

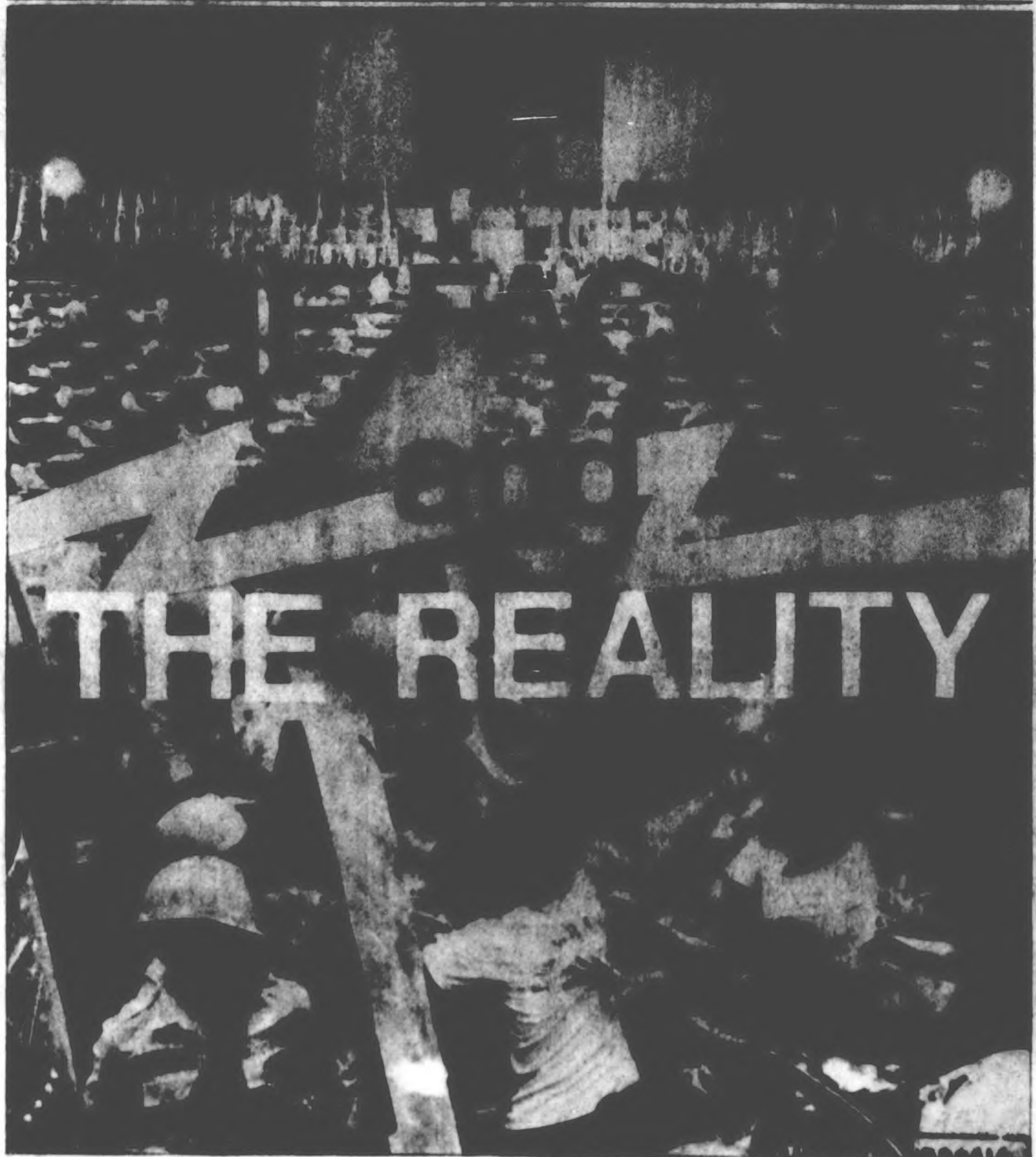
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# Greater suppression, greater resistance

What is a regime whose authorities cannot face people peacefully assembled in the streets without a gas mask, a shield and a gun? Whose high officialdom cannot dialog with the workers, students, teachers and professionals but would rather let its truncheons and bullets do the talking?

Such a regime cannot but be a desperate one. And without doubt, the present US-Marcos rule is one such regime — a regime so desperate today for many big reasons. For one, it failed to convince the people that the new regular parliament is a step toward the restoration of significant liberal democratic processes and not another refashioned tool of autocratic rule. For another, its economy is in shambles, battered by the highest inflation rate ever and chronic bank runs and commodity shortages.

Moreover, the regime is right now besieged by spiralling anti-dictatorship protests. Since June this year, the streets and plazas have once again been resounding with threatening signals against the regime. Highlighting the basic demands of the surging open mass movement are such economic demands as wage and salary increases and such major political demands as the recognition of the basic freedoms of the people. These demands focus on the basic call for the dismantling of the dictatorship and the establishment of the democratic coalition government.

Anticipating stormier days ahead, the regime today is hell-bent on reining in the people's open protest movement. It has ordered goons, policemen and soldiers to violently break public assemblies and picketlines. Earlier, it had reactivated secret marshals on the pretext of stemming the rise of criminality but actually to condition the public on summary executions, as part of its modus operandi in dealing with political dissenters in the cities. The regime is presently wooing the parliamentary opposition to support its bloody campaign against "subversives."

But despite the current violent suppression campaign against demonstrations and strikes, the people have held their ground. They have bravely withstood military and police assaults.

We hold that in the face of the intensifying suppression by the dictatorship, it is entirely correct for the legal democratic organizations and the trade unions to continue to assert their right to hold various forms of open mass protests in any place. The basic issues must be brought to the people through the burgeoning parliament of the streets. Whenever they can, workers should strike to defend their trade union and economic rights as well as to project issues against the regime. To sulk now, to surrender the streets, the public plazas and the factory picketlines without the most resolute defense is to thwart the people's basic right to free assembly and to give license to the

regime to engage in more brutal and wholesale repression.

Considering the current level of suppression, there is still plenty of room for maneuver for the open mass struggle. One is by broadening further popular participation and support for various issues and different forms of mass actions. While the regime tries to appear awesome and intransigent, in many instances, it has relented when faced by powerful public reaction and mass indignation. By mastering tactics, the demonstrators can ingeniously find ways of breaking through the phalanx of riot police or preventing the violent dispersal of rallies. In all cases, they must win the broadest public support for militant mass actions. These tactics include: the proper combination and alternation of forms requiring big concentrations and those requiring small but widespread activities, going to court, conducting or ignoring negotiations with police forces as the case may be, precise timing in massing up, well-executed street maneuvers, effective self-defense and organized retreat when the situation so demands.

While we should recognize that protest actions cannot by themselves overthrow the regime, the anti-dictatorship forces must maintain the initiative in the open political war. Thereby, they can reap more support for basic issues and calls, rally the people in their millions to put an end to this evil regime and firm up their resolve to fight while sharpening the US-Marcos regime's isolation all the more.

We call on the people to resist the intensifying assaults of the police and military on their protest actions. Filipinos should not be cowed by the arrest, maiming or killing of demonstrators and strikers. Far from stemming protest, these criminal acts will only backlash on the perpetrators. Violent suppression will only make more revolutionaries out of the multitude of political activists and make more political activists out of millions of sympathizers.

The urban open protest movement does not stand alone in the fight against the dictatorship. In the countryside, a far more powerful force — an escalating guerrilla war — is wearing out and tearing apart the regime's armed forces. In the city, partisan warfare by the NPA has been launched and is fast developing, meting out the necessary punitive measures, most especially on the regime's minions who blatantly attack the people's just protest actions. Together, the open mass movement, the guerrilla war in the countryside and the partisan warfare in the cities, shall shake and erode the foundation of the regime's domination and score greater victories for the revolutionary struggle of the Filipino people.

## IN THIS ISSUE

Cover: *Students protesting against the dictatorship*

Cover stories: July 23 is a significant day to remember — depending on one's vantage point. For the regime and some oppositionists in the Batasan, it marked the opening of the regular parliament. For the anti-dictatorship forces, it signalled intensifying police-military repression of demonstrations. In this issue, LIB discusses the development of the open protest movement since the elections and the spiralling trend of violent suppression.

EDITORIAL .....	3	SPACE .....	10
COVER STORIES		CRISIS .....	10
A new season of protest .....	3	INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY	
Tear gas, truncheons and bullets .....	7	A burst of support .....	20
MANIFESTO		Protest actions abroad in US .....	21
A story of a lost campaign .....	10	CULTURAL	
Rifles for Pany .....	14	Ang hayop na ho .....	28
NPA offensives in Surigao Sur .....	18	POSTSCRIPT .....	26
Daring to struggle .....	18		

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.

# A new season of protest

Series of demonstrations after elections marks new period of escalating mass actions



Asserting freedom of assembly: Demonstrators marching in Mendiola in defiance of riot police last July 13

The roads leading to Liwasang Bonifacio once more came alive on July 23 as thousands of rallyists marched from two points in Metro Manila to convene the "Kongreso ng Bayan Laban sa Diktadura," a counter-congress to the dictator's Bataasang Pambansa that was to have its opening session that same day. Sponsoring the huge demonstration were the Coalition of Organizations for the Restoration of Democracy (CORD) and the Pambansang Koalisyon ng mga Manggagawa Laban sa Kahirapan.

Arm in arm, workers, urban poor, students, church people and professionals trekked the long distance from the Welcome Rotonda in the east and the labor ministry building in the west, urged on by the claps, cheers and spontaneous offers of drinking water and financial contributions from people lining the streets. Jutting above the thick column of marchers, placards, banners and streamers emblazoned with the names of several people's organizations swayed under the noonday

sun, as if keeping time with the rhythmic beat of drums and the marchers' militant chanting. Blending well with this varicolored sight was the rally participants' sun-tanned faces readily breaking into smiles to acknowledge the bystanders' cheers and occasional showers of confetti.

Earlier that day, different sectoral groups held several mobilization rallies in various areas. As early as 10 a.m., 5,000 urban poor from Tondo, Navotas and Dasmariñas, Cavite trooped to the National Housing Authority (NHA) office in Diliman, Quezon City to demand an audience with NHA head Gen. Gaudencio Tobias and confront him with pressing issues affecting their sector. Despite Tobias' refusal to see them, the urban poor staged a rally in front of the NHA before trekking to the Welcome Rotonda to join up with other marchers.

On that same morning, some 30,000 workers walked out from factories all over Metro Manila and marched from assembly points in Pasay, Quezon City, Sta. Me-

sa and Caloocan to picket the labor ministry office in Intramuros.

Meanwhile, students at the Technological Institute of the Philippines, Feati and Manuel L. Quezon University staged boycott-mobilization rallies. But the police broke up their mass actions with tear gas that morning. Despite such harassment, students from these schools later joined forces with those from other colleges and universities, bringing their sector's organized mobilization to 15,000.

Other smaller delegations from the church, business and professional sectors brought the rally's total number of organized participants to about 50,000. In a continuing bid to repudiate the regime, they had come to present the real state of the nation to counteract Marcos' scheduled address at the Batasan. Their rally was to have been the biggest multisectoral rally tackling the most comprehensive range of issues since the boycott campaign.

Meanwhile, 20 kilometers away, the dictator's voice rambled through the halls

of the parliament building: "There will be time enough for us to quarrel and match political strength. The opportunity will come soon enough with the local elections in 1986 and the presidential elections in 1987."

Coming from Marcos, it was honey bait laid out so thickly, its intent was hard to miss. Pointedly offered to the Batasan oppositionists during the sham legislature's opening session, the gesture was meant to keep these assemblymen interested enough in narrow parliamentary politics to stop them from straying into the folds of the parliament of the streets. And lest any of the oppositionists entertain second thoughts about the matter, the dictator served out a warning as well. That very moment, at Liwasang Bonifacio, police

hurled tear gas cannisters, destroying what could have been a triumphant entry into the plaza by the rallyists.

Earlier that day, at about 12 noon, Manila city mayor Ramon Bagatsing and Western Police District chief Gen. Narciso Cabrera had cancelled the rally permit, alleging "communist infiltration of the rally." By then, thousands of people were already marching from different assembly points in Metro Manila toward Liwasan. The real motive behind the arbitrary move, however, was obvious to many people. Clearly, Marcos had no intention of allowing the holding of the people's assembly that would contrapose it with his sham parliament and lie-packed speech.

#### Crisis breeds dissent

That the dictator ordered the people's

assembly dispersed was not at all surprising. The anti-dictatorship front has been surging forward despite the regime's electoral scheme to deflect it from its militant course. Fueling mass protest is the worsening economic situation that has made life more wretched for Filipinos.

So rapid and intense has the economic decline been that almost every one has now turned economic watcher, if not amateur economist. Indeed, there is great cause for anxiety among all sectors, be they poor or well-heeled. Within a week from the May 14 elections, price increases for petroleum products were decreed, thus giving rise to hikes in transportation fare and further pushing the prices of prime commodities sky-high. By mid-year, the inflation rate soared to 40.3 percent, the highest recorded since World War II. The purchasing power of the peso, already seriously eroded in years past, skidded to 39 centavos from its 1978 value. The economy which came to a near-halt last year, expanding by a mere 1.4 percent, is expected to register a negative growth rate this year. To top it all, a huge \$25 billion debt hangs like a millstone on the people's necks, with debt-servicing providing an added burden to the country's fast-dwindling foreign exchange reserves.

The unyielding stance of Marcos on dissenters has not helped any to ease the tense political situation. In fact, the regime's iron-fisted measures against demonstrations have further stoked the anger of the people. Whatever initial euphoria there has been over the participating oppositionists' near-sweep of Metro Manila and some provincial seats quickly evaporated. The ventilation of popular issues like the uncontrolled price hikes did not even wait after the Batasan's opening session. By the end of the election period, protest actions were once again snowballing in factories, schools and streets.

Having borne the brunt of the economic crisis for so long, the workers raised a storm of strikes to assert labor rights and demands. As records from the regime's own labor ministry revealed, strikes during the first semester increased by 40 percent over the 1983 figure and involved twice as many workers (see page 16).

A groundswell of protests also swept the urban poor. In mass actions in their communities or in front of the NHA, slum dwellers denounced empty government promises of land and resisted the demolition of their houses to give way to useless showcase projects. In a manifesto, they cited that even as the regime continues to relocate thousands of urban poor families to far-flung areas like Sapang Palay and Dasmarias, Cavite, it neglects to provide for their basic needs such as employment and medical care while exacting high "cost-of-development" fees from relocated families already burdened by the economic crisis. In response to these problems, the Coalition of the Urban Poor Against Poverty was formed last July 19 to provide a



"Kongreso ng Bayan": Workers and urban poor streaming toward Liwasan last July 23

framework for continuing coordinated and militant mass actions to press for their demands.

In their thousands, students and teachers also took to the streets. The students, to protest tuition fee hikes and government neglect of the educational needs of the people; the teachers, to demand salary increases and the reorientation of the educational system along nationalist lines. As early as May, students from the University of the Philippines trooped to the education and budget ministries and later to Malacanang to protest an average 169 percent increase in tuition fees that was to take effect by the opening of classes this June. They were later joined in protest by teachers as well as students from other colleges and universities who were also denouncing unjust tuition fee hikes. Last June 27, the Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT) rallied to demand a minimum basic salary of P1,500 for public school teachers and the suspension of Pag-Ibig, Medicare and GSIS deductions from their meager pay.

The students' marches to Malacanang were among the most militant and dramatic mass actions during the post-election period. Last June 28, a symbolic victory was won as 15,000 student demonstrators, who went to present their demands to Marcos, staged the first and biggest organized mass action in the area since 1972, reaching as far as the foot of Mendiola bridge.

#### Multi-sectoral rallies

Most of these sectoral struggles, despite the reasonableness and legitimacy of the rallyists' demands, were violently suppressed by police and military forces upon orders from Marcos (see page 7). But the heightened repression only triggered off greater protests and reinvigorated the popular condemnation of the regime. Towards the end of June, the relatively small mass actions concerned mainly with sectoral economic struggles began to give way to bigger multisectoral anti-dictatorship rallies, as more people closed ranks with other sectors.

Sounding off the call for unity was the June 21 demonstration at Ugarte Field in Makati. Dubbed the "Kasalanan ng Bagong Lipunan (KBL)" rally, the sponsoring organizations -- CORD, the Alliance of Metropolitan Associations (AMA) and General Assembly Binding Women for Reforms, Integrity, Equality, Leadership and Action (GABRIELA) -- urged the forging of principled unity between boycotters and participants in the last elections. Rally speakers also enumerated the manifold crimes of the regime against the people and exposed the US hand in the deteriorating economic crisis.

On July 4, which is enshrined in the regime's calendar as the Philippine-American Friendship Day, about 2,000 people mounted a picket in front of the US embassy. Riot police lined up in front of

the embassy gates tried to disperse them with tear gas and truncheons. Undaunted, the demonstrators regrouped and staged their rally at Plaza Ferguson, located just across the embassy. There, speakers took turns denouncing police brutality against defenseless citizens and assailed US support for Marcos. Earlier, a delegation composed of representatives from CORD, the Nationalist Alliance and other groups submitted a joint manifesto to US embassy officials.

On July 6, 10,000 students marched toward historic Mendiola bridge to stage a rally in front of Malacanang. But instead of getting a sympathetic ear from Marcos, they were met with another attack of tear gas and truncheons. Many organizations strongly condemned the

people's right to free assembly. On July 10, about 200 people picketed the headquarters of the Western Police District in UN Ave., Manila, the police force responsible for the violent dispersal of the July 6 rally.

Roundly condemned by the public and various concerned organizations, the regime's series of assaults on the open mass movement only succeeded in drawing more and more people into the wings of militant mass protest. To assert the people's democratic rights in the face of intensifying fascist attack, the "Martsa Para sa Karapatan ng Bayan" was organized on July 13. Thirty thousand demonstrators marched anew toward Mendiola -- the first major multisectoral rally after the elections. They protested not only



At the doorstep of the fascists: Picketing the WPD headquarters in UN Ave.



Confrontation: Butz Aquino jousting with Gen. Cabrera (second from right)



Sea of support: People flood Recto Ave. on July 13 to join rallyists at Mendiola



New look: Seminarians sport gas masks as they get ready for "battle"

police repression but also the military's ongoing counter-insurgency campaign in Kalinga and the brutal assault of the Artex workers' strike.

The July 13 rally proved the immense popularity of militant mass struggles among the people. Showing their hatred for fascist rule, residents of the area and pedestrians cheered the marchers, welcoming them with showers of confetti, draping cloths beneath their windowills and bringing down containers with water, coffee and food from tall buildings along Recto. Even along Mendiola, practically at the doorstep of Malacanang, people eagerly awaited the marchers' arrival.

#### Parliament of the streets

While increasing numbers of people opted to participate in the mass actions in the parliament of the streets, a section of the traditional opposition was directing its efforts at fighting the regime within the confines of the controlled parliament. But Marcos' unaccommodating stance on thorny issues like Amendment 6 and his continued refusal to share power soon underscored the limitations, if not impotence, of the Batasan. And soon enough, parliamentary oppositionists who had entertained hopes that the legislature offered

real possibilities and could serve as a forum for ventilating the people's demands were gnashing their teeth in frustration.

Bitter debate marked meetings between KBL representatives and oppositionist assemblymen who were battling for the restoration of the privilege hour which has been suspended since the abolition of the old Congress in September 1972. The dictator's adamant stance against the revival of the practice, which involved setting aside an hour to allow assemblymen to speak on matters they felt should be tackled, was an early enough indication of what the regular Batasan was going to be like. Thus, with the privilege hour issue setting a discordant tone, the fate of future opposition resolutions on Amendment 6, impeachment and the immunity clause in the 1973 Constitution seemed to be a foregone conclusion.

Even as these transpired, some Batasan oppositionists sought talks with the militant anti-dictatorship front in an effort to ascertain viable bases of unity between the two groups. Attended by various opposition personalities, people's organizations and political parties, the "unity meetings" at first were geared toward enlisting the support of the militant mass movement for opposition efforts at

the Batasan.

But the success of the July 13 rally at Mendiola changed the complexion of these meetings. The rally had not only reaffirmed the justness and popularity of the militant mass movement but also served as a powerful magnet drawing in the participation of not a few oppositionists in resolute mass struggles. The "unity meetings" then moved toward the forging of an agreement among the various forces to unite on specific issues and undertake joint actions, not within the context of the Batasan, but within the context of the parliament of the streets.

Still, there are some oppositionists who remain indecisive. They are still undecided as to whether to remain well within the narrow halls of parliament, to lend their decorative presence at the Batasan to give it a veneer of respectability and take Marcos' bait of a more substantial share of the spoils in the 1986 and 1987 elections.

But outside the Batasan walls, the people are fast deciding. No longer so easily taken by the regime's deceptive ploys, they have increasingly realized that the rubber-stamp parliament was fashioned by the regime for its own ends and can never be in a position to dismantle the dictatorship. With their gradual loss of confidence in the regime's prescribed parliamentary set-up, the people's eyes are now more and more trained at the militant mass movement — the parliament of the streets — which not even the regime's harassment campaign has succeeded in quelling.

A 53-year old laborer watching the July 23 rallyists marching along Espana articulated the sentiments of many people. "Sang-ayon kami diyan," he exclaimed enthusiastically to a LIB staffer. "Kami man noon ay nagboykot din. La-bing-wala kami nagboykot sa pamilya dahil alam naming wala namang mangyayari sa Batasan na iyan."

The militant mass movement will indeed continue to overshadow the Batasan and scale greater heights. But its true worth was aptly stated by a student leader who spoke during the indignation rally the night of July 23: "Let us show the dictator that we remain undaunted. We shall continue to take to the streets, in bigger and more daring mass actions. We shall fight not merely through the parliament of the rally, the parliament of the boycott and the parliament of the strike. Let us also remember the parliament of the countryside, where our brothers are right now shedding blood."

As the people's participation in the open anti-dictatorship movement intensifies, they become more prepared and tempered for higher forms of struggle, including armed struggle. The advance of complementary forms of people's resistance shall decisively bring down the US-Marcos dictatorship.

Victoria Manalo

# Tear gas, truncheons and bullets

**Regime steps up repression against militant anti-dictatorship forces**

No Marcos speech could have spelled it out better. The stinging tear gas bombs, the flailing truncheons, the advancing phalanx of riot police, the scampering demonstrators said it all that 23rd of July. The assault was Marcos' direct state-of-the-nation address to restive Filipinos everywhere and his message could not have been more warlike.

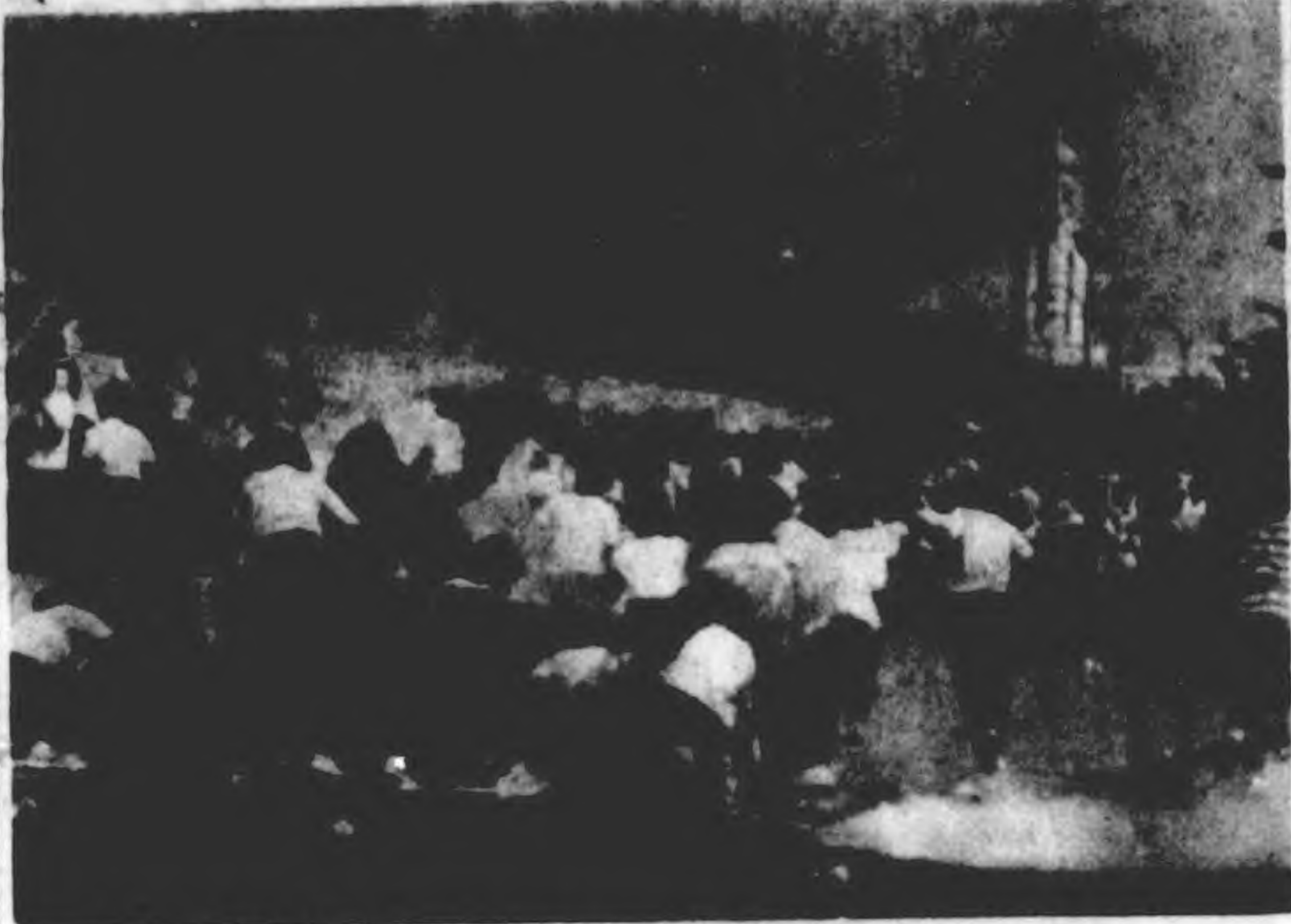
"I tell the opposition now not to support the campaign of subversion and terror as a show of spite against me," said a grim-faced and gravel-voiced Marcos at the opening session of the regular Batasan. "If you have anger in your hearts because of me, do not let our people and our country suffer because of it." Marcos tried to temper his tough words with the hands-across-the-aisle statement that he would not impose martial law again and that he would not use his law-making powers if the legislature was in session or could still act.

But no hands were reaching out to him, either from the parliamentary opposition or the parliament-of-the-streets opposition. Many disbelieved him because in many instances, he had done the exact opposite of what he said he would not do. Many also blamed him as one major cause of the country's sufferings and the primary instigator of the campaign of terror against the people.

There is one clear evidence of Marcos' dismal lack of credibility despite the image-boosting May 14 electoral ploy. Since June this year, the regime has not let up on its attempts to suppress the militant anti-dictatorship movement. Its uncompromising and intensified stand against dissent underscores the emptiness and duplicity of Marcos' calls for unity.

## A new season of political tension

The placing of Metro Manila under red alert on June 5 and the subsequent setting up of military checkpoints set the stage for a new season of political tension and repression. The twin moves were apparently intended to forestall massive unrest following Marcos' unpopular announcements of a floating rate and a new oil price hike. But the military brass in Metro Manila had another view of the mat-



*Day of tears: July 23 rallyists running from billowing tear gas*



*The culprits: Gas-masked military men hurled tear gas bombs from these jeeps*

ter. PC Metrocom chief Gen. Prospero Olivas said subversive elements were starting to be active again in the city, "as borne out by two fires of suspicious origin that gutted the Alabang public market and the old Manila International Airport on June 4."

Rather than gull the people, however, the military's resurrection of its favorite tactic of smearing the CPP and revolutionary forces only stirred suspicion and fears of a new crackdown on dissenters. In the past, the military had used the communist bogey, even to the point of staging arson and bombings, in order to justify its repression campaign against anti-dictatorship forces. With the first anniversary of the Aquino assassination fast approaching, coupled with the worsening economic crisis and

mounting unrest, many were inclined to believe the regime was laying the groundwork for greater repression.

The reactivation of the secret marshals on June 18 heightened such fears. Ostensibly tasked with stopping the upsurge of crime, this network of undercover agents was first fielded in Metro Manila in August 1982 and withdrawn later that year following a heated controversy over their dubious exploits. Attached to the PC-Metrocom, they now number about 760 agents drawn from the ranks of military trainees, police as well as the Presidential Guard Battalion. But far from assuaging Manila residents' fears about rising criminality, the utter randomness with which



*Pot-bellied policemen: Arming themselves with shields and rattan truncheons*



*Escape from terror: Rallyist trips on cart as he scampers for safety*



*Helpless innocent: Red Cross aide giving first aid to tear gassed child*

the secret marshals killed their victims struck terror throughout the metropolis. Within three weeks, the secret marshals had killed 40 people, 26 of whom turned out to be cases of mistaken identity.

The grisly killings prompted Cardinal Jaime Sin, a Marcos critic at most times, to broadcast a national circular in all Catholic churches condemning the secret marshals. "It is the hallmark of a Christian society that her legal organizations should demand that police respect the constitutional rights of suspected and accused persons," said the feisty cardinal, "no matter whether the twisted body on the tarmac be that of a senator or be it the tattooed corpse of a suspected murderer." Other critics decried that the marshals could use their position as cover to salvage political dissenters or their personal enemies. In fact, the secret marshals proved to be no deterrent to crime as robbery became more rampant in June, an indication that the marshals could actually be in cahoots with hoodlums.

But Marcos vehemently defended his "licensed-to-kill, ask-questions-later" vigilantes and continued his diatribes against progressive and revolutionary groups. In the third week of June, the dictator continuously warned that he might reimpose martial law amid a reported escalation of NPA offensives in the countryside (see page 10). "It is very difficult for me to admit this, but I am shocked at the manner in which they (the CPP) have proliferated."

As if on cue, in the early dawn of June 27, 40 military agents raided the headquarters of the Nationalist Alliance for Justice, Freedom and Democracy in Quezon City. The NA is the militant multisectoral alliance which led the boycott campaign during the last elections and has consistently stood at the forefront of the anti-dictatorship movement since its founding last November. On June 28, the military arrested NA secretary-general Fr. Jose Dizon who resides in the same place, along with five others including two children, ages two and six. The raid seemed to indicate that the regime was testing the water to see whether there would be any adverse reaction to a crackdown. But NA member organizations and supporters refused to be terrorized into fear and immediately assailed the military action. Their militant response forced the military to release Dizon and his household companions after eight hours of detention.

#### **Rhetoric and fascist force**

With the upsurge of mass actions on the student and worker fronts in the first week of July, the regime swiftly seized the opportunity to step up its harangue against protesters. Marcos, taking a hard-line stance, continually refused to dialog with student leaders about skyrocketing tuition fees. Spouting his usual anti-communist jargon, the dictator said, "The stu-



dents have adopted the communist line and that is the government can't do anything about the economic crisis and therefore, should be removed." He said the students also protested against Amendment No. 6 "and other things communists usually complain about."

To back up Marcos' simplistic, if not inane, assertions, AFP chief Gen. Fabian Ver came up with a list of 27 organizations supposedly infiltrated by subversives. The list, allegedly based on the confession of a captured rebel leader named Aldin Palmone, included just about every organization actively opposed to the regime. To further the military's black propaganda campaign against revolutionary forces, Ver also reported that liquidation squads of the NPA were "planning to sow terror in Metro Manila and destabilize the government."

Marcos' and Ver's menacing words were soon backed up by a show of fascist force. On July 4, police broke up a student march in front of the US embassy with tear gas and truncheons. On July 6, the same violent measures were used to disperse another student mass action at Mendiola, the bridge leading to Malacanang. Other urban areas in the country reported the same grim tale. In Iloilo City on July 9, several plainclothes policemen forcibly broke up a student demonstration pressing for a tuition fee rollback and arrested two students. Earlier in Davao City in the second week of June, a student and jeepney driver were shot after participating in a transport workers' strike that hit the city.

Protesting workers fared no better than students. In fact, they received a dose far more deadly than tear gas and truncheon blows — bullets. The worst incident took place on July 9. At the strike-bound Artex factory in Malabon, trigger-happy policemen went on a shooting rampage, wounding many strikers (see page 16). "Nanawala sila hindi potaas kundi sa amin," said a worker. "Unang baril nagsidapa agad kami. May tinamaan sa binti."

But if the military expected protest actions to fold up following the iron-fisted measures, they were certainly wrong. In an affirmation of the tenet that repression only generates greater resistance, people from various walks of life intensely condemned the regime and defiantly demonstrated their support for beleaguered protesters. In rallies in Metro Manila and other urban areas, people fervidly cheered on the demonstrators and handed out money and food as concrete tokens of support. Popular public opinion did not only boost the morale of activists but also served to shield the open mass movement from large-scale suppression.

#### Violent suppression. Name of the battleground

As July unfolded, violent suppression became the name of the battleground between the regime's minions and militant protes-

ters. Workers' picketlines were violently broken up in many factories. To put a tighter rein on mass actions, rally permits were required. Even then, military overlords reserved the right to revoke a permit at the flimsiest excuse. The presence of known personalities in negotiating panels was no deterrent to a violent dispersal of a rally. On July 20, the army commanding general placed all army units throughout the country on full alert.

And when July 23 finally came and the protest march unrolled in Liwasang Bonifacio, it was only a matter of minutes before the riot police mounted their tear gas assault. The dispersal was merely a reiteration of the regime's "we-mean-business-stance" but it made a complete sham of Marcos' so-called maximum restraint policy. In defense of the dispersal, however, General Olivas claimed: "Tear gas was the mildest way of dispersing that crowd." But some people present at the aborted rally say that the tear gas used resemble more the paralyzing effect of Mace.

In any case, many observers believe the July 23 attack could be the prelude to a larger campaign of the regime's terror, perhaps even an open reimposition of martial law. Citing some facts, they point to the recent lifting of the imports ban to accommodate crates of tear gas canisters from the US. They also report that a new prison camp has been built in Muntinglupa for 3,000 to 4,000 people. Another prison camp has also been reportedly set up at the old Mobil complex in Limay, Bataan which could hold several thousand people.

It is interesting to note, however, that the government grandstands its anti-dissident campaign almost always when hearings on the national budget are about to begin. The reason is obvious. The regime does not want any reduction of its gargantuan military budget in the light of announced cuts in government spending. Moreover, Marcos hopes that playing up the insurgency problem will impress the US of the need for continued military support against the revolutionary forces. Aside of course from the fact that the communist bogey offers him a convenient excuse to cling to his emergency and dictatorial powers.

#### Marcos' tightrope position

But Marcos' martial law threats do not seem to be very popular at the moment with his US patron. It is only four months before the US presidential elections in November and the Reagan administration is not about to gamble votes on an open return to repressive rule in a client state already widely unpopular in the US and abroad. American congressmen who recently visited the Philippines revealed as much to Marcos. "The US Congress is not disposed to be in favor of martial law," said Republican Rep. William Edwards III, head of the four-man delegation.

Ever the accommodating puppet, Marcos



Dictator Marcos: Communists everywhere



UFO: Unidentified fascist ogre



US import: Tear gas canisters

quickly allayed fears of a new martial law, for the benefit of the US delegation. He told them that his government had the security situation well at hand and that the NPA posed no danger to the security of the state. He kept up this line until the delegation left, then switched back to his old familiar refrain before the Filipino public: "I don't want to alarm you but the communists ..."

Marcos' contradictory statements would be quite funny if these didn't glaringly show up his tightrope position — on one hand, feigning stability and normalcy while on the other, desperately checking the rise of massive protests. If anything, the dictator's muddled line reveals that he still has not broken loose from his politically defensive position.

To date, he remains as politically isolated as ever, serving as the most vulnerable target of the anti-dictatorship front. Whatever gains he may have hoped to achieve with the US-designed electoral stabilization program have not materialized. He has neither gained badly needed credibility nor checked worsening political instability. He has not halted the growth of the militant section of the open mass movement which is attracting more adherents as the economic situation deteriorates. He has not even secured his most heartfelt desire — the promised \$650 million standby credit from the IMF.

As the economic situation further worsens and political unrest mounts, Marcos' options are becoming more limited. If he declares martial law and clamps down on all dissent, he risks shattering the fragile facade of democracy he carefully patched up during the elections. This would only stir greater outrage and protests in the Philippines and abroad and sharpen more his political isolation. Not to say, exacerbate the economic crisis and further delay assistance from the IMF. On the other hand, if he allows the open mass movement free rein, this will grow stronger and bigger and critically threaten the interests of the US and the local ruling elite. The only option for Marcos at the moment is to continue his belligerent forays against anti-dictatorship forces, in the vain hope that these measures would continually weaken his adversaries and check their growth.

Such repressive moves, of course, will not stop the momentum of protests which is fast building up as Aug. 21 and Sept. 21 draw closer. These moves would only galvanize the people into greater unity and increase the mobilization for the mammoth rallies slated on these red-letter days. But therein lies Marcos' dilemma — and nightmare. For him and his US backer, there is no welcome light at the end of the tunnel. The light that they may see glimmering at the tunnel's end is not relief in sight. Rather, it is the speeding train of the revolutionary movement charging toward them.

Leon Fortaleza



Excellent terrain: Forested areas in Cordillera provide good camp and training sites for NPA

## MAINSTREAM

# A story of a lost cam

## Guerrillas foil massive military drive in Cordillera tri-boundary

The place is tailor-made for guerrilla warfare. Settlements are dispersed, nestled along narrow river valleys or perched on carved-out slopes of mountain borders. Ridges above the valleys converge upwards into large, forested and wooded watershed areas where thick foliage and heavy clouds block visibility from the air. Located above the villages are rice terraces, camote patches and vegetable gardens in the mountain slopes for the guerrillas' sustenance. A few narrow gravel roads connect town centers. These roads offer numerous excellent ambush sites, being usually bounded by cogon-covered elevated slopes on one side, and by a ravine on the other.

The place is the tri-provincial boundary of Abra, Kalinga-Apayao and the Mountain Province. It is a rugged area encompassing the six municipalities surrounding the Gran Cordillera Central, the virgin heartland of the Cordillera mountain range. In the Philippines' generally mountainous terrain, no other area could perhaps match its geo-demographic advantages for guerrilla warfare.

Four decades ago, during the Second World War, it was in this area that Filipino guerrillas loyal to the United States Armed Forces in the Far East (USAFFE) inflicted the heaviest blows against the 60,000-strong Japanese Imperial Army based in the Cordillera. Another four decades further back, during the

Filipino-American War, it was also here that retreating Philippine revolutionaries were finally able to shake off the crack American Cavalry battalion under Colonel March that was in hot pursuit of Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo, thus enabling the latter to escape to Palanan, Isabela.

Today, the Cordillera tri-boundary has again taken the center stage in another major war drama. Armored "Chemite" personnel carriers filled with AFP soldiers bearing M60 machineguns and M16 rifles have replaced the horses and Mausers of American cavalrymen. Modern Huey choppers hovering in the sky remind everyone that the ongoing maneuver is indeed a present-day war operation. Yet, the presence of American advisers and the proliferation of US-made weapons and vehicles used by the AFP indicate that today's campaign seems somehow a replay of the past.

Dubbed Oplan Chumancil, the largest ever counter-insurgency operation in the northern highlands started as far back as April this year. The dramatic build-up of military forces in the area, however, came in the months of June and July. To date, 3,000 men belonging to the 1st Scout Rangers Battalion, 6th Marine Battalion Landing Team, 1st Brigade of the Fifth Division and the local Philippine Constabulary have been thrown against guerrillas of the New People's Army (NPA)



## paign

operating in the tri-boundary whom according to military estimates range between 600 to 700.

"(Oplan Chumancil) is a turning point in the government's anti-subversion campaign," boasted Marcos about the operation right after a surprise visit to an "advance command post" in the combat zone. LIB informants, however, reported that Marcos' journey actually took place in Salapadan, Abra, a lowland town near Bangued which is extremely far from the Cordillera foothills as well as from the scene of fighting. Obviously, the visit was a propaganda gimmick to bolster the ailing dictator's image as a field commander in tip-top shape. The motivation of Marcos' visit notwithstanding, Oplan Chumancil, by sheer size and cost, appears indeed to be of crucial importance to the regime's anti-NPA drive.

For years now, the growing strength of the NPA guerrillas in a very strategic area in Northern Luzon has been the cause of serious apprehension for the military. Prior to the current campaign, the NPA guerrillas had launched several successful ambushes in the neighboring provinces of Abra and Kalinga-Apayao. But search-and-destroy missions of company-size AFP formations had always amounted to nothing. As the military itself had to admit, the NPAs in the area remained unscathed

and were in fact expanding their influence and increasing their fighting capability.

In an interview with news reporters last July 16, Defense Minister Enrile, making one of his typically fearless anti-NPA forecasts, revealed the aim of the large-scale counter-insurgency campaign: "to dislodge the NPA contingent in the Cordillera." While this is certainly the primary purpose, also of special consequence in the regime is the capture of Conrado Balweg, a priest and Tingguian tribe member who turned guerrilla. Balweg now operates in the area and has a P200,000 price on his head. In recent months, as a result of his widely publicized interviews with the local and foreign media, Balweg has become a folk hero to many of the country's church people and urban middle class. Through example, Balweg has been proving the righteousness and viability of the option of armed struggle in overthrowing the present dictatorship. "The AFP soldiers who enter our village always ask first the whereabouts of Fr. Balweg," said a Tinglayan resident interviewed by LIB.

While the Kalingas believe that the current counter-insurgency drive is really intended to flush out the NPA, there is more at stake. They say that the ultimate military objective is to "sanitize" Upper Kalinga to pave the way for the continuation of the construction of Dam 2, which forms part of the Chico River Basin Development Project. Due to intense popular and armed resistance by the Kalingas, the building of the dam has been stalled for the last four years.

### Successive offensives

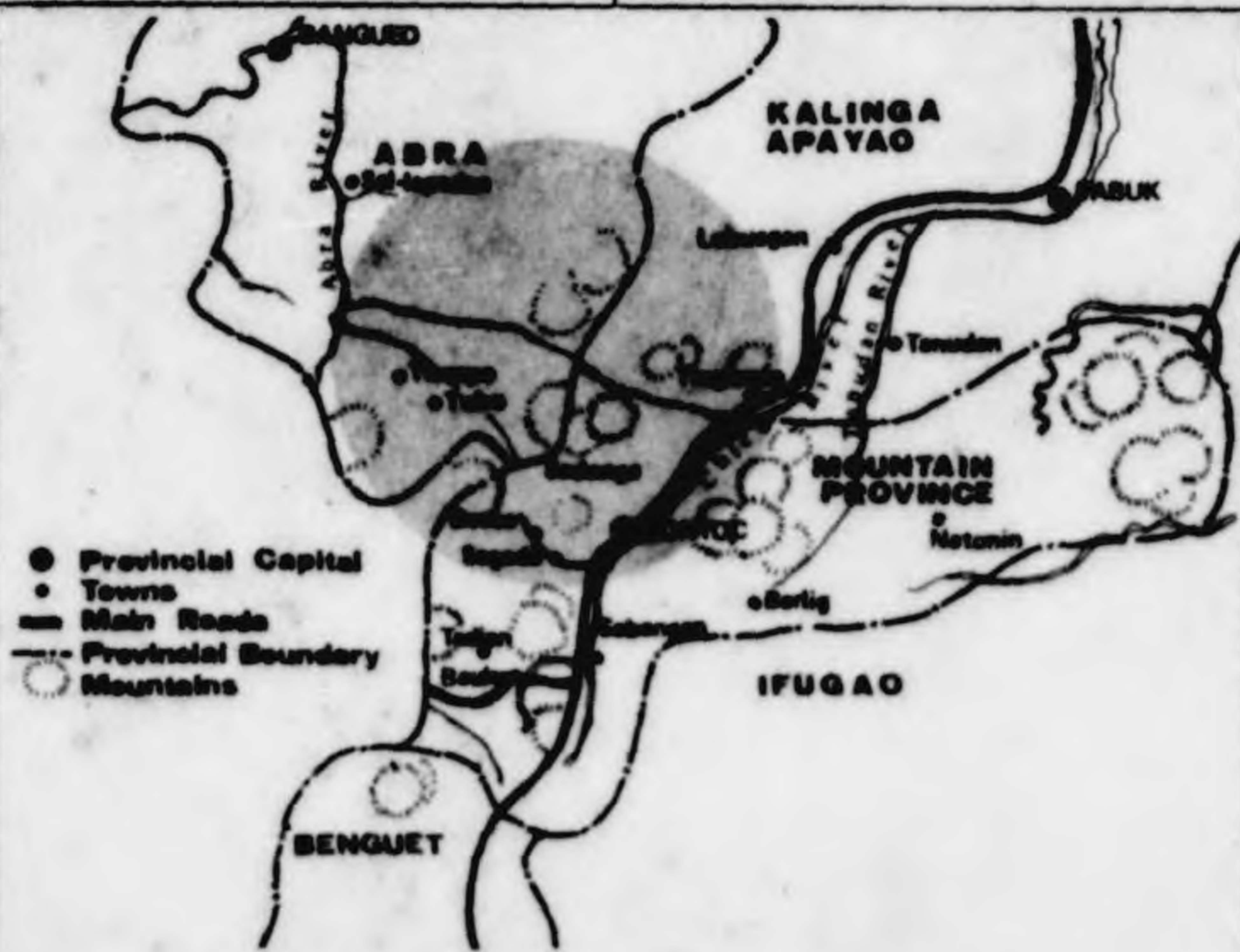
As early as April, the NPA has been rai-

ning blows on the starting forces of Oplan Chumancil which arrived in Tinglayan municipality on April 7. A series of ambushes and sniping attacks greeted the first GHQ battalion, the 6th Marine Battalion Landing Team and the forces of the regional command. On April 10, the guerrillas ambushed soldiers in Butbut, Tinglayan, killing an undetermined number of troopers. Another NPA surprise attack followed on April 23, resulting in the killing of one army lieutenant and the wounding of three other soldiers.

From May 8 to May 10, the NPA mounted four successive sniping operations on army detachments and highway patrols in Tinglayan municipality, killing an enemy soldier and wounding three others. According to local residents, the military transports their dead and wounded via least used trails or during the night so as to hide their real losses. On May 13, an NPA team ambushed an army convoy in Sagada, Mountain Province and killed one captain, one lieutenant, four soldiers and wounded eight others. On May 31, a platoon of guerrillas divested Civilian Home Defense Force (CHDF) members of 11 high-powered rifles in Barrio Anabel, Sagada.

With the NPA guerrillas not letting up on their tactical offensives, despite the deployment of three fresh battalions in the tri-boundary, the military poured in more battalions in the months of June and July. The military also embarked on a full-blown media offensive, glorifying the campaign's "successes" and vilifying the NPAs in the north.

But the deployment of additional army battalions did not intimidate the guerrillas.



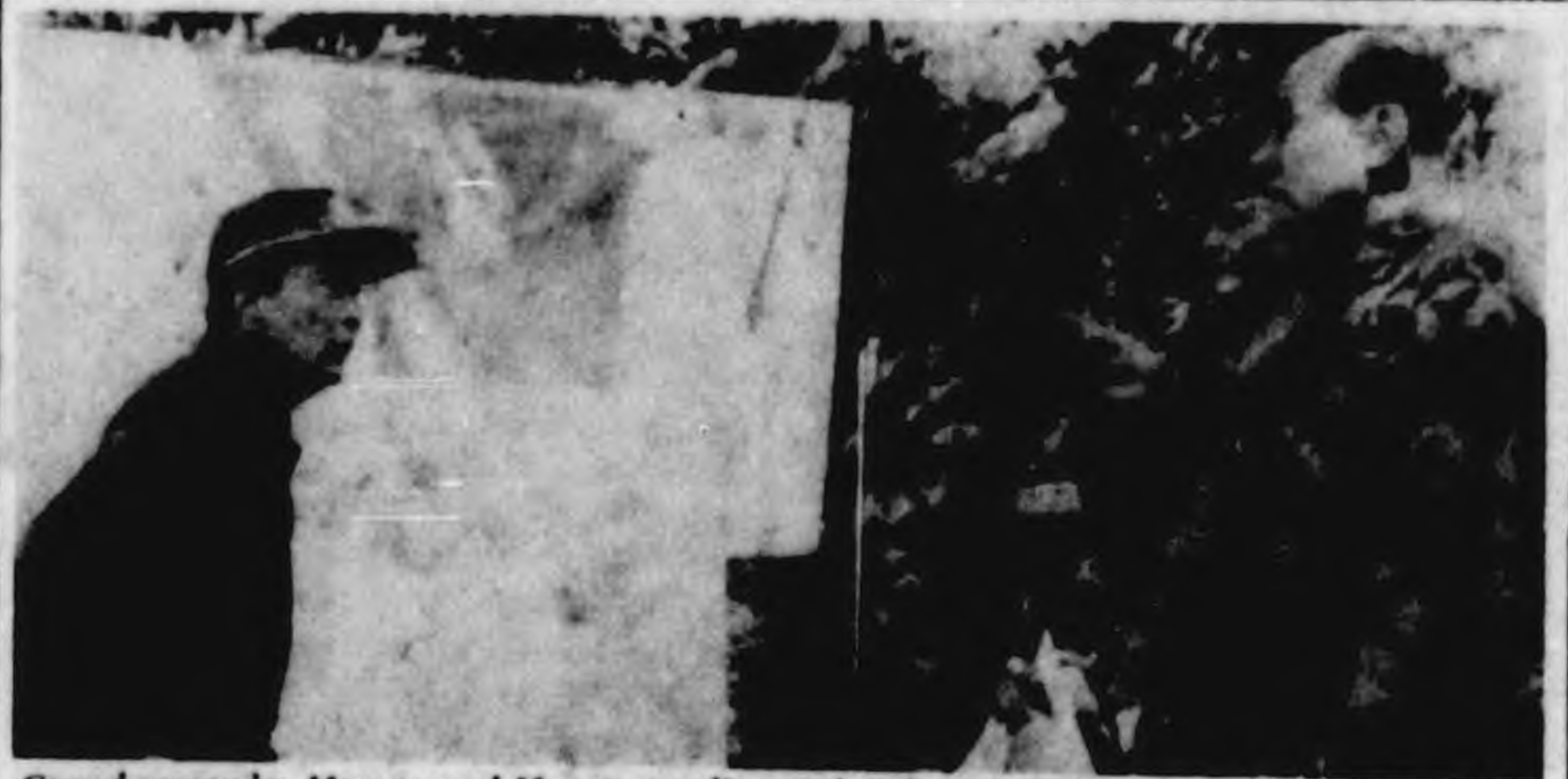
NPA's strategic location: Tri-boundary (inset) connects Abra, Kalinga and Mt. Province

As if to serve notice that the military build-up could not check their offensives, on June 28, the NPA boldly attacked an 89-man army patrol on its way from Butbut village to Bugnay. An NPA platoon sniped at the patrol's rear section while another assaulted the patrol's advance team. From 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., the Red fighters engaged the military in the longest and fiercest clash to date in the tri-boundary.

Ka Dario, a seasoned NPA squad leader, related to **LIB** some of the highlights of the Butbut battle: "From a distance, we heard bursts of rifle and machine gun fire. We rushed toward the battle scene to lend support to comrades. By 10 o'clock, we were able to occupy a higher slope overlooking the position held by the front section of the military patrol," he said. "From there, we fired at their position. At about 2 p.m., two Philippine Air Force choppers appeared and started to strafe us. We trained all our Kalashnikovs and Garands at the closest chopper." Ka Dario said the helicopter was hit and forced to land somewhere in the vicinity of the poblacion. The other helicopter followed suit.

"The enemy used mortars against us. When I heard a loud pop followed by a whistling sound, I knew that a mortar shell was coming. All of us lay flat on the ground. The explosion was terrible. The ground shook," Ka Dario related. "But when we looked at each other, not one was wounded. After around ten more ineffective mortar fires from the enemy, the next was not as frightening anymore."

When the battle smoke cleared, Ka Dario said, the military had six dead and nine wounded. One helicopter was put out of commission. The Red fighters did not suffer any casualty. The following days, five T-28 World War II planes of the PAF dropped more than 50 bombs on suspected guerrilla camps in forest and pasture lands between the villages of Butbut and between



*Grand zarzuela: Marcos and Ver pretending to be close to battle scene in far-away Abra*

Bugnay and Betwagan.

The military loudly claimed victories in its drive in the Cordillera. In an official report to Marcos last July 7, AFP chief-of-staff Gen. Fabian Ver stated 51 NPAs were killed during a ten-day clash. This drew intense reactions from oppositionist political figures and human rights advocates who, aware of the regime's consistent and gross violation of human rights especially during counter-insurgency operations, demanded a probe on Ver's casualty report. But it was the military itself that exposed its own lies. In interviews, the brigade commander of the 41st Infantry as well as the PC provincial commanders of Kalinga-Apayao and Mountain Province gave grossly conflicting reports to foreign and local media men who swarmed military offices in the north to get news. On the other hand, village folk interviewed by an independent International Fact-Finding Team that went to the combat area strongly denied the reported rebel casualties. "Ver's report is pure baloney," said a member of another fact-finding team that went to the tri-boundary

last July 18.

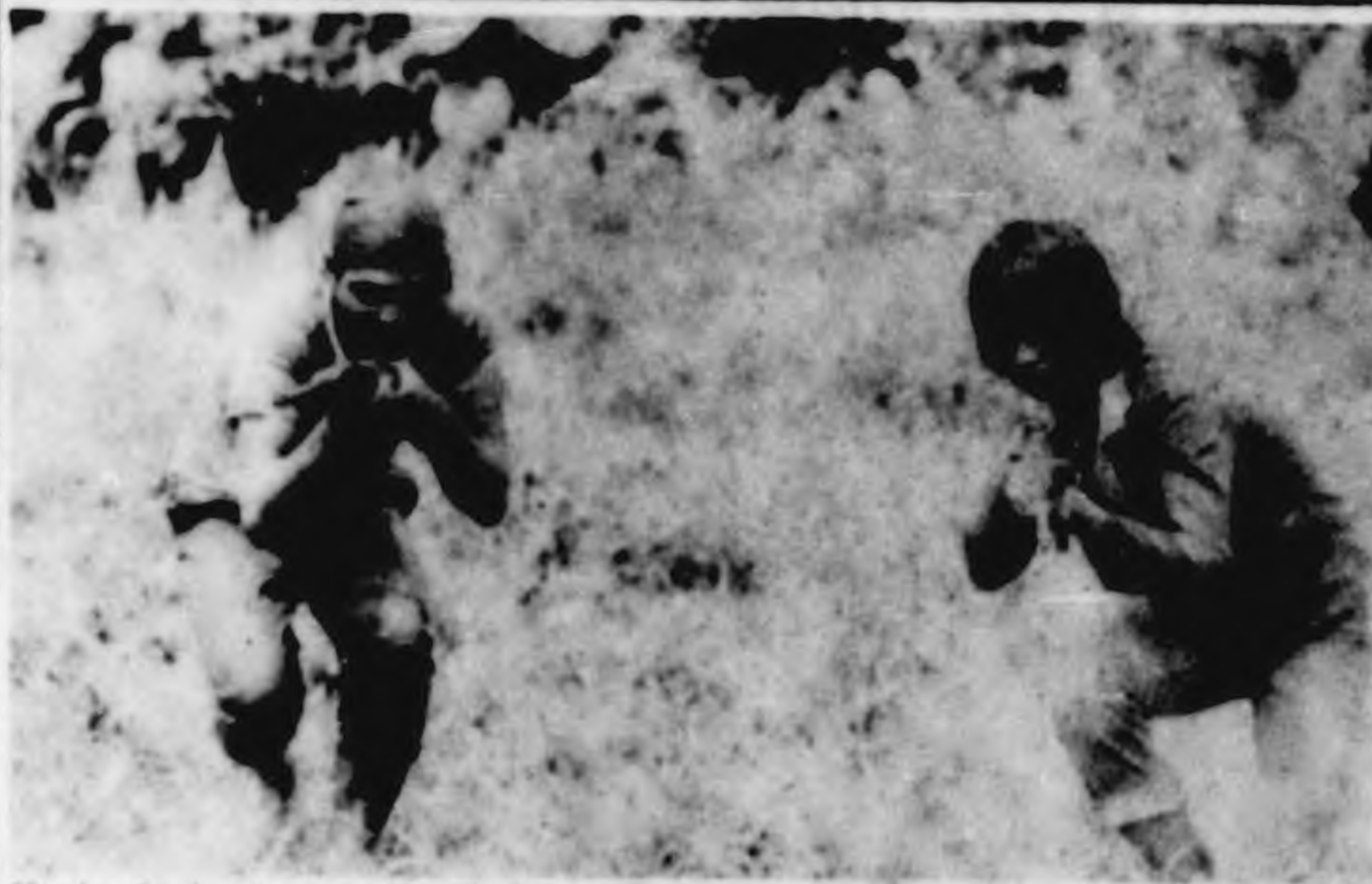
The truth was, the military has been winning only in press releases but losing out heavily in the field. Reports released by the regional operational command of the NPA in Northern Luzon said that between April 10 to June 30, there was a total of 19 encounters and ambushes in the tri-boundary which netted 21 soldiers killed and 11 high-powered rifles seized. In these incidents, only one guerrilla was seriously wounded. In the follow-up bombing operation of the military after June 28, the sole casualty was a carabao owned by a farmer.

#### Adapting to enemy methods

During the first weeks of the anti-NPA campaign, the military, fresh and hot for battle, sought big and decisive engagements with the guerrillas in places which are accessible like the highway and where they could put into full advantage their superior firepower and logistical support during prolonged clashes. Knowing that mere squads and platoons could easily be nipped by the guerrillas, the military usually moved in two companies or full battalions. But thus far, the NPA has denied them any prolonged and decisive battles, choosing to fight only in quick engagements wherein they are sure of scoring against the enemy.

"Our basic method in laying an ambush against a company-size patrol is to completely wipe out its rear or advance section while pinning down its main body," reported Ka Dario. "If a successful ambush can not be laid, we have the option to snipe them from a farther distance. If the enemy formation is too big and the terrain is not so favorable, we just let them pass by. Anyway, they can only explore and follow big trails and won't dare go farther. They can't follow paths that they don't know and those which we make ourselves and later camouflage," added Ka Dario.

The guerrillas have put into optimum use their familiarity with the terrain of the Cordillera tri-boundary whose forest, slopes and streams had been the playground of most local fighters during their childhood.



*Honing for battle: Guerrillas drilling in ambush maneuvers*

"Once we sight the enemy on a trail, we know exactly where he's heading," said Ka Wasan, a district-level Kalinga cadre who occasionally joins NPA regulars during intense enemy operations.

A case in point is the chance encounter last June 27 between an NPA group and army patrol along a narrow mountain trail between the villages of Bugnay and Basao. The NPA group sighted the approaching soldiers while the latter were still tracing the right pathway. The military team's lead man immediately fell under the first volley of gunfire. Two other soldiers were reported missing as the guerrillas totally outmaneuvered the government troops.

To effectively monitor NPA movements and to look formidable, the military has positioned detachments at vantage points, on hilltops above or on the same level as the barrio. From these places, they have a clear view of mountain trails, ridges, camote patches and the farmers' outfield huts. From these points too, their mortars and light artillery have a good firing range. The ploy is not only to track down guerrilla movements but also to intimidate the NPA from doing big and quick daytime maneuvers that might outflank the military.

But the NPA has adapted ingenious methods against enemy monitoring. For instance, in preparing their meals, the guerrillas cook only during nighttime so no visible smoke could serve as signal to the enemy. "We also move during the night," added Ka Wasan. "This makes walking twice or thrice slower than our pace during daytime but in this way we could move to any place we want to."

After a few showy maneuvers along the fringes of the watershed areas above the villages, the fascist soldiers, as expected, have entrenched themselves in the villages and military settlements. Knowing that hunting guerrillas in the forest is futile and dangerous, the military has resorted to its main strategy — "clearing and holding" the villages. This strategy entails the deployment for long periods of time of modest-sized formations usually oversized platoons, inside the barrios or adjacent to them putting restraints on the movement of barrio folk outside the village perimeter and the imposition of curfew and controls on each family's food purchases. These measures are intended to drastically cut the flow of food and other logistics from the barrios to the guerrilla camps.

But despite the current controls and the temporary suspension of their regular visits to the villages, guerrilla forces are far from starving. Members of revolutionary mass organizations in many barrios have vigorously launched secret campaigns to smuggle food and other basic necessities for the consumption of the NPA. Creatively and determinedly, hundreds of barrio mass activists acting in concert, clandestinely carry a few gantas each of rice whenever



*Dressed to the hilt: But where's the battle?*

possible to designated points easily within the reach of the Red fighters. When pooled together, the cavans of rice are enough to last platoon and company size formations for weeks.

Sweet potatoes and beans planted in moun-

tainside clearings are also easily obtained by the guerrillas whenever needed. "We have an understanding with them (NPAs) that in times like this, our camote and beans in the kaingins are theirs for the picking," a leading member of a local revolutionary peasant association in the barrio explained to LIB.

The NPA forces in the tri-boundary have really nothing to fear if the worst situation comes and they are forced out of the area for a while. Revolutionary mass organizations are stable and deeply embedded among the people in majority of the barrios. Local cadres among the peasants, women and youth shall continue consolidating mass organizations, raise the revolutionary consciousness of the people, and lead them in mass resistance against the military. Even if the NPA regulars abandon the villages temporarily, the AFP would surely find its brittle counter-insurgency schemes of "winning hearts and minds" and "restoring faith in established government institutions" crashing against a wall.

Meanwhile, as of this writing, the much-ballyhooed counter-insurgency campaign of the regime in the Gran Cordillera Central tri-boundary drags on. Daily, the cost of the military campaign mounts. Constantly harassed, the morale of the encamped soldiers ebbs. Increasing military abuses and atrocities fuel further the hatred of the people against the AFP and their determination to resist. Yet, on top of it all, the military has yet to score against the intractable guerrillas.

History draws many parallels. And a sharp one is being drawn today in the Cordillera tri-boundary. With the way things have been turning out for Oplan Chumancil, the military forces' inevitable fate is certain. Its end shall be no different from that which befell the anti-revolutionary and anti-people counter-insurgency forces of the Americans and the Japanese in the area in earlier epochs — dismal defeat.

**Alfredo Amuyao**



*Open-door village meeting: Tribesman in traditional wear protesting military abuses*



For country and people: Guerrillas in Panay training in early morning drill

## Rifles for Panay

Red fighters launch offensives, build up NPA arsenal

May 11 is a day that will always be remembered with pride by the people of Leon town in Iloilo. For on that day, they scored two big victories right under the noses of a wary and well-prepared fascist military.

About 500 people left the town at 9 a.m. that day to join the Lakbayan march going to Iloilo City. In anticipation of the protest action, the PC checkpoint which borders three towns was placed on red alert, according to *Daba-Daba*, underground mass newspaper in Western Visayas. Thinking that the moves of the people were sufficiently monitored, the members of Leon's INP-CHDF force based at the municipal hall became confident that everything was under control.

But their overconfidence soon proved to be their own undoing. Late that afternoon at about 4:30, two passenger-jeepneys coming from Iloilo City and bearing about 20 NPA fighters dressed in PC uniforms entered the town. Their objective: the as-

sault of no less than the municipal hall itself.

Posting blocking forces at different points of the enemies' possible entry, the NPA unit in charge of raiding the hall called on the 18 members of the INP and CHDF units to surrender. But some members of the fascist forces foolishly chose to fight back. In the firefight that followed, two policemen and one CHDF member were killed. The CHDF man, Rudy Cabaya, was the notorious area commander in the whole town of Leon. His death was a fitting punishment for one who had committed so many crimes against the people.

Quickly, the raiders confiscated five M16 rifles, 11 .38 revolvers, a military communication radio, a typewriter and various types of ammunition. Their operation so flustered the town officials that when the NPA left, the military immediately sent a unit to pursue the Lakbayan marchers, who, they thought, were used by the Red

fighters to divert the attention of the military so as to gain entry into the town. They even entertained the notion that NPA members could be hiding among the rallyists. But the Lakbayan marchers had already traveled a far distance that their pursuers decided to return to the town.

At the boycott rally in Iloilo City, about 8,000 people came to participate and register their defiance of the sham election. When the rally was over, the townspeople of Leon returned home accompanied by a visitor, Agapito "Butz" Aquino, brother of slain oppositionist Benigno Aquino Jr.

But the military was waiting for them at the outskirts of the town. Still smarting from the shock and humiliation of the NPA raid on the municipal hall, the soldiers blocked the way of the marchers. The people, however, were undaunted. They insisted and stood by their right to hold protest actions, at the same time denying any knowledge or involvement in the NPA assault. Confronted with the protesters' determination, the soldiers backed down and allowed them to pass through.

So in a single day did the courageous people of Leon launch a successful protest action and defend it against the harassment of the local military while at the same

time, the NPA was able to deal a humiliating blow at the heart of the enemy's fortress in that town.

The victory of the NPA in Iloilo, however, was not the only one that took place in Western Visayas.

Last May 4, the guerrillas killed four troopers and wounded many others in an ambush at Barrio Naujon, Sebaste, Antique. The ambush site was a narrow portion of the road that follows the shoreline of Naujon. Parallel to the shore was a mound of hills that looked so harmless and natural with its cogon grass but hiding in the thick shrubs was a platoon of NPA fighters. Patiently, the guerrillas waited for a combined force of PC, INP and 47th Infantry Battalion soldiers to enter the trap. The soldiers, on board two Ford Fieras, were clearing the way for KBL candidates led by Arturo Pacificador, who were slated to hold a campaign rally in the town of Pandan.

At about 8 a.m., the first vehicle carrying 12 soldiers rolled into the killing zone. As sudden as lightning, a volley of gunfire hit them. As the jeep skidded, three troopers fell dead and the Fiera slowly came to a halt. As heavy firing from the Red fighters continued, the second vehicle was pinned down. Garand bullets struck the headlights of the Fiera and its engine, forcing it to stop completely. In the 40-minute gunbattle, four troopers were killed, and many others, including the station commander of the Sebaste INP and the commanding officer of the 315th PC company, were seriously wounded. The Red fighters safely retreated.

At the other end of the killing zone, an NPA team had posted a cardboard sign with the words, "STOP. NPA AMBUSH." The notice was put up to warn civilians against entering the area and getting caught in the crossfire. A long line of vehicles waited until it was safe for them to pass through.

Meanwhile, a PC reinforcement team had arrived but all that greeted them was the

## NPA offensives in Surigao Sur



NPAs marching in front of common barracks

A series of raids and ambushes was held last May by the New People's Army in Surigao del Sur, resulting in the killing of at least five enemy soldiers and the confiscation of numerous firearms, according to *Taliba ng Bayan*, an NDF publication which was recently revived.

The first operation was launched May 23 by more than 100 guerrillas in San Agustin where they raided a municipal hall. By 1 p.m., an assault team composed of 25 NPA guerrillas aboard a passenger jeepney attacked the police headquarters near the town. Almost instantly, they fired at the surprised policemen and PC soldiers.

An undetermined number of fascist troopers were killed while eight M16 rifles, 14 carbines and one Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR) were seized.

As the NPA proceeded with its operation, two of its blocking teams were deployed at several points to prevent the entry of enemy rescue teams. Although the entire operation took four hours to complete, it was only 30 minutes after the Red fighters left that fascist reinforcement troops were able to reach the town. Only the sight of their dead companions greeted their arrival.

The successful raid was repeated by the NPA after five days. On May 28, a jeepload of soldiers was waylaid on a highway at Tagbalidbid, resulting in the death of five enemy troopers. Five M16 rifles were seized in that ambush.

Explaining their victories, the NPA guerrillas in Surigao del Sur said: "The enemy forces were easily vanquished because of the readiness of the people's army and the favorable ambush positions we have always taken."

sight of a Ford Fiera that had been turned upside down with its wheels flung to the sea. The KBL rally scheduled to be held in Pandan never took place until election day itself.

In another tactical offensive, the NPA seized more weapons in a disarming operation that took place just where the military was launching its "search-and-destroy mission" in the mountainous bar-

rios of Madalag, Aklan. On April 13, an NPA team captured a CHDF member and used him to guide them to the house of the barrio captain who was also a member of the civilian defense force. Disguising themselves as soldiers, they knocked on the house of the barrio captain who was taking his supper with two other CHDFs.

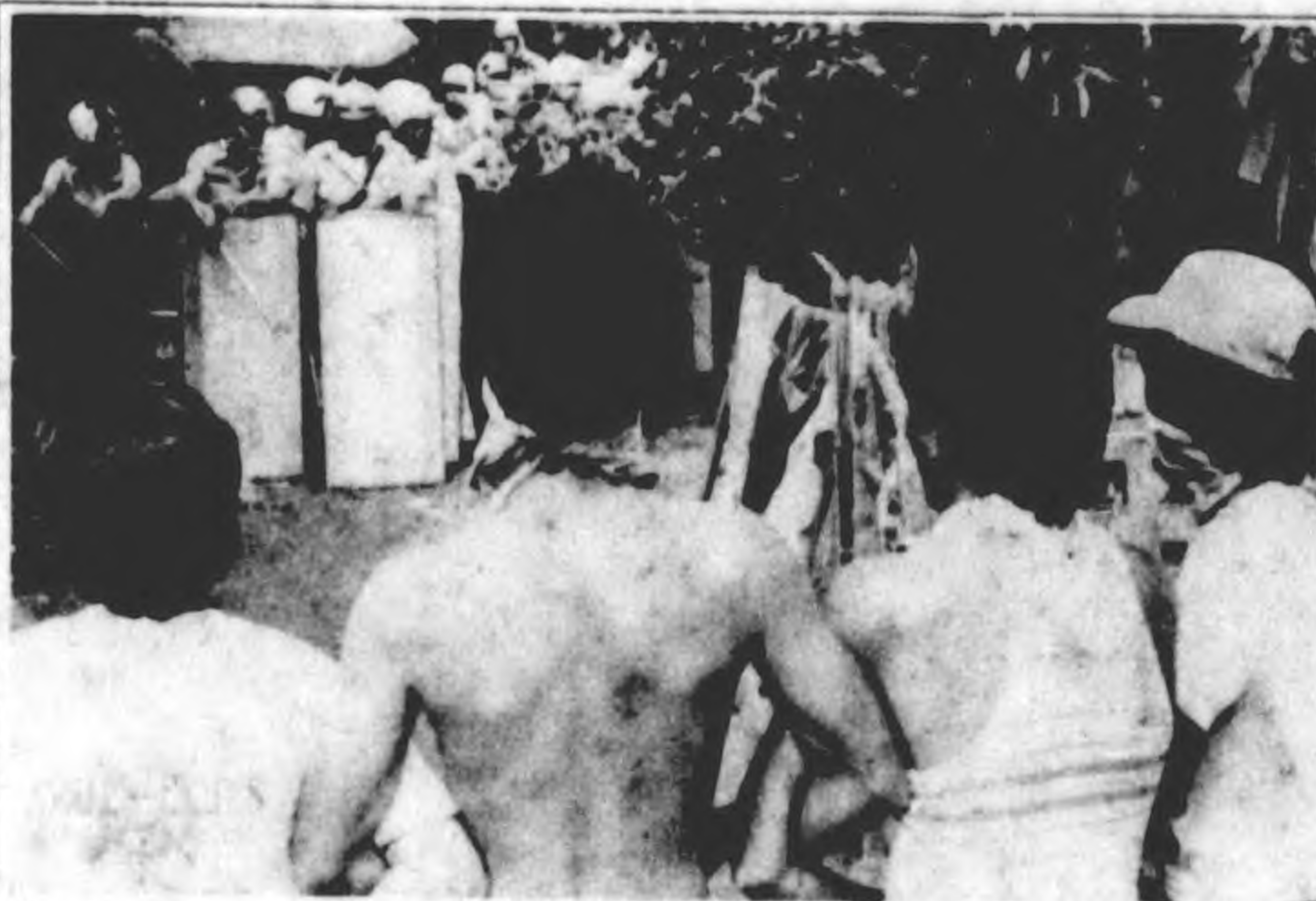
Faced with the armed men, the CHDFs became alarmed and pointed their guns at them. But the men quickly explained they were military soldiers. Upon hearing this, the barrio captain, still trembling in fear, apologized for their behavior. Not until the Red guerrillas confiscated three Garand rifles and a magazine pouch did they introduce themselves as members of the NPA. The captives, however, were treated well. The guerrillas explained to them the NPA campaign of neutralizing and weakening CHDF units and the justness of the revolution.

*Daba-Daba* also reported a successful NPA ambush in Barrio Paruran, Lambunao, Iloilo on May 14. During the last two months, small-scale tactical offensives were launched too in Tubungan and Janiway, Iloilo. Undoubtedly, all these are part of the surging revolutionary battle to crush the regime's troops.

Minda Rodrigo



Surging revolutionary battle: Recent NPA offensives in island of Panay



Deadly confrontation: Artex strikers close ranks as riot police approach their picketline

## Daring to struggle

Workers' strikes defy regime's repressive policies

Tension gripped the factory belt of Panghulo, Malabon on the morning of July 9. On that day, 300 police and PC-Metrocom troopers broke up a one-and-a-half-month-old strike at Artex Development Co., laying their second assault in a week. They shot at and beat up some 200 workers manning the picketlines.

This time, however, the fascist operatives, who came to enforce an injunction order obtained by the firm's owner from the National Labor Relations Commission, were not content with merely clearing the entrance to the factory. Pursuing the strikers, they trained high-powered water hoses on houses where the workers sought refuge, and truncheoned anyone they managed to flush out.

The workers, though outnumbered, valiantly fought back with anything they could lay their hands on. For more than an hour, running skirmishes ensued as workers pelted rocks and traded blows with their attackers who were armed with rifles, pistols and truncheons.

After the bloody clash, 27 workers were arrested and 56 persons were injured, most of whom were strikers who suffered gunshot wounds and truncheon blows. Four other workers, who remain unaccounted for, are feared dead.

The Artex incident, one of the worst assaults on the picketline in recent years, came barely three months after a brutal police attack on strikers at the Foamtex

factory in Valenzuela that resulted in the death of two workers. The Artex incident was also the latest in a series of violent assaults, notably at the Bataan Export Processing Zone, Sinclair Phil., Balanced Food Corp., and Philippine Electrical Company, where scores of workers were injured and arrested, and their picketlines demolished.

To a large extent, almost all of these strikes were spurred by the failure of factory owners to implement labor standards and by unfair labor practices. Workers who have long borne the brunt of any economic difficulty find that they have to fight even for such basic demands as the implementation of Wage Orders and the right to organize themselves into genuine unions.

In fact, figures indicate that the vast majority of strikes were called by workers to demand what is already theirs under the law. The Artex workers' strike provides a glaring example.

For years, the middle-sized textile company severely exploited its workers, paying them rates lower than the minimum wage. At the time the strike was declared, the Artex workers were receiving a measly P23 daily wage when the decreed minimum daily wage for Metro Manila workers was already P42. For a long time also, its capitalist owners viciously suppressed genuine unions, and nurtured instead, company unions with whom they had fake collective bargaining agreements (CBAs) that had nothing in them for the workers.

But Artex workers who managed to organize themselves into the Samahan ng mga Manggagawa sa Artex (SAMAR), a genuine union affiliated with a militant labor federation, struck last May, pressing for a certification election and demanding an increase in their P23 starvation wage.

The response of the Artex management, which has had a history of strike-breaking and union-busting, was the brutal assault last July 9. But the truncheon-and-bullet policy of the Artex owners which has been repeated in workers' disputes elsewhere, has caused striking workers to be more resolute in defending their picketlines. Said a determined Artex worker: "Ipagtatangol namin ang picketlayn kabit maghubos kami ng dugo!"

Workers in other factories have similarly assumed a firm fighting position. Like their comrades at Artex, they have been putting up their picketlines almost as fast as these are torn down by the police. More importantly, they have begun to act militantly in defense of their rights.

### New horizons in workers' struggle

Since this year, workers have become more daring in launching and conducting their struggles. This is evident in the rising number of strikes. In 1983, there was a total of 83 strikes involving 15,745 workers with 2.48 million manhours lost. In many of these strikes, workers defied back-to-work orders and court injunctions, and staunchly defended their right to strike and paralyze company production in order to pressure management to grant their just demands.

But one of the most significant developments in the workers' movement this year was the launching anew of an area-wide coordinated strike at the Bataan Export Processing Zone. Participated in by about 4,000 workers in 17 firms, the launching of the one-day strike last March reflected a capability for higher levels of cooperation and organization among the workers and prepared the groundwork for more labor mass actions of this kind.

This mass action also signals the significant development of coordinated strikes by areas, industry or conglomerate that will play a major role in the advance of the workers' movement. The greater pressure put on capitalists by striking firms will enable workers to pursue demands that would otherwise be difficult to fight for in a simple factory-level strike.

To further widen their arena of struggle, workers have also utilized the regime's legal courts as a way of countering legal harassment by factory owners. They have filed assault and murder charges against their police and military attackers and brought cases to the Supreme Court questioning the legality of



court injunctions on strikes and the authority of government labor bodies to issue back-to-work orders.

However, even as the workers' participation in sectoral issues continues to advance, their presence in political mass actions has also become more marked. In their tens of thousands, workers have lately been providing the biggest organized mobilizations in massive multisectoral rallies, and have easily imprinted their mark on recent mass campaigns.

As workers participate in more and more multisectoral political rallies, their consciousness is further developed to accommodate not only their involvement in purely economic and sectoral welfare issues, but their active participation as well in political struggles.

In increasing numbers, they have come to realize that the nation's plight is also their own and that the workers' freedom can only be attained in conjunction with the Filipino peoples' struggle for freedom.

#### Growing militancy of organized labor

The workers' heightened consciousness has led countless unions to defect from reactionary labor groups to more progressive federations. According to Ka Frederick, a trade union cadre, there are three main groupings of unionized workers -- the militant 500,000-strong Kilusang Mayo Uno-Pambansang Koalisyon ng mga Manggagawa Laban sa Kahirapan (KMU-PKMK), the 400,000-strong Federation of Free Workers (FFW) and the government-controlled Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP) which claims a membership of 800,000.

Said Frederick, "On paper, the reactionary TUCP seems to have quite an edge over the more progressive KMU-PKMK and FFW. But in reality, the TUCP is a paper tiger." He explained that notwithstanding its claims of an 800,000-membership, the TUCP has very few effectively functioning unions -- that is, those that have CBAs containing substantial benefits for its workers.

Thus, if its supposed membership is slashed by half, a more accurate picture of the trade union movement will emerge -- a situation where the KMU-PKMK and the FFW will continue to absorb disenchanted members of the TUCP.

"What we really have is a 'rough parity' among these three main groupings, but with the TUCP on a losing streak," Frederick said.

"The TUCP's real nature has been exposed. It enjoys no credibility and is now isolated from among the mass of workers. Were it not for the aid coming from the AFL-CIO, a US imperialist labor front, it would have folded up a long time ago," Frederick added.

But it is not only in the Philippines where the TUCP is being routed. Internationally, it has been receiving a beating from labor organizations. In a recent

development, the New Zealand Federation of Labor (NZFL) dissociated itself from the TUCP and resolved in its 1984 conference to "give full support to the KMU." Other major labor federations in Ireland and Japan have also recognized the KMU as a genuine national trade union center.

The regime, too, has been receiving a beating internationally. A committee of the International Labor Organization again criticized the Marcos regime this July for maintaining labor laws "incompatible" with ILO conventions guaranteeing trade union rights, and condemned the confiscation of union property as well as the use of torture against arrested labor leaders.

The labor laws referred to are Batas Pambansa 130 (the Strike Law) and 227

in workers' struggles after listening to the testimony of an Artex worker, and later actually visited the strike area.

Meantime, as the militant trade union movement grows stronger, it will surely be met with greater repression by the fascist regime in cahoots with oppressive factory owners and managers. But as more workers are mercilessly beaten up and shot while defending their picketlines, they are also beginning to realize the limits of circumscribed legal mass actions such as the strike in achieving justice for their cause.

As a result, more and more workers are looking up to the example of Alex Boncayao, a fellow-worker who joined the NPA in 1979. In his life as an exemplary labor leader and NPA fighter, they find inspiration. Their raging anger over



Water cannons and armed police battling defenseless Artex strikers

(the Anti-Scab and Picketing Law) which limit the right to strike. The ILO condemnation came in the wake of successive protest actions led by the PKMK which has described the two laws as the "poison of labor," in a picket held last July in front of the Ministry of Labor and Employment (MOLE) building.

The striking workers' resolute defense of their picketlines against charging policemen has also been earning the sympathy and admiration of other sectors in the Philippines. Even as the regime relentlessly lays a heavy hand on the workers' movement, members of largely middleclass groups like JAJA and ATOM have strongly condemned such assaults and moved to strengthen their ties with the workers. Church leaders attending a recent Association of Major Religious Superiors meeting as well as other sectors vowed also to involve themselves

their exploitation and hardships somehow finds solace in the knowledge that NPA partisan brigades, such as that named after Boncayao, are avenging those in their ranks who have been felled by fascist bullets. (see *LIB*, April-May 1984).

As workers are further pushed to the wall, they will increasingly take these lessons to heart. The working class will live up to the words of a poem now often recited by militant workers:

"Sa talsik ng dugo'y  
Tumitingkad ang kulay  
Ng kasaysayang ang kauri mo  
Ang nagwawagayway.  
Sa noo mo'y nag-aapoy  
Ang pinagbuklod na kaapiban.  
Sa siklab ng iyong buling  
Pagbinga'y nagsisimula  
Ang titis ng tagumpay."

Angel Nicolas

# SPARKS

News about the resistance movement

## NPA's KILL 8 TROOPERS IN ALBAY AMBUSH

New People's Army guerrillas ambushed a joint PC-CHDF team in Panoypoy, Camalig, Albay last June 2, killing eight troopers, including a PC sergeant, a policeman and four CHDF men, and wounding nine others. The troopers, who were on board a truck, were on their way to conduct "regular clearance operations" when surprised by the NPAs.

## MINDANAO RAIDS NET 47 ARMS

Separate operations by Red fighters in Mindanao these past two months netted at least 47 firearms, according to partial reports.

In June, NPA guerrillas seized 40 firearms from company guards and paramilitary forces in raids on the Sta. Clara Plywood Corporation and Marcelo Rubber Co., both in Upper Sultan, Naga, Zamboanga del Sur.

Last July 8, NPAs raided the homes of CHDF men in Upper Labay, South Cotabato and carted away six Garands and one Carbine. The guerrillas also punished with death a CHDF member working as a military intelligence agent.

## SECTORS PROTEST SHAM INDEPENDENCE

About 1,000 workers, urban poor, professionals and students staged a rally in front of the US embassy last June 12. Various speakers exposed sham independence and US control of the Philippine economy, politics and culture. They demanded an end to US intervention in the country's internal affairs and called for the restoration of sovereignty and democracy.



Policemen trying to block march to US embassy

## STUDENTS PICKET RP-US DEFENSE OFFICIALS' MEET

While the RP-US Mutual Defense Board concluded its talks last June 14, members of the League of Filipino Students (LFS) picketed the US embassy, site of the joint meeting. Admiral William Crowe, US commander-in-chief of the Pacific command and Maj. Gen. Fabian Ver, AFP chief of staff were inside the embassy at that time. The students called for a stop to US aid to the Marcos regime and an end to US control and intervention in the country.

## AHW VOWS TO FIGHT FOR QUALITY HEALTH CARE

In its first national convention last June 24, the Alliance of Health Workers (AHW) resolved to "protect the people's right to quality health care." The AHW, composed of 15 hospital and health agencies, sounded its opposition to policies prejudicial to indigent patients, such as that which requires them or their families to advance payment for medicine and accommodations before they are given medical care. The AHW also protested the failure of hospital authorities to fill vacant positions in

hospitals, thus overburdening health workers with an increased patient-hospital ratio. In addition, the alliance vowed to continue working for the implementation of proposed wage hikes for paramedical and non-medical personnel of the Ministry of Health and the granting of additional benefits such as night shift differentials and overtime pay for health workers.

## DAVAO JEEPNEY DRIVERS STAGE STRIKE

Jeepney drivers in Davao City led by the Transport of Southern Mindanao for Independence and Nationalism (Transmission) called for a "rest" last June 7, and kept off the streets to demand the rollback of oil prices. The drivers, who were supported by a local consumerist group, Konsumo Dabaw, also demanded the granting of benefits to drivers such as insurance and social security, and representation in government bodies related to the industry.

## NEPA SCORES PD 1892

The Makati-Manila chapter of the National Economic Protectionism Association (NEPA) called on Filipinos — businessmen, especially — to work for the repeal of Presidential Decree No. 1892 granting foreigners the right to own up to 100 percent of corporate equity even in non-pioneer industries.

NEPA charged that PD 1892 goes even beyond the Laurel-Langley Agreement and the parity amendments in its generosity to foreign investors. NEPA feared that Filipino businessmen, already hard pressed by the economic crisis, will be forced to give up control over their enterprises to their foreign suppliers or other foreign investors.

## IGOROTS RALLY AGAINST MILITARY ABUSES

Last June 15, about 3,000 Igorots in Bontoc demonstrated against the deployment of military troops in that province. They said that the soldiers had committed many abuses against tribal folk such as indiscriminate firing and harassment as well as the continuous violation of Igorot traditions. The rallyists were supported by church officials and some parliamentary oppositionists.

## CHURCH HITS REPRESSIVE DECREES, SECRET MARSHALS

In a pastoral letter read last July 15 in churches all over the country, Jaime Cardinal Sin once more called for the abolition of all authoritarian decrees and powers, amnesty for political prisoners and an end to the summary killings of suspected criminals by so-called "secret marshals." The cardinal moreover backed students demanding full disclosure of conditions imposed by the IMF for the approval of a \$650 million loan, saying that "it is only proper that (they) demand knowledge of those onerous conditions imposed on their future by international agencies."

The following week, the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) issued a pastoral letter raising the same issues.

## DETAINEES PURSUE SUIT AGAINST TORTURERS

Political detainees heavily tortured upon their arrest in February 1982 sought last June 20 to reopen a P6.5 million damage suit filed against their military captors. Government lawyers opposed the move, saying that a 1979 constitutional amendment grants immunity to top government and military officials, as well as employes and troopers acting on the president's orders. In filing the petition, the detainees' lawyers countered that the immunity clause does not permit the use of torture on a suspect.

## STUDENTS PICKET CENTRAL BANK

Some 200 members of the Student Christian Movement held a rally in front of the Central Bank last July 17 to protest the regime's subservience to the dictates of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). In a manifesto, the students denounced the government's implementation of stringent IMF measures in exchange for a \$650 million loan from the aid agency.

# CRACKS

Indicators of the regime's crisis

## BORED WITH THE BOARD

After eight months, 120 hearings and testimony from 186 witnesses, the Agrava Board has still no answer as to who shot Ninoy Aquino last Aug. 21. The regime claims the assassin was Rolando Galman, a criminal hired by the communists. But many believe that the military killed Aquino, on orders from the Marcoses themselves. The *New York Times*, quoting a high-ranking Philippine official, suggests three options for the board: 1) support the military version of the killing, 2) find criminal negligence on the part of the security forces while ignoring the mettlesome issue of who killed the former senator, or 3) rule that Aquino was murdered as a result of a "military conspiracy,"



Agrava Board: Still in the dark re Aquino killer

without pointing to Marcos and his close associates. Others speculate that the closest to the top the board will get is Col. Arthur Custodio whom Galman's children claim picked their father up from their home three days before he was shot dead. If the board cannot go that high, they will probably point their finger at Sgts. Lat and De Mesa who accompanied Aquino down the airplane staircase. Any of these findings, however, will be bound to trigger off public protests. As many people have noted: "It's a no-win situation for the regime."

## WHY HE DIDN'T EVEN SAY GOODBYE

Former deputy foreign minister and now Assemblyman Manuel Collantes is no longer very clubby with the Marcos gang these days. Reason: he wasn't offered the foreign affairs portfolio which went to Arturo Tolentino. Miffed, the Batangas solon refused to join the KBL oath-taking in the presence of Marcos in Malacanang early this July, asserting that Chief Justice Enrique Fernando would swear him instead as assemblyman. Then, he announced that he was aligning himself with the independent bloc in the Batasan, particularly to protest Amendment 6. To further show his pique, Collantes has been attacking government technocrats whom he says have made life for Filipinos more miserable. He is reported to have tagged Prime Minister Cesar Virata as the person who bungled the economy, Trade Minister Roberto Ongpin as an SOB and Oil Industry Commissioner Geronimo Velasco as a crook.

## A FRIENDSHIP TURNED SOUR

Sugar king Roberto S. Benedicto has fallen out of grace with Marcos. Benedicto, a trusted Marcos crony, is being accused of mismanaging a number of enterprises placed in his trust and siphoning funds into his own accounts. Marcos is reportedly angry over the inability of NASUTRA (the sugar monopoly run by Benedicto) to pay planters for their past sugar deliveries as well as over the disposition of salted dollar incomes derived from sugar over the years, the muddled purchase and shipment of sugar from Thailand and the London market and the inexplicable disappearance of 300,000 metric tons of local sugar from NASUTRA warehouses. Another Marcos headache involves the floundering Republic Planters Bank and Traders Royal Bank,

both under Benedicto's management. The latter is hard put at explaining why huge amounts have been lent by both banks to his own enterprises which are going bankrupt, among them the Celebrity Sports Club. Aggravating Marcos' loss of confidence in his former law classmate is the defeat of KBL candidates handpicked by the latter to run in Western Visayas. Benedicto fears that he might be phased out of business like Herminio Dini, Ricardo Silverio and other now less favored cronies and trustees of the Marcos economic empire. The Benedicto fiasco has prompted Marcos to appoint son Bongbong to head a "supermanagement group" to check on the accounts of other crony-managed enterprises with dominant Marcos interests.

## ALL IN THE FAMILY

With Benedicto down and out, his Broadcast City enterprise comprising the three largest TV-radio networks in the country (KBS-RPN, IBC and BBC) has fallen onto the lap of First Daughter Imee Marcos Manotoc. Imee took over from Benedicto's adopted daughter Kitchie about early June when she began signing major contracts. Kitchie was booted out by her father and Marcos when she and her second husband reportedly failed to account for about P28 million (some say P40 million) in TV funds. The Broadcast City already owes the Philippine National Bank P200 million. It has also been suffering heavy losses these past years, a reason which further spurred Marcos to pull out the enterprise from his crony. Another reason is that the Marcos family is gradually tightening its control on media facilities controlled by relatives and friends. With the local elections and presidential elections looming in 1986 and 1987 respectively, Imee is expected to shift emphasis to radio, a medium effectively utilized by the opposition in the last elections. Meantime, Imee's husband Tommy is being groomed to become senior vice president of the planned merger between Republic Planters Bank and Traders Royal Bank.

## BULLETIN'S NEW BULLY

Coconut magnate and Marcos crony Eduardo Cojuangco Jr. has got his fat fingers in another juicy pie. Following the death of *Bulletin Today* owner-publisher Hans Menzi, Cojuangco has upped his share in the paper to 40 percent, consisting of 25 percent from his previous holdings, 10 percent purchased from Enrique Zobel and 5 percent from Cesar Zalamea. The rest of the shares is owned by the Menzi Foundation and its key board members like Emilio Yap. But whether Cojuangco can claim full ownership of the publication is still a puzzle. Other Marcos cronies and relatives are reportedly running after the newspaper, notably Jose Aspiras, the group of Johnny Perez, Pocholo Romualdez and Teodoro Valencia and the team of Kokoy Romualdez and Imee Marcos. Meantime, very little has been heard about Cojuangco's P100 million libel suit against *Penorama*, the *Bulletin's* Sunday magazine. Observers say maybe it's because Cojuangco can't sue himself.

## WHO'S AFRAID OF THE IMF?

Marcos is. Despite repeated public assurances that he is confident that the International Monetary Fund will soon release its \$650 million standby credit to the Philippines, Marcos privately fears the earliest he may receive it is next year. The IMF is still reportedly unhappy over the Marcos government's failure to meet its stringent conditions. For one, the Ministry of Human Settlements is nowhere near abolition, along with other unproductive and wasteful agencies. Similarly, agricultural monopolies like the NASUTRA have not yet been dismantled. In addition, the government has not controlled excess liquidity. The IMF's stringent measures are to make sure that the Marcos government does not renege on its debts like the Argentinians while at the same time, intended to pressure Marcos to grant bigger concessions to the IMF. Complained labor minister Blas Ople: "The IMF has one solution for all countries with debt problems — cut you off at the knees."



A call for boycott: Dutch and Filipinos demonstrating in front of the Philippine embassy in The Hague last May 14

## INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

# A harvest of support

**NDF gains more international recognition and allies**

*This article is based on newsreports from the NDF Update, publication of the International Office of the NDF, and messages from Svensk-Filippinska Foreningen and International Solidarity.*

A series of diplomatic offensives launched by the National Democratic Front abroad has yielded a harvest of recognition and support for the Philippine resistance movement from parliamentarians, heads of state, political parties and organizations of concerned citizens abroad.

Notching a milestone in its international work, the NDF was invited to the first national congress of the Panhellenic Socialist Movement of Greece (PASOK), held at the Olympic stadium in Athens from May 10 to 13. In that congress, which was attended by 2,400 elected delegates and representatives from over 40 countries, Greek Premier Andreas Papandreou reiterated his country's policy toward liberation movements, saying: "We daily give support to every liberation movement that is strug-

gling against colonialist or racist regimes, as well as to the struggles of the people against dictatorial or military regimes, and we condemn interventions in the domestic affairs of other countries on any pretext or in any form, such as those in Lebanon and Afghanistan."

Speaking to an NDF delegation led by Luis Jalandoni, the NDF international representative, Papandreou said he hoped the Filipino people's struggle would continue to advance. He also told the visiting Filipino delegates that the removal of the US military bases in Greece was a strategic option for PASOK because these "entangle us in confrontations and polarisations which conflict with Greek policy." They also expose Greece to the danger of total destruction in the event of a world conflict, Papandreou said.

In a message to the Greek people and the Panhellenic Socialist Movement, Jalandoni, in turn, said: "Your firm and consistent stand for your independence and national sovereignty inspires us because

we too are struggling for our independence from the yoke of US imperialism.... Like you, we are firmly determined to remove the US bases, expel the US troops and dismantle their nuclear weapons. Your victory in ousting the military dictatorship likewise inspires us because we are fighting the US-supported fascist dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos."

Jalandoni added that the political support of foreign friends for the Filipino people and the NDF is deeply appreciated for as the struggle advances, the need for a powerful and militant solidarity network to complement the efforts of the Filipinos will be heightened.

Other foreign delegations that attended the PASOK congress included those from China, the Soviet Union, France, Britain, Algeria, Angola, Austria, Belgium, Vietnam, Denmark, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Switzerland, India, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Congo, Cuba, the German Democratic Republic, the People's Democratic Republic of Korea, Lebanon, Libya, Mozambique, the Polisario Front, the Palestine Liberation Organization, Poland, Romania, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Chile. The Philippine NDF was the lone liberation movement from Asia that was represented in the assembly.

Four other developments that served to project the NDF in the world community

took place from May to June:

- ▶ The International Conference on Nicaragua and for Peace in Central America held in Lisbon, Portugal from May 3 to 6,
- ▶ the funeral rites for Enrico Berlinguer, chairman of the Communist Party of Italy (CPI), last June 13,
- ▶ an NDF delegation's meeting with representatives of four Swedish political parties in Stockholm from May 22 to 24, and
- ▶ the recognition by another political party in the Netherlands of the NDF.

An NDF delegation led by Jalandoni attended the International Conference on Nicaragua and for Peace in Central America. Sponsored by major international non-governmental organizations affiliated with the United Nations, the conference de-

nounced US intervention in Latin America and condemned the mining of Nicaraguan ports by the Reagan administration. The assembly pointed to the "direct and immediate danger of an invasion of Nicaragua by the US armed forces and an escalation of US intervention in El Salvador." Likewise, it condemned the US military invasion of Grenada.

The conference also provided an occasion for a brief meeting between Jalandoni and Vietnamese delegation leader Minister Nguyen Thi Binh. Madame Binh, who is presently the minister of education of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam was also the South Vietnamese National Liberation Front's representative in the Paris Peace Talks in the early 1970s. Jalandoni described the Philippine political situation,

laying stress on the Marcos regime's strategic hamlet policy and the growing strength of the underground resistance led by the NDF. Madame Binh, on the other hand, expressed her desire that accurate information about Vietnam reach the people of Southeast Asia.

Last June 13, the NDF delegation at the invitation of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Italy joined Italians in mourning the death of Enrico Berlinguer, 62, beloved leader of 1.7 million members of the Italian Communist Party and of more than 11 million Communist voters in that country. Foreign dignitaries present in the funeral rites included Prime Minister Zhao Ziyang of China, Mikhail S. Gorbachov of the Soviet Union, French Communist Party leader Georges Marchais,

## Protest actions snowball in US



Picketing the Philippine consulate in San Francisco last May 14

Extreme political isolation is a problem that ceaselessly hounds Marcos not only in his own country but in other nations as well. Like a worn-out carnival magician whose tricks have become starkly apparent even to the farthest viewer, the dictator has been reaping only the sharpest disdain from those who have become weary of his political burlesques, the latest of which was the May 14 Batasang Pambansa elections.

In the United States and Canada, numerous protest actions at their most creative forms were launched by anti-Marcos dictatorship organizations like the Coalition Against the Marcos dictatorship/Philippine Solidarity Network (CAMD/PSN), the International Movement for a Democratic Philippines, the League of Filipino Students (USA), the Philippine Education Support Committee, the Movement for a Free Philippines, the Filipinos East Bay Network, the New Aquino Movement and the Justice for Aquino, Justice for All Movement.

According to *Ang Katipunan*, newspaper of the Union of Democratic Filipinos (KDP), a series of motorcades, vigils, symposiums, lobby-ins, educationals and pickets were held weeks before election day, culminating in a National Day of Protest on May 14. Three weeks before the National Day of Protest, ballots were distributed in Filipino communities, churches and schools in a movement dubbed the "Referendum ng Bayan." Respondents were asked questions like "Do you want Marcos out of office?" and "Do you want an end to US domination of the Philippines?" To these, over 80 percent of the several hundred ballots collected answered in the affirmative.

Other protest actions included:

- ▶ a militant picket staged by 200 people in front of the Philippine Consulate in San Francisco, followed by a march to the Union Square in the heart of the downtown area. These were preceded by a motorcade blasting anti-Marcos slogans through

downtown San Francisco and Filipino neighborhoods.

- ▶ two pickets held in front of the Philippine Consulate in New York City which was participated in by individual members of the New York Philippine Jaycees and other community groups.
- ▶ an indoor rally at the United Nations Church Center and another picket in front of the consulate in New York.
- ▶ a picket by about a hundred placard-carrying marchers at Washington D.C.'s Dupont Center near the Philippine Consulate. The demonstrators then marched down to the White House.
- ▶ a picket in front of the Los Angeles Philippine Consulate with speakers including Tony Russo, a co-defendant in the Pentagon Papers case and representatives from the Agape fellowship and the Committee for a Democratic Palestine.
- ▶ a demonstration and vigil held on May 14 in front of the Philippine Consulate in Toronto, Canada and another one in Montreal which was attended by "first-time" Filipino participants.
- ▶ a forum last May 7 at the University of Hawaii, attended by former Constitutional Convention delegate Ernesto Rondon (who died in the US recently).
- ▶ forums and roadside protests in Honolulu, Hawaii where activists displayed cards and banners denouncing the Marcos regime and passing motorists honked their horns in support of the protest.
- ▶ lobbies staged in several cities in the US by several anti-Marcos groups demanding an end to US aid and the release of political prisoners in the Philippines.



Jesse Jackson was for boycott

These protest actions drew the support of American political leaders who joined the boycott advocates in denouncing the farcical elections and criticizing the regime's policies. Appearing in a press conference called by the CAMD/PSN, Rep. Howard Berman hit his country for propping up Marcos' rule. Presidential candidate Rev. Jesse

Jackson also threw his support to anti-Marcos Filipinos.

Departing from the usual detachment assumed by politicians with regards US-backed puppet regimes, Jackson told his listeners: "Politicians are afraid to touch Filipinos because it means they'll have to take a position in relation to Marcos." To make his opposition to the US-Marcos regime clear, the black presidential aspirant donned a boycott shirt and stayed overnight with a Filipino activist family.



Massive funeral of Berlinguer (inset) in Rome

Palestine Liberation Organization head Yasser Arafat and the representatives of many other European and Third World countries.

In an earlier trip to Rome last June 7, Jalandoni discussed with Italian sympathizers and support group members the current conditions in the Philippines. Participating in the round-table discussion were Giancarla Codrignani, member of the Italian parliament and president of the International League for the Rights and Liberation of Peoples in Italy; Gabriel Bertnetto, journalist of the PCI newspaper *L'Unita*; Stefano Chiarini and Tommaso Francesco of the *Il Manifesto* cooperative; Alfonso Gianni of the Partito de Unita Proletaria (PDUP); and Gigi Ricciarelli of KASAMA. In a meeting with Antonio Rubbi, officer-in-charge for foreign affairs of the Communist Party of Italy and Massimo Micucci, the NDF representatives discussed various ways by which their Italian friends could perform solidarity work.

During a three-day visit to Sweden, the NDF delegation met with leaders of that country's four political parties and the staff of the prestigious Swedish Institute of International Affairs. Jalandoni discussed with Swedish leaders the Philippine political situation after the May 14 elections, the danger of large-scale US intervention in the country's internal affairs, the NDF's economic and foreign policies, the labor situation, the Moro people's struggle and other matters. The visit to Sweden was organized by the Svensk-Filippinska Foreningen (SFF), a Philippine support group in that country. The SFF organized a public meeting in Stockholm which was attended by members of the Ugnayan Pilipino, an association of Filipinos in Sweden.

#### Political breakthroughs

Political recognition was granted to the NDF by a political party in the Netherlands, the Politieke Partij Radikalen (Political Party of Radicals or PPR), the second such group in that country to do so. It followed the Pacifist Socialist Party of the Nether-

lands which recognized the NDF in December 1981. The PPR has two seats in the Dutch parliament and works closely with the PSP and the Communist Party of the Netherlands. It described the NDF as "the most important liberation movement in the Philippines" in a letter addressed to the Filippijnengroep Nederland, the support group in Holland.

These organizations had shown their political strength and influence in a peace demonstration in The Hague last October which was attended by about half a million protesters. Of an estimated 550,000 who joined the rally, at least 53 percent was mobilized by the three political parties.

The events from May to June showed the NDF has gained not only the sympathy of socialist leaders but their support as well. In the international gatherings and forums in Athens, Lisbon, Rome and Stock-



Jalandoni with Greek foreign minister

holm, foreign friends were eager to know more about the militant struggles of Filipinos.

A member of the Italian Communist Party, Antonio Rubbi, for instance told the NDF delegation, "It is our task to give support and solidarity." His concern for and empathy with the Philippine resistance movement was echoed by Greek Premier Papan-dreou as he proudly accepted a pendant made by Filipino political prisoners, a token of friendship for the people of Greece. Said the premier: "We know of your struggle." Greek Foreign Minister Yannis Charalam-

bopoulos was even more emphatic when he told the NDF representatives, "I know your struggle is a difficult one, but you will win." As a former victim of torture and imprisonment during the rule of the military junta in Greece, Charalambopoulos' words rang strong and clear and is indicative of greater support in the near future.

This early, some countries have opened their doors to the NDF. The Swedish Communist Party, for instance, has told the NDF representatives that they will always be welcome in Sweden. In several other nations, foreign friends have already taken up the cudgels for Filipino activists fighting the US-Marcos regime. As the Filipino people in their home country launched massive and vigorous protest actions denouncing the May 14 Batasang Pambansa elections, support groups abroad held their own demonstrations against the sham political exercise. For instance, a peculiar mix of street theater and political rally was held in front of the Philippine embassy in Stockholm last May. The protest action was participated in by citizens of various nationalities who chanted slogans and distributed leaflets drawing attention to the Philippine political situation.

At The Hague, Netherlands, Dutch sympathizers and their Filipino friends staged a boycott demonstration in front of the Philippine embassy. With their faces painted with protest symbols, the demonstrators wore black costumes to symbolize the death of democracy in the Philippines. Proetst cards bearing the signatures of hundreds of concerned people denouncing the Philippine government policy of exporting labor were delivered to the embassy.

For Filipino freedom fighters, the struggle will certainly not be easy. But as the International Office of the NDF has stated: "As Filipino revolutionaries persist in the arduous task of overthrowing the fascist regime of Marcos, they are buoyed up by the knowledge that they are not alone, that they have the support and solidarity of many peoples around the world."

Political theater: Protester dons skull paint in The Hague rally



# Ang hayop na ito

Makata ay tupa  
Mamong korderong hindi umaalma  
Lalo na't sa berdeng damo ay sagana.  
Malinghing ng tupa'y ang Awit ng Iba:  
Isang Kuwan, Isang Kural, Isang Martsa.  
Makata ay tupa  
Kepag nag-aruga  
Ay hari at reyna.

Makata ay lora  
Kibot ng bibig niya ay laging totoo  
At sunod sa kibot ng bibig ng Amo.  
Bulaklak ng labi'y mga bagong kuwento  
Batay sa alam ng Bagong Paraiso.  
Makata ay lora  
Kung puso niya't ulo'y  
Para sa anunsiyo.

Makata'y kamelyon  
Kay deling magpalit ng kulay at Poon  
Magkulang dilawan, sumamba sa tumbong  
Batikan sa Sining-Ng-Pagkakataon  
Habang sumusulat ng "panghabang-panshon."  
Makata'y kamelyon  
Kepag nagugumon  
Sa altar ni Mammon.

Makata ay buwaya  
Bihatang sumicid sa Ilog Heraya  
Anumang masila ay lamang-bituka  
Sari-saring klase ang mga biktima:  
Prinsipyo at premyo, bayang ama't ina.  
Makata ay buwaya  
Saan man mapunta'y  
Masikap, magana.

Makata ay ahas  
Laging naguhunos ng matandang balat  
Upang ipansilaw ang bago niyang kintab.  
Tiyak kung gumapang, may tugma at sukat  
Ang tiyan ay sandat, at ang dila'y tiled.  
Makata ay ahas  
Kepag nasa ugat  
Ang diwang kamandag.

Paco Plaridel



## Cock-eyed Cojuangco

NPA guerrillas recently raided Eduardo Cojuangco's farm in La Carlota, Negros Occidental and carted away 75 of his prize-fighting cocks, each worth at least P5,000. As a result, Danding is going cock-eyed these days. Yes, so cock-eyed that one day at San Miguel, he announced that all beads had to go.

A wag reports that in Tondo recently, the First Lady scolded the people for not voting KBL and letting her down after everything she had done for the poor. In reaction, the audience flashed the Laban-sign. This incensed Madame that she ripped off her necklace, hurled it at them, sending everyone scampering after her pearls. This made Imelda even angrier, so she ripped off her bracelet and hit the audience with it, and another melee ensued. Our informant says the Tondo folk can hardly wait for Madame's next visit. They hope, next time, she'll come wearing diamonds.

How did Jun Labo, the dictator's erstwhile faith healer, get past Philippine Airport authorities with over \$50,000 in his person? US Immigration authorities caused the regime quite an embarrassment after a routine search of Labo's luggage yielded the amount. Our guess is the money came from consultation fees paid by a wealthy but dying patient.

Talking about faith healers, Marcos has reportedly abandoned Labo's services in favor of another psychic healer. Eva Estrada Kalaw was overheard by some society matrons as saying that Marcos' new spiritual surgeon had warned the master fascist that he would die within three days after he decrees Martial Law, Part II. But little does Eva know that Marcos'

new healer practices black magic. After three days, he can resurrect Marcos back to life.

Do you know that the house of the Philippine Ambassador in Brunei is the biggest there and costs \$8,000 a month? His deputy lives in a \$4,000 house with five bedrooms. And the regime dares to ask oil loans from Brunei!

When you hear Jolly Benitez being called the "Assemblyman from Villamor Air Base," don't wonder. Because that's where his winning votes came from, according to Col. Balbino Diego who ought to know. Diego is the Presidential Security Command's legal counsel.

Whatever happened to the Herdis Group of Crony Companies? Well, our friendly dictatress has offered them to Lucio Tan, Malacanang's fastest rising Chinese bagman. Our informant tells us that Lucio has formed a corporation that is quietly buying Disini's various holdings. Who says crony capitalism isn't alive and kicking?

Miffed by the Central Bank's refusal to remit their dollar earnings, officials of Saudia Airlines threatened to expose several questionable oil deals entered by Messrs. Marcos and Geronimo Velasco with the Kingdom. It seems that our not too honest President was charging our National Treasury \$4 more per barrel than what was actually being paid to the Saudis. The kickbacks amount to a hefty \$240 million per year. His hand caught in the cookie jar, the dictator immediately ordered the full remittance of Saudia's dollar profits.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH: "Ito pong si Presidente Marcos ay huwag na nating tawaging TUTA. Kasi may edad na siya. Tawagin na lang natin siyang ... ASO!" — a radio listener.

## To Russia with love

Don't look now but Marcos is playing footsie with the Russians!

Their tangoing began last July 3, the eve of Pil-Am Friendship Day, when Marcos called off the July 4th holiday and declared it to be a regular working day. The following morning, according to LIB sources, the dictator invited all the ambassadors to lunch at Malacanang, practically preventing them from joining US embassy officials at a US Independence Day luncheon.

But the Marcos-Russian dalliance finally came out in the open on the evening of July 4. With wife Imelda and their usual entourage, Marcos attended the solo concert of Russian pianist Yevgeny Malinin at the Cultural Center. Escorting them were none other than the Russian ambassador and his wife. During the intermission, Marcos left but it was certainly not to go to a scheduled dinner with the Americans but simply to go home.

Signs of a serious falling out between Marcos and his American partner? Not really. The snub was merely Marcos' way of showing the US his displeasure at the way it is dragging its feet over the much-awaited loans. Usually, whenever he is sore at the US, Marcos uses the Russians, sometimes the Chinese, to dramatize his pique.

The Russians, however, seemed to enjoy the lover's spat and happily flirted with Marcos. On July 4, they gave an award to Imelda. They also put out full-page ads in the newspapers announcing a trade fair to be held in the Philippines. For his part, Marcos openly encouraged the Russians to do business in the country.

The US, however, was not amused by its stooge's latest fling. To appease his irate partner, Marcos invited US Ambassador Stephen Bosworth to dinner at Malacanang on July 15. There,



he apologized for making July 4 a regular working day which had "inadvertently disappointed our American friendship." He excused his arbitrary move, claiming that local businessmen had appealed to him for relief from holiday wages and work stoppages.

At present, Marcos and the US are back in each other's arms. But this does not mean Marcos has put finis to his short-lived affaire d'coeur with the Russians. The US has still not granted him his heartfelt desire — the IMF credit and other loans. Until then, the Russians can still hope to enjoy more days of playing

Even then the Americans have no fear of being displaced permanently from the affections of Marcos. For they know that he can never forget where he gets his bread and butter. As the song goes, true love never dies.