation of domestic foreign credits, overpricing of royalty, technical and management fees, and rates of exploitation shall be taken into account.

Compensation may be done by converting the equity of foreign owners into preferred stocks or bonds, paying no more than the normal rate of return to capital as dividend. The government shall redeem these stocks or bonds from foreign owners for a period ranging from ten to twenty years. The only exception to this rule involves properties of those foreigners who actively participated in anti-people and anti-revolutionary activity. Their properties shall be confiscated without any compensation.

3. What will be the policy on foreign loans?

The people's democratic republic shall respect all loans contracted by the previous regime but it reserves the right to



Sugar workers of Negros: A lifetime of feudal exploitation



Strongholds of US big business: Government takeover

"As a rule, direct investments and profit-making assets of the US and other foreign big capitalists must be nationalized with compensation."

evaluate and pay each loan. All terms and components of each loan have to be investigated, and in the case of onerous and self-serving loans, culpability has to be established. Such foreign loans which were used to overburden and sabotage the Philippine economy, deepen its agrarian and non-industrial character and divert local resources into unproductive channels must be cancelled. Otherwise, these loans are renegotiable so long as their obnoxious features are removed and terms of easy payment are arrived at.

The new government shall transact new necessary loans with the country's traditional and new lenders so long as these are for productive and industrial purposes and are made available at reasonable terms.

4. What is the land reform program of the new government?

The implementation of the land reform program is one major component of the new economic order. Its goals are to liberate the peasantry, the largest social class in the Philippines today, from feudal and semi-feudal forms of exploitation and to develop the basically backward agricultural production in the countryside.

At present, the revolutionary movement has been implementing the general policy of reducing land rent and eliminating usury. Only in selective areas, as in the case of some despotic landlords and landgrabbers, are complete expropriations instituted in favor of poor peasants and settlers.

In due time, the general land reform policy shall be to distribute land to the landless tillers equitably and at no cost. Right after total victory of the present armed revolution, the land reform process shall be completed throughout the country. Farms which are run most efficiently on an industrial or wage basis shall become state farms.

Hand in hand with the free land redistribution process shall be the promotion of an increase in production and side occupations. To effect this, the cooperative movement and mechanization in the countryside shall be accomplished in stages and in relation to industrial development.

5. In the implementation of the land reform program, will there be some considerations?

Yes. Landlords who have supported the revolution and who do not oppose land reform shall continue to be given due consideration. They shall be given land to till, some compensation or alternative sources of income to support their families. As a result of the opportunities accruing to poor peasants and farmworkers, the rich peasants will have to rely more on their labor power and will have lesser opportunities to exploit others. But even then, they will have better opportunities to maintain or improve their incomes.

6. What will complement the land reform program to ensure the solution of the economic problems of the people?

National industrialization will complement land reform in economic development. Agriculture shall be the main foundation while national industrialization shall serve as the leading factor. The agricultural surplus that used to be grabbed by a parasitic landlord class and invested on luxury spending will be increased and made to support national industrialization. It shall provide the food and raw materials needed by the industrial sector as a whole, its workers, employees and dependents. On the other hand, the rise of purchasing power among the peasants as a result of the gains of land reform will create a large domestic market.

The main components of national industrialization shall be the strategic and big industries and plantations owned by the transnational corporations, big compradors and big bureaucrats which shall be expropriated by the state, the privately owned non-monopolistic enterprises as well as the small producers' and manufacturers' cooperatives.

7. Where will capital come from to spur national industrialization?

With the stoppage of remittances of superprofits, the salting



upon victory



Yankee, Go Home: Anti-imperialist rallies surging nationwide

"Landlords who have supported the revolution shall be justly compensated for their redistributed lands."

abroad of the foreign exchange of transnational corporations and big bourgeoisie and with the halting of luxury expenditures, a large amount of capital shall be made available for national industrialization. Large savings will also result from the government's policy not to engage in unnecessary and unproductive projects. At the same time, the Filipino private sector shall be encouraged to invest wherever its capital is most suited. It can form cooperatives or enter into joint ventures with the public sector.

8. What would be the major changes in the economy that will result from national industrialization?

The pattern of producing in the main agricultural and extractive raw materials for export shall be changed. Raw materials such as logs, copper concentrates, coconut, sugar and the like shall be processed locally. Marginal repacking, reassembly and light-processing industries for the domestic market and reexport shall, as much as possible, become instruments for producing goods truly manufactured in the country.

The capital goods sector will be developed from practically nothing. Insofar as export promotion is the cheapest means of building up the capital goods sector, this may be encouraged in the initial phases of economic construction. The basic idea is to convert these exports into capital goods, so that in the long-run, such external dependence will be overcome.

The comprehensive national resource base of the Philippines shall be so utilized as to develop the metal, chemical and other industries all-roundedly. Development of the steel industry to serve as the backbone of the program of national industrialization shall be given a high priority. The oil and coal industries will likewise be developed. There shall be effective economic planning to ensure a well-balanced and well-paced development of industry and agriculture, light industries, centralized and dispersed industries.

9. How will the need for external trade be related to the

task of promoting self-reliance?

Certainly, the geographic pattern of the country's international trade will be broadened. There is no question that a broader market will bring about enormous gains since this could generate greater stability in our import and export trade. Moreover, with a broader geographic base, no single country can exert political and economic pressure on us that may be detrimental to our economy's long-term growth. This matter is also related to the goal of attaining self-reliance for the whole economy.

We must realize, however, that self-reliance must not be interpreted as autarky or absolute independence from the rest of the world. To hold such a view is erroneous. Self-reliance must be interpreted to mean that, if need be, the whole economy can still operate at a level adequate to meet domestic consumption even if both import and export trade are closed, or become extremely unfavorable.

This type of self-reliance can be realized only if the economy's productive forces are fully developed. To the extent that monopolistic and monopsonistic elements are mitigated, import and export trade can contribute to the faster development of such productive forces.

We must accept the fact that because of decades of forced dependency, our economy, as presently constituted, will still have to rely on the international market for most of its industrial needs. It may require a generation or two before the economy will have the potential, i.e., the productive forces, to go it alone. By then, it might not be necessary for us to go it alone, but if we must, no foreign power can exert undue economic and political pressure on us since our country will be completely independent. This is how we envision self-reliance to mean. It is coterminous with economic and political independence.

10. Will there be confiscation of certain properties upon the establishment of the democratic coalition government?

As a general rule, the property of imperialists, the big land-



Pineapple farm workers: Slaving for Del Monte and Dole in Mindanao



Ayala ferment: New economic alternatives shaping up

"All appropriate, non-monopoly forms of private property will be allowed."

lords, comprador big bourgeoisie and traitors shall be confiscated. This act is inherent in the revolutionary process of overthrowing the political rule of these forces. The state must remove all conditions in which it will be possible for the imperialists and the big exploiting classes to exist and exploit the people further. Breaking up the monopoly ownership of the means of production by the imperialists, comprador big bourgeoisie and landlord classes through confiscation is one major step in this direction.

The state shall take over the enterprises owned by the imperialists and their big comprador agents. As mentioned earlier, lands owned by landlords shall be equitably distributed to peasants who have little or no land at no cost to them.

The state shall also confiscate certain properties based on specific revolutionary principles. For example, properties acquired through fraud, extortion, corruption and other such means shall be confiscated. This also applies to private property that has been accumulated outside of the country. Properties that have been directly and actively used for anti-people and counter-revolutionary activities shall also be confiscated. All those whose properties have been confiscated and who have not committed public crimes shall be afforded the opportunity of earning a living; (expropriated elements of exploiting classes, however, shall not be put in any position to decide or influence decisions).

Compensation for confiscated properties shall be done on a case to case basis. Landlords, for instance, who have supported the revolution shall be justly compensated for their redistributed lands. Also, claims of heirs of counter-revolutionaries and anti-people elements whose properties have been confiscated shall be duly considered.

Other considerations involve questions of details which will be fleshed out in the course of the people's democratic revolution and upon its victory. At any rate, the basic principle to be followed is that confiscation shall never be arbitrary and legally and justly acquired property shall not be confiscated. As a rule, confiscation proceedings shall be undertaken in appropriate courts of law that shall be instituted

upon the proclamation of the new government. However, even in the course of conducting the armed revolution, property of the imperialists and their agents, feudalists and counter-revolutionaries shall be confiscated wherever and whenever possible.

11. What types of forms of private property will be allowed? Up to what extent?

All appropriate, non-monopoly forms of private property will be allowed. This principle is expressed in the existence of cooperative and private sectors which we have discussed. The state shall protect and promote private ownership of both the means of production that do not dominate the livelihood of the people and the means of consumption that do not restrict the growth of the forces of production. These means of production and consumption must have been acquired legitimately through land reform, honest labor, entrepreneurship and skill, inventiveness and intellectual merit.

The democratic republic shall also guarantee and assist private entrepreneurship and also individual initiative in intellectual and creative pursuits which are beneficial to the people.

12. What are the factors or elements present in the Philippine economy which will definitely serve as plus factors in forging the envisioned economy?

We shall be brief in answering this question. No physical or natural barrier can prevent the realization of the economy being envisioned. The people and the people alone can bring about the kind of transformation that is required of the new vision, conditioned upon the dismantling of the US-Marcos dictatorship which is the concentrated expression of US imperialism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. At this point, let us state that we have an abiding faith in the broad masses of the Filipino people to throw off and overcome these evils and establish a new democratic coalition government.



Who needs them: Properties of notorious Marcos men shall be confiscated

A common front

Australian support groups unite with Filipinos in the struggle against US imperialism and the Marcos regime

From time to time, residents of different cities in Australia are treated to short political plays about the Philippines presented in public places. The performers, however, do not belong to any of Australia's local theater groups but merely utilize street theater, a popular art form in that country, as one way of informing the Australian public about current issues in the Philippines. They are members of the Philippine Action Support Group (PASG) which *Philippines Brief*, a PASG publication, describes as a "national network of people working in support of Filipinos (struggling) for freedom and democracy in their country." Existing since the '70s, the PASG used to have only two branches in Melbourne and Sydney. Since the early '80s, however, its membership has expanded and it now has branches in the state capitals of Brisbane and Adelaide as well as in Canberra, the national capital, and more recently, in Perth and Hobart, Tasmania. The PASG network is also affiliated with other Philippine support groups throughout the world.

Most members of PASG became involved in solidarity work after visiting or having lived in the Philippines where they saw the country's actual conditions for themselves. Others, who were already involved in a variety of political issues, began to have an interest in the Philippines after meeting Filipino activists abroad. The PASG counts several students, trade unionists, professionals and church people among its members.

According to the PASG newsletter, *Philippine News*, two recent events have served to further expand the reach of support groups in Australia — the case of Columban priest Fr. Brian Gore, an Australian national who faced trumped-up charges of murder in Kabankalan, Negros Occidental; and the assassination of ex-Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr.

Father Gore's trial, which drew wide publicity in his country, especially in his home city of Perth, awakened many Australians about the human rights conditions in the Philippines and the plight of political prisoners under the Marcos regime. It was largely as a result of the wide interest and support among Australians for Father Gore's case that the Perth support group was put up. Since Father Gore's release and arrival in his home city, the Perth support group has helped sponsor a series of activities where the former Kabankalan parish priest also discussed the regime's



Support from Down Under: Holding a march for peace in a busy downtown center

harassment of Christian justice and peace workers helping impoverished sugar plantation workers in Negros.

The Aquino assassination drew even wider publicity about the repressive character of the Marcos dictatorship, according to *Philippine News*. Since August last year, PASG activities have enjoyed wider coverage, with the Australian media approaching the support groups more often for their comments on current issues concerning the Philippines.

Because of these two events, the core of PASG members has been able to count on a broadening network of contacts from the Australian media, church people, trade unions, political groups, progressive individuals and even government officials to provide varying levels of support to the national democratic movement in the Philippines.

In nearby New Zealand, there is also a growing support network led by the Wellington Coalition of Philippine Support Groups. Closely coordinating with the Wellington groups are other support organizations based in the major cities of Auckland and Christchurch. Trade unionists and church people compose the majority of New Zealand's support group members.

Linking with peace groups

Recently, PASG and the New Zealand support groups sponsored a series of speaking tours from June to early August with a progressive Filipino university professor as guest lecturer. The professor, an expert on US bases in Asia and the Pacific, spoke on several occasions before representatives of different Australian, New Zealand and Pacific-based peace groups. The thrust of the campaign was to identify common bases of unity between the Filipino people's liberation movement which includes the struggle to remove the US bases in the Philippines, and the Australian and New Zealand peace groups, the most powerful and influential pressure groups in these countries. The peace groups are the only organizations capable of mobilizing up to 150,000 people for protest actions in Australia and New Zealand.

The professor's speaking tour began with a talk at the "Beyond ANZUS Conference" in Wellington in early June, which was attended by about 600 delegates, mostly peace activists from Australia, New Zealand and other Asian and Pacific countries. ANZUS is the acronym for the Australia-New Zealand-United States military alliance. "Beyond

PASG-AUSTRALIA

ANZUS..." was meant to be a counter-conference to the ANZUS council meeting which was going on in New Zealand at that time. The counter-conference, reports *Philippine News*, resulted in the adoption of a number of resolutions called the "people's alternative to ANZUS" where the participants stressed the importance of becoming non-aligned by calling for the abrogation of the ANZUS treaty, and recognized the need for peace groups to shift from merely advocating nuclear disarmament to supporting movements for national self-determination as well.

In doing so, the "Beyond ANZUS Conference" underscored the common danger faced by all countries in Asia and the Pacific harboring US military facilities. Speakers pointed out that the ANZUS military agreement, which permits the presence of US communications facilities in Australia and New Zealand vital in guiding ships, submarines and nuclear weapons and the frequent docking in Australian ports of nuclear-armed and atomic-powered US ships exposed the two countries to nuclear attack in case of a dispute. Australia has one submarine and one satellite communications station, and another station that monitors military and radar transmissions, while New Zealand has two tracking stations.

This situation, paralleling that of the Philippines whose vulnerability to attack arises from the presence of the Subic and Clark military bases here, was cited as proof of the need for a common front between peace groups and the people's movement in the Philippines.

Concretely, this led to the forging of formal ties between the Nuclear Free Philippines Coalition on the one hand, and People for Nuclear Disarmament, the broad coalition of all peace groups in Australia, as well as similar groups in New Zealand and the Pacific. This also paved the way for the establishment of ties with other people's organizations in the Philippines.

The participants also warned against the danger of Australia and New Zealand being dragged anew by the US into its belligerent military adventures in Asia. They cited instances in the past when the US invoked the ANZUS military agreement in asking for troop support from Australia and New Zealand for its wars of aggression in Korea and Vietnam. Noting the growing anti-imperialist movement in the Philippines, the delegates raised the specter of another Vietnam, apprehensively stating that the ANZUS countries may again intervene militarily. They vowed to apply more pressure on the Australian and New Zealand governments to adopt a position of neutrality.

Campaign against Australian aid

Another major concern of the PASG is exposing the Australian government's economic and military aid to the Marcos regime and harnessing popular opposition to it.

In March 1984, the PASG published a 44-page study on Australian military aid to the Philippines which was part of the documentary evidence submitted by the support group when it testified in the Australian Senate's hearings on foreign affairs and defense last April. The study revealed that although the amount of Australian military aid is relatively small, standing at A\$1.46 million (about US\$1.6 million) in 1983-84, when it came to its training program for Filipino military men, Australian aid was as extensive as US aid. Quoting former Australian Defense Minister Ian Sinclair who in 1980 admitted this, the study said, "We (now) train as many Filipino servicemen in Australia as the US does in the US."

Consequently, more than 400 Filipino military and police troopers have been to Australia through the more than 40 exchange visits and training programs that have been taking place since a major re-

view of the two countries' military relations was undertaken in 1972.

In May 1979, the first joint exercise involving Philippine and Australian military troops took place, in the Learmonth-Exmouth Gulf in Western Australia, at the invitation of the Australian Defense Forces. For the first time also, an Australian officer attended the Philippine Command and General Staff College, while a team of Philippine Service officers visited Australia to inspect its defense resources. In 1980, a Filipino brigadier general went to Australia for a study visit, and 23 members of the Philippine Air Force arrived in Queensland for training in the use of Nomad aircraft, an Australian-manufactured plane specifically designed for surveillance and reconnaissance. Its easy maneuverability and ability to fly at low speeds in high altitudes make the Nomad ideal for use in counter-insurgency campaigns. The Philippines had received 12 Nomad aircrafts in 1975. In March 1982, six Australian technical advisers were assigned to Mactan Air Base in Cebu to assist and train in the maintenance of the Australian Nomads, said the study.

This year, according to the PASG study, an Australian Senate inquiry into the defense cooperation program revealed that Filipino police forces involved in civil as well as military matters, were also being trained in the use of DART equipment, an automatic range target system. Australia had supplied the Philippine military with 150 DART mechanisms in 1981, with provision for spare parts, training and back-up. DART systems are currently used regularly in small arms training by the Philippine Army, Navy and Constabulary.

Also in 1981, a special warfare and "counter-terrorist" exercise took place at Subic Bay with clearance diving teams, the US Navy and the Special Air Regiment of the Australian Air Force. In the same year, a task force composed of



Hands across the sea: Map of Australia; Melbourne support group members protest Aquino assassination

three Australian war ships, the HMAS Melbourne, HMAS Torrens and HMAS Supply visited the Philippines. In April 1983, Mirages of the Australian Air Force combined with units of the Philippine and US Air Forces in a tactical air exercise under the Cape Thunder series.

The study revealed moreover that Philippine-Australian military relations have increased especially since the visit of Philippine Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile in 1982. The visit, details of which were veiled in secrecy, was protested by the PASG in a series of demonstrations. In the same year, the then Australian Minister for Defense Support Mr. Viner, visited the Philippines to launch "a high-level effort to promote sales of Australian defense products and services, including weapons and ammunition."

located.

To be sure, recent PASG efforts to persuade the Australian government to stop all aid to the Marcos dictatorship combined with the international embarrassment associated with publicly supporting the regime, have already caused the Australian government to withhold some assistance. In October 1983, for example, Australian Minister for Defense Brian Howe blocked the sale of A\$15 million worth of military equipment to the Philippines, citing the inadequacy of guidelines concerning the sale of military equipment to "regimes facing civil insurrection."

Philippine News also reports that growing concern with aid and its relation to the human rights situation in the Philippines was indicated during the Filipino professor's visit to Australia where he had audiences with Minister

Age and *The Australian*, that country's most widely circulated national newspaper and magazine respectively, and *Direct Action*, published by the Socialist Workers Party.

The professor likewise gave 20 radio interviews, two of which were aired nationwide, and appeared on three television talk shows. In one such show in Perth last July, he not only called for a stop to Australian aid to Marcos, but also talked about the police attack on striking Artex workers and the use of tear gas to disperse the July 23 demonstration in Manila — two events which received wide coverage in the Australian media.

The professor's talks before two Trades and Labour Councils, state-level federations of all labor groups in Australia, as well as with other trade union groups in New Zealand paved the way for greater solidarity ties with labor groups in the Philippines (see *LIB*, June-July 1984). In 1983, workers of Dunlop and CEFCO, the Australian mother companies of Grosby and Judric in the Philippines, already showed their solidarity with striking Filipino workers by putting pressure on their Australian bosses to give in to the Filipino workers' demands. Australian dock workers belonging to the powerful Amalgamated Metal Foundries and Shipwright's Union have, on some occasions, also refused to unload shipments from the Philippines to protest the Philippine government's handling of Fr. Brian Gore's case.

Broader contacts for people's organizations in the Philippines were also gained when the Filipino professor met with the following: Amnesty International-Australia; the Australian Council of Churches; Community Aid Abroad; Action for World Development; the Turkish Workers' Union; the Palestine Liberation Organization's representative in Australia-New Zealand; SAMPA, a political group of Filipinos in Australia; the Communist Party of Australia; the Socialist Workers' Party; and the Socialist Party of Australia.

New Zealand support groups are also currently involved in a campaign to bring Filipino groups and citizens in that country together through a conference featuring speakers from the Philippines representing the Nationalist Alliance, the studentry, church and human rights groups, tribal groups and women's organizations.

Through the efforts of support groups in Australia and New Zealand, the peoples of these two countries are more and more becoming the Filipino people's strong allies in their struggle to overthrow the US-Marcos regime and liberate the Philippines from the clutches of foreign domination.

Victoria Manalo



PASG-AUSTRALIA

International Women's Day: PASG women members join rally in Sydney

The PASG study also charged that even as the Australian government continues to pour military aid to the Marcos regime, the biggest chunk of Australian economic aid abroad goes to the Philippine-Australian Development Assistance Project (PADAP), a five-year aid plan renewed last year, which funds several infrastructure projects in Zamboanga del Sur and Samar. That the so-called development aid program had substantial military significance was revealed by the study. It said that original documents of the Australian consultants to the Mindanao project referred to the "peace and order" goals of the project. Leaked World Bank documents, moreover, exposed the conception of Australian and World Bank aid projects in Northern Samar as a support for the government's counter-insurgency program in the island. PADAP-funded road building projects were said to facilitate the mobility of AFP troops in the NPA and MNLF strongholds where they are

Howe as well as Australian Foreign Minister Bill Hayden, with whom he exchanged views on the subject.

The same concern was also shown when, on different occasions, the professor met three Federal senators and 17 state level officials, most of whom were members of the ruling Australian Labour Party's Foreign Affairs Committee, reported *Philippine News*.

Other developments

The Filipino professor's six-week visit to Australia, which was spent making the rounds of eight major cities, has also resulted in more extensive exposure for the Philippine nationalist and democratic struggle among different groups in that country, reported *Philippine News*. Aside from his meetings with 15 Australian peace groups, he was able to give talks in 12 out of 17 universities in that country. The PASG also arranged for him to have interviews with 15 publications, among them *The*

They, too, remembered

Filipino community and supporters in the US honor people's martyrs in Aug. 21 activities



PHILIPPINE NEWS

Hail to Ninoy: Filipinos and Americans join Freedom March in downtown Los Angeles

It was standing room only at St. Andrew's Church in Daly City, California last Aug. 21 as members of the Filipino community and American supporters held a moving memorial to the late ex-Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr. It was a scene repeated across the United States and neighboring Canada as mourners commemorated not only the tragic event at the MIA tarmac a year ago but also the death of other Filipinos at the hands of the regime since the imposition of martial law in 1972.

The more than two-hour memorial mass at the church was the culmination of a day-long activity sponsored by the Ninoy Aquino Movement for Justice, Peace and Democracy (NAM) and other Filipino groups. The mass action began with a motorcade in San Francisco participated in by over a dozen cars decorated with banners and carrying bullhorn-equipped chanters. The cars paraded through the city streets and stopped in front of the Philippine consulate offices where a noon rally was held.

Later, at the St. Andrew's Church,

about 1,000 people attended the mass and listened to an unusual Prayer of the Faithful. Names of martyred Filipinos were read against background music provided by the Filipino Oakland Choir; a reader offered prayers for the sector represented by each of the martyrs.

Men dressed in rural garb and offering grain and fruits to the altar represented the farmers. The names of Cosme and Emerita Engoc of Misamis Occidental, Salvador de la Cruz of Nueva Ecija and the 45 barriofolk of Sag-od, Northern Samar were read, all of whom are victims of the regime's counter-insurgency operations in the countryside.

A man carrying tools to the altar represented the workers and worker martyrs Liza Balandó and Virgilio Hebron. Youths dressed in white and wearing yellow sashes symbolized the youth and studentry and martyrs Jessica Sales and Edgar Jopson, both salvaged by the military. A woman carrying a graduation cap, books and office supplies represented the professionals and its martyrs, Drs. Johnny Escandor and Bob-

by dela Paz. Also honored were martyred church people Deacon Carlos Tagayag, Puri Pedro and Fr. Zacarias Agatep and tribal leader Macliing Dulag.

Aquino himself was remembered among the "countless victims of state and military violence in the Philippines" as his family members bore a huge picture of the slain senator and placed it above a wreath of white flowers near the altar. The memorial mass was capped by the heartfelt singing of "Bayan Ko."

Meanwhile, at Washington D.C., an eight-person delegation of Filipino community leaders and American supporters entered the usually well-guarded Philippine embassy and read a letter of protest before the surprised diplomatic staff. The letter, which condemned the human rights violations of the Marcos government and demanded that Marcos yield power to the people, was read before TV cameras which recorded the event. After handing the protest note to an embassy official, the delegation left, chanting "Down with Marcos! Justice for Aquino, justice for all!"

The group joined about 100 protesters gathered at the nearby Du Pont Circle. The demonstrators held banners reading, "Stop US Aid to Aquino's Assassin!" and placards with pictures of the slain senator and other victims of salvaging. Especially prominent was a life-size figure of Reagan holding a Marcos puppet. Both were displayed against a background of white crosses. During the rally, representatives from the Friends of the Filipino People, Committee for Philippine Concerns, Philippine Support Committee and the Coalition Against the Marcos Dictatorship (CAMD) condemned US economic and military support to the Marcos regime and hailed the burgeoning protest movement in the Philippines as evidence that despite Marcos' deceptions, "the Filipino people have not been silenced."

In New York, some 200 Filipinos — members and supporters of the CAMD and the Movement for a Free Philippines (MFP) — held a lively, noisy and colorful demonstration in front of the Philippine consulate located in the city's fashionable Fifth Avenue. Members of the consulate staff peered from behind the office's massive glass windows and expensive curtains while fiery speeches were delivered by CAMD, MFP and NAM representatives as well as leaders of the National Black United Front. A cultural group of young Filipinos also dramatized poems by Jose Ma. Sison.

A concelebrated mass was held later that day, which was followed by a program where a CAMD representative read the Solidarity Message signed by leaders of various opposition groups overseas.

The next day, another concelebrated mass was organized by the Benigno S. Aquino Memorial Society, the De La Salle Alumni Association, the Filipino Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights, the Filipino Community Foundation of New York, Inc., the Church Coalition for Human Rights and the Philippine-American Group-Advocates for Social Action (Pag-Asa). The theme of the mass was the "significant role of the new Filipino martyrs in the present struggle to achieve freedom amidst endless cases of military repression."

In Chicago, the MFP commemorated the assassination anniversary with a dinner-symposium where the Reagan administration's continued support of the Marcos regime was severely criticized. In a message relayed to the symposium participants, Congressman Stephen Solarz, chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs, called for US pressure on Marcos to immediately institute economic and political reforms. Another congressman, Sen. Alan J. Dixon, in remarks delivered through his assistant, urged the complete cut-off of all US military and economic aid to the Marcos government. The senator charged that the Aquino assassination was masterminded by a government-military conspiracy, the responsibility for which falls solely on Marcos. He also charged that the economic aid supplied by the US does not go to the people but rather to the Marcos family and their cronies. Similarly, he said that the military aid enables Marcos to paralyze and oppress the people, noting that the Philippines is not threatened by any external attack.

Meantime, across the US border, 160 people in Toronto, Canada watched a skit dramatizing political repression in the Philippines. The skit was presented as part of a city hall rally attended by members and supporters of the MFP, CAMD/Philippine Solidarity Network (PSN) and NAM. Some 50 CAMD/PSN members also led a picket in Montreal and participated in an evening program sponsored by the Quebec Philippine Solidarity Committee and the YMCA. Similar activities were also held in Los Angeles, Sacramento and other places in the US.

The rising tide of protest actions by Filipinos and foreign supporters in the US and Canada will surely add to efforts by nationalist and democratic forces in the Philippines to bring down the Marcos dictatorship.

Reported by Fidel Sierra/USA

CULTURAL NOTES

The blossoms of revolution

People's art and literature bloom out of the Filipinos' real daily life and experiences



Mano de Verdades Posadas

A novel about the people's struggle

There are two main currents of art and literature existing side by side in a subdeveloped country like the Philippines. One results from the creative activity of artists and writers who cater to the "highbrow" aesthetics and "refined" sensibilities of the elite. The other is the product of artists and writers who identify themselves with, or who themselves sprung from the huge majority of Filipinos whose social, economic, political and cultural advancement they champion through their works.

Such dichotomy may hold true for the rest of the Third World, where gradations and extremes of opulence and poverty define the socio-economic spectrum and dramatize the daily human condition. In such a society, it is not unusual for one breed of artists and writers to strive for "universality," in an attempt to break out of or "transcend" harsh social realities by harping on "eternal verities," like "the true, good, and beautiful," in the process abstracting themselves out of the overwhelming social context. This breed of artists and writers is often rewarded handsomely, if not through state recognition and sponsorship then through private patronage, a la Medici or Marcos (though the latter cheats by stealing awesomely from the people and giving to the famous and great what is passed off as royal largesse). Many times, such

artists and writers dutifully reciprocate the favor by acting as purveyors of court art and literature, and as witting or unwitting glorifiers of the authoritarian regime.

On the other hand, there is the growing circle of artists and writers who pour out their creative energies into the crucible of struggle, forging weapons of criticism through art and literary works by which they would lay bare the social ills of their time, even playing the historian's role by tracing the root causes of social, economic and moral malaise through the ages, exposing the cancer gnawing at the system — the malady common to Third World societies with a common legacy of colonial enslavement and neocolonial plunder.

We may call the first current as *establishment* art and literature, the second as *people's art and literature*. By establishment, we mean those that are not only being funded and financed by the state for cosmetic purposes, but also those that are being upheld, patronized or financed by the profligate elite. Creative works emanating from this culture-of-the-status-quo claim to be devoid of or ("free from") any ideological content, are simply manifestations of individual genius and the bourgeois "Muse." Thus, in such art, we have various degrees of abstract expressionism, unintelligible to the "uninitiated" masses. Thus, in such literature, we have fiction and poetry and theater which hew closely to the bourgeois, intellectualist tradition (or *belletrism*) bereft of indigenous, nationalist, historical moorings. In a word, an art and literature of *alienatedness*.

People's art and literature include all creative works (painting, graphics, murals, sculptures, poems, stories, plays, films) that draw substance and content (and to a great extent, even their formal structures) from the people's traditional culture as well as from the all too real daily struggle for life of millions of Filipinos: peasants and plantation workers, factory laborers and peons, fishermen, miners, urban poor and dispossessed rural folk, oppressed women and neglected children, and many others. The central theme of people's art and literature is the struggle of these people against the evils spawned by the enduring legacy of centuries of colonial rule, expressed in the present complex of neocolonial realities such as feudal oppression, political tyranny, economic exploitation and military terrorism.

nary struggle

The primary goal of this art and this literature is the creation of a truly national and democratic culture that embodies the free spirit of inquiry, the freedom of creative expression built around the experiences of the great majority of the Filipino people. Unlike the individualist bourgeois concept of artistic freedom, however, this new spirit does not exist apart from the full sense of community and collective interest that, in ages past, characterized the life and livelihood and the arts of the people — a state of society long since subverted by modern relations of exploitation and domination characteristic of class society and the global capitalist ethic.

Where do we find people's art? We find it in the creative works of the revolutionary underground, in the form of artworks such as drawings, illustrations, paintings and cartoons accompanying political commentaries or heroic accounts, or those standing on their own as acerbic comments on the status quo. We also find it in the creative works

existing in the open, in the country's urban centers, where art exhibits and art circles proliferate and where a significant group of socially conscious artists is crafting the first noteworthy generation of *social realist art and revolutionary expressionism and symbolism*. One of these artists once remarked that *social realism* may not always describe what they are doing, but that *social criticism* or, simply, *revolutionary art*, would. Bourgeois critics would dismiss socially critical art as so much "propaganda." Precisely: all art properly belongs to the great battlefield of culture, of ideas, of man's future, and this clash between theories of art and world views is to be expected.

Where do we find people's literature? We find it, likewise, in the revolutionary underground, in the form of poems written by guerrillas and workers and peasants and cultural workers from the petty bourgeoisie. A recent development is the rich harvest of countryside literature from those who, apparently, have succeeded in unleashing the creative spirit possessed by even "the simplest man." But there is, of course, no such thing as "simple man" (said of workers and peasants, for instance, who are expected to be capable only of manual toil and material production); there are only undeveloped potentialities, untapped human genius, trapped inside the "simple man" by the conditions of human labor and

the restrictions of the system. People's literature is very evident in anti-landlord plays, written, scored, choreographed, produced, directed and acted in, collectively, by revolutionary cultural groups in the countryside, in which the peasants are not merely spectators but can become part of the performance. It is also found "above ground," as practiced by poets, fictionists, essayists, playwrights who, though they write from urban centers and university campuses and who may yet have to fully immerse themselves in the proletarian and peasant milieu they write about, express the profoundest solidarity with the majority of the Filipino people. They refuse to go the way of elitist writing and, worse, pro-regime bootlicking, as is the case with some well-known, much-awarded former progressive writers who have managed a foothold at the fringes of the dictatorship, from where they snatch with eager jaws the meaty bones and tasteful carcasses the Queen of Tarts may strew their way.

While people's art and literature by themselves cannot launch a social revolution for national liberation, they nevertheless are volatile, potent propellants which can fire up the hearts and minds of an entire people, motivating and strengthening them in their momentous march towards a better, more human and humane future.

Marte Mirador



UJOS

V.1, Enero 1982

"Where do we find people's art and literature? We find it in the creative works of the revolutionary underground ..."

The 3 generals

Bank mergers are in vogue these days, but if PCI Bank, Metrobank and Combank ever plan to get together, it will certainly unnerve a lot of people. Reason – the merger will be called PC-Metrocom.

Two peasants, Andoy and Baldo, talk about detained peasant leader Ka Celeng:

Baldo: Hoy Andoy, kumusta si Ka Celeng?

Andoy: Hinuli ng militar at ikinulong.

Baldo: Ano ba ang kaso niya?

Andoy: Una, *subersyon*, pero walang ebidensya; ginawang *rebelyon*, pero wala namang armas; kinasuhan ng *insureksyon*, pero walang makuhang testigo; kaya't pinatungan ng *bakasyon*, dahil matagal daw nawala sa baryo!"

The word is out that the Agrava Board will mete out the death penalty against three very well-known generals – Brig. Gen. Hans Menzi, Brig. Gen. Tomas Karingal, and Gen. Baltazar Aguirre.

AT A U.P. RALLY: "My mother used to tell me how she was worried about my playboy image. But now she's even more worried about talk that I've become a communist. So I tell her, 'Mama, aren't you glad it's an improvement?'" – Butz Aquino.

Ever wonder how so many police and military men are suddenly reported among the injured after demonstrations? Easy, says an insider. Just take pictures of soldiers wounded because of encounters with the NPA and MNLF recuperating in military hospitals.

And then there's the story of the eager-beaver police captain anxious to do his part in whitewashing the investigation of the massacre of nine young farmers from Langoni, Negros Occidental. Imbued with a macabre sense of timing, he slapped murder and subversion charges against the farmers three months after their death! PC-INP chief Gen. Fidel Ramos, probably incensed at this latest display of "military intelligence," ordered the police captain sacked for "ignorance of the law."

SIGNS OF THE TIMES: Motorists on the national road passing through the town of Dasol, Pangasinan never fail to notice the slogan "Mabuhay ang mga Makabayang Pulis!" along with other slogans extolling the CPP-NPA painted red with six-inch high bold letters. Residents say the slogans, printed on a wall just a few steps away from the town's police outpost and municipal hall, have remained undisturbed for more than three months now.

