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# LIBERATION

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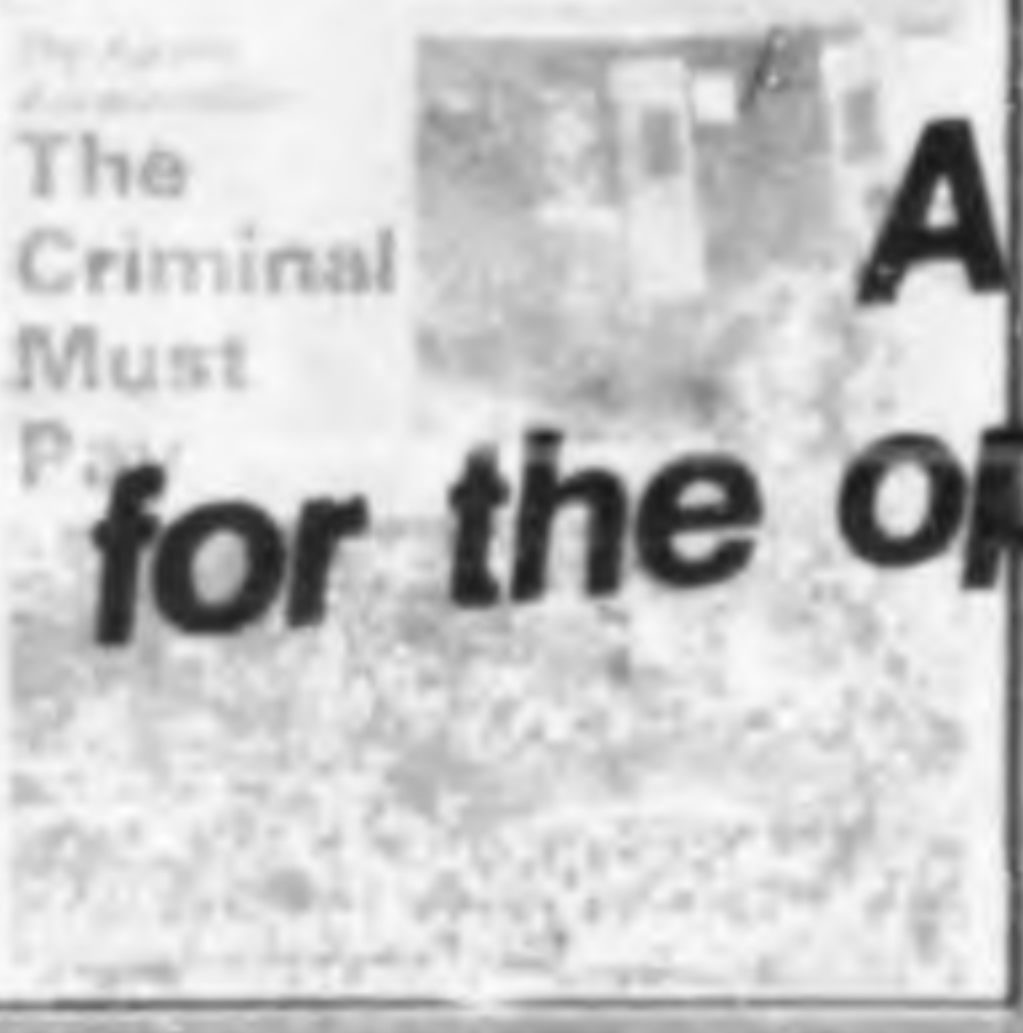
**LIBERATION**



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**1984**

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**A banner year for the open mass movement**

EDITORIAL

# A glance back at '84, a look forward at '85

Months after the August 1983 assassination of Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr., his ghost still haunts the Marcos regime. All throughout 1984, the regime was stalked by a rousing political upheaval and worsening economic debacle that were no spectral visions but tangible nightmares dating back to the last months of 1983. This crisis underscored the most important contradiction riving Philippine society today: the intense polarization of the entire nation, with the Filipino people, on one hand, ranged against the US-Marcos dictatorship, on the other.

To be sure, these acute problems of the regime did not spring overnight but have long and deep roots in the semi-colonial and semi-feudal nature of the social order. Neither did the life-and-death confrontation between the Filipino people and the US-Marcos regime emerge only with the Aquino assassination; it has been there since Marcos, at the instigation of his imperialist masters, declared open war on the Filipino people by imposing martial law in September 1972 and abolishing in one stroke all trappings of republican democracy.

The intensifying economic crisis manifested itself in the forms of a massive foreign debt problem, the outward flight of capital, a series of currency devaluations, the collapse of an increasing number of business enterprises, uncontrollable inflation and widespread unemployment. These, in turn, translated into the deepening misery of the people, especially the basic masses.

At home and abroad, the regime's extreme isolation and politically defensive situation grew. Dramatizing its badly beleaguered position were the surging open protest movement and escalating revolutionary armed struggle nationwide. In urban areas, more groups and individuals among the middle forces united with the basic masses in cause-oriented organizations and massive protest actions. In the countryside, NPA offensives increased in size and frequency and partisan operations extended to a number of towns and cities. Encouraged by the steady progress of guerrilla warfare, more radicalized elements in the middle forces started to open up to the option of revolutionary armed struggle as the most viable and principal means to attain basic changes in the social order.

Alarmed by the rising threats to its puppet regime, especially to its vast economic and military interests in the Philippines, US imperialism cunningly maneuvered to undermine the unity of the anti-dictatorship forces. Using the May 14 Batasang Pambansa elections as bait, the US and its lackey Marcos tantalized traditional politicians with promises of winning 30 percent of the Batasan seats. Quite a number of oppositionists, especially those who were active in electoral politics before martial law, then deserted the surging "Parliament of the Streets." Though majority

of the cause-oriented groups launched a vigorous boycott campaign of the polls, the damage had been done; the oppositionist forces became divided into boycotters and participationists.

But the creation of a rubber-stamp parliament did not solve the dictatorship's grave problems. Neither did its increasing use of naked terror and force in urban and rural areas in a bid to silence dissent and suppress all forms of popular protest. The economic slump continued to deepen, the regime was still blamed for the Aquino murder, and the people's forces regrouped in more militant organizations and alliances pressing for the removal of the regime and an end to US imperialist domination.

This is the situation we now meet in the first quarter of 1985. A situation of crisis and unrest, repression and resistance, reaction and revolution. Once again, the regime and its imperialist sponsors are busy using the coming elections (scheduled for early 1986) to divide the opposition forces by encouraging established political parties to compete among themselves for provincial governorships and town and city mayoralties; and more importantly, to divert public attention away from the central political issue — the need to overthrow the US-Marcos dictatorship.

To some extent, the regime has made some temporary gains in this direction, as evidenced by the frenetic efforts of elite opposition groups to choose candidates for probable "snap" elections and for the local elections. This has caused some confusion, and also divisions, among anti-dictatorship forces, distracting their attention from more basic and immediate issues.

In this light, the National Democratic Front of the Philippines reaffirms its call to the people to persevere in the struggle to overthrow the US-Marcos regime, wielding *all* forms of struggle that are necessary and indispensable for the final overthrow of the dictatorship. It is imperative that all grasp that elections *alone* cannot topple the dictatorship and usher in fundamental changes in the social order.

What is most important today is that all forces, organizations, groups and individuals in the anti-dictatorship front step up the struggle to dismantle the dictatorship, further strengthen the anti-fascist and anti-imperialist front and keep up the pressure on the regime by means of massive street demonstrations, rallies and marches. In this way, we prepare and temper the people to face more readily the new schemes of the dictatorship like the coming local elections.

The year 1985 up to the first half of 1986 will be a very crucial period as far as the entire revolutionary movement is concerned. We call on everyone to greet the new year with renewed vigor and militancy in all spheres of the struggle.

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Cover: 1984 LIB front covers

**Cover story:** Year 1984 saw the overall anti-dictatorship struggle make great strides in the face of the US-Marcos regime's weakening hold on power. In this article, LIB reviews the advances made by the open mass movement and armed struggle and the crises that beset the dictatorship anew in 1984.

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*The National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDF) serves as the organizational framework and channel for the unity, cooperation and coordination of all anti-imperialist and democratic forces, including overseas Filipinos. It traces its beginnings to the establishment of the Preparatory Commission for the National Democratic Front on April 24, 1973. LIBERATION is the official publication of the NDF.*



*Like a moving picture: Huge demonstrations unreeled the year round as political ferment seethed more intensely*

#### COVER STORY

*On today's significant events and issues*

# The top stories of 1984

Surging protest actions in cities and town centers dominate last year's headlines

Like a battered boxer barely able to hold himself up for the next round of the fight, the Marcos regime found itself the target of unrelenting blows from anti-dictatorship forces last year. Though it continued to receive more than just ringside support from its patron, the US, even this was not enough to breathe life into the dying regime.

From an irate people came expressions of protest and opposition in all forms. No amount of pacification, not even the Batasang Pambansa elections, could block the onslaught of anger that had been building up among the people for years. In ever increasing numbers, workers went on strike, students and teachers took to the streets, professionals abandoned their offices, and peasants trekked from the countryside to voice their indignation over starvation wages, unceasing poverty, denial of political freedom and disregard for human rights.

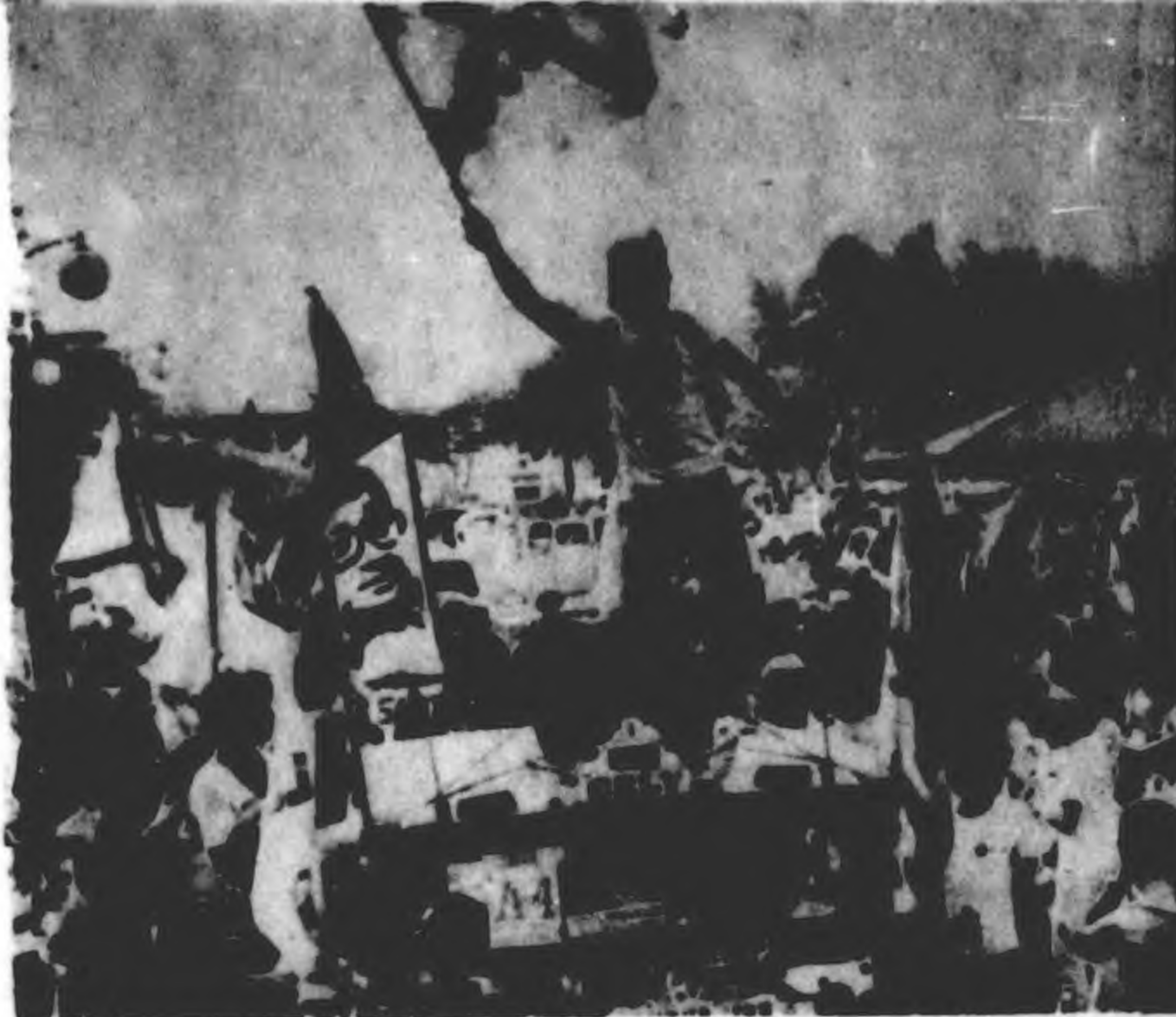
The state responded with characteristic ferocity and viciousness. Picketlines were attacked, rallyists were teargassed, human rights advocates were harassed, dissenters were salvaged. But all this worked to the regime's own undoing. The open mass movement grew in size, breadth and intensity in urban centers as never before, even as guerrilla warfare continued to advance relentlessly nationwide.

This is the story of 1984.

#### ECONOMIC CRISIS

Year 1984 opened with more bad economic tidings for the people. The economy, long in the doldrums, made a turn for the worse when credit money for the country's imports dried up in the wake of the political storms spawned by the Aquino assassination. As a result, thousands of import-dependent businesses closed down, immediately swelling the ranks of the unemployed. From December 1983 to March 1984 alone, almost a million lost their jobs, and many more were laid off during the remainder of 1984.

The slowdown in industrial production also led to a 5.5 percent drop in the gross national product (GNP). As goods vanished from the shelves and production costs rose, inflation shot up to a high of 65 percent, which was as far as doctored government figures would admit. Meantime, the proportion of households unable to meet the poverty line of P2,503 a month rose from 43 percent as



*X means boycott: The election hoopla stirred protests from all sides, especially from the militant ranks of boycotters*

of the end of 1983 to almost 60 percent by mid-1984. Mass discontent was fueled all the more as the people witnessed the regime's profligacy in the face of their economic woes.

Desperate for a financial fix to maintain its shaky hold on power, the debt-addicted regime readily agreed to a strait-jacket of IMF conditions. These included the imposition of more and bigger taxes, increases in service rates for utilities such as electricity and water, a freely floating peso-dollar exchange rate which translated to de facto peso devaluations, curtailment of government subsidies, and a wage-freeze.

### ELECTIONS '84

The regime complemented its promises of bread for a hungry and restive populace with a round of circuses. In early 1984, the Jan. 27 plebiscite was cooked up to drumbeat participation in the scheduled Batasang Pambansa polls in May. The dictator sought to deflect the people's clamor for his ouster by submitting for approval certain constitutional amendments such as the restoration of the vice-presidency and the return to district and provincial representation.

After securing the necessary "mandate" for such changes, the regime went full-steam ahead to gull the masses and the election-hungry traditional opposition into joining the show. The dictator's emergency powers were suspended for the entire poll period, the Comelec's image was cleaned up, and block voting and the old padded voters' list were scrapped. Even a token declaration of war against political dynasties was tossed in for good measure.

In the end, the elections proved to be one of the dirtiest and bloodiest in re-

cent history. To ease down an exceedingly tense political situation, and with US prodding, the regime reluctantly conceded some 30 percent of the Batasan seats to the traditional opposition. But not all were taken by the dictatorship's electoral sleight-of-hand, and those who were, were not mesmerized for long.

### BOYCOTT-LAKBAYAN

The election period itself was time spent by the anti-dictatorship forces denouncing this latest of the regime's ruses and forming a massive boycott movement. To unite the opposition, a common statement entitled "A Call to Meaningful Elections" was drawn up. The statement was signed by 30 leading oppositionists who resolved to boycott the May elections unless six demands were granted: the abrogation of Marcos' decree-making power, repeal of all oppressive laws and decrees, restoration of the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus, general amnesty to all political prisoners, restoration of press freedom, and a general revamp of the Commission on Elections. The demands raised went beyond narrow electoral reforms and struck directly at Marcos' dictatorial powers.

The Feb. 14 deadline passed with the regime giving out only the most superficial concessions. An all-out boycott of the polls was then pushed into high gear. The next three months were spent by the pro-boycott anti-dictatorship forces in a vigorous campaign that sought not only to urge the people to boycott the sham elections but to project the basic issues of the regime's continuing political tyranny and the people's abject poverty. Highlighting the boycott campaign was the LAKBAYAN or Lakad ng Bayan Para sa Kalayaan on March 1 to 7, a marathon protest action that saw peasants, wor-

kers, students, professionals and other groups march from 16 points north and south of Manila to rally support for the boycott cause and the overall anti-dictatorship struggle.

All in all, 14,000 people snubbed the regime's voting booths to register at the various boycott centers set up, and 10 million or 34 percent of the estimated 29.5 million qualified voters registered their protest in various forms — this included those who did not register in the first place, those who registered but did not vote, and those who trooped to the polls but spoiled their ballots.

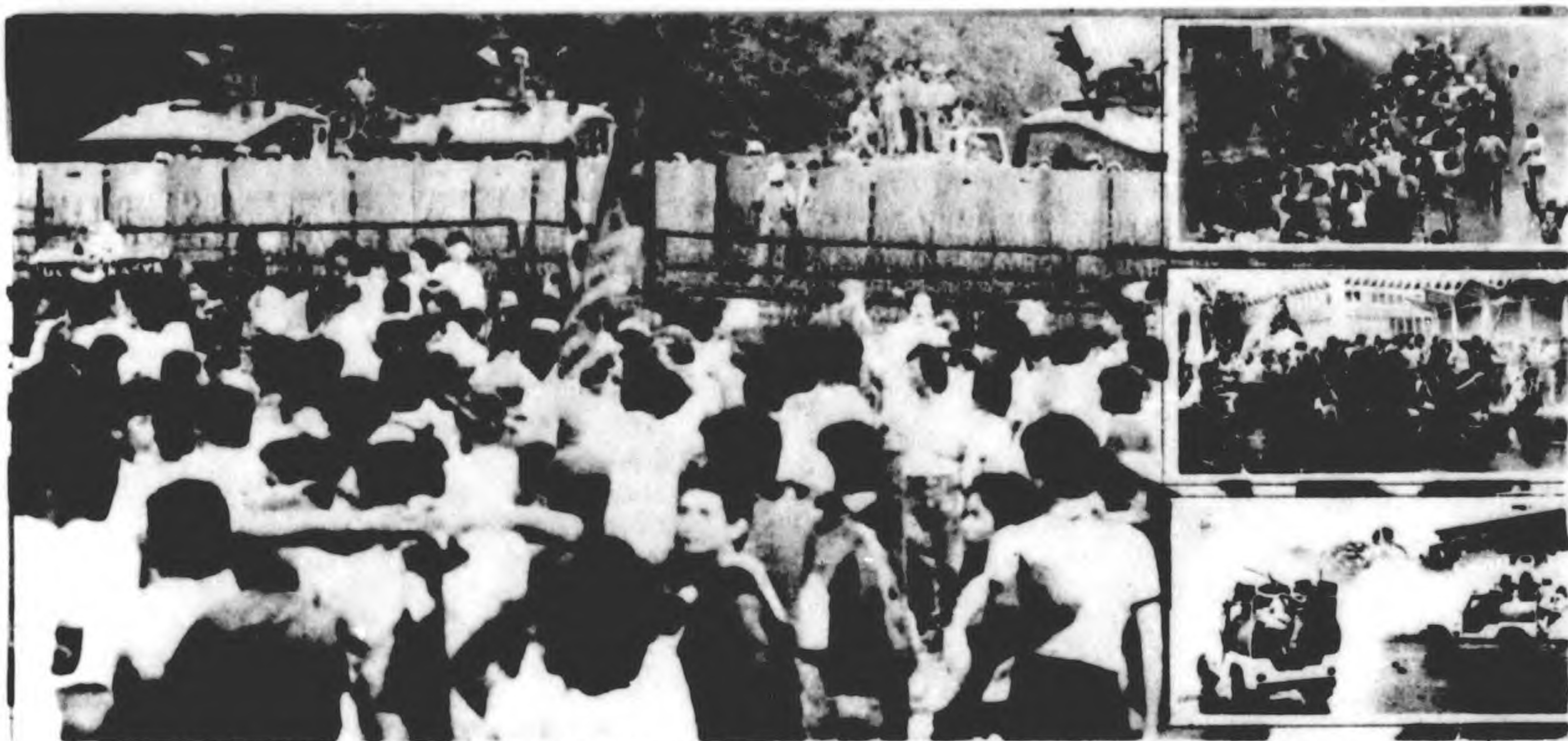
But the boycott movement's most important achievement was showing the people that the best way of attaining their just demands is by transcending the established bounds set by the regime and firmly asserting their right to engage in militant forms of action.

### PARLIAMENT OF THE STREETS

The message was not lost on the people. Almost immediately after the elections, the streets of Manila and other towns and urban centers in the provinces resounded with huge multi-sectoral demonstrations which raised the nagging issues left unresolved by the sham elections. In terms of intensity, breadth, forms of protest, main forces and political content, 1984 was definitely a banner year for the open protest movement.

Metro Manila, Davao City, Bacolod, and the cities and town centers in Bataan and Pampanga were the areas most intensely covered by the wave of protests. In these places, the open mass movement reached its peak from July to September when an average of more than three major mass actions were launched per month.

A series of firsts was achieved in 1984: the biggest May 1 rally in Manila (60,000



*Bridge of broken dreams: Mendiola became a favorite rally site as tear gas and water cannon attacks mounted everywhere*

workers), the big rally at the Luneta on Aug. 21 (350,000), the demonstration in front of the US embassy on July 13 (15,000 participants) and the 15-hour rally-vigil in Mendiola on Sept. 21-22. In Mindanao, an average of 10,000 to 20,000 people joined the island-wide protests last Aug. 21, with a high of 35,000 massing up in Butuan City. Fifty-thousand persons all over Mindanao also joined the nationwide peasant campaign launched last October, and an estimated 200,000 were mobilized for the human rights campaign last December. In the Visayas, as many as 30,000 rallied last Aug. 21 in Iloilo, Cebu, Tagbilaran and Negros. On Sept. 21, a total of 120,000 people all over the Visayas protested the 12th anniversary of the martial law declaration, and 220,000 assailed the sordid human rights situation. Of this, 35,000 marched through several barrios in Negros in a Human Rights Day Lakbayan that culminated in a 100,000-strong mass up rally in Bacolod.

Year 1984 also witnessed the revival and development of other forms of protest. All in all, 22 people's strikes (*welgang bayan*) were launched in 1984, 16 of them in Mindanao. Six area-wide strikes in Bataan, Northeastern Mindanao, Southeastern Mindanao and Southern Mindanao took place, along with five conglomerate-wide strikes and one federation-wide strike, making a total of 12 coordinated strikes last year. In the last quarter of 1984 alone, seven *lakbayans* or people's marches, were launched in different parts of the country.

Indicating the rising level of militancy were the symbols targeted for popular attack and the venues chosen for holding protest actions. From streets and plazas, mass actions spread to the most concrete and visible symbols of fascist

and imperialist power—the US embassy, Mendiola (the gateway to Malacanang), the Central Bank and other conduits of foreign loans, the oil companies, and police and military headquarters. In Central Luzon, rallies were staged right at the doorstep of that huge symbol of US military might, Clark Air Base.

But it was in terms of political content that the open protest movement scored the most in 1984—not only did it clearly assert the demand to dismantle the US-Marcos dictatorship, it also called for the launching of higher levels of struggle. Increasingly, propaganda in the open mass movement began to acknowledge the legitimacy of armed struggle; more importantly, the democratic coalition government was projected as the only viable alternative to the US-Marcos regime.

#### REPRESSION OF THE OPEN MASS MOVEMENT

Finding itself embattled on all fronts, the dictatorship unleashed one of its most vicious series of assaults on the open mass movement. In a complete reversal of its pre-election stance not to openly attack dissenters, it mounted a selective but systematic terror campaign designed to stem the people's rising militancy.

Workers continuously stood at the receiving end of the state's brutality as police and military forces assaulted their picket lines at the start of the year. The attacks resulted in the death of two workers, injuries to 146 and the arrest of at least 80 strikers. In July, another bloody clash, this time at the Artex Development Co., led to the arrest of 27 workers, injuries to scores of strikers, and the disappearance of four others, now presumed dead. Days before the elections, small student marches held in Manila were violently dispersed, with some participants

arrested, and others reported abducted.

After the polls, the dictator brushed aside all pussyfooting and once more assumed an openly belligerent stance against the militant mass movement. The setting up of checkpoints, the reactivation of secret marshals and the arbitrary dispersal of the July 23 state-of-the-nation rally at Liwasang Bonifacio signalled a new season of repression. Following in close succession were the teargassing of workers' rallies on Aug. 12 and 17, the Mendiola stand-off on Sept. 22, and the Welcome Rotonda indignation rally on Sept. 27, that resulted in the death of a bystander and the wounding of many other bystanders and rallyists.

In October, the fascist state reacted to the people's strikes that swept Davao and other cities and towns in Mindanao by arresting hundreds of participants and launching military raids and zoning operations against entire barangays. In November, workers once again bore the brunt of repression when a woman worker of a strike-bound firm in Valenzuela, Metro Manila was slain at the picket line. And, in a gruesome finale to a year of fascist terror against the open mass movement, police and military troops harassed and tried to disperse rallyists commemorating Human Rights Day last Dec. 10 in front of two AFP camps in Cubao.

#### BIGGER, MORE FREQUENT NPA OFFENSIVES

Even as the regime's rampaging attacks on militant protest actions failed to quell mass resistance, in the countryside and cities, armed struggle advanced steadfastly.

The year saw the increasing capability of the New People's Army in utilizing bigger formations and launching more daring attacks on the regime's armed minions.



*No way out for Marcos: Escalating NPA offensives and protests against the US and Aquino's slaying portend greater problems*

In many instances, company- or under-sized battalion-strength NPA forces engaged enemy troopers in fierce gunbattles, inflicting heavy casualties, and hauling in scores of high-powered rifles. Another striking feature was the use of commandeered vehicles to facilitate swift assault and withdrawal of forces.

As early as January, a 200-strong NPA contingent in Agusan del Norte boarded 12 trucks and blocked three points along the national highway in Bo. Dulag and disarmed Pepsi Cola company guards, and the local police and PC of a total of 20 firearms. Later, in October, a similar number of Red fighters in Surigao del Sur mounted machine guns on dumptrucks commandeered from a nearby logging company and swooped down on the PC headquarters in Liangga, killing more than 18 troopers in a five-hour gunbattle.

Soon after, on Dec. 10, the same number of NPA guerrillas raided the more than 8,000-hectare NDC-Guthrie Plantations, Inc. in Agusan del Sur.

But no doubt, the biggest NPA banner story of the year was the slaying of Northern Police District chief, Gen. Tomas Karingal, on May 24 in Quezon City. Claiming responsibility for his death was the Alex Boncayao Brigade of the NPA, named after a worker leader who joined the NPA and was killed in a clash with the military in 1983. The NPA said Karingal was punished for his "blood debts to the Filipino people."

**AGRAVA BOARD DECISION**

As the armed resistance and the open protest movement battered the dictatorship, it was dealt still another stinging blow when the majority report of the Agrava Fact-Finding Board found the regime's highest-ranking military officers indictable for the assassination of Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr.

The board's damning pronouncement served to expose further the true role of the military as the protector of the interests of the Marcos ruling clique.

But the ballyhoo over the report soon proved to be a cunning device to temporarily appease an enraged people. Despite the board's findings, the military officers and men named as conspirators were merely suspended and ordered confined to quarters, while AFP chief-of-staff Gen. Fabian Ver was allowed to go on leave.

Suspicious of an impending rehabilitation of Ver by Marcos were further stoked when military manifestos professing loyalty to the discredited general were issued within days of the board's announcement of its report. Meanwhile, as the trial of the military conspirators progressed, a not-guilty verdict for Ver by the regime's Sandiganbayan court seems more and more imminent.

**MARCOS' HEALTH/ RUMORS OF A COUP**

As if to echo his regime's own moribund state, death once more stalked Marcos toward the end of the year. For a full three weeks, the dictator was conspicuously absent from the scene, with government media attempting to fill up the void by releasing file videos and retouched photos showing Marcos in the pink of health.

But notwithstanding official denials of the President's ill health, his absence was enough to generate rumors that a military-civilian junta would soon be taking over from him. The regime's uncertain state of affairs also led some of the dictator's underlings to position themselves in the limelight, the better to project themselves as possible replacements.

Struck by the possibility of a power

vacuum even before the 1987 presidential polls take place, an emboldened opposition hastily moved to forge ranks and select a presidential candidate from among themselves. The Convenor Group, as the trio of ex-Sen. Lorenzo Tanada, Mrs. Corazon Aquino and businessman Jaime Ongpin came to be called, hastily drew up a list of 16 possible presidential candidates. Not to be outdone, the group of former Sens. Salvador Laurel and Eva Kalaw formed their own band called the National Unification Committee.

**U.S. INTERVENTION**

Meantime, the US stepped up its behind-the-scenes maneuvers to woo the legal opposition away from the path of militant mass struggles and towards the narrow road of parliamentary politics. Increasingly anxious over news of NPA victories in the countryside, the US made a frenetic bid to reconcile the anti-Marcos elite with the ruling clique to bolster unity against the growing revolutionary forces.

Its ace card was the 1984 parliamentary elections, a power-sharing scheme where the bourgeois opposition was given 30 percent of Batasan seats. Not long after came another US-influenced ruse: the Agrava board majority report naming General Ver, the regime's number one general, as a conspirator in the Aquino assassination.

The consequent installation of US fair-haired boy Gen. Fidel Ramos as Ver's successor, served as ritual cleansing for the regime. The ceremony came with a "showering of gifts" on the regime—close to \$1 billion in bilateral economic aid, the granting of the IMF loan, and the promised beefing up of the AFP.

Victoria Manalo

# A revolutionary blueprint for unity

NDF issues revised draft program for revolutionary struggle

There were no fireworks and whistles to greet its presentation on New Year's Day. But people who had long awaited the issuance of the new program of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines did not fail to appreciate its momentous significance and value to the advancement of the revolutionary united front against the US-Marcos regime.

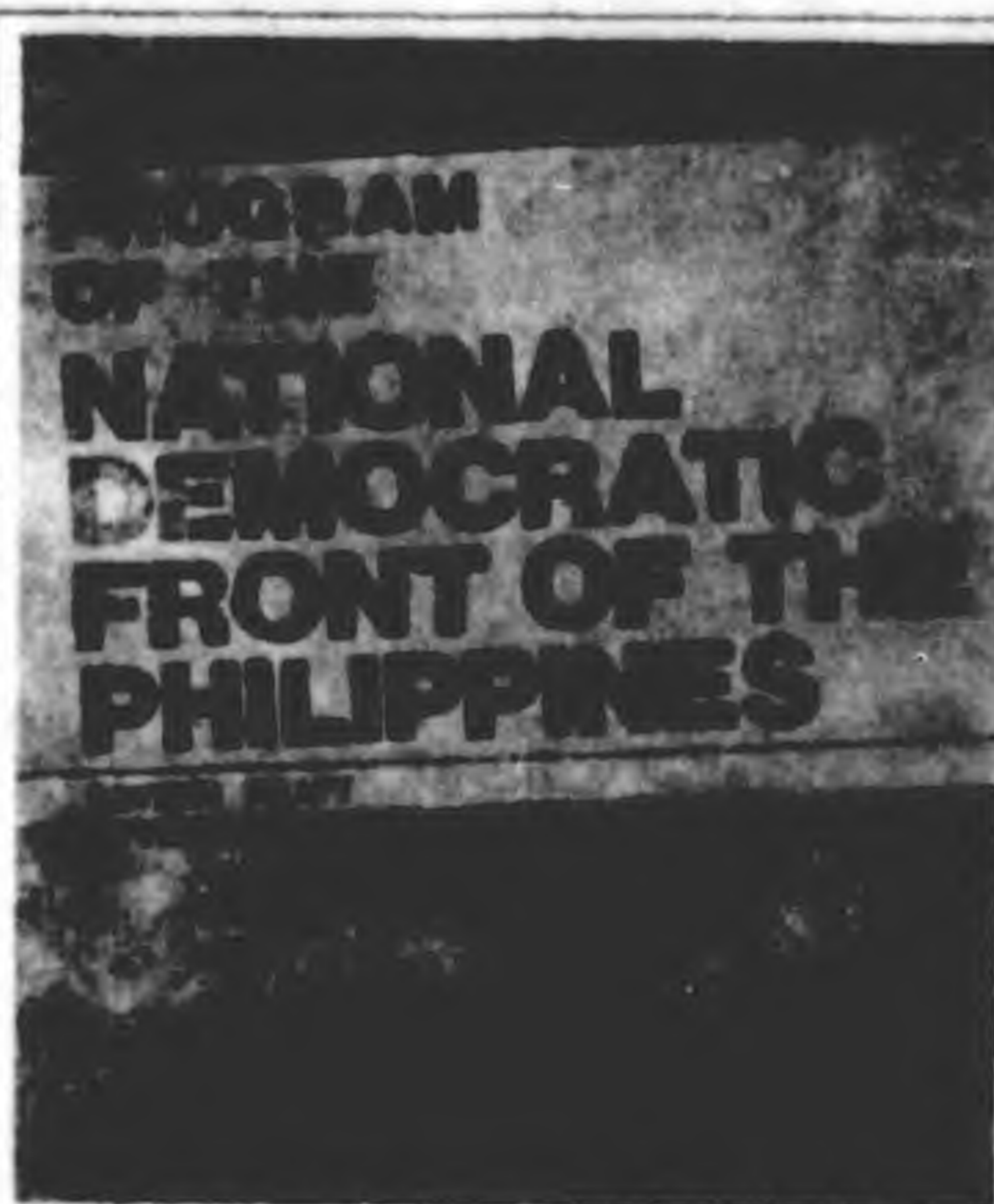
Released this Jan. 1, 1985, the revised draft program of the NDF reaffirms the call to "unite the Filipino people and overthrow the tyrannical rule of US imperialism and the local reactionaries." It likewise underscores the necessity of waging a protracted people's war, especially armed struggle, to achieve national liberation and genuine democracy.

The 1985 program comes in the midst of the current upsurge in the open democratic protest movement and the emergence of new forces in the anti-dictatorship front, following the Aquino assassination. It lays down the principles and popular bases of unity that would bind all revolutionary and patriotic forces, organizations and individuals seeking an end to dictatorial rule and the establishment of a democratic, independent and just social order.

The new draft program has gone through more than a decade of evolution and reflects the development of the NDF. The first program, released on April 24, 1973, marked the establishment of the Preparatory Commission for the NDF. Comprising the Preparatory Commission were representatives of leading revolutionary organizations like the Kabataang Makabayan, the Communist Party of the Philippines and the CNL.

In 1977, the wealth of experience from several years of revolutionary practice led to the elaboration of the initial program's ten points. In 1982, a year after the national democratic revolution entered the advanced substage of the strategic defensive, the 1973/1977 NDF Ten-Point Program was revised to lay down a more detailed program of government and to explain the process by which victory is to be achieved.

Through all these years, the NDF sought untiringly to unite, develop and coordinate all possible forces and individuals for greater participation in the anti-dictatorship struggle. It established basic organizational structures on the international, national, regional, provincial, city, town and barrio levels to serve as the firm foundation of the democratic coalition government.



Suggestions for improving it are welcome

To date, the NDF stands as the most developed organizational expression of the revolutionary united front. As the 1985 program states, "It provides a framework and channel for the unity and coordination of all groups and individuals adhering to, and advancing, the general line of fighting for national liberation and genuine democracy." Membership in the NDF is voluntary, and no single political party or group will be allowed to dominate the organization or monopolize the decision-making processes in the NDF's leading and subordinate bodies.

The present draft program is divided

into three parts. The first part is on the "People's War and the National Democratic Front," the second is on the "General Program" and the third is on the "Specific Program." The 12-point general program (see box) consists of the NDF's long-term tasks. "These remain valid and binding on all members of the united front for the entire course of the national democratic revolution and provide the strategic guidance and direction for the implementation of the immediate tasks," says the program.

On the other hand, the specific program consists of the immediate tasks to be carried out. According to the program, "These are required by the current conditions and are directed towards the fulfillment of the general program. From time to time, these specific tasks may be adjusted or modified according to changes or developments in the current situation." These specific tasks are subdivided into tasks in the political, military, economic, social welfare, cultural and educational, and foreign relations spheres.

Towards the immediate ratification of the 1985 draft program, the NDF Secretariat is enjoining all revolutionary mass organizations, comrades, allies and friends to seriously study the program and forward further suggestions for enriching and improving it. In this connection, **LIBERATION** shall publish such comments, criticisms and suggestions, in the hope of generating the widest possible feedback on the new program.

LIB Staff

## The 12-point general program of the NDF

1. Unite the Filipino people to overthrow the tyrannical rule of US imperialism and the local reactionaries.
2. Wage a people's war to win total, nationwide victory.
3. Establish a democratic coalition government and a people's democratic republic.
4. Integrate the revolutionary armed forces into a single national revolutionary army.
5. Uphold and promote the free exercise of the people's basic democratic rights.
6. Terminate all unequal relations with the United States and other foreign entities.
7. Complete the process of agrarian land reform, raise rural production through co-operatives and modernize agriculture.
8. Carry out national industrialization as the leading factor in economic development.
9. Guarantee the right to employment, raise the people's living standards, and expand social services the sooner after establishing democratic state power.
10. Promote a patriotic, scientific and cultural renaissance and ensure free public education.
11. Support and foster the self-determination of the Latin and Caribbean people and their liberation.
12. Carry out a revolutionary, anti-imperialist and peace-loving foreign policy.



A pledge of commitment: KM delegates signing Congress documents

LIBPHOTOS

forces of reaction, the KM launched a militant protest movement nationwide that exposed and condemned the iniquities of the socio-political system. It spearheaded historic mass actions of such depth and magnitude never before witnessed in those times, to arouse and mobilize the greatest number of people for the struggle."

There is no yardstick that can measure the other invaluable contributions of KM to the revolutionary struggle, noted the NDF. The KM is a founding and leading core member of the NDF. It has played a leading role in the anti-imperialist movement. It has served as a training ground for many cadres and activists now found in every field of revolutionary endeavor; to not a few of them, the NDF said, we credit the opening and development of some of our present guerrilla fronts.

The NDF called upon the KM, as the leading revolutionary organization of the youth, to boldly pursue the central political objective in the current period: the escalation of the overall revolutionary effort to overthrow the US-Marcos dictatorship and achieve a decisive victory for the national democratic revolution. To achieve this objective, the KM should carry forward the following key tasks (see box).

"In fulfilling all these urgent tasks and in strengthening itself, the KM thereby strengthens the NDF," said the message. "The formation of the KM on a nationwide scale constitutes the youth-student sector's main contribution in building up the NDF and advancing the struggle to topple the US-Marcos regime."

The Congress also discussed and ratified the KM constitution, general and specific program, organizational guide and finance orientation document. Also approved were resolutions recognizing the contributions of KM founding chairman Jose Ma. Sison and nationalist Lorenzo Tanada, and extending support to the anti-imperialist struggles of the peoples of Nicaragua, Chile and El Salvador. One resolution expelled and repudiated former KM chairman Nilo Tayag, now a Marcos apologist, for his betrayal of KM principles.

Sixteen delegates were elected to the KM National Council. Among those elected were Joaquin Evangelista, chairman, Antonio Guevarra, vice-chairman, and Joven Peleador, secretary, and the representatives of local KM chapters in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. The next Congress will be held in 1987.

The Congress also paid tribute to the KM hero-martyrs who have laid down their lives in the struggle. Among them are Arthur Garcia, Charlie del Rosario, Eugene Grey, Magtanggol Roque and Johnny Escandor. "They left us a valuable and precious legacy," said the NDF message, "that will endure long after the much hated dictatorship is gone: that commitment is not simply a slogan to utter but a life to live in the service of our people."

Leon Fortaleza

## Youth on the march

KM holds 4th National Congress



With clenched fists raised, the hooded youths solemnly recited the pledge of commitment. Then, one by one, they

filed behind the wooden table in front of the small hut and signed their revolutionary names on the document there. Above them gleamed a red silk banner inscribed with the old Tagalog letter K inside a gold-edged triangle.

It was Nov. 30, 1984 and the signing marked a dramatic finish to a historic occasion — the Fourth National Congress of the Kabataang Makabayan (KM), the first such meeting after 14 years and the first since the KM's illegalization under fascist martial rule.

Founded on Nov. 30, 1964, the KM had indeed much to celebrate that warm evening somewhere in Southern Luzon. The Congress coincided with the organization's 20th anniversary and 20th year of revolutionary struggle against the US-Marcos dictatorship. It also signified a higher level of development of the youth-student movement as a full-blown political movement in the fight to overthrow the regime.

Held from Nov. 26 to 30 last year, the Congress was attended by 40 delegates and visitors from various parts of the country. The KM delegates came from Northern Luzon, Central Luzon, Manila-Rizal, Southern Tagalog, Bicol, Panay, Negros, Cebu, Leyte, Samar and five regions in Mindanao. The Congress summed up the KM's experiences, elected its national

leadership and set its tasks and direction in the coming years.

In its solidarity message to the KM Congress, the NDF hailed the many valuable contributions of this revolutionary youth organization to the struggle for national liberation and democracy. Said the NDF, "At a time when it was extremely perilous to do so because of the strong

### NDF Call to the KM

1. Propagate the national democratic line in a comprehensive way, giving special attention to advancing the anti-imperialist movement in the light of current US moves to derail the rapidly growing revolutionary movement and forestall the collapse of the crumbling regime.
2. Help develop the urban revolutionary mass movement, by forging the strongest unity with the worker masses and tirelessly conducting propaganda and organizing work among the middle forces.
3. Consolidate and expand the KM as the central organization of the revolutionary youth striving to raise youth-student struggles to a higher political level so as to help further weaken and isolate the regime.
4. Actively support and participate in the armed struggle, by providing political, material and personnel support to revolutionary armed forces like the NPA and forming combat support networks and self-defense committees in urban areas.
5. Develop a vigorous international solidarity work to generate the strongest and broadest possible political and material support for the Philippine revolution.



# 'A revolutionary faith that moves mountains'

CNL stresses political movement of Christians

... as the people's war advances into a bigger stage and the middle forces are called upon to assume bigger responsibilities in broadening their participation in the campaign to dismantle the US-Marcos dictatorship and to expand public opinion supportive of the armed struggle of the people, CNL realizes the necessity to reach beyond the boundaries of the institutional church people and conduct political work among the Christian faithful who wish to develop political involvement in the context of their Christian faith. There is thus a new stress in CNL work, namely, the political movement of Christians.

Thus stated the Christians for National Liberation (CNL), an NDF member organization, in a statement marking the 13th anniversary of their founding last Feb. 17, 1985. This new stress on the CNL's political work is designed to mobilize masses of Christian believers for a broader participation in current political struggles. It bespeaks of the steady advancement of CNL work among Christians and church people.

The CNL has come a long way since its early years. From its original 72 founding members in 1972 in Manila, it now has a registered membership of more than a few thousands of church people. It has spread out to establish cells, sub-chapters and chapters in dioceses, seminaries, congregations and parishes in all regions of the archipelago, embracing not only rank-and-file priests, pastors, sisters, seminarians and church workers, but also church leaders. Thus, the CNL can rightfully claim to be a "national revolution-



Opening doors to include all Christians

nary mass movement of church people committed to help liberate the entire nation from the US-Marcos dictatorship and bring the Filipino people to liberty and a better life."

But even as it prided itself in its achievements, the CNL warned of the ongoing moves of the dictatorship to manipulate the churches, as part of its overall efforts to arrest the process of its disintegration and collapse. "The battle over the moral influence of the Church has become crucial," said the CNL. In this light, the people should be alert to

such ploys as the "unity and reconciliation proposals, active non-violence, promotion of fundamentalist religion and spirituality through renewed proselytism and rabid religious fanaticism, the anti-communist scare, black propaganda on the Theology of Liberation" which are nothing else but "pure deception and diversion from the real problems of the people (as well as) an "anti-people interpretation of Christ and the Church."

These moves by the regime, working in close collaboration with reactionary church leaders, only goes to show that it will leave no stone unturned in stabilizing itself and regaining control over the people. The CNL vowed not to let this happen by doubling, or even tripling its efforts to expose such moves of cooptation while further advancing the national democratic movement in the Christian churches.

The CNL further called on its members and allies to "awaken the multitude of church people to the liberating component of Christian discipleship and mission" by teaching the "tens of millions of Christian believers in the entire country about a revolutionary faith that moves mountains and renews the face of the earth." It also urged them to strengthen their solidarity with the people's mass struggles, "both open and clandestine, legal and underground, unarmed and armed, sectoral and multi-sectoral." Lastly, it called on all Filipino Christians to "join the march of the pilgrim people towards a new promised land where justice, equality, love and freedom will flow like milk and honey."

Abdul Ulap

New evangelists: More and more church people are widening their political involvement



# Making great strides

CPP marks 16th anniversary



The Communist Party of the Philippines commemorated last Dec. 26 its 16th anniversary "amid great strides

in all fields of revolutionary endeavor," said the CPP publication *Ang Bayan*. In an editorial entitled "From Small and Weak, To Big and Strong," *Ang Bayan* cited the recent gains made by the CPP since its reestablishment on Dec. 26, 1968.

From a handful of members then, the CPP now has more than 30,000 members assigned in all lines of revolutionary work throughout the archipelago. Its military arm, the New People's Army, has gone way beyond the 20,000 guerrillas reported in 1983. They are armed with more than 10,000 high-powered rifles and are deployed in 59 guerrilla fronts and provinces, out of 73 provinces in the country. In the barrios, there are now over 6,000 revolutionary mass organizations, while in the urban areas, the CPP exercises leadership or effective influence in more than 350 factories and enterprises and in 300 schools. *Ang Bayan* also reported that more than 60,000 national democrat mass activists are now spread throughout the land.

The CPP attributed its big advances to the implementation of the correct political line and the readiness of Party members, NPA fighters and the revolutionary masses to shoulder all needed sacrifices.

A founding member of the NDF, the CPP has for years now been one of the strongest and most consistent organizations in the anti-dictatorship struggle. "Of all political forces ranged against the dictatorship," *Ang Bayan* said, "the Party has had the most extensive and deepest roots among the toiling masses and the rest of the Filipino people. It has the most solid organization and the strongest and most resolute armed forces. And it has the closest links with progressive and revolutionary organizations and peoples abroad."

*Ang Bayan* called on revolutionary forces to exert their "utmost in the continuing efforts to intensify guerrilla warfare and to establish stable guerrilla bases, and to consolidate and expand the open mass movement and the national united front against the US-Marcos dictatorship."



Honing for bigger targets: NPA guerrillas practice target shooting

## More assaults, more victories

NPA intensifies offensives in Central and Southern Luzon

### IN CENTRAL LUZON

The break of dawn on Dec. 16 signalled a new day in more ways than one for residents of Sta. Ana, Pampanga. On that day, at 5 a.m., the town's hated mayor, Magno Maniago Sr., was punished with death by partisans of the New People's Army. According to *Himagsik*, revolutionary mass newspaper in Central Luzon, so loathsome was the slain mayor that people of neighboring towns and even his own relatives rejoiced at the news of his death.

Maniago gained notoriety as a rabid counter-revolutionary and as one of the most corrupt public officials in Pampanga. He began his anti-people activities as early as 1965 when he became a sergeant assigned to the PC-Criminal Investigation Service in Pampanga and collaborated with the Sumulong-led Hukbong Mapagpalaya ng Bayan (HMB). The HMB under Sumulong's leadership degenerated into a band of murderers and extortionists that victimized residents of Angeles City and other towns in Pampanga. At that time, Maniago also personally led violent assaults against peaceful rallies and ruthlessly tortured captured activists and revolutionary leaders in the province.

In 1969, he became mayor with Sumulong's help. After two months, he started tipping off members of the HMB and ordered the arrest of several cadres and townspeople of Sta. Ana. Maniago

went on to organize abusive paramilitary units such as the Barrio Self-Defense Unit and the Civilian Home Defense Force. His activities led to the death, arrest and torture of several revolutionary cadres and town residents. In these iniquitous undertakings, he connived closely with the AFP units stationed in Sto. Domingo, Mexico, Pampanga.

Meantime, Maniago's 15 years as mayor were marked with some of the worst public crimes in the province's history. Foremost among this was the anomaly concerning the town's flood control system. Serious defects led to the periodic inundation of ten barrios, affecting 20,000 people. Everyone in town, from big businessmen to jeepney and tricycle drivers, was also forced to "contribute" to the mayor's *tong* collection.

Elsewhere in Central Luzon, NPA partisans also rid the area of other enemies of the people. Last Nov. 28, Red fighters killed Sgt. Villano "Kintin" Solomon, the notorious chief of police of Carranglan, Nueva Ecija, and seized his armalite and rounds of ammunition. Solomon actively engaged in counter-insurgency activities and set up a spy network in the barrios of Carranglan that informed the military on NPA activities. Besides this, he was a landgrabber and extortionist, who would order peasants who complained about him, beaten up.

These past two months, a PC sergeant, a CHDF chief and a notorious robber were also meted the death penalty by

# Clashes in Lanao

MNLF-BMA renews drive  
against AFP

Despite the continuous massive deployment of the regime's troops in Lanao del Sur in recent months, the Moro National Liberation Front-Bangsa Moro Army (MNLF-BMA) has inflicted heavy losses on the military.

According to *Mindanao*, the NDF publication in that island, the regime began pouring its troops mainly into Maguing, Ramin and Lumba a Bayabao towns in Lanao del Sur last June. The objective: to crush the stiff resistance of the Maranaos led by Panontongan Al Sabbar (also known as Commander Narra) of the Lanao Revolutionary Committee, the territorial organization of the MNLF-BMA in the area. While government press releases said that only two army battalions had been fielded in the area, BMA sources said there were actually much more. Apart from the Civilian Home Defense Forces (CHDF) and the Philippine Constabulary-Integrated National Police (PC-INP), several army battalions (the 6th, 25th and 40th IBs) have also been deployed, supported by helicopter gunships, T-28 planes, tanks, howitzers and 81-mm

the NPA in separate operations in Bataan, Pangasinan and Zambales.

## IN LILIW, LAGUNA

Liliw is a town in Laguna famous for its idyllic resorts and dainty handicrafts. It is also famous as the scenic venue of TV laundry soap commercials portraying women washing clothes along rushing, rocky streams. But today, there is more to Liliw than its placid, tourist-brochure image.

Last Oct. 14, NPA guerrillas raided the town hall of Liliw and confiscated four M16s, a Garand, two carbines, a pistol, rounds of ammunition, a radio transmitter and other military equipment. The lightning raid lasted five minutes, with not a single shot fired by the Red fighters.

The offensive was a big surprise — and embarrassment — to the regime and military. Never did they think that the NPA would be so daring as to raid a tourist town barely an hour's ride from Metro Manila. For the townspeople of Liliw, however, the raid was a welcome event. For years, they had aired complaints about military abuses, but to no avail.



A formidable force: BMA platoon drilling with high-powered rifles

and 60-mm mortars.

As in the past, the regime tried to use Maranao troopers under its command to act as guides and frontliners against their fellow-Maranaos. The entire operation, dubbed "Operation Linis," is only the latest anti-Moro rampage to be unleashed by the dictatorship in the province.

The controlled media played its role well in churning endless tales of mi-

litary victories by the regime's troops. But the Moro people know better than to believe these lies, *Mindanao* said. For in the months from June to August, it was the MNLF-BMA which scored victories against the real terrorists of the state. For instance:

► On June 23, enraged Moro farmers, aided by a squad of BMA guerrillas, ambushed enemy troopers in Barangay Kandong, Maguing, killing seven soldiers,

and seven others wounded. The Red fighters confiscated four M16s, 998 bullets, five packs and other military equipment. Pitch darkness, however, prevented the NPAs from seizing all of the soldiers' weapons before retreating. Among the enemy casualties was the military unit's commanding officer, 1Lt. Noel Bulan, a fresh graduate of the Philippine Military Academy.

The well-executed ambush, reported *Silyab*, was followed by partisan operations in other Bicol provinces. On Sept. 23, an NPA sparrow unit shot and killed a PC sergeant in Guinobatan, Albay for his many anti-people crimes. On Nov. 4, a CHDF member, Marcelino Awa, was also killed by the NPA in San Roque, Bato, Camarines Sur, and his M16 taken from him. Awa was responsible for the death of a cadre and the salvaging of a civilian, as well as the mauling of other barrio folk. Apart from serving as a guide in military operations, and leading troops in encirclement campaigns against the NPA, he was also a cattle rustler. The relieved masses thanked the NPA for getting rid of this abusive CHDF member.

Victoria Manalo and Leon Fortaleza

With the raid, which has made the NPA presence felt in the province, the people now know that the military can no longer commit abuses with impunity and get away scot-free.

To signify their gratitude and support, Liliw residents who witnessed the raid warmly applauded the NPA fighters. There were no TV cameras to record the scene, but the stories that are now being told and retold about the raid will preserve that signal event for posterity.

## IN BICOL

It was 12:45 a.m., Sept. 8, and thick clouds covered the face of the moon. Smugly, 16 troopers of the Philippine Army Scout Ranger Battalion walked along the road leading to San Jose, Pilar, Sorsogon, confident that they were safe under cover of darkness.

Suddenly, the thunder and flashes of automatic rifle fire shattered the night's stillness. Unknowingly, the Scout Rangers had walked directly into an ambush staged by NPA guerrillas in Bicol.

According to *Silyab*, revolutionary mass newspaper in the region, the hour-long battle resulted in eight soldiers killed

The troopers belonged to a unit which was responsible for the murder of a woman and her father-in-law, and for the looting which took place in the barrio the previous day.

► On June 24, a BMA squad clashed with a platoon of the 6th IB. The encounter left nine enemy soldiers dead.

► On June 28, 15 troopers died while seven others were wounded in a foiled attempt to overrun a BMA camp in Kairandangon, Barangay Taoncopan, Lumba a Bayabao. The unsuccessful raid, which was conducted with the use of tanks, was repulsed by the BMA when one of the tanks lost its rails during the attack. On the same day, another BMA unit killed six soldiers and wounded two others in Bato-Bato, Lumba a Bayabao.

► On July 14, BMA guerrillas attacked and overran an enemy detachment in Maguing. A barrage of grenades from an M79 caused panic among the surprised government troopers. The Moro fighters disabled an armored personnel carrier and seized its mounted machine gun. A BMA guerrilla was killed in the assault.

► On July 16, BMA troopers opened fire on seven soldiers of the 6th IB who were riding atop a Ford Fiera in Barangay Patani in Ramain. Four of the enemy soldiers were killed while three civilians were injured.

► On July 30, 17 BMA fighters repulsed an assault by 150 heavily-armed soldiers, killing 20 of them and wounding 12 others. In the encounter, two Moro fighters were killed and two wounded. The guerrillas seized an M203 and two Mi6s.

► On July 31, eight government troopers were killed in a brief exchange of gunfire when a BMA unit lured the enemy unit into a trap. Six M203s, one machine gun and a radiogram were confiscated by the guerrillas.

► On Aug. 3, a BMA sparrow unit liquidated two troopers from the 442nd PC Company in Camp Amai, Palepale, Marawi City. On the same day, another fierce battle broke out between Moro guerrillas and fascist troopers in Basale. Although casualties on the enemy side remained unknown, residents reported having seen the following day a military bus loaded with dead bodies and injured soldiers.

Lanao del Sur is just one province in Mindanao where the Marcos regime has stepped up its military thrust. This heightened drive, which is being steadfastly resisted by the Moro masses as well as by their equally oppressed Christian brothers, is rooted in the government's overall drive to exploit the island's rich resources and deliver the benefits from these to foreign companies.

The contested areas in Mindanao are well-known for their natural bounty. The flatlands enjoy natural irrigation while the rest of the area is still largely

covered with virgin forests. With an eye on the profits that the exploitation of these resources can bring, the Marcos regime embarked on an ambitious development plan under the Southern Philippines Development Authority (SPDA). Under this agency, which is controlled by that super-profiteering ministry, the Ministry of Human Settlements, lands were laid open to foreign agri-business and industry. About 25,000 hectares of prime land were placed under the management of SPDA, a development which was followed by the dislocation of thousands of farmers, fishermen and traders.

To quell the public unrest that would result from the eviction of the land's long-time occupants, the government introduced the Kapatiran Agro-Industrial Cooperatives Settlement (KAICS). Under this program, Moro residents and fighters were lured to join a BLISS housing project allegedly worth P100 million.

But as the regime dangled a carrot in one hand, it was busy preparing a violent assault on the masses with the other. A 200-strong security force composed of "rebel returnees" was formed to encourage MNLF fighters to turn their backs on the revolutionary struggle. Where the government's projects failed to fool the people, these paramilitary units were used to sow division and enmity among the Moro people and to undermine what the regime suspects to be the growing fraternal relationship between the MNLF-BMA and the NPA.

The economic and political importance of Lanao del Sur is further underscored by its geographical location. Wao and Bumbaran, two municipalities controlled by the Ranao Revolutionary Committee of the MNLF-BMA, lie in the tri-boundary zone of Lanao del Sur, Bukidnon and North Cotabato. With Narra's willingness to unite with other revolutionary forces just across the border in the provinces of Bukidnon and North Cotabato, the regime can certainly not afford to stand idly by and allow the revolutionary Moro forces to grow and prosper.

But the Moro masses and the MNLF-BMA know that despite the victories they have scored against the regime's superior military might, the fight for freedom is far from over. The US-Marcos regime has stepped up its drive by hunting down MNLF leaders and terrorizing the people. Last year, Narra's name was placed in the list of the fascist regime's top enemies. Simultaneously, more troops and weapons were poured into Mindanao's "troubled spots." But the mounting death toll on the side of the military is an ominous indication of the Moro people's renewed struggle against the dictatorship. It carries the dire promise of bigger onslaughts and deadlier attacks against the fascist forces which dare to fight the determined Moro masses.

**Beda de Silva**

# Blazing the

People's strike in Mindanao advances mass



Matina Aplaya Crossing, Davao City: Heavily arm

The last quarter of 1984 marked the entry of a new and higher phase in the struggle against the US-Marcos dictatorship in the cities and town centers. Since October, the "people's strike" or (*wel-gang bayan*) — a form of political action combining a transportation strike with labor walkouts, student boycotts, closure of stores and other business establishments, barricades in the streets and communities, and marches and demonstrations — has periodically erupted in major urban centers like Metro Manila, Cebu, Davao, Bacolod and Iloilo.

But in no other place has this intense and powerful form of struggle been waged with more success than in the city of Davao. In October and again in November last year, people's strikes in this city paralyzed all forms of transport, halted most of the economic activity in factories, banks, markets and stores, and rendered helpless the local governments and military command.

The people's strikes were called by the Coalition of Organizations for the Realization of Democracy-Mindanao (CORD) and the Nationalist Alliance and were supported by the Integrated Drivers' As-

# way

movement



*ed soldiers block human barricades*

sociation of Davao; the Transport Association of Southern Mindanao for Independence, Solidarity and Nationalism; and professional, student, workers' and community groups. Fueled by the regime's imposition of increases in the prices of gasoline and oil products in October, the people's strikes also demanded justice for slain mass leader Alex Orcullo, called attention to the country's worsening economic and political crisis and demanded the dismantling of the US-Marcos dictatorship.

In their thousands, strikers manned barricades all along the main highways in Davao City, some of which were erected right in front of the military's own checkpoints. In October, more than 500 were arrested in the city in dispersal operations by police and military forces. But thousands came out to march in defiance of military authorities. A huge throng of 10,000 surged toward Jones circle where more than 200 strikers had been picked up. There, the protesters encircled the riot squads which had been sent to guard the area. Hundreds of angry citizens shook the gates of the Philippine Constabulary barracks to demand the release of the detained strikers and their leaders.

In November, barricades were set up in the Davao City suburbs of Matina, Agdao and Bajada as business and industry were crippled and campuses were deserted. Pocket rallies were also launched in major highways. In Matina, the barricade center, as many as 2,000 protesters stood their ground to demand the release of hundreds of arrested strikers and more than 1,000 marchers placed under arrest, even as busloads of armed police and military troops confronted them.

In some districts of the city, red flags flew atop houses and school buildings. At the outskirts, urban partisan units of the NPA launched successful armed actions against military agents and troops. Cries of "Long live the National Democratic Front!" and "Long live the New People's Army!" rang out in the streets.

Although not on the same scale and intensity as in Davao, transport strikes with wide public support also erupted in the cities of General Santos and Iligan and in the towns of Marbel (South Cotabato), Digos (Davao del Sur) and Mati (Davao Oriental), as well as in Surigao, Butuan, Cagayan de Oro City and Zamboanga City.

Severely shaken by the intensity of such political struggles, the regime responded to the protest actions with brutal reprisal. Not satisfied with arresting hundreds of participants at the height of the October strikes, the military also abducted five protesters and took them to an isolated area to be summarily executed. But a passing car's headlights lit up the execution grounds, startling the soldiers and enabling the five men to escape.

On the pretext of looking for NPA guerrillas, the military also conducted zoning operations in strike centers. In one such operation in Toril suburb, three peasants were killed. On the midnight of Dec. 2, five persons, four of them aged 14 to 22, were massacred while six others were wounded when military and CHDF elements raided an urban poor community in barangay Agdao in the suburb of Buhangin, Davao City. Those

killed, all active participants in the November people's strike, were on night patrol to protect their community from arson and theft.

Residents have been taking turns going on night patrol after receiving threats that their neighborhood would be razed. Many believed the military was behind the arson threats to counter their growing militancy and punish the community for its active role in the strikes. The military made good their warnings; two days after the massacre, 150 houses in the neighborhood were gutted in a three-hour fire.

The rising scale of state terrorism, however, is not likely to deter the advance of people's struggles in the cities and towns of Mindanao. In a statement issued Nov. 25, the Provisional Council of the National Democratic Front in Mindanao called on the people to prepare themselves in the coming months and years for "more intense and brutal fascist reaction." But the people have nothing to fear, said the NDF-Mindanao. Unlike in the early years of martial law, "the people's forces are so much stronger, . . . and are on the offensive in the political struggle. On the other hand, the US-Marcos fascist dictatorship is enmeshed in contradictions, remaining on the defensive politically, and is weakening in its main source of power, the military."

Pointing out that the Filipino people are at a crucial juncture in their history where they face an excellent opportunity to put a faster end to the US-Marcos dictatorship, the NDF-Mindanao also stressed the continued development of the open democratic movement, the underground mass organizations and the armed partisan units. As proven by the effective people's strikes in Davao City, these, said the NDF-Mindanao, are "the three machineries for carrying forward the political struggles in the urban centers." These machineries, it added, will assure that the people's struggle is sustained and raised to a higher level and will deliver more damaging blows that will hasten the collapse of the US-Marcos dictatorship.

Victoria Manalo

## NPA offensives sweep Davao

A series of tactical offensives was launched by NPA guerrillas in Davao these past few months, resulting in the death of four enemy troopers and the confiscation of several high-powered arms and assorted ammunition.

According to reports from LTB correspondents, 150 NPAs raided the town hall of Lupon, Davao Oriental on Dec. 2, killing two soldiers from the 438th PC Company. A total of 26 M16s, five Garands, six M2 carbines and thousands of rounds of ammunition were confiscated. That same day, 60 Red fighters successfully disarmed CHDF elements in Caraga, Davao Oriental. Sustaining no casualties, the Red fighters seized six Garands, two carbines and several rounds of ammunition.

Earlier, NPA partisan units meted the death penalty on two police station commanders and confiscated their .45 revolvers. Killed in Matina, Davao last Nov. 21 was Major Parolan, station commander of Sto. Tomas, Davao del Norte. A week later, Major Barotillo, assistant station commander of Marawi City, Lanao, was killed by members of an NPA armed partisan unit, also in Matina, Davao City.

# SPARKS

Newsbriefs about the resistance movement

## MANILA TEACHERS STAGE STRIKES

The Manila Public School Teachers Association (MPSTA) staged a walkout for four days starting Jan. 28 to protest the government's callousness to their demands for just compensation. Seventy out of Manila's 78 elementary schools participated in the mass leave of absence.

They denounced as "unconstitutional" the announcement of Education Minister Jaime C. Laya that teachers will not be paid their salaries if they continued their protest action. Many of them had been on mass leave starting Jan. 26 when Mayor Ramon Bagatsing turned down their demands. Earlier, on Jan. 21, they picketed the Manila City Hall.

The MPSTA, which has a membership of 16,000, has been seeking an increase in salaries to P3,000—an amount which they said would just be enough to allow them to cope with today's cost of living.

Meantime, members of the State Colleges and Universities Faculty Association (SCUFA) protested their low pay in a talk with Education Deputy Minister Fernando Bernardo last Jan. 23. SCUFA Chairman Rene C. Romero said that unlike elementary and high school teachers, college teachers do not receive cost-of-living allowances.

## TEACHERS SCORE IMF-WB IN CENTRAL BANK PICKET



Teachers lambast IMF-WB at Central Bank picket

Some 200 private school teachers, employees and students led by the Private Educators and Non-Teaching Personnel (PENT-UP) and the Private Educators for Action and Change (PREACH) picketed the Central Bank office in Manila last Jan. 18 to protest IMF-World Bank policies responsible for the economic difficulties faced by private schools today. The two groups pointed out that the severe financial problems of private schools throughout the country are merely part of the overall economic crisis whose immediate causes are IMF-World Bank-dictated policies such as devaluation and increased taxation. During the picket, PENT-UP and PREACH also urged the various constituents of the education sector to unite and save private schools from impending bankruptcy.

## EDUCATION ALLIANCE FORMED

Militant teachers, students, parents and school administrators recently formed a coalition called the Movement for the Advancement of Critical Education (MACE). The new organization opposes IMF-World Bank intervention in the educational system and all forms of taxation on private education. It aims to work for free and quality education at all levels and the promotion of a nationalist, scientific and mass-

oriented educational system. Among its members are the Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT), Parents Alternative Inc. (PAI), League of Filipino Students (LFS), Concerned School Owners and Administrators of Metro Manila Private Schools, and 12 other youth, student, teachers' and professional organizations. As its first activity, MACE held a picket-rally last Dec. 7 in front of the Education Ministry in Manila.

## IBP HITS PD 1834

The Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) pressed the Supreme Court to stop the enforcement of five Presidential Decrees on national security and public order following the detention of 32 persons who participated in the transport strike last Jan. 28. Noted film directors Lino Brocka and Behn Cervantes, were among those arrested at the height of the strike.

The IBP described as unconstitutional for being "vague, overly broad, capricious, contrary to reason and . . . defeats the right to bail," PDs 1834, 1835, 1836, 1877 and 1877-A.

## THOUSANDS JOIN FUNERAL MARCH FOR SLAIN STRIKERS

Thousands of workers and sympathizers joined the funeral march last Jan. 23 for two slain strikers of the Franklin Baker Co. of the Philippines (FBCP), a multinational desiccated coconut factory in Sta. Cruz, Davao del Sur. The workers were killed when armed men strafed their picket line on the 10th day of their strike which started last Jan. 1. Ten other persons, including the seven-year-old daughter of a striker, were wounded in the attack.

Also on strike elsewhere in Mindanao are workers of the Paper Industries Corporation of the Philippines (PICOP) in Bislig, Surigao del Sur and Pillsbury Flour Mills in Iligan City. Despite harassment, workers at Pillsbury, who have been on strike since Oct. 29, are continuing their protest action. At least six of the strikers have been arrested and a labor leader killed since the strike started.

## NATIONWIDE TRANSPORT STRIKE HELD

The Alliance of Concerned Transport Organizations (ACTO) launched a two-day strike last Jan. 28-29 to demand the rollback of fuel prices to the October 1984 level, the exemption of jeepney drivers from paying the new three-year P150 drivers' license fee, the scrapping of the plan to reroute jeepneys plying the Light Rail Transit route and the implementation of government-subsidized prices for jeepney parts, tires, batteries and accessories.

ACTO president Pedro Bolinas said 80 percent of transportation in Metro Manila was paralyzed with at least 70 percent of an estimated 60,000 jeepneys staying out of the streets in the national urban center.

By the time the strike was lifted, scores were hurt and some 350 striking jeepney drivers and their sympathizers arrested as police broke up their human barricades which were set up along some major roads in Metro Manila.

Similar strikes were held simultaneously in Davao City, Baguio, Albay, Cebu, Iloilo, Laguna, Quezon province, Pampanga, Bulacan, Butuan and Batangas. The Davao strike which was timed for a scheduled visit of Imelda Marcos, was dubbed "Welga Dahil sa Iyo."

## EO 851 ASSAILED

A multi-sectoral alliance staged a series of protest actions this January demanding the repeal of Executive Order (EO) 857, which requires overseas workers to remit between 50 to 70 percent of their dollar earnings through government-authorized banks. The protesting group composed of ATOM, GABRIELA, MABINI, PKMK, Sandata ng Bayan Laban sa Kahirapan (SANDATA), Concerned Seamen of the Philippines (CSP) and the Kapisanan ng mga Kamag-Arak ng Migranteng Pilipino (KAKAMPI) united to form the Alliance for the Repeal of EO 857. As its first activity, the alliance picketed the Ministry of Labor and Employment building in Manila this

month.

Meanwhile, more than 7,000 domestic workers in Hong Kong also staged a two-hour protest walk in the colony's Statue Square. They denounced EO 857 as an "IMF-World Bank imposition to centralize the workers' dollar earnings into foreign exchange reserves to enable the government to pay its huge foreign loans."

### STUDENTS COMMEMORATE FQS



LIBPHOTOS

Students light candles at Mendiola for FQS martyrs

Youth and student activists marched to Mendiola last Jan. 21 and 25 to commemorate the First-Quarter Storm (FQS). LFS and MAKABAYAN members lighted candles and laid bouquets beneath a cross implanted at the foot of Mendiola bridge, and promised to continue fighting for the cause the student martyrs of the FQS died for. Armed with red candles and red streamers, they raised clenched fists and defiantly sang nationalist and revolutionary songs in front of the military and police blockading Mendiola. The activities were part of the celebration of National Youth Week from Jan. 21 to 25.

Earlier, some 150 LFS members launched the first protest action for 1985 when they staged a surprise rally last Jan. 16 outside the US embassy to denounce the visit to the Philippines of US Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian Affairs Paul Wolfowitz.

### TRIBAL FILIPINOS HOLD 'SANDUGO'

Delegates representing tribal communities from the Igorot people in Cordillera, Dumagats and Remontados in Sierra Madre, Negritos in Zambales Mountains, Mangyans in Mindoro and Lumads from Mindanao affirmed their determination to fight for their ancestral lands in a *sandugo* (blood brotherhood) among themselves and lowland and urban supporters last Dec. 15. The Coordinating Committee for Minority Concerns (CCMC) sponsored the Dec. 12 to 15 celebration at the Christ the King Seminary grounds, Quezon City, to strengthen the common fight for "justice, freedom and democracy among all Filipinos." The celebration commenced with a march on Dec. 12 at the Welcome Rotonda where the delegates and support groups assailed intervention by government and transnational corporations over the minorities' ancestral land rights.

### VICTIMS OF REPRESSION HONORED

Victims of military and police brutality were honored with the Alay sa Laya ng Bayan (ALAB) awards in ceremonies held last Jan. 26 at St. Joseph's College in Quezon City. KAAKBAY and CORD, sponsors of the affair, said that the ALAB awards represent a significant step towards "democratizing our concept of heroes and creating a new politics that is mass-oriented." Among the awardees were political prisoners, those truncheoned and shot during the forced dispersal of rallies and the Foamtex and Artex workers killed in violent assaults on their picket lines last year.

## CRACKS

Indicators of the regime's economic and political crisis

### DID HE OR DIDN'T HE?

Was it dialysis, a tracheotomy, a kidney transplant or coronary bypass? The question has kept coffee-shop gossips busy for days, trying to out-do each other with news on just how sick or how dead the overstaying Malacanang resident was. Sources have confirmed the following, however: that on the night of Nov. 13, Marcos suffered renal failure and was clinically dead for a few seconds but was revived with a tracheotomy to assist his breathing; that he suffered from complications that have arisen from systemic (meaning the entire body is involved) lupus; and that four kidney specialists from Houston, Texas arrived in Manila to examine the ailing dictator.



But Marcos has always displayed an appalling ability to defy death, and this he proved when he surfaced in December, albeit thinner and weak, to sign the national budget, an occasion recorded by TV cameras. Days later, a limping but apparently much healthier dictator emerged, performing a "presidential striptease," where he bared his torso to show that he had no surgical scars. But if much of the talk about FM's ill health was unfounded, analysts agree that they were likely designed by Marcos himself. Purpose: to cause hysteria among the opposition and KBL people and to flush out plans by various political groupings to grab power. Oppositionists seem to have taken the bait, at the rate they are revealing their intent to succeed a president who has proven to be so versatile in playing dead and providing lessons on the art of dying.

### SO WHO'S RUNNING THE SHOW?



It all started when oppositionist Aquilino Pimentel created a stir last November by leaking the news that a five-man junta had been formed to take over the reins of government in the event that Marcos becomes incapacitated, dies or goes on an extended trip abroad. With Marcos downed anew by his mysterious illness, Pimentel's disclosure titillated all the more an already curious public, on the question of who was (or will be) running the show in the absence of the dictator. While Pimentel declined to name his source, he said the junta would be composed of Prime Minister Cesar Virata, Batasan Speaker Nicanor Yniguez, and Generals Fidel Ramos, Rafael Ileto and Manuel Yan. Political pundits, however, say that the Cagayan de Oro oppositionist most likely received the information from highly placed US sources and that it was the US itself that re-

commended the junta arrangement to Marcos.

Other versions churned out by the rumor mill say that the junta will consist of the "Gang of Four" — Marcos, Imelda and her brother Kokoy Romualdez, and AFP chief-on-leave Gen. Fabian Ver. The "Gang" already has effective control over media and all ministries, except for defense, where Minister Juan Ponce Enrile and acting chief-of-staff Gen. Fidel Ramos hold sway. Another version says that the junta has been in place for quite some time now, and effectively running the show are Enrile, Ramos, Marcos aide Alejandro Melchor, Foreign Minister Arturo Tolentino and Virata. In this set-up, the First Lady has reportedly insisted that businessman Eduardo Cojuangco at least sit in as "adviser."

### THE MAN WHO WOULD BE KING



Eduardo Cojuangco, businessman extraordinaire and arch-crony of Marcos has been consorting with just about every group interested in leading a post-FM government. Last month, he reportedly received, care of disgraced General Ver, a shipment of short firearms from Europe, which was then sent to the Visayas. Sources say the smuggling of arms has apparently been going on for some time now. The gun-running venture indicates that Cojuangco continues to maintain close relations with Ver, who in turn is still in cahoots with Imelda, who in turn is busily maneuvering to succeed her ailing husband (unless the US government can help it). What

bears watching, however, are Cojuangco's overtures towards other would-be successors who show big promise.

One such hopeful is Juan Ponce Enrile, whose possible ascendancy, sources say, would not at all displease the US. The defense minister is at the moment maintaining a high profile, conscientiously making the rounds of various organizations as speaker, guest of honor, etc. Enrile is reported to lord over a multi-million peso textile-smuggling operation and his "business partners" include a number of military officers. Sources also say that when the time comes, Cojuangco plans to beef up Enrile's control over the military by activating a number of generals Cojuangco has been maintaining in his payroll at P10,000 to P30,000 a month. But this is just for starters, many say of the ambitious Cojuangco. A very patient man, Cojuangco is reportedly willing to settle for the role of king-maker in the next 10 to 15 years, until such time when he can be king himself.

### RAMOS IS THEIR GUY

Gen. Fidel Ramos' promotion to the top post in the AFP, albeit temporary, has been anything but accidental. For a long time now, the US has been rooting for a more "professional" military leadership that would do away with the demoralization and inefficiency eating up the AFP. Ramos apparently fits the bill as a man whose unquestioning loyalty lies not with the dictator and his wife but with the US' own interests. The general, besides being a graduate of West Point, completed training in Fort Bragg, North Carolina, which specializes in counter-insurgency warfare. Ramos put this knowledge into good use when he designed and initiated in the 1960s a counter-insurgency course for 300 choice military officers below the rank of major. The cream of this crop was, in turn, tested in the battlefields of Vietnam in the guise of the Philippine Civic Action Group.

### AMERICA'S RAH-RAH BOYS

From all indications, US imperialist use for the AFP did not end with Vietnam. It is just as — if not even more — intent on strengthening its hold today on the Philippine mili-

tary, what with the growing strength of the NPA and the increasing uncertainty of continued US rule in the country. Recently, a series of "reforms" for the AFP was recommended by Richard Armitage, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, to the Solarz Committee. The recommendation included the training of AFP soldiers on "counter-propaganda" and the shifting of emphasis in the acquisition of military equipment from external defense purposes to that of internal use against local insurgency. With these developments, might it not be more fitting for the AFP to call itself the American Forces of the Philippines?

### CAUGHT WITH HIS MOUTH OPEN



A near-casualty of the whole affair is Labor Minister Blas Ople who, while abroad, was quoted in a *New York Times* interview saying that Marcos' health was "undergoing vicissitudes, problems which started a year ago." As a result, said Ople, the dictator could "not take major initiatives at this time," and the "Philippines was going through an interregnum." Marcos, mustering all the indignation his diseased body would allow, lashed out at the absent Ople, ordering him to "desist from issuing any more world-shocking statements that do not jibe with the truth." "I am offended personally" bristled the dictator, who told Ople to return

to Manila immediately. Back home, all the usually loquacious Ople could mutter was a meek, "I was quoted out of context," along with an offer of resignation. But the labor minister must have eloquently begged his boss for forgiveness, because he soon received a presidential pardon.

### THE DOODLING DESPERADOS



Down at AFP headquarters, the military is gearing up a smear campaign against the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army in a desperate attempt at getting even as they find their public image increasingly and irreparably damaged. In weeks past, military men, policemen and hired goons have been seen at night painting slogans on the walls and street islands of Metro Manila. The message of the slogans is the same for all: to discredit the CPP and NPA with fictitious anti-people charges. The red and black letterings, however, betray their authors: they are so neatly drawn that whoever put them there had obviously taken their own sweet time, in blissful knowledge that they were immune from arrest. Even Metro Manila aides have kept their distance and refrained from their routine of cleaning up the mess.



## VIEWPOINT

Contributions from readers

# Planning for a post-Marcos era

A study of two political options from the legal opposition

For scores of years, elections have been the bourgeois politicians' principal if not sole arena of combat. At the mere mention of elections, expect them then to behave like the proverbial old warhorse which, at the sound of bugles signalling a charge, rears up and then dashes into full gallop into the fray.

In this article, Ambrosio Banaag, who represents a group of Marxist revolutionary writers, discusses the near-frantic political initiatives and activities which different groups of bourgeois oppositionists have recently been undertaking to unify their fragmented ranks, the better to fight the Marcos clique and its ruling Kilusang Bagong Lipunan (KBL) in the forthcoming electoral contests. He analyzes the two distinct mechanisms developed by these politicians: the Fast Track System (FTS) and the National Unification Committee (NUC) scheme.

Banaag cites the various factors which had impelled the bourgeois opposition politicians to make immediate preparations for electoral combat with the Marcos regime. First, the Marcos clique could not extricate itself from the extreme political isolation to which it had been pushed by the people since 1983, making it highly vulnerable in an election. Second, the dictator Marcos was seriously ill and greatly debilitated, and rumor was rife that he might die anytime. Third, the 1986 local election and the 1987 presidential election were drawing near. And fourth, the ranks of the bourgeois opposition were so much in disarray that the politicians felt they had to move fast to re-group.

Banaag says that both the FTS and the NUC proposals have the stated purpose of unifying all opposition forces, selecting just one presidential candidate and waging a unified electoral campaign. Aside from the similarity in their professed purpose, however, he says there is little else in common between the FTS and NUC. In fact, in many ways, they present a study in contrasts in so far as the main proponents, objectives, composition and methods of each are concerned.

With the publication of this article, LIB invites other people to send in their own comments, suggestions, including criticisms, about the various political options shaping up against the dictatorship. Comments on Banaag's article are also welcome.

### The proponents

Among the main proponents of the FTS are progressive politicians, sincere anti-fascists who have been direct victims of oppression by the US-Marcos fascist dictatorship, and anti-collaborationists. Some of them have been consistently active in the people's anti-fascist and anti-imperialist struggles while others are newly activated representatives of the anti-Marcos compradors and landlords.

On the other hand, among the main proponents of the NUC are fascist collaborators, rabid pro-imperialists and fanatic counter-revolutionaries, Trojan horses which the Marcos clique is infiltrating into the ranks of the bourgeois opposition, former KBL leaders who have defected from the regime in the manner of a rat deserting a sinking ship, and plain opportunists who have finally found their voices after many years of keeping quiet in fear of the dictatorship.

### The objectives

Regarding objectives and programs, the NUC has yet to spell out its stand on the various issues of national freedom and democracy that touch the very lives of the Filipino people. What comes out

in bold relief, from the pronouncement of the NUC leaders, is that they simply want to replace the Marcos clique in power and perhaps introduce some superficial reforms to calm down the people.

The FTS, on the other hand, has enunciated its objectives in a "Declaration of Unity" which, while not comprehensive enough from a national-democratic point of view, does embody a substantial number of the people's patriotic and democratic aspirations. Its main points are the following:

1. Respect for freedom of conscience and religion.

2. Belief in the inalienable dignity of the human person. Basic constitutional rights would be guaranteed, and general and unconditional amnesty would be granted to all political detainees and all political offenders.

3. Belief in developing the fullness of our nationhood and in the supremacy of the national interest. The nation would be safeguarded from any form of foreign domination and interference. Foreign military bases on Philippine territory would be removed and no such bases would thereafter be allowed.

4. Belief that ownership of the principal means of production must be diffused and income equitably distributed to promote development, combat poverty, and ensure the rational utilization of resources. Free trade unionism and the right to organize would be encouraged, and a land reform program truly beneficial to the underprivileged would be vigorously and honestly pursued.

5. Belief in free, orderly and honest elections. Amendment No. 6 would be repealed, martial law would not be imposed and the writ of habeas corpus would not be suspended without a two-thirds vote of all members of the law-making-body, and all oppressive decrees and laws shall be repealed.

6. Belief in a pluralistic society. The new leadership would respect and protect freedom of expression and the right to disseminate all philosophies and non-



Fast-Track architects: Convenor Group and presidential bets ink declaration of unity

violent programs, the Communist Party of the Philippines would be legalized, and steps would immediately be taken to redress all legitimate grievances of all who have resorted to armed struggle.

7. *Belief that leadership means service to the people.*

8. *Belief in accountability to the people.* The new leadership would eliminate the social cancer of graft and corruption. Victims of the Marcos regime would be restituted or compensated for damages to the fullest extent possible. Also, ill-gotten wealth, property and assets would be confiscated or sequestered for the direct benefit of the entire body politic, and all special privileges of Marcos relatives and cronies would be immediately terminated.

#### Composition

In composition and manner of selecting the opposition presidential candidate, the FTS and the NUC also present a study in contrasts.

The nucleus of the FTS is composed of the Initiators, the Convenor Group (CG) and the Probable Standard Bearers (PSBs).

The Initiators are a small group of businessmen, professionals and church people who are leaders of Manindigan, an organized group of professed anti-fascists, most of whom have had no direct involvement with bourgeois politics in the past. It was they who first thought up the FTS (and the Slow Track System, or STS) middle of last year.

The CG, which came into being through the efforts of the Initiators, is made up of former Sen. Lorenzo M. Tanada, who has come to be known as the "Grand Old Man of the Opposition"; Mrs. Corazon C. Aquino, widow of assassinated former Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr.; and big businessman Jaime Ongpin.

The PSBs are former Sen. Jose W. Diokno of KAAKBAY, Agapito (Butz) Aquino of the ATOM, former Sen. Jovito R. Salonga of the Liberal Party, former Cagayan de Oro Mayor Aquilino Pimentel of the PDP-Laban, former Sen. Ambrosio Padilla also of the LP, former Sen. Ramon Mitra also of the PDP-Laban, former Sen. Raul Manglapus of the Christian Democratic Party and former Executive Secretary Rafael Salas, now a ranking official of the United Nations.

In the selection of their presidential candidate who, in turn, would pick his vice-presidential running mate, the CG and the PSBs would convene a Board of Electors of about 150 members. These would be composed of themselves, opposition political parties, and the various people's sectoral and multi-sectoral organizations which have come to be popularly known as the cause-oriented groups (COGs) and sometimes as mass-based organizations or "parliamentarians of the streets" ("cause-oriented" in contrast to election- and personality-oriented political parties and

groups, and "parliamentarians of the streets" in contrast to the dictatorship's fake Batasang Pambansa).

For the moment, the apportionment of seats in the proposed Board of Electors is under discussion. From the latest published reports, it would appear that the CG-PSB is reserving five percent of the seats for itself and is offering 65 percent to the political parties and 30 percent to the COGs.

In this sense, the FTS may be said to have a distinctly democratic inclination—it is offering a substantial number of seats to the people's organizations. But the COGs have all the reason to consider the 30 percent inadequate.

**Unlike the bourgeois politicians who regard elections as some kind of "be-all and end-all," the national democratic movement holds these as important only in so far as these help to strengthen the revolutionary forces and weaken the US-Marcos dictatorship.**

Throughout martial law, it is the COGs that have been at the very forefront of the people's open struggles for freedom and democracy, not to mention the immediate political and economic demands of the classes and sectors they represent. They have borne the brunt of the fiercest fascist attacks and have made the heaviest of sacrifices in the people's interests. And they have the mightiest of political bases—the people.

That the COGs' efforts are being given consideration by the FTS is evident in its offer of 30 percent of the seats in the proposed Board of Electors. But, as already pointed out, the COGs are right in seeking greater representation.

In contrast to the FTS, the NUC would be composed almost wholly of the main proponents of the Batasan and are affiliated with the United Democratic Opposition (Unido), plus other bourgeois politicians whom they would handpick.

Among the top leaders of the NUC are former Sen. Salvador Laurel, Unido president, former Sen. Eva Kalaw, who heads a faction of the LP, and former Trade Minister Luis Villafuerte, now a Unido member of the Batasan.

Laurel and Kalaw are remembered for having signed the Kongreso ng Mamamayang Pilipino (KOMPIL) manifesto pledging to boycott the 1984 BP election unless the Marcos regime granted six democratic demands, only to later renege and participate unconditionally. They have also been sniping at the national-democratic movement, an act which objectively helps the dictatorship. Villafuerte, on the other hand, was a cabinet member in the Marcos regime for a long time before defecting to the Unido when the KBL's political fortunes began to fall.

To give the impression that the people and not just bourgeois politicians are represented in the NUC, they would give

some seats to the COGs but only a negligible number. The people's organizations would thus be reduced to the status of ornaments to prettify the NUC.

In this respect, the NUC is definitely elitist and undemocratic. It is instructive of how the NUC proponents regard the COGs that while they talk about giving them representation, on the other hand they criticize the COGs for having boycotted the 1984 BP election. They give the specious argument that they would have landed more seats in the Batasang Pambansa had there been no boycott at all.

They conveniently forget that they themselves have on many occasions com-

plained that the BP is inutile and a mere rubber-stamp of Malacanang—something the COGs have been saying all along.

All these is not to say that there are no progressive elements among the Batasang Pambansa members in the NUC. A number of them have been supportive of, and active in, the people's anti-dictatorship struggles. But for now they are a small minority, and it is the old-time bourgeois politicians and opportunists who hold sway in the NUC.

The NUC and the FTS also differ in the matter of the conduct of the campaign that would precede the forthcoming election.

The NUC would campaign in the traditional manner, that is, by mobilizing old-time ward leaders who comprise their "grassroots." Also, the NUC leaders are reliant on support coming from US imperialism which regards them as "horses in reserve" to be activated if the Marcos clique becomes too heavy a burden to carry and has to be disposed of.

The FTS would combine the traditional style of campaigning with the militant mass struggles of the people nationwide.

#### Some background

The FTS has undergone a process of evolution since its inception last October-November when the dictator Marcos lay seriously ill and was even reported to have undergone a major operation.

The Initiators (or "Managers") actually envisioned two alternative systems—the FTS and the STS. The FTS was to be actuated in the event that Marcos died suddenly and a presidential election was called immediately. The STS was the alternative if the election was to be held in 1987 as scheduled by the Marcos constitution.

The Initiators broached their idea to Tanada, Cory Aquino and Ongpin and asked them to comprise the CG. Accepting the offer, the three then proceeded

to list down the PSBs from among the oppositionists known to be aspiring for the presidency or who were "presidential material."

Originally listed down were Diokno, Butz Aquino, Salonga, Pimentel, Manglapus, Salas, Laurel and Kalaw. The PSBs were to pick the common presidential candidate from among themselves. If no one got a majority after several ballotings, the CG would step in to do the choosing.

It was also set as a condition that if the presidential nominee won, he would have to consult the CG, the other PSBs and the Initiators on all appointments to the cabinet and other key positions in the government.

The whole scheme was correctly criticized as elitist and undemocratic, given the small base that was to make all the important decisions.

Since then, many changes for the better have been instituted, manifestations of the FTS leaders' resiliency and receptiveness to contrary but compelling opinions.

Mainly through the efforts of progressive personalities among the PSBs, the draft declaration of unity was revised to reflect quite a number of the people's democratic aspirations. The FTS was ratified but good only for three months, renewable after that. If a better idea came along, it would undergo major changes. Today, a Board of Electors is in the process of being formed with a much wider base, to include the political parties and the COGs.

(Another change took place in the process of evolution when Laurel and Kalaw excluded themselves, favoring the NUC of which they are leaders and where they enjoy much better chances of getting the presidential nomination. Three other names — those of Guingona, Padilla and Mitra — were added to the list of PSBs.)

On the other hand, the NUC has undergone little change. When the FTS was first publicized, the NUC's main proponents criticized it as "undemocratic." Correct as their appraisal was, it was a classic case of the pot calling the kettle black since the NUC was just as elitist and exclusive — a private preserve of the bourgeois oppositionists in the Batasang Pambansa.

#### Our own views

It may be pointed out that both the FTS and NUC proceed from several common premises. One is that a presidential election would be called in 1987 or sooner, if Marcos dies or is incapacitated. Another is that whoever the opposition puts up as a candidate could beat the KBL candidate handily, be it Marcos or his wife Imelda, or somebody else. And still another premise is that once the Marcos clique is out of power, it would be comparatively smooth sailing from then

on.

It is a distinct possibility, however, that as its political fortunes continue to crumble, the Marcos clique may fabricate "reasons" not to call an election, in the same manner that it scrapped elections when it imposed martial law in 1972 and monopolized power. Bombings, arson and "rebellion" could be staged for the purpose, as in 1972.

As for the premise that any KBL candidate for president would be a "pushover," it must be borne in mind that the Marcos clique is fighting for its very political life and, on an unprecedented scale and magnitude, could surely resort to terrorism, limitless campaign spending and massive electoral fraud that have all been its hallmark.

Let's grant for the sake of argument that the opposition candidate does win notwithstanding these. As he proceeds to

in so far as these contribute to the strengthening of the revolutionary forces and the weakening of the principal enemy, the US-Marcos dictatorship.

In relation to the forthcoming electoral exercises of the dictatorship, and the current maneuvers of the bourgeois politicians, what is important is that the people's forces strengthen their ranks and tighten the bonds that unite them with the liberal-democratic (or progressive liberal) forces. Positive forces in the ranks of the bourgeois reformists — the sincere anti-fascists who have no close links with US imperialism — should also be won over, if only on a tactical basis, to frustrate the schemes of imperialism, the Marcos clique, and the counter-revolutionary and pro-imperialist "oppositionists."

The people must also be warned of the danger of reformism which rears its



implement the reforms, say those embodied in the FTS's "Declaration of Unity," there would be obstacles all along the way. There should be no illusions about "neutralizing" US imperialism or the reactionary Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), the top echelons of which are under the tight control of imperialism and the Marcos clique. These and other diehard reactionaries would certainly be blocking each and every meaningful patriotic and democratic reform. One must consider that the Batasang Pambansa would continue to be ruled by the KBL majority that is beholden to Marcos and to US imperialism.

In this connection, we reassert our own forms of struggle in the national-democratic revolution — the armed struggle, open mass struggles, and electoral struggles. The first — armed struggle — is principal while the two others are secondary. And between the two, open mass struggles are by far the more important.

Unlike the bourgeois politicians who regard elections as some kind of "be-all and end-all," the national-democratic movement holds these as important only

ugly head every time an election is held.

The people's forces are correct in opposing the elitist and undemocratic attitudes especially of the bourgeois reformists, and in insisting upon a decisive voice in the choice of candidates and in the general conduct of the forthcoming campaigns against the dictatorship.

For now, the FTS presents better potentials than the NUC. The FTS could really be an effective vehicle in the anti-dictatorship struggle if it identifies itself more closely with the people's mass struggles and if it withstands the divisive maneuvers of imperialism, the Marcos clique and the counter-revolutionaries masquerading as oppositionists. The NUC also has possibilities, but only if the positive forces within its ranks prevail and not tail after its present leaders.

As in the past, the dictatorship's elections provide greater opportunities for propaganda, organization and united front work. Let's seize every opportunity to push the national-democratic revolution and defeat the US-Marcos dictatorship.

**Ambrosio Banaag**



Victory rally: Held in Managua on July 19, 1979; huge mural shows Augusto Sandino

## INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

### Resistance and struggles abroad

# Against all odds

Nicaragua forges ahead despite US aggression

Nicaragua today is a country faced with US aggression from four directions: military invasion, a war of economic attrition, diplomatic undermining of its peace initiatives, and a strong media campaign to discredit the whole country's reconstruction efforts. Although there is worldwide awareness of Nicaragua, information about what is really happening there has been uneven, if not hostile. This is largely due to US efforts to deceive people by hiding the truth.

### A history of US meddling

Such US moves are hardly surprising. For more than a hundred years, the US has been cavalierly meddling in the internal affairs of Nicaragua and continually mocking its sovereignty. In 1855, at the height of US expansionism, an American adventurer named William Walker arrived in newly independent Nicaragua with 58 men, and soon after declared himself president. His "government" was immediately recognized by then US Pres. Franklin Pierce. Since then, the US has treated Nicaragua and the rest of Central America as if these were its own backyard, using every imaginable excuse to directly or indirectly impose its will and exploit it economically.

By the 20th century, the US had be-

come an ascendant imperialist power, annexing territory after territory to build up its economic-political empire. It is at this point that direct US military intervention in Nicaragua began. Not accidentally, the same period also saw US military aggression against Cuba, the Philippines and other states in South America and the Caribbean.

In a move to further consolidate its hold on the small Central American nation, the US sent marines to invade and occupy Nicaragua in 1912. The marines installed a pro-US government that allowed the US to wring more economic concessions from Nicaragua. Believing that they had put up a regime sufficiently servile to US interests, the US troops left in 1925, after occupying the country for more than a dozen years.

But they had to return the following year when Nicaraguans launched an armed movement to oust the US-backed government. After some time, the Americans succeeded in getting the leader of the rebellion, General Moncada, to sign a peace treaty. But one of his generals, Augusto Cesar Sandino, refused to collaborate, correctly perceiving that the peace treaty was merely a ruse to prolong the US presence. Sandino instead organized a guerrilla war against the US occu-

pation force.

The US troops left in 1933 without defeating Sandino, but not before creating an anti-insurgency military force, the National Guard, which was placed under the command of Anastacio Somoza. Somoza later had Sandino assassinated under orders from the US ambassador, and was rewarded with victory in fraudulent presidential elections. Thus, for the next 43 years, only members and close associates of the Somoza family took turns in despotically ruling Nicaragua, backed by enormous US aid.

But in 1961 was born the Frente Sandinista de Liberacion Nacional (FSLN), named after Augusto Cesar Sandino. After waging a liberation struggle for 18 years, the FSLN defeated the incumbent Somoza regime and put an end to more than a century of US domination.

The message that the Nicaraguan victory brings to the citizens of other US-backed dictatorships in Latin America is hope — that someday, they too will succeed in ousting local tyranny and US imperialist rule in their homelands.

It is this truth that the US has been trying hard, through various means, to conceal from the rest of the world — that it could be defeated by a small nation right in its own "backyard."

### Recent US sanctions

Today, on Nicaragua's border with Honduras, around 15,000 CIA-backed counter-revolutionary forces called *contras*, mainly composed of deposed landlords and former National Guardsmen, have been making incursions into Nicaraguan territory. These invasions are supported by US planes and the insurgents heavily supplied with US arms. The US has given the *contras* at least \$80 million in official aid since 1981. When adverse public opinion forced the US Congress to suspend such aid in June 1983, aid for the *contras* continued to pour in from the CIA, which continues to supply the counter-revolutionaries with \$1 million a month.

The *contras* have also mined Nicaraguan ports using sophisticated and highly complex explosives, causing damage to some trading ships. The mining operations were accompanied by naval attacks using powerful and heavily armed speedboats. The operations were directed by the CIA from a US ship off the coast of Nicaragua.

These assaults have caused untold hardships and pain to the Nicaraguan people. Most of the targets of the *contras'* attacks are civilian communities and vital economic enterprises. This is part of Reagan's objective to create a stranglehold on the country's economy.

Resistance to the *contras* has been taking its toll on Nicaragua. The cost of

the war now amounts to about \$238 million per year, a considerable sum for a poor country. The figure represents both the cost of dislocation of personnel and other resources from production towards defense, as well as the direct cost of damage to installations and infrastructure.

Much more serious in the long run is the US-inspired economic boycott of Nicaragua. No new loans have been approved by the World Bank since January 1982. Neither has Inter-American Bank which funds new roads, health clinics and rural organizations all over the Caribbean approved any loans for Nicaragua. The actions of the United States, reducing Nicaragua's sugar quota to 10 percent of what had been agreed upon in an internationally binding contract, seriously threatens the attempt of Nicaragua to diversify its trading partners. Faced with the need to find another trading partner, Nicaragua offered its sugar to Libya, which finally bought \$150 million worth at the originally contracted price.

Ironically, the more the United States boycotts trade with Nicaragua and blocks initiatives by European countries to circumvent this, the more self-fulfilling is the US prophecy that Nicaraguan trade relations will favor the socialist and non-aligned countries.

The US has also been undermining the efforts of Panama, Colombia, Venezuela and Mexico, known as the Contadora group, to call for a reduction of tension in the Central American region through dialogue and negotiations between the US and Nicaragua. These are but part of the frantic efforts of the US government to isolate Nicaragua internationally. Several months back, Henry Kissinger also attempted to dissuade Western European governments from supporting Nicaragua. The US

has also been vetoing moves to bring up Central American issues for deliberation in the United Nations Security Council.

#### Slandering the democratic elections

To cover up its internationally unlawful actions and to further facilitate the undermining of Nicaraguan reconstruction, the US government has also embarked on an insidious media campaign against Nicaragua. One of its most recent efforts was a campaign in the international press designed to discredit the recently held Nicaraguan elections.

The elections for president, vice president and a 90-member Constituent Assembly took place in Nov. 4, 1984. It was an affirmation of the commitment to a free and democratic election which was included in the original program of government issued by the Sandinistas before the overthrow of the Somoza regime in 1979. It was reaffirmed the day after victory on July 20, 1979, when the newly installed Government of National Reconstruction issued the Fundamental Statute of the Republic. The newly elected officials replaced the government junta and the Council of State that governed the country during the early years of reconstruction.

Reagan, who was reelected two days after the Nicaraguan elections, quickly denounced it as a "farce." The elections, however, was such a success that there could be no direct criticism of the process itself. Thus, after its completion, the international media, upon the instigation of the US, focused attention on a different issue — the alleged shipment of sophisticated Soviet MiG Fighter planes to Nicaragua. This, like many other allegations that have hit the headlines of the Western press, is intended to smear Nica-

ragua's image abroad by making it appear as a hapless Soviet satellite and emerging military aggressor.

No amount of misinformation, however, can hide the truth. That the Sandinistas head a popular and democratically elected government, was recently confirmed by the Irish Inter-parliamentary delegation which observed the elections in Nicaragua. For 17 days, from Oct. 22 to Nov. 7, the delegation met with people, including members of the government, political leaders, opposition candidates, representatives of the church hierarchy, academic community, church workers and members of the diplomatic corps, including the US ambassador to Nicaragua. The delegation stated in its report that the election was a "free and fair one, and carried out with total integrity."

The delegation noted that the seven parties participating in the elections represented a broad spectrum of political ideologies and are "an indication of the pluralism of political life in that country." The delegation also reported that Nicaragua, "despite considerable efforts to diversify its trading partners and financial resources and improve the living standards of its people through its economic programs, is facing critical destabilization springing from US opposition to the present administration."

The observers emphasized that there was strict voter registration; 1.56 million voters, representing 93.7 percent of the population, registered. All citizens over 16 years of age were eligible to vote. On July 27 to 31, voter registration was carried out throughout Nicaragua, including the areas affected by the war against the *contras*, as an essential step towards the exercise of the right to vote. On the other hand, recent elections in US-backed Central American countries such as El



Left: Nicaraguans making a choice on election day which drew more than 75 percent registered voters; Above: Map of the US self-designated "backyard" — Nicaragua and its Central American neighbors



Peasant soldiers airing their problems to FSLN leader Daniel Ortega (middle)

Salvador and Guatemala did not introduce such measures.

Nicaragua is a country with no experience of democratic elections. Because of this, a massive educational campaign on the electoral process was carried out in the months preceding the election. It was clearly explained to the population that voter registration was compulsory, while voting was voluntary.

A total of \$25 million was spent on the elections, with support funds coming from several countries including France, Sweden and Norway; this is a considerable sum for Nicaragua, representing some two percent of its GNP. Despite the great cost, however, the elections mark the fulfillment of a promise to the people at a time when the country is still recovering from the war of 1978-79 and is gravely faced with the need to defend its borders from attacks.

#### PPT condemns US government

Another significant event which upheld the Nicaraguan people's cause was the judgment of the Permanent People's Tribunal (PPT) issued in Brussels, Belgium, from Oct. 5 to 8, 1984, condemning the US government under the Reagan administration for the "crime of aggression against Nicaragua and for violation of the most elementary rules of international society." The Tribunal said that:

"1. The US government has not demonstrated its central and critical charge that there is sustained support by Nicaragua for rebel activities in El Salvador:

"2. The evident purpose of the counter-revolutionary forces operating along the Nicaraguan border and within the country is to destabilize, if not overthrow the Sandinista government in Nicaragua. The direction, control and supply for these counter-revolutionary activities is based on policies set in Washington and largely implemented by operatives of the CIA;

"3. The US government has consistently blocked Nicaraguan efforts to find peaceful settlement and has not attempted in good faith to seek a negotiated so-

lution;

"4. The military and para-military operations of the *contras* have caused great suffering and physical damage in Nicaragua; and

"5. The US government has engaged in provocative military maneuvers and has endorsed plans pointing toward a large-scale invasion of Nicaragua in the near future."

The Tribunal operates within a legal framework established by the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Peoples, adopted in Algiers on July 4, 1976. The Tribunal, the result of efforts of jurists and moral authorities from different parts of the world, provides a forum for determining whether the fundamental grievances of a people are well-founded.

Members of the PPT jury included Belgian lawyer Francois Rigaux as chairman, Nobel Prize awardee George Wald of the US as vice chairman, Spanish lawyer Victoria Abellan Honrubia, Swiss lawyer Richard Baumlin, French theologian Georges Casalis, Swedish diplomat Harald Edelstam, American jurist Richard Falk, Nobel Peace Prize awardee Adolfo Perez Esquivel of Argentina, Belgian sociologist Francois Houtart, Indian philosopher Raimundo Panikkar, Italian theologian Giulio Girardi, French political scientist Edmond Jouve and Italian magistrate Salvatore Senese.

It will be remembered that the PPT also met at the University of Antwerp, Belgium from Oct. 30 to Nov. 3, 1980, and upheld the appeals presented by the NDF and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) on behalf of the Filipino people and the Bangsa Moro people respectively.

Thus, though Nicaragua today faces threats from many sides, it has the support of the freedom-loving peoples of the world. As emphatically stated by the Irish delegation, "The Nicaraguan people seek the conditions to continue to rebuild their country and construct a new society. They do not want war. But they are prepared to defend themselves. They will not allow their reconstruction efforts to be undermined."

**Manolo Tierra**

## CULTURAL NOTES

*Art and literature in the movement*

# 'Be a man fo

A father's letter to his son on Christmas

LIB recently received this letter from a comrade, which we are printing here in part:

*Mga kasama sa Liberation,*

*Mapulang pagbati!*

*Nais kong ipaabot ang isang typewritten copy ng sulat ng aking asawa, isang kasamang nabibag ng kaaway noong nakaraang taon sa isang bayan sa Timog at nadetine pagkatapos.*

*Isinulat niya ito para sa aming anak na ngayo'y ilang buwan pa lamang ang edad. Hindi pa kami nagkikita mula noon. Pero, regular ang aming komunikasyon sa isa't isa. Sa ngayo'y putol ang aming linya o ugnayan.*

*Nais kong ibabagi ang kanyang sulat sa marami pang kasama, na tulad nami'y dumanas ng mapait na karanasan sa kamay ng mga pasistang tropa ng papet na rebimen, pero sa kabila nito'y patuloy na lumalabok sa pakikibaka ng buong bayan.*

*Maraming salamat,*

*at Mabubay Kayo!*

*Ka Mega*

Today is Christmas. But how my heart grieves for you and Mama!

It has been two years now since troopers of the Marcos regime dragged me out from a private vehicle along with three others and threw me into the sepulchre of the living—the prison . . . .

Son, I am imprisoned, as more than a thousand other political prisoners all over the country, because I too believe in the justness and nobility of the struggle being waged relentlessly by our people. Yes, it is love of country which has brought me to the side of the people, no matter the difficulties and the hardships. It is love of country which has brought me, unfortunately, to this hell.

Love of country is expressed in many ways, but the best expression of that love is joining and fighting for the people's struggle, whether that be in the cities or in the countryside. Paying mere lip service to that love does not advance the popular and rightful fight against oppression. If one must desire meaningful and lasting change in our society, he should fight for it. If one seeks the overthrow of the oppressive, unjust system, he should be ready to give up his own life, if need be, for that cause.

You are still young and unable to understand massacres, torture, salvagings

# r others'

day



and mass deceptions. Perhaps, in your childish dreams, you may have been visited by visions of truncheons and gas canisters fired against hapless demonstrators fighting the regime. But you may hardly understand their meaning. But I strongly hope that upon entering adolescence, you will come to realize the brutal reality of the times.

Your Mama is a fine teacher and comrade. She will not treat you like a baby when that time comes. She will accord you the rights and privileges of comrades. But the finest teacher, my dear son, are the masses.

Never be aloof or take airs when playing and mingling with the kids of the *anakpawis*. Your Papa comes from a working class family, and I myself during my childhood never experienced

luxury and comfort. You should always try hard to be a good and patient friend to the poor. You must be a man for others, a revolutionary.

Mama understands why we have to suffer. . . . Mama is a fighter and has acquired the tenacity of a guerrilla. She can wait, yet continue the crusade for the advancement of the national democratic cause. When you will finally come to understand it all, you will undoubtedly accept the righteousness of the path we have taken.

The war is cruel and it is now raging like fire in the hills and cities. . . . Our war today, is a war of the ruled, the oppressed and the poor. Justice is on our side and history will hand down its verdict in our favor. Yet, for individual par-

ticipants like us, emotions creep in that can make or unmake our revolutionary lives. In the end, it is really persistence, determination and dedication to the cause that will propel us through.

If by chance, we fail, it is the human factor which has taken over the will to persevere. But your Mama and I have vowed our utmost to overcome such human frailties and weaknesses. We must have the will and the urge to carry on despite all odds.

Son, the fight is long and hazardous. The war has commenced and some shall be left in the sidelines, many shall die, yet many shall continue. This is a war that shall persist to the end. If, in this war, I may lose my life, take it as part of the laws and the natural course of war. True, we live only once, and life is unique and precious. But we live for a purpose, which we must pursue and make our guiding light, as the very substance which molds our thoughts and actions.

Today is Christmas and perhaps, just an ordinary day for many people. But if I were to give any significance at all about this day, it would be its promise of hope. This hope is a vision that social change will come someday; this hope lies in the firm belief that the masses are the true makers of history, and capable of making that vision a reality.

Thus hope for social change will be fulfilled as more of our people awaken and muster the most conceivable strength to overthrow the US-Marcos dictatorship.

When will we ever see each other? Only time will tell, but we shall determine that appropriate time. Meanwhile, continue with your sound sleep.

And upon awakening, listen to the sound of the war drums from the distant hills. Listen to the rippling mountain springs and the rustling leaves of majestic trees murmuring and beckoning to you. Listen to the birds chirping and to the songs of men and women harvesting freshly cut grain. The mountains, the forests, the masses are waiting for you.

I have to go back, my dear Son, I have to go back. Out from my window cell, I can see the homing birds in flight. They, too, are hurrying, fleeing, and raging against the dying of the light.

Freedom, my dear Son, is the only thing that matters in this world. It is the heart, the soul and nourishment of any man, of all men. Yes, you will learn about it and I hope, fight and live for it.

Oh yes, freedom has its price. And the price is high.

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*EDITOR'S NOTE: One week after sending this letter to his wife and son, the writer successfully escaped from prison, along with other political detainees. The military considered their escape the "biggest jailbreak" in the region.*



## Believe it or not

**ONE FOR RIPLEY'S.** After 62 sessions, the Batasang Pambansa passed only three out of 3,651 bills and approved 13 out of 294 resolutions. Among its major achievements was enacting a law authorizing barangay captains to administer oaths of office to local elective officials. Believe it or not.

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These rats recently threatened to jump out of the regime's sinking ship, but they got wet just the same. Can you guess who they are?

She threatened to join the opposition when she could not get a slot for candidacy in her KBL party during the Batasang Pambansa elections. She had to stand as sponsor during the wedding of her boss' daughter, only to realize in the end that even this was not a ticket to job security in politics.

He resigned from the KBL saying the party was "no longer responsive to the times." But in better times, he was a notorious absentee assemblyman who curried favors from the powers-that-be by trumpeting Imelda Marcos' Human Settlements projects in his noontime show. He started humming a different tune when the political winds began to turn against his patrons. Some say he is probably dropping hints for other parties to field him in '86.

A motley group of Metro Manila mayors who, fazed by the stunning defeat of KBL bets in Metro Manila during the Batasan elections, have started distancing themselves from the ruling party. They will either run under the banner of opposition parties or failing that, run independently. One of them has begun sounding off the opposition through his wife who reportedly plays mahjong with a top bishop.

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The Armed Forces of the Philippines Medical Center in Quezon City recorded an increasing number of psychiatric cases among military personnel in the '80s, reaching a peak in 1983. The record must have been broken in 1984, as reports from the provinces indicate an alarming trend of AFP insanity:

In Davao, three PC men walked naked around town in broad daylight, with nothing on but the rifles on their shoulders. People who saw them ran to their homes, their bellies aching with laughter. The soldiers appeared harmless as most exhibitionists are known to be. But reports said they were

### THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO IMELDA (said in the KBL caucus last January)



All you need to win an election...



is a little of this,



a little of that.



a little of this.

trigger-happy and would fire their guns away at the slightest provocation.

In Pangasinan, one morning, soldiers from the Military Intelligence Group (MIG) operating a canteen that doubles as a prostitution house were visited by the parish priest who questioned the morality of their "industry." The priest was appalled at the answer he got: The brothel was actually a KKK project.



Marcos' cutback on government expenditures to abide by IMF conditions for loans have heavily cut into the salaries of government employees—but not into the military brass' emoluments. Budget Ministry sources have revealed that every Christmas season, top military officials divert social services funds to bonuses for themselves. The same sources say that IMF officials who are out to check on government compliance to its conditions are not likely to find anything amiss. Reason: Official records are never made to reflect such flagrant anomalies.

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While ordinary employees had to haggle, beg and threaten for their 13th month pay last year, a privileged group of mammals never had it so easy and so good. In flagrant disregard for the least bit of *delicadeza*, Batasan assemblymen voted to allow themselves a Christmas bonus equal to three full months of pay.

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From police blotters all over the country came this strange but true case:

Crime: Robbery

Facts: This Jan. 25, 1985, unidentified men barged into the bank's premises, poked their high-powered guns at the employees and ordered them to stop all transactions. Employees were told not to bother with small bags to put the money in. The vaults would do, they were told.

Place: Banco Filipino branches

Suspects: Metrocom soldiers

Masterminds: Jobo Fernandez and Ferdinand Marcos (all at large)

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