

The Conjugal Dictatorship of Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos

Primitivo Mijares
1976 Edition

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Primitivo Mijares Testimony in US Congress

"**After our** last footnote updating this paper, Marcos' top confidential press man, Primitivo Mijares, Chairman of the Media Advisory Council and twice President of the National Press Club with Marcos' support, testified in the U.S. (House) Subcommittee on International Organizations which held hearings on violations of human rights in South Korea and the Philippines. Mr. Marcos attempted to bribe Mijares with \$100,000 not to testify but the latter spumed the bribe. Marcos denied the attempted bribery but from a scrutiny of Mijares' testimony, the statement of denial and the circumstances described, the probability favors Mijares. Mr. Marcos denied mainly the reported bribery but not the contents of the testimony of his erstwhile confidential press man. Considering that Mijares was an "insider" in the Philippines, Mijares' testimony carries much weight.

Diosdado Macapagal Statement

"**If Mijares** were not credible, he would not have merited refutation by Mr. Marcos himself as well as a formal exculpatory inquiry into the Mijares charges by the senior Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs " — *DIOSDADO P. MACAPAGAL, former President of the Philippines, in his latest book, Democracy in the Philippines.*

To the Filipino People

**Who dramatized in the
Battle of Mactan of April 27, 1521,
their rejection of a foreign tyranny
sought to be imposed by
Ferdinand Magellan, that they may
soon recover lost courage and,
with greater vigor and determination,
rid the Philippines of the evil rule
of a home-grown tyrant
with the same initials.**

About the Author

by Cris D. Cabasares, written in 1976

PRIMITIVO "TIBO" MIJARES Is a 44-year-old newspaperman's newspaperman, the highlights of whose life may even be more colorful than the man he writes about In this book. For, really, what will Ferdinand E. Marcos be, If you take away his self-serving and self-created World War II exploits?

Mijares went through that world conflagration experiencing as a young boy a tragedy and horror that would have driven hardened and matured men stark-raving mad. He was but 12 years old when he came upon the mutilated bodies of his slain mother, dead from the bayonet thrusts of Japanese soldiers, and his father, dying from both Japanese bayonet and bullet wounds, in the smoking ruins of their home.

Mijares was to narrowly escape death from the massacre and burning by retreating Japanese soldiers of his hometown of Santo Tomas, Batangas, in the Philippines, only because a few hours earlier he had led as the eldest child his other younger sisters and brother out into the country to clear a field for planting.

While his gunsmith father, Jose, was busy turning out home-made pistols, called locally as paltiks for the resistance movement, young Mijares served as the driver or cochero for the family's horse-drawn rig, carretela, used in the delivery of vinegar to outlying towns. In between supplying guns to the guerrillas, the Mijares family was engaged in the fermentation of that liquid so necessary to the Filipino palate.

When the Japanese military one day decided to commandeer all the horses In the town, Mijares persuaded the Japanese to allow him to drive his carretela home to unload the empty vinegar jars before surrendering his horse. But along the way Mijares pretended to be yelling orders at his horse, although actually he was shouting, in the local dialect unknown to the Japanese soldiers riding beside him, to his townmates to hide their horses.

After World War II, the four Mijares orphans were distributed among their mother's uncles with the girls joining an uncle in Borneo, now Sabah, and the boys staying in the Philippines. Tibo went to school near Baguio where his uncle, an agriculturist, was stationed. He edited the high school newspaper, was elected president of his graduating class and finished as valedictorian.

Mijares became the youngest editor of the Baguio Midland Courier, the biggest city newspaper, in 1950. He became a full-pledge reporter the same day he joined the defunct Manila Chronicle on August 15, 1951, covering all the major beats.

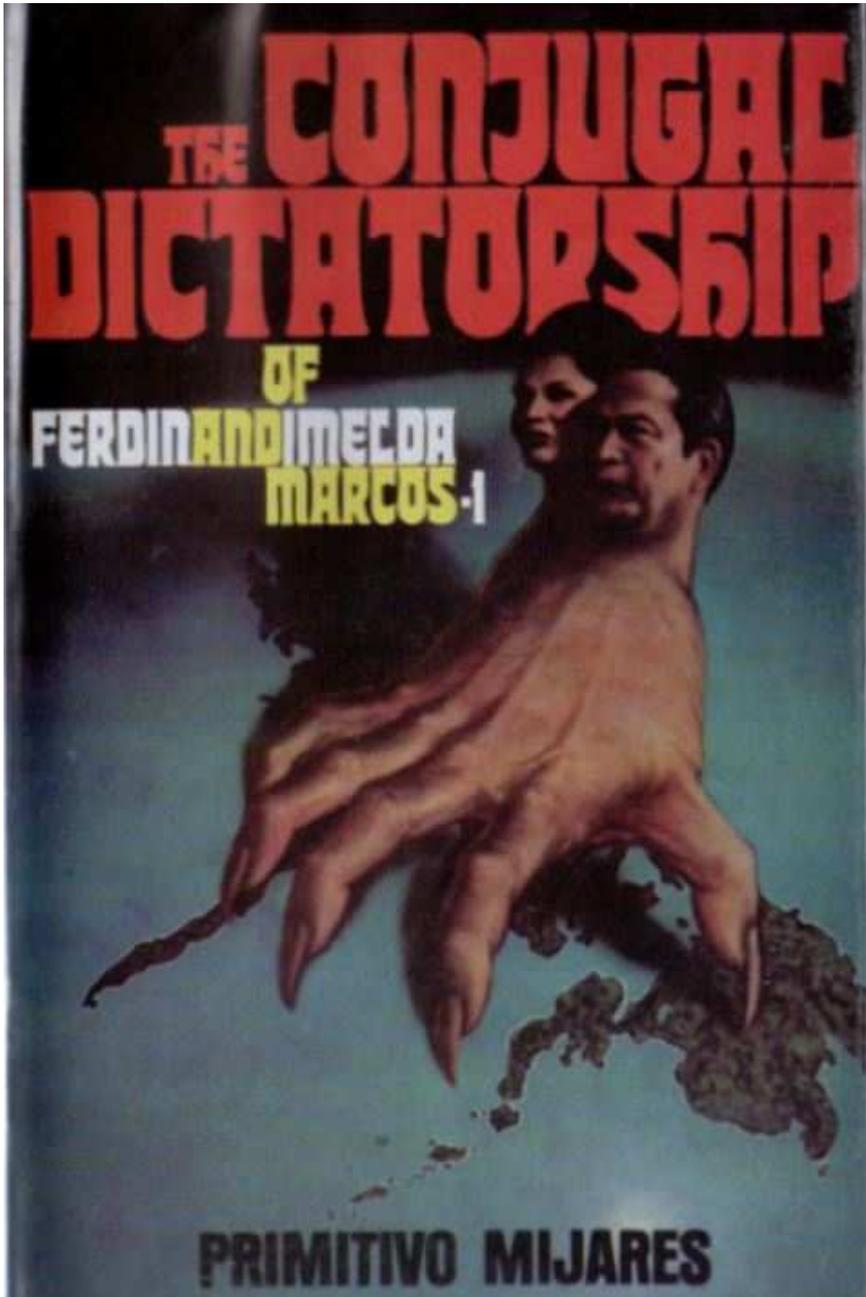
Nights Mijares pursued his college studies, finishing his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1956, and Bachelor of Laws in 1960, at the Lyceum of the Philippines. He passed the Philippine bar examinations also in 1960.

Tibo figured in the most tumultuous events of his country. He was with Arsenio H. Lacson, the best and most colorful mayor Manila ever had, when Lacson, under the machineguns of armed forces armored cars, practically cursed into retreat back to camp the first attempt to impose martial law in the city.

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Tibo was both a star witness and active participant in the greatest single upheaval to hit the Philippines. The full story is, of course, in this book.

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Original Cover of the 1976 Edition

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Author's Picture

Author's Foreword

This book is unfinished. The Filipino people shall finish it for me.

I wrote this volume very, very slowly. I could have done with it in three months after my defection from the conjugal dictatorship of Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos on February 20, 1975. Instead, I found myself availing of every excuse to slow it down. A close associate, Marcelino P. Sarmiento, even warned me, "*Baka mapanis 'yan.*" (Your book could become stale.)

While I availed of almost any excuse not to finish the manuscript of this volume, I felt the tangible voices of a muted people back home in the Philippines beckoning to me from across the vast Pacific Ocean. In whichever way I turned, I was confronted by the distraught images of the Filipino multitudes crying out to me to finish this work, lest the frailty of human memory -- or any incident *a la* Nalundasan -- consign to oblivion the matters I had in mind to form the vital parts of this book. It was as if the Filipino multitudes and history itself were surging in an endless wave presenting a compelling demand on me to

San Francisco, California perpetuate the personal knowledge I have gained on the infamous machinations of Ferdinand E. Marcos and his overly ambitious wife, Imelda, that led to a day of infamy in my country, that Black Friday on September 22, 1972, when martial law was declared as a means to establish history's first conjugal dictatorship. The sense of urgency in finishing this work was also goaded by the thought that Marcos does not have eternal life and that the Filipino people are of unimaginable forgiving posture. I thought that, if I did not perpetuate this work for posterity, Marcos might unduly benefit from a Laurelian statement that, when a man dies, the virtues of his past are magnified and his faults are reduced to molehills.

This is a book for which so much has been offered and done by Marcos and his minions so that it would never see the light of print. Now that it is off the press, I entertain greater fear that so much more will be done to prevent its circulation, not only in the Philippines but also in the United States.

But this work now belongs to history. Let it speak for itself in the context of developments within the coming months or years. Although it finds great relevance in the present life of the present life of the Filipinos and of Americans interested in the study of subversion of democratic governments by apparently legal means, this work seeks to find its proper niche in history which must inevitably render its judgment on the seizure of government power from the people by a lame duck Philippine President.

If I had finished this work immediately after my defection from the totalitarian regime of Ferdinand and Imelda, or after the vicious campaign of the dictatorship to vilify me in July-August, 1975, then I could have done so only in anger. Anger did influence my production of certain portions of the manuscript. However, as I put the finishing touches to my work, I found myself expurgating it of the personal venom, the virulence and intemperate language of my original draft.

Some of the materials that went into this work had been of public knowledge in the Philippines. If I had used them, it was with the intention of

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utilizing them as links to heretofore unrevealed facets of the various ruses that Marcos employed to establish his dictatorship.

Now, I have kept faith with the Filipino people. I have kept my rendezvous with history. I have, with this work, discharged my obligation to myself, my profession of journalism, my family and my country.

I had one other compelling reason for coming out with this work at the great risks of being uprooted from my beloved country, of forced separation from my wife and children and losing their affection, and of losing everything I have in my name in the Philippines — or losing life itself. It is that I wanted to make a public expiation for the little influence that I had exercised on the late Don Eugenio Lopez into handpicking a certain Ferdinand E. Marcos as his candidate for the presidency of the Philippines in the elections of 1965. Would the Filipinos be suffering from a conjugal dictatorship now, if I had not originally planted in Lopez's consciousness in 1962 that Marcos was the "unbeatable candidate" for 1965?

To the remaining democracies all over the world, this book is offered us a case study on how a democratically-elected President could operate within the legal system and yet succeed in subverting that democracy in order to perpetuate himself and his wife as conjugal dictators.

I entertain no illusions that my puny work would dislodge Ferdinand and Imelda from their concededly entrenched position. However, history teaches us that dictators always fall, either on account of their own corrupt weight or sheer physical exhaustion. I am hopeful that this work would somehow set off, or contribute to the ignition, of a chain reaction that would compel Marcos to relinquish his vise-like dictatorial grip on his own countrymen.

When the Filipino is then set free, and could participate in cheerful cry over the restoration of freedom and democracy in the Philippines, that cry shall be the fitting finish to this, my humble work

April 27. 1976

Acknowledgment

I would need an additional chapter in a futile attempt to acknowledge all the help I received in producing this volume. However, I would be extremely remiss, if I did not acknowledge my debt of gratitude to the librarians at the Southeast Asia Center, University of California at Berkeley, and the thousands of Filipinos in the United States and back home in the Philippines whose enthusiasm for, and dedication to, freedom and democracy guided my unsteady hands in an unerring course to finish this work.

— *The Author*

Chapter I

A Summer Night in Washington, D.C.

The capital of the United States of America had always incited in me the inner feelings of love of country, a feeling which I seem to overlook while I am actually in my own terra firma on Philippine soil; it is as if one is given a sudden urge of imbibing, and seeking to belong to a vital footnote to, history. Except for this latest trip of mine which I was pondering this sultry summer night on June 16, 1975, every time I visited Washington, D.C. which, to me, stands out not only as the capital of the United States but also of the democratic western world as well as the*J.S. allies in Asia, I always felt that I was invested with a sense of mission for my country, even though my trips to this capital of the world had always been undertaken by me in my capacity as a simple newspaperman. So it was the way I felt in June, 1958, when, as a young reporter for the now defunct Manila Chronicle, I first set foot on Washington, D.C. My first trip to Washington, D.C. was in connection with my coverage of the state visit of then President Carlos P. Garcia.

The thought alone of going to Washington, D.C., that square mass of land carved out of the territories of the states of Maryland and Virginia, becomes awe-inspiring; being in D.C. itself gives one a sense of history. As two great journalist-observers of Washington, D.C. put it, “the numerous national monuments that give Washington, its physical and spiritual identity are as revered by the home folks as they are by the thousands of tourists who come streaming in every year at cherry-blossom time.” Indeed, a great many people attempt to make it to Washington, D.C. not only because they seek to honor America’s great national heritage, but also because they want to be part of it, in however small a way.

But on this summer night of June 16, 1975,¹ I felt that somehow I just might be a part of the history of the United States and of my country, the Philippines, or perhaps as an insignificant footnote, but certainly a part of the historical record of one of the chambers of the bicameral Congress of the United States of America. In the midst of such heady thought, I was, however, sobered up by a warning given earlier by former Senator Raul S. Manglapus, president of the “Movement for a Free Philippines,” that I should not expect too much — presumably by way of publicity — out of this visit to Washington, D.C. I should rather think of my mission in Washington, D.C., Manglapus suggested, as a bold strike for a great national struggle being waged by Filipinos back home in the Philippines. I told Manglapus that I was going to Washington, D.C. in response to an invitation of a committee of the United States Congress. I will not be seeking headlines. I am not going to perform any heroics.

I told myself that I almost did not make this trip to the U.S. capital, were it not for the foresight and valued assessment of a greying Bataan warrior who, while his colleagues are enjoying the blissful luxury of retirement and quiet life, has taken on a second struggle for the freedom of his country. It was Col. Narciso L. Manzano (USA Retired), a Bataan war hero whose exploits are documented by Gen. Carlos P. Romulo in his book, “I Saw the Fall of the

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Philippines,” who brought my name to the attention of, and insisted on my appearing before, the best forum available as of now to any struggle for the peaceful overthrow of a dictatorship — the United States Congress.

It is an historical irony that one of the few really effective fighters in the United States against a dictatorship that has engulfed the Philippines is this authentic and unassuming hero of the Battle of Bataan.

Manzano is a no nonsense brutally frank man who used to coach soccer teams in Manila. Now supposed to live in retirement in San Francisco, Manzano has proved to possess more energy than several men half his age. Not given to unnecessary delays and red tape, Manzano instead has waited for no man and depended on no one in carrying out his one-man battle against despotism in the Philippines. He staked his very life fighting a despotism imposed by foreigners during the dark days of the Japanese occupation of the Philippines. The man is now waging another heroic battle against a home-grown tyranny.

Manzano has flooded the U.S. Congress and the White House with telegrams, personal letters, mostly handwritten, documents and press clippings pointing out why American officialdom should not support the dictatorship in the Philippines. Manzano even managed to convince television stations in (he San Francisco area to grant him free air time in refuting single-handedly the overpowering propaganda of the Manila martial regime in the United States.

In fact, Manzano and Antonio Garcia, MFP information officer, were the only two persons who supported me mightily in my decision to go to Washington, D.C. Manzano used some of his contacts on Capitol Hill to make sure that I would be heard in committee by the United States Congress.

It was the case I was about to state, and the very decision I have made to state such case, before the U.S. Congress that gave me a sense of purpose, a mission for my country, and a sense of entering the threshold of history.

At the time, I tried to relate the feeling I had to the fact that, the United States of America, on the eve of its bicentennial, had found a most auspicious, if regrettable, occasion to dramatize the wisdom of its Founding Fathers in opting for a responsible living presidency at the apex of government. I imaged the delegates to the Continental Congress rejecting overwhelmingly in 1776 certain well-intentioned proposals that the former British colonies of North America embrace a dictatorial form of government for the newly-independent nation. I thought that the situation that was presented the United States of America 199 years after its launching into independent nationhood was the exemplification of the principle of taxation with representation; people pay heavy taxes as the price of their having a voice in the affairs of government. The propitious occasion was, of course, the forced resignation of President Richard Milhous Nixon on August 9, 1974, under the pressure of an impending impeachment trial in the wake of the Watergate scandal. It demonstrated in ringing tones — louder perhaps than when the bells of Philadelphia tolled the end of the British rule over the North American colonies — that, under a rule of republican government of the United States of America, no man, however high and mighty he might be, can be above the law, and the great American system founded in 1776 would know how to deal with a man who places himself

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above the law or tampers with sacred and hallowed institutions of the United States of America. I was thinking at the time that, whatever condemnation might be reserved for the ill-fated Nixon presidency, Nixon, alone of all people, acted heroically to make the American system work by his resignation from the premier White House post. Nixon himself being a part of that system knew exactly what to do when the fateful event came upon its hour, never for a moment, it seems, did Nixon think that all the screaming agitations within the various sectors of U.S. society to have him disciplined for his breach of faith were an illegal conspiracy of the rightists, the centrists or the leftists in collaboration with members of the American media, youth movements and the general American public, to overthrow the duly-constituted government of the United States of America.

The conditions in Washington, D.C. and across the continent of the United States at the time of Nixon's Watergate crisis suited to a "T" the description of conditions in the Philippines a few months before September, 1972, as described by Romulo, in his capacity as secretary of foreign affairs of the Philippines, before the Commonwealth Club of California on May 24, 1973, in San Francisco. Romulo declared that the Philippines at the time was "mired in the other darker depths of democracy — the bickering, the factionalism, the corruption, the aimless drift, and more than these, the rebellion of the alienated x x x." Romulo's employer in the Philippines viewed and interpreted the conditions in Manila in a different light, in a most absurd way. And yet, freedom-loving Americans viewed the agitations in their country in the wake of the Watergate scandal — agitations which also paralleled Philippine conditions resulting from official corruption, abuses and ineptitude — as developments that are as serious and as normal as that with which democracy is faced and for which democracy does, in its own tedious, humane and noble way, ultimately found the proper solutions. As for Nixon, he obviously viewed all the exercises resulting from Watergate, concerted or disparate as they may have appeared, as a solid indication that America no longer wanted him to rule for he had lost his moral and legal authority to lead the country from the seat of the ever-living presidency. He saw the light; that democracy rejuvenates itself in the system of government of the United States by the very act of renewal of faith by its own people in the system.

Indeed, Nixon could have contrived some serious crises, like plunging America into a new war in Indochina or provoking some economic crises that might have compelled his tormentors to forget Watergate in the meantime. As a matter of fact, in Manila at the time, the Department of Public Information, on instructions from the Office of the President, encouraged coffee shop talks that Nixon would hold on to the presidency by provoking some world crises that would require Americans to close ranks behind their President.

Nixon did indeed agonize over the decision he had to make in bowing to the superiority and workability of the American democratic system over and above the personal or ethical interests of one man, be he the President of the United States or the lowly street cleaner. And, as Nixon agonized personally over his duty to strengthen the fabric of the American system of representative government, voices of sympathy, admiration and condemnation for his strength of will in his hour of crisis crisscrossed the world.

“Sayang si Nixon, kaibigan pa naman natin. Kung mayroon sana siyang martial law powers at may lakas ng loob na katulad ng sir natin . . . e, di, okay na okay lang siya sa White House. Wala sanang aabuso sa kanya” (What a pity for Nixon, considering that he is our friend. If only he had martial law powers and had the courage like our sir [to exercise the powers] ... then he would be stable in the White House. He wouldn't have to take those abuses [criticisms from Congress and the American media, among others].)

“Oo nga sana, pero wala siyang ganyang powers na katulad dito sa atin.” (Yes, but he doesn't have such powers under the American Constitution as we have under ours.)

The dialogue at the time was between Philippine President Ferdinand E. Marcos and his wife, Imelda Romualdez-Marcos, as they talked about the difficulties of President Nixon at the hands of Judge John Sirica, and the select Senate Watergate Committee and the House Judiciary Committee, chaired by Senator Sam Ervin and Rep. Peter W. Rodino, Jr., respectively, not to mention the unrelenting independent investigations of the mass media. The scene of this dialogue was Marcos' public “study room” where the First Lady had stopped by after disposing of her own callers for the day in her “Music Room.” The First Lady, who spoke first, really felt sincerely sympathetic to the beleaguered President Nixon whose administration had initially given backing to the military-supported New Society of President and Mrs. Marcos. And now, it was the sincere wish of the conjugal rulers in Manila that President Nixon should be able to set up just the kind of military government that the duumvirate have in the Philippines so that the American Chief Executive could extricate himself from the tightening noose of the Watergate scandal.

The smug conjugal leaders of the Philippines knew exactly what they were talking about. They had just done in their country what they had hoped Nixon would be able to do in the United States; they had availed of, to their personal advantage, an extreme measure provided for an actual emergency by the Constitution of the Philippines under the provisions of Article II, Section 10, paragraph (2), which stated:

“The President shall be the commander-in-chief of all the armed forces of the Philippines and, whenever it becomes necessary, he may call out such armed forces to prevent or suppress lawless violence, invasion, insurrection, or rebellion. In case of invasion, insurrection, or rebellion, or imminent danger thereof, when the public safety requires it, he may suspend the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus, or place the Philippines or any part thereof under martial law.”

As early as the date of their improvident dialogue on Nixon's predicament, which was about December, 1972, the Marcoses of the Philippines were already forming definite ideas about extending the influence of their conjugal rule in the Philippines into the United States of America. This is because they have found out rather painfully that the military-backed New Society launched by Marcos has not drawn significant support among the overseas Filipinos, much less among the rank and file Americans in the U.S. mainland.

On another occasion, the First Lady revealed during one of her noon day talks with the people around the President, which included myself, that

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President Nixon had given his “personal blessings” to the imposition of martial law in Manila.

Mrs. Marcos disclosed that President Marcos had an overseas telephone conversation with President Nixon a few days before Sept. 21, 1972. Her recollection of the phone conversation was that Marcos told Nixon that bombs were exploding all over Manila and that Communist-instigated demonstrations were assuming uncontrollable proportions; that he (Marcos) is under compulsion to proclaim martial law to protect the integrity of the Republic and its interests, including the varied American interests in the islands; and that Nixon told Marcos to “go ahead” with his plans “because Nixon wanted to see if martial law would work here.”

Mrs. Marcos revealed that President Nixon wanted to find out how well Marcos would be able to wield his powers as commander-in-chief of the armed forces to extricate himself from his political troubles. The implication of her statement was that Nixon knew very well in advance Marcos’ political plans when the Philippine President “sought” the U.S. President’s clearance to impose martial law in his country. At the time, Nixon himself was already facing seemingly insurmountable political troubles arising out of the Watergate scandal. The First Lady claimed that Nixon wanted Marcos’ martial law to work effectively “because he might find need for a model which he could adopt later on in the United States.”

“We are actually doing Nixon a favor by showing him herein the Philippines how martial law can be wielded to save a President from his political troubles,” Mrs. Marcos declared.

Contrary to the wishes of the Marcoses, President Nixon did not choose to concoct any device or stratagem that would have allowed him to avail of the commander-in-chief provision of the United States Constitution, suspend civil and political rights and thereby silence all criticisms and opposition to his rule in the White House. Nixon chose resignation and temporary infamy at his St. Helena in San Clemente, California, as his own heroic contribution to the cause of strengthening the fabric of the democratic system of government in the United States of America.

It was the peaceful, orderly and legal manner by which the United States’ system dealt decisively and unerringly with Nixon’s Watergate that made the eve of the U.S. bicentennial more meaningful; its system of removing an erring and unwanted Chief Executive becoming the object of hope and aspiration in desperation among oppressed and tyrannized peoples, like the 45 million Filipinos now groaning under a yoke set up by a home-grown tyrant.

And when oppressed peoples think of the American system, with its living presidency, the microcosm of their thoughts, aspirations and hopes for “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness” turns hopefully to Washington, D.C., the capital of the world where people can look up to a Washington Post to expose government venalities and official shenanigans without fear or favor.

Filipinos look up to Washington, D.C. as their own special capital city, too. There are justifiable grounds for this attitude, although the ultra-nationalists in my country would denounce it as colonial mentality. Momentous events have taken place in Washington, D.C. that helped shape the destiny of that 7,100-island archipelago known as the Republic of the Philippines. It was in

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Washington, D.C. where, at the turn of the century, then President William McKinley “had a divine inspiration”¹ that convinced him that it was the mission

(*1. See Page 123, printed record of the hearings of the Subcommittee on International Organizations of the Committee on International Relations, House of Representatives, U.S. Congress, series of 1975.)

of the United States to “civilize and christianize” the Philippines; it was that divine inspiration which impelled McKinley to decide to order the U.S. Far East Fleet, commanded by Commodore George Dewey, to destroy the Spanish Fleet off Manila Bay, thereby paving the way for the colonization of the Philippines by the United States. Thus, upon the establishment by General Wesley Merritt of an American military government in Manila, on August 14, 1898, President McKinley, who was girding for a reelection, intoned: “The Philippines are ours, not to exploit, but to develop, to civilize, to educate, to train in the science of self-government.”

As the Philippines came under American rule, Filipinos never faltered in their desire to govern themselves. Numerous missions and resolutions were dispatched to the United States by leaders of the Philippine independence movement even as the Philippines enjoyed benevolent American rule, enjoying the protection of the Bill of Rights as found in the U.S. Constitution. All the agitations for self-rule for the Filipinos ultimately resulted in the passage by the two chambers of the U.S. Congress of two similar Philippine freedom bills, one introduced by Senator Millard Tydings in the Senate and the other authored by Congressman John McDuffie in the House. Enacted by the United States Congress and signed into law by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the so-called Tydings-McDuffie Act was accepted by the Philippine Legislature in behalf of the Filipino people on May 1, 1934. The Tydings-McDuffie Law provided for the establishment of a Commonwealth Government and recognition of Philippine Independence on the fourth of July immediately following the end of the ten-year period from the date of the Commonwealth inauguration. More importantly, the Tydings-McDuffie Law provided that a Constitution, subject to approval by the President of the United States ^{*2} and to ratification by the Filipino people, ^{*3} shall establish a republican presidential form of government for both the transition Commonwealth and the Republic to be declared independent. Independence was granted the Republic of the Philippines on July 4, 1946.

(*2. President Franklin D. Roosevelt approved the Constitution as drafted under the terms of the Tydings-McDuffie Law on March 23, 1935.

3. The Filipino people ratified the Constitution by an overwhelming vote on May 14, 1935.)

Thus, from 1947 to 1961, the Philippines marked its Freedom Day on July 4. In 1962, a Philippine President (Diosdado P. Macapagal) reset the day of Philippine Independence to June 12, the date in 1898 when Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo proclaimed the independence of the Philippines from Spanish rule from the balcony of his home in Kawit, Cavite. The Filipino people, however, continue to celebrate July 4 as Philippine-American Friendship Day or Republic Day. The radical move of Macapagal was described by admirers as

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nationalism of the highest order, but what could not be erased was the observation that the change was effected in the wake of the rejection by the U.S. Congress in February, 1962, of an omnibus bill which would have granted the Philippines additional war payments to the tune of \$78 million. Included in the proposed additional war damage payments was a personal claim made by a certain Ferdinand E. Marcos for \$8 million to compensate for food and war material he allegedly supplied the American guerillas in Mindanao during the Japanese Occupation of the Philippines. The U.S. War Damage Commission had earlier rejected the Mindanao during the Japanese Occupation of the Philippines. The U.S. War Damage Commission had earlier rejected the same personal war damage claims of Marcos as “fake.” *4

(*4. See Chapter on “Too Late the Hero.”

One of the fiery supporters of President Macapagal on his transfer of the date of Philippine Independence was then Senator Ferdinand E. Marcos who delivered an emotional oratory denouncing “America’s ingratitude” for the Bataan sacrifices of Filipino soldiers, like him. In the course of his fiery speech, Marcos even went through the motions, along with another senator (Eulogio Balao) whose heroic exploits in the battles against the Japanese have never been questioned by anyone, of returning to the United States embassy in Manila all his 28 war decorations, most of which he had obtained 17 years after his alleged heroic exploits in the war.*5 (*5. *Ibid.*) Marcos’ act of “returning” his war medals to the United States embassy prompted then Senate Majority Leader Cipriano Primicias, Sr. to ask rhetorically: “How can he return those medals to the U.S. embassy when all but two of them are Philippine decorations which he obtained only a month ago and 17 years after the war?” In any case, when Marcos himself became President of his country in 1965, he upheld the decision of Macapagal and to this day leads his nation in celebrating Independence Day every 12th day of June.

Washington, D.C. is thus of special significance to the Filipinos. There was even a time when Filipinos, especially the newspapermen, considered going to Washington, D.C. a special pilgrimage in much the same spirit that a Filipino Muslim looks forward to a visit to Mecca in Jeddha, a lifetime obligation. Thus, Filipino newsmen found themselves in the 50s and early 60s making a mad scramble for the much-coveted Fulbright and Smith-Mundt travel grants offered through the State Department in order that they could acquire the status symbol of having made the trip to Washington, D.C. Lately, however, the status symbol has had some changes, with Filipino newsmen considering that the trips to Moscow or Peking are the current “musts” for media men. The outstanding symbol of a Filipino newsmen’s achievement in Washington, D.C. is, of course, Abelardo “Al” Valencia, the first Filipino correspondent of the Associated Press before World War II, who is now doing some press and public relations work for the Philippine embassy in Washington, D.C.

I imagine that the patriotic feeling that Washington, D.C. awakens in me when I am within her fold works similarly for most other Filipinos who are awed by the relevance of the U.S. capital to their own lives as citizens of the Philippines. It was in Washington, D.C. where Proculo Rodriguez, Jr., the man largely responsible in preventing the Commission on Elections from being used

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by the ruling Liberal party in 1965 in cheating then presidential candidate Ferdinand E. Marcos, launched the first protest against martial law by staging on September 25, 1972, a one-man demonstration in front of the Philippine embassy. It was also in Washington, D.C. where another Filipino, Napoleon Lechoco, Sr., single-handedly invaded the Philippine embassy and held hostage the Filipino envoy, Ambassador Eduardo Z. Romualdez, for 11 hours to dramatize a demand that his son, Napoleon, Jr., be given an exit permit from the Philippines.*⁶ In so doing, Lechoco, Sr., a former Manila newsman and crusader against graft and corruption in government, heroically called world attention to the tyranny, oppression and repression going on in the Philippines.

(*⁶ Lechoco, a native of Masbate, Philippines, entered the Philippine embassy and held the ambassador at gunpoint on Nov. 18, 1974, demanding the release by the martial regime in Manila of his son, Napoleon, Jr. He said that his son who has been granted an immigrant visa by the U.S. government, was being deliberately blocked in his attempt to leave Manila in retaliation for the anti-martial law activities of the elder Lechoco in the U.S. The martial regime capitulated to Lechoco, Sr., granting his demands in exchange for the release of Ambassador Romualdez unharmed. There was the general observation among Filipinos at home and abroad, however, that, if the envoy had not been a Romualdez, the martial regime would not have yielded so easily to the demands of Lechoco. The ambassador happened to be a first cousin of the First Lady.)

There must be in the atmosphere or conditions that are a monopoly of Washington, D.C. that would induce men to take actions that, viewed singularly as such acts, would lead other ordinary men to conclude that such actuations are foolhardy, such as the actions taken by Rodriguez or by Lechoco, who are both Filipino immigrants in the United States. And yet, a district court in the District of Columbia rejected a defense argument that Lechoco, Sr. acted in a state of sanity in holding Ambassador Romualdez hostage in exchange for his son.

On the night of June 16, 1975, I was assessing the impact of Washington, D.C. on the lives of Filipinos, including mine at the very moment, in much the same way perhaps that John W. Dean III must have pondered his own predicament while preparing to blow the whistle on his former boss. It could have been just a coincidence, but I could not help thinking that I was an "insider" in the Marcos administration in much the same manner that Dean was in the Nixon White House and that what I was about to do the next day (June 17) was to expose a gargantuan political scandal that would dwarf the Watergate scandal which broke out in Washington, D.C. just two years earlier, on June 17, 1972. I was studying the words I would have to utter for the June 17, 1975 affair of mine, serenely on that sultry summer night of Washington, D.C. amidst the comfort of the fairly efficient air-conditioning system of Room No. 733 of the Mid-Town Motor Inn, an ideally-located motel almost midway between the White House and the U.S. Capitol building complex, with address at 1201 K. St., N.W. Washington, D.C. My room phone rang and, after some hesitation, allowing it to ring a few times more, I grabbed the receiver to say, "Hello? Yes?"

"Operator!" interjected a voice from one end of what surprised me then as an overseas call, a call that would later turn out to be a notorious episode in the history of the Philippines, "the man answering is my party already. Tibooo! Botihss... Si..."

"Just a moment, Mr. Secretary," interrupted a decidedly Oriental female

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voice, so familiar to my eardrums as that of an overseas telephone operator from Manila.

And so much more familiar was the clear voice of the man who now wanted to establish urgently a line with me, 10,000 miles away. I could recognize his voice inspite of the waterfall-like hissing sound that an overseas telephone connection makes.

After all, I have been associated for years with the now agitated possessor of that voice; I have carried on overseas telephone conversations with him three times a day for over a one-month period from San Francisco, New York and Washington, D.C. on a quasi-state affair of the “highest priority” rating. The project in which I was involved at the time had “highest priority” rating because the principal was the female half of the ruling duumvirate in the Philippines, the First Lady Imelda R. Marcos. It was not only the consideration of her personality that made the project of such “high priority”; it was what she wanted to accomplish that made me and other hirelings of the dictatorship in the Philippines work in earnest. She wanted the American media to take notice of her in a favorable light as she pulls — as programmed at that time — another “diplomatic coup” in the United States to match her diplomatic triumph in being able to visit China’s aging Chairman Mao Tse-Tung in Peking in September, 1974. The Philippines’ First Lady was sorely irritated that the international media have played down her triumphant Peking trip. Only the controlled Manila press spoke glowingly of her “achievements” in the field of diplomacy by her China visit. She blamed Information Secretary Francisco S. Tatad for having previously poisoned the foreign press against her.

I was asked to help out in the new image-building project for Mrs. Marcos in the United States; I was their all-around propaganda man, especially on projects where the official link of the government must not be established, if they should fail. My mission was to establish in my “private capacity” contact with the overseas Filipinos opposed to the martial regime in the Philippines.

The job I had to do was not an easy one; otherwise, it could have been just assigned to one of the officials or staff employees of the Philippine embassy in Washington, D.C. or the Consulate General in New York. But I was brought all the way from Manila to handle this particularly messy job.

“So, Mr. Mijares, you have become their Donald Segretti,” quipped Alejandro del Rosario, city editor of the defunct *Manila Chronicle* and now information attache at the New York consulate, as he reported to me on orders from Ambassador Ernesto Pineda, the consul general to New York, to assist me in the prosecution of my mission.

We set up headquarters in one of the rooms of the Commodore Hotel 42nd street in New York city, avoiding being seen at the Philippine Consulate in order to maintain the “cover” that I was contacting the exiles on my own initiative. I was soon joined by public relations practitioner Jose T. Tumbokon with whom I was supposed to be travelling on private business.

If my mission had been a sure thing, it just might have been grabbed, instead of being delegated to me, by Benjamin “Ko-koy” Romualdez, the favorite brother of Mrs. Marcos. An ambitious, rapacious and insatiable man, he wants to be known as the Kissinger of the Philippines because he had

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performed for President Marcos some diplomatic trouble-shooting which, he said, should place him on equal stature with U.S. State Secretary Henry Kissinger; but coffee shop wags in Manila have already dubbed him “Kokoysinger” or “the man who’s got *cuckoo-y* on his head.” Kokoy realized the difficulty of my assignment, but he thought that I just might be able to do it. I almost did. The mission flopped, not because of lack of goodwill on the part of the Filipino exiles or of resourcefulness on my part, but because of the stupidity and penchant for duplicity of Kokoy himself.

My mission was discussed and cleared beforehand by Kokoy with President Marcos. Coordination was then assigned to the man who was now so eager to talk to me on this night of June 16, 1975, by overseas telephone. I made sure myself, however, that it was really the President’s desire that I fly to the United States — as I did on October 21, 1974 — to arrange a meeting between the Philippines’ bejewelled and extravagant First Lady and the Filipino exiles who constitute the overseas opposition to the martial regime in the Philippines. The First Lady had persuaded her husband-President to allow her to go to New York to inaugurate on November 14, 1974, the \$8 million Philippine Center on Fifth Avenue. Of course, Leandro Quintana, business editor of the Philippine News, swears that the First Lady of the Philippines, aside from doing official chores for Marcos, had been observed by him strengthening her Israeli connections at the Carlyle Hotel in New York, specifically with an Israeli violinist.

When I said my goodbyes to President Marcos on October 19, 1974, to undertake the “get Manglapus mission,” the President gave me specific instructions on the line I should take in talking to the former senator. Marcos did not entertain any illusion, much less a desire, such as which Mrs. Marcos had, on the dismantling of the apparatus of overseas opposition to his dictatorial rule in the Philippines. He gave me the impression that he would as a matter of fact prefer to have a semblance of an opposition from abroad to the martial regime; also, he wanted a man of Manglapus’ stature to lead such a movement.

Marcos told me that the last emissary he had authorized to see Manglapus goofed. The emissary was retired Philippine Navy Commander Juan B. Magluyan, a townmate of Manglapus and former comrade in the guerilla movement during the Japanese Occupation. He instructed me to reiterate to Manglapus the message he had authorized Magluyan to convey: that Manglapus could concentrate on graft and corruption among top military commanders in attacking the martial regime, and that he should also condemn the old society politicians for driving Marcos to declare martial law.

I surmised that the objective of Marcos in seeking to convey a message to Manglapus was to make the former senator do what Marcos could not himself do: upbraid the military commanders on their deep involvement in graft and corruption under the martial regime. At the same time, Marcos also wanted to prevent possible unification of domestic and overseas anti-martial law efforts by alienating Manglapus from the sidelined political leaders back home.

After spelling out his instructions to me, Marcos advised me to return to Manila as soon as possible since the Media Advisory Council has to be reorganized. I told him I had already drafted and passed on to Presidential Executive Assistant Jacobo C. Clave a decree replacing the MAC with two

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smaller censorship and licensing councils. The decision to abolish MAC was made by Marcos on October 15, 1974, during a conference which was attended by Bulletin Today publisher Hans Menzi, Secretary Tatad, and myself.

The contact with the Filipino exiles, specifically elements comprising the "Movement for a Free Philippines," which is headed by former Senator Manglapus, was programmed principally for the First Lady. It was to have had certain sinister purposes which not even President Marcos figured out when he put his stamp of approval to the project; he did not even realize that the amount of government funds he had approved for the First Lady's trip would be multiplied no less than ten times in an arm-twisting method that only an extravagant First Lady like Mrs. Marcos is capable of doing. Firstly, the contact with Filipino exiles was to be held out to Marcos himself by the female half of the ruling duumvirate in Manila that, everywhere Imelda might be, whether she be in mainland China or continental America, she becomes an instant hit; her irresistible charms work on heretofore antagonists, opponents and bitter critics of the conjugally-managed New Society in the Philippines. Secondly, it was going to be exploited later on as a death-blow to the overseas opposition to the martial regime in the Philippines. It was to be a ruse, the plan being to make it appear that the exiles led by Manglapus had sought the kindhearted help of Imelda in seeking forgiveness for their anti-martial law activities in the United States. As a matter of fact, during her stop-over in Honolulu on her way to New York, the First Lady read a statement that her dictator-husband was offering amnesty to all overseas Filipinos who feel they might have committed a crime or crimes against the New Society. It was a ridiculous offer because, as every student of law realizes, no citizen of a country, excepting those in the diplomatic service, can be held liable for any act he may have committed outside the territorial limits of his country even though it be a violation of his country's laws. Thirdly, the "feat" of making the exiles "surrender" to Mrs. Marcos was also going to be beamed to President Gerald Ford in order to compel a decision on his part to receive the First Lady at the White House, an expected happening that Imelda and Kokoy figured would complete the scenario that Imelda Romualdez-Marcos is a hit whether she be with Mao or Ford. Kokoy was supposed to have started the groundwork for the White House "conquest" by Mrs. Marcos, having convinced his brother-in-law that he was the best man to do it in view of his "strong connections" in the State Department. However, when Kokoy received negative feedbacks on his efforts to make his sister crash into the White House, he decided that the First Lady should make a big show of contacting the dissident Filipino exiles. The "show" was expected to do the trick in the program to stampede Ford into receiving Imelda. However, none of the tricks resorted to by the First Lady or her sock-less brother ever worked on Ford. But they never got bored being rejected by Ford.

There apparently are several reasons for the failure of the continuous assault by the First Lady on Ford's White House.*7

(*7. Despite the visit made by President Ford to the Philippines in December, 1975, the White House doors are still tightly-closed to Mrs. Marcos. The Ford visit should not be viewed as an endorsement of the martial regime. Secretary of State Kissinger had himself leaked out to the American media a story that the Philippines and Indonesia were included in the Ford safari thru Asia in order to downgrade the importance of Ford's visit to Peking.)

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One of them is that President Ford is not in favor of lending the prestige of his office to totalitarian regimes, especially so in the case of countries which have enjoyed expensive experiments in democracy at the expense of American taxpayers and which experiments have been brought to naught by the whims and caprices of home-grown tyrants. The other reason is said to be very personal; that the First Lady, following a cue from President Marcos, had snubbed Ford when he visited Manila some time ago as a minority leader in the House of Representatives; that was before Ford became an appointive U.S. Vice President and later as an appointive U.S. President. And then, Ford is said to be wary that a visit by Imelda would necessarily include a chat with Mrs. Betty Ford, an encounter that might contaminate Mrs. Ford with the ideas of Imelda on jet-set parties and expensive junkets abroad and on meddling in the affairs of state.

All the varied details and ramifications of the deceitful plan to get the First Lady to hold a "reconciliation" conference with Manglapus and company, as well as other aspects of the image-building project for the First Lady were matters I have had to discuss for over a one-month period, three times a day, over the transoceanic telephone with the man who now so urgently wants to establish telephone contact with me. The sound of anticipation from the man speaking at the other end of the line was discernible to me even 10,000 miles away. After all, I have said an irritated "hello, yes" as I answered the intermittent ringing of my room phone.

I recalled that the man who now wants to talk to me was a man who was almost as thorough and as methodical as the President we both used to serve. I have had occasion to discuss with him over the transoceanic telephone in November, 1974, even such details of Mrs. Marcos' trip involving the air transportation to New York of a battalion of security agents belonging to the Presidential Security Command and how they should be shielded from the media people of New York. He would remind me over the phone that I should be meticulous in misleading the Manglapus group on the number of free-riding "Blue Ladies" and other government officials ordered to go to New York to provide the "crowds" which would "adulate" Mrs. Marcos. Always, the man would remind me that it was "the desire of the President" that Mrs. Marcos be made very happy in New York and persuaded to stay there a little longer, obviously to keep her off his back while the President undertook matters of utmost concern to his own personal well-being.

This particular overseas phone caller and I were among a handful of the closest assistants of Dictator-President Marcos. We had direct, unrestricted access to the heavily-isolated dictator virtually 24 hours a day, although our entry into the Marcos corridor of power was paved in different ways.

Although I was functioning strictly as a newspaperman, covering the political beat for the now defunct *Manila Chronicle*, I worked closely beginning the year 1963 with then Senate Minority Leader Ferdinand E. Marcos on instructions of my publisher, the late Don Eugenio Lopez, Sr., the acknowledged "President-maker" in the Philippines in those days. The reason was that, as a political writer, I successfully convinced Lopez that then Senator Marcos should be backed by the Lopez political-economic power in wresting

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the Senate presidency in 1963 as he (Marcos) was the presidential timber “best-equipped” to dislodge the incumbent President, Macapagal, in the 1965 presidential elections.*⁸ Marcos eventually won the presidency in 1965, and won reelection in 1969, but I stayed on in my job as a newspaperman with the Lopez empire.

(*⁸. See Chapter on “Too Late the Hero.”)

When Marcos and Lopez broke up their alliance in 1972, I chose to side with Marcos, and was thus compelled to transfer to Marcos’ newly-established newspaper, the Daily Express. Thus, even before the imposition of a dictatorial martial regime, I found myself closely collaborating with Marcos in news management under conditions of a still very free press in the Philippines. Upon the imposition of martial law on September 21, 1972, I assumed the role of a “media czar” for the regime with my election as President of the Malacanang-controlled National Press Club of the Philippines, my assumption of the position of chairman of the Media Advisory Council and my being held out personally by President Marcos as the sole conduit between the military government and the practicing media.

Considered a man “outside government,” I performed various functions for President Marcos. I was generally accepted as an ex-officio member of the Marcos Cabinet, having access to all Cabinet meetings and even closed-door military briefings. While functioning as chief propagandist for Marcos, I also served as a “Devil’s Advocate,” a role which I had taken to heart in my honest belief that the imposition of martial law in the Philippines was a temporary emergency measure “to save the Republic” from a Communist take-over. It was my pursuit of the “Devil’s Advocate” role, which Marcos himself assigned to me in view of my “non-official” status in the Palace, that eventually led to my disenchantment with the regime. On a number of occasions, I have had to denounce corruption and abuses of leaders of the defense and military establishments, and somehow they managed to find out about my memoranda to President Marcos on these matters. Some military officers actually proposed that I be arrested and placed in the military stockade without prior notice to the President on charges that I was a former staff member of the defunct Manila Chronicle. However, the military establishment had it on good authority that I was highly thought of by President Marcos and, in their view, it was politics not to antagonize a man who had such an influential and powerful friend.

To be sure, there were early attempts on the part of the military’s Office for Civil Relations to bring me within the pale of its emergency jurisdiction over mass media.*⁹ I had invariably brushed off such attempts to make me clear my

(*⁹. See Chapter on “Era of Thought Control.”)

writings with the OCR with the statement that they have “presidential clearance.” At that time, the military just didn’t know the role I was playing for the martial regime. However, the OCR officers have heard about my easy access to the President. One day in December, 1972, Colonel Noe S. Andaya, OCR chief, felt called upon to summon me to the OCR office at Camp Aguinaldo. I did consent to see Andaya but only after I had “cleared” my trip with the President himself. Marcos asked one of his presidential assistants to monitor my trip to the OCR office.

It turned out that Andaya wanted me to explain a piece I had written in my

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column, "PM Views," which was critical of Senator Gerardo A. Roxas, president of the suspended opposition Liberal party. Andaya said it was "un-New Society" of me to have assailed Roxas in the manner that I did. I answered him that that particular column was "ordered" by President Marcos himself. As a matter of fact, I told Andaya, a presidential assistant was waiting for a telephone call at the Palace from the OCR chief so that he could authenticate my claim on who ordered that the Roxas column be written the way it was published. Andaya did make the call and he got his answer.

Later, the presidential assistant told me that he added a few more words to this effect: "It is the President's desire that you do not waste the time of Tibo Mijares by asking him to explain to the military what stories the President had ordered him to write."

Andaya turned very apologetic later on. He stressed that it was not the desire of the OCR to question the orders of the commander-in-chief of the armed forces. The good colonel, who later on became a close personal friend, explained that the OCR merely wanted to do its job of policing media.

I utilized my conference with Andaya to let him and the military know the nature of propaganda work that I was doing for Marcos. Fortunately, I had with me at the time some of the handwritten directives of President Marcos on what columns I should write and what stories I should program for the Daily Express and the other newspapers allowed to publish. I had with me President Marcos' own handwritten "story ideas which I was supposed to stagger for the Christmas holidays of 1972-1973. At that time, Marcos was already preparing to cancel the scheduled plebiscite on the martial law Constitution (1973) and to call the first referendum among the barangays. I showed the handwritten notes of the President to Andaya. After that conference, my stock with the military soared to new heights. Andaya could only plead with me that I "let us in the OCR know once in a while" what major news stories I would be farming out on orders of the President "so that we can coordinate." Andaya added that I really would know best how to develop the column and news story ideas dictated by the President.

The military, and subsequently the entire nation, were to accept as a matter of course that anything that appeared under my by-line in the newspapers were the "thoughts of Marcos." The truth was that there was hardly any column I had written which I cannot support with physical evidence of the handwritten directive of Marcos on how a particular column should be written. Most of the pieces I had written as news stories or columns about how excellent were the thoughts, acts and deeds of Marcos were actually dictated by Marcos to me. I was, therefore not a free agent when I wrote about the "thoughts of Marcos" in my columns in the Daily Express publications. My column was more generally accepted as "President Marcos Views" and not as "Primitivo Mijares' Views. When Information Secretary Tatad suspended newspaper columns in April, 1973, the President ordered Tatad in writing the following day to reinstate "PM Views" immediately.

I started entertaining second thoughts about my support and propaganda work for Marcos towards the end of the year 1973. It is difficult to pinpoint the exact point in time when I did. But it must have been right after December 30, 1973, which was the day Marcos' second and last term in office under the 1935 Constitution ended. At about that point in time, I began to realize

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that Marcos imposed martial law, not to save the country from a Communist rebellion and to reform society, but to hold on to the presidency for life — and as a dictator. I decided then that I would have to eventually jump Marcos' ship. However, I felt that I could not dissociate myself quietly from the Marcos regime. I somehow had to make public my rebellion against Marcos' plan to become the Philippine ruler for life. The Filipino people never gave Marcos a mandate to rule for life when they elected him to the presidency in 1965. I wanted to perpetuate into the records of history the machinations of a man dead-set on becoming a dictator in his own country.

When I felt I was ready to defect from the Marcos regime, I contacted a worthy ally, former Evening News man Cris D. Kabasares and asked him to tell Alex A. Esclamado, editor-publisher of the Philippine News, about my plans. Cris wrote under his by-line the story of my defection on February 20, 1975.

I was not expecting any telephone call that late night of June 16, 1975, as I have already parted company with Proculo Rodriguez, Jr. who had accompanied me earlier in the evening for dinner at the residence of a friend, Betty S. Torres, at Silver Spring in Maryland. The only man who could conceivably call me at that late hour was Cristobal Manalo, former legal counsellor at the Philippine embassy "fired" by Marcos in September, 1972, because he was an "Iglesia ni Kristo" *¹⁰ member. However, he could not have known

(*¹⁰. A highly-politicized religious sect, established by Bishop Felix Manalo before World War II, the INK supported Marcos to a man in the 1965 and 1969 elections. When he no longer needed their support after the 1969 elections, Marcos started classifying the INK people, along with the Lopezes, as unscrupulous oligarchic pressure groups. See also chapter on "Twilight of Democracy" for an account on the battle for custody of the INK radio station complex in Quezon City.)

where I was billeted at the time. I must confess though that, during the almost four months preceding this trip of mine to Washington, D.C., I have stood most of the time in morbid fear that a telephone call such as the one I am now called upon to receive might just intrude into my life. I was irritated that a phone call would somehow interrupt me at the time of my study of a speech, the preparation for which has just been as long as the fear I have entertained that that kind of telephone call might come. For the phone call turned out precisely to be about that speech I was studying in my room at the Mid-Town Motor Inn in Washington, D.C.

The phone call came at that point in time when, while reviewing my speech, I was recollecting the circumstances of an earlier visit to Washington, D.C., and comparing them with the reason for my current trip. Somehow I could establish a link. The fare I used for my flight from San Francisco to Washington, D.C. was the unused return portion of my plane ticket which was issued to me in Manila when I left the Philippines on October 21, 1974, to pursue my mission for the First Lady. I recalled that it was the First Lady who ordered me to fly to Washington, D.C. from New York on the night of November 18, 1974, to help out in "rescue" operations for Ambassador Eduardo Romualdez who was then being held hostage by Lechoco inside the chancery. Having been informed earlier that Lechoco was a former newsman, Mrs. Marcos decided that I should rush to Washington, D.C. and try to establish a dialogue with the ambassador's captor. It seems that Kokoy who had flown earlier from New York had called up

the First Lady that he had been unsuccessful thus far in establishing any contact with "Nap." Marita Manuel, a staff writer of the Daily Express assigned to the press corps of the First Lady, contacted me at the Hotel Roosevelt suite of National Media Director Gregorio S. Cendana where members of the support groups for the First Lady's New York trip then had converged on hearing about the siege in the Philippine embassy in Washington, D.C. But before I boarded the 9 p.m. commuter flight of the Eastern Airlines out of La Guardia airport, I took time out to place an overseas call to the man who, on this night of June 16, 1975, wanted to talk to me by overseas phone. I told him briefly about the siege at the Philippine embassy, and then warned him that the First Lady's mind was being poisoned by some courtesans to the effect that "Nap" Lechoco was his protege, and that, as a matter of fact, Mrs. Marcos had asked me for his home phone number at New Manila in Quezon City, presumably to give him a call and initially mark him for the needed immolation for the predicament that had befallen her cousin, the ambassador. Thus, when the First Lady's call came through to the house of this man, he was ready with a believable reason that obviously saved him from premature political damnation by the conjugal dictatorship in the Philippines.

These things flashed so fast in my mind, even as I held my Mid-Town Motel room phone receiver and heard the Manila overseas operator courteously cut off the caller from the Manila end: "Just a moment, Mr. Secretary. . . Sir, this is an overseas call from Secretary De Vega. Are you Mr. Mijares?" I answered hesitantly, but managed to say, "Yes, this is he." Then I heard another familiar voice, which I can identify anytime anywhere as that of Agent Arturo Boquien, of President Marcos' Study Room communication cubicle, stating: "Doc, na'andito na si Mr. Mijares. . . hold the line, sir."

My overseas conversation with Presidential Assistant Guillermo C. De Vega and his principal was reported to the outside world in the widely-syndicated column, "Washington Merry-Go-Round," of Jack Anderson and Les Whitten, on July 2, 1975, thus:

"MARCOS TRIED BRIBING WITNESS"

WASHINGTON — President Ferdinand Marcos, the Philippines' strongman, offered a witness a \$50,000 bribe the other day not to testify on Capitol Hill about corruption and tyranny in the Philippines.

The witness, Marcos' former press censor Primitivo Mijares, was prepared to tell the uncensored story of the Marcos regime to a House international relations subcommittee.

ON THE EVE of his testimony, Mijares received a personal call from Marcos in Manila urging him not to testify. Then an aide got on the phone and offered him the \$50,000.

The money actually was deposited in a San Francisco branch of Lloyds Bank of California in the names of Primitivo Mijares and Ambassador Trinidad Alconcel, the Philippines' consul general. Thus Mijares couldn't withdraw the \$50,000 until the consul general counter-signed the check.

Mijares not only went ahead with his testimony but informed Chairman Don Fraser, D-Minn., of the bribe attempt. Fraser's office notified the Justice Department, which is investigating.

WE HAVE confirmed that \$50,000 was deposited in the names of both

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Mijares and Alconcel in savings account No. 0662-46062 at Lloyds Bank of California. The bank's records show that Alconcel removed Mijares' name from the joint account on June 18, the day after Mijares testified.

By Mijares' account, he simply became disgusted with Marcos and sought asylum in the United States. An approach was made in May to persuade him to come home. A colonel in Marcos' presidential guard, Romeo Ochoco, looked up Mijares in San Francisco.

OVER COFFEE and doughnuts in a 24-hour restaurant, they talked about a book that Mijares is writing about the Marcos dictatorship. He plans to call it "The Conjugal Dictatorship of Ferdinand and Imelda."

The colonel was soothing. "He said Marcos would talk to me about my complaints," recalled Mijares. But the former press censor felt he knew Marcos too well to trust him.

The colonel's visit was followed by a series of telephone calls from Ambassador Alconcel, who had heard that Mijares would be a star witness at Fraser's hearings on U.S.-Philippines problems.

The consul general tried to persuade Mijares not to testify and, when Mijares refused, to "pull the punches." In return, the former censor was promised that Manila would "help" him.

HE FLEW TO Washington, nevertheless, to testify and checked into a downtown Washington motel. Not long afterward, on June 16, he received a call from Manila.

"It was Marcos," Mijares told us. "He started out by calling me by my nickname, 'Tibo.' He asked me not to testify, because of what it would do to his 'new society'.

"I told him it would be difficult to back out since I was already under the committee's jurisdiction. He told me his assistant would tell me something, that they had something for me."

Then presidential aide Guillermo de Vega got on the line, according to Mijares, and began speaking in a mixture of Tagalog and Spanish to confuse possible wire tappers. The aide said \$50,000 would be awaiting Mijares in San Francisco if he didn't testify. But if he went ahead with his testimony, warned the aide, it would be a "declaration of war."

MIJARES HELD firm. Two hours before he was scheduled to take the stand, he received a call from Alconcel imploring him not to testify and reiterating that the money would be on hand in San Francisco.

But the onetime censor, having renounced his former way of life, took the witness chair and testified in detail about vote fraud, corporate theft, payoffs, illegal jailings and general corruption.

Mijares laid all these crimes right at the door of Marcos, his family and cronies. Nor did Mijares spare himself in his testimony.

Now he is trying to convince U.S. immigration authorities that there is a place in the United States for a newspaperman on the run from totalitarianism.

In compliance with a suggestion from John M. Salzberg, staff consultant to the House Committee on International Relations, I prepared an affidavit

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detailing the circumstances of the bribe offer and submitted it to the committee.*¹¹

(*11. Executed on July 10, 1975, in San Francisco and verified by Bernard Baylocq, a notary public.)

7. That at about eleven 'clock in the evening of June 16, 1975, EST, while I was reviewing my opening statement to be given to the Committee, I received an overseas telephone call from Manila. The person at the other end turned out to be my very good friend and former colleague at the Malacanang Palace, Presidential Assistant Guillermo De Vega. He told me he was calling from the study room of President Marcos and that the President wanted to talk to me. Our telephone conversation, as far as I can recall, went on as follows, after the usual amenities:

SECRETARY DE VEGA: "*Tibo, gusto kang makausap ni Sir.* (Tibo, Sir [meaning President Marcos] wants to talk to you.)

PRESIDENT MARCOS: "*Tibo, puede bang huwag ka nang sumipot sa Komiteng 'yan? Alarn mo, marami na tayong problema dito. Baka madagdagan mo pa. Mabuti pa ay bumalik ka na kaagad sa San Francisco.*" (Tibo, would it be possible for you not to appear before the Committee? Your testifying may add more to our problems. It would be better if you returned to San Francisco immediately.)

MIJARES: "But, sir, there is no way I can back out now. I have already placed myself under the jurisdiction of the Subcommittee."

PRESIDENT MARCOS: "Here is Gimo (Secretary De Vega) and he has something to tell you." (Then transferring the telephone to Secretary De Vega.)

SECRETARY DE VEGA: "*Tibo, bumatsi kana diyari and Trining will arrange for you 'cinquenta' in San Francisco.*" (Tibo, I suggest you get out of that place right now and return immediately to San Francisco where Ambassador Trinidad Alconcel will arrange 'Fifty' for you.)

MIJARES: "Mogs, (a nickname I use in addressing Secretary De Vega) *hindi na puede. Nasabi ko na sa Komite na nandito na ako sa Washington.* I have to testify." (Secretary De Vega, it is impossible now to withdraw. I have already informed the Committee that I am now in Washington, D.C.)

SECRETARY DE VEGA: "*Iyong figure ay libo.* (The figure are thousands.) And you will get another Fifty (meaning Fifty Thousand Dollars) when you leave the United States. Since you may not want to come home to Manila, you may want to go to Australia to be with your sister. We will send you another Fifty upon your arrival there."

MIJARES: "*Salamat na lang, Mogs. Pero, hindi kita puedeng mapagbigyan.* (Thank you anyway, Secretary De Vega, but I cannot accede to your suggestion.)

SECRETARY DE VEGA: "I will not accept your negative answer now. *Pag-aralan mong mabuti iyan, Tibo.* (Consider this proposal carefully.) You know very well that, if you testify that would mean a Declaration of War on your part against us here."

MIJARES: "I realize that, and you can be sure I will act accordingly. Goodbye, Doc."

SECRETARY DE VEGA: "*Sigue na, Tibo.* (All right, Tibo.) Take care of

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yourself. Trining (Ambassador Trinidad Alconcel) will contact you.”

8. That, at about 8:45 A.M. EST of Tuesday, June 17, 1975 (5:45 A.M. San Francisco time), the day of my scheduled testimony before Congressman Fraser’s Committee, I received a long distance call from Ambassador Trinidad Alconcel from San Francisco. Alconcel, in so many words, made me understand that he had received instructions from President Marcos to give me Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00) which he has been authorized to draw from the Philippine National Bank Agency in San Francisco. Presuming that I would no longer testify before the Committee, Alconcel asked me to take the first available plane to San Francisco so that he could deliver the money to me. I told him that I could not change my plans anymore, even if I wanted to. However, he insisted that he was going to the Philippine National Bank the first hour that morning to arrange everything. Then he hung up.

In dangling the \$50,000.00 for my non-testimony and another \$50,000.00 for my departure from the United States, President Marcos was obviously quite sure that he was making me an offer I would hardly be able to refuse. Yes, every man has his price. I have just been offered mine, and the dictatorial regime that goes by the false facade of sponsor of a New Society in the Philippines could sit serene, insured for the price of \$100,000.00 against a damaging expose’ by an insider in a forum where the New Society would get hurt most.

Either by oversight or some providential happening, the martial regime of Marcos miscalculated; it failed to reckon with that little possibility that I might also be influenced by the high fallutin’ principle that there are things in this life which are more precious than gold, like the duty and obligation I owe to myself, my family, my profession, my country and its history.

Dictator Marcos was so sure. He had been assured by his consul general in San Francisco, Alconcel, that I have softened and ripened for a bribe four months after my dramatic defection from the Philippine government. Alconcel had surreptitiously interviewed my close confidants in San Francisco, among them being Lino Sarmiento and Crisostomo D. Ibarra, and he had gathered the valuable information that I was now living in a state of utter penury, unable to meet my obligations, let alone my requirements for my daily bread. The reports that have reached Marcos in Manila through Alconcel were correct in a certain sense. And so, they thought, I was ripe for the picking. My situation was, however, more in the nature of being impecunious.

Having operated as a man and as a leader of men on terms so unconscionable by any yardstick, Marcos obviously overlooked the possibility that any man, even I, could harken to the voice of conscience — as I did. One such voice of conscience that I will always treasure in my life is that of Antonio Garcia, a colleague in the newspaper game in the days before martial law and now information officer of the Movement for a Free Philippines.¹² When I bade Tony goodbye on June 15, 1975, as I prepared to fly from San Francisco to Washington, D.C., he gave me a most valued pep talk, thus: “Padre, you have an appointment with history; our suffering countrymen will emblazon in bold letters their gratitude to you for what you will do in Wash-

ington, D.C.” *12

(*12. Garcia was delegated by Manglapus in early November, 1974, to hold talks with me in New York on my proposal for a meeting between MFP leaders and Mrs. Marcos. With advise from Hermie Rotea, who knew how I operated in Manila as a newsman, Garcia opposed the proposed conference between Mrs. Marcos and Manglapus, behind closed-doors; he demanded that it be held in public. Kokoy rejected the proposal that the conference be opened to the U.S. news media.)

I had already made a choice — even before such choice was ever presented to me in concrete and tempting terms by that overseas phone call from President Marcos. I restated this choice — or decision — almost a month before my scheduled testimony before two persons who would fully appreciate such a decision on my part. They were D. H. Soriano and Juan A. Perez, chairman of the board and publisher, respectively, of the Daily Express for which I worked as a reporter-columnist from March, 1972, until my defection in the United States.

“D.H.” and “Johnny” had sought me out in late May in San Francisco on their own, having come in from New York where they negotiated certain contracts for the Daily Express. They were not about to negotiate with me to go home; rather, they wanted to satisfy themselves that a personal friend, their ace reporter, was at least in good shape and knew what he was doing. As a matter of fact, D.H. and Johnny made it plain that they would respect my wishes to be left alone if I didn’t want to meet them at all — when they requested that I be put in touch with them by Ms. Lourdes Poblete, widow of the late newsman Augusto Poblete, who is now employed as a family health worker by the City and County of San Francisco. Over cups of coffee at Naper Tandy’s of the Hyatt Hotel on Union Square, I assured them that I am still able to keep body and soul together.

“Would it not be better if you abandoned what you are doing now and come to terms with the President? I am sure the old man would welcome you back.” Johnny suggested.

I answered D.H. and Johnny in the language we three fully understood as newspapermen. I happen to have a “scoop,” I said, “a big story.” I then posed the question to my two former colleagues in the Philippines: If you, as newspapermen, have an exclusive story of wide public interest, would you sit on it as you are now advising me to do in this case? I really got the newspapermen in D.H. and Johnny. They looked at me with just one question on their faces. What do you mean, Tibo?

And so I reminded them of things they themselves knew very well, about my relationship with President Marcos and the female half of the ruling duumvirate in the Philippines. Of course, D.H. and Johnny both knew this more than anybody else. They knew that, as a reporter-columnist of the Daily Express, I had devoted more time to serving the President as a propagandist and press censor than in actually earning my pay in the newspaper. Although there were different managements, I knew I was serving the interests of one entity anyway; President Marcos owns the Daily Express. Both D.H. and Johnny knew that I was “that close” to the First Family; I could enter his inner sanctum at any time, except when he was doing very personal things.

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The Philippine News*¹³ put it more succinctly this way in reporting on my defection: (13. Issue of Feb. 2027, 1975, page 1.)

Mijares is the only private newsman — as a matter of fact among the few persons — who could go in and out of the Palace Study, room and talk to the President without having to go through frisking by security agents. He does not have to have a prior appointment — as most people who want to see the President are required to submit to these days.

As a matter of fact, Mijares displays a “blue pass” personally handwritten by Marcos requiring him to be with the President from the time the first presidential caller comes in the morning until the dictator retires for his afternoon nap.

Mijares wangled the hand-written “blue pass” because he has to consult the President on topics for his daily tri-lingual column, “PM Views,” which had come to be known as “President Marcos’ Views.”

It is widely known in Manila that Mijares became National Press Club president upon the suggestion of Marcos who wanted to keep an eye on the media people, most of whom the Philippine dictator had labelled as “subversives” or “enemies of the state” for their critical writings on his pre-martial law government. Marcos even strengthened Mijares’ hand by naming him the MAC chairman.

It was in his capacity as MAC chairman that Mijares once had to act as hatchet man for Marcos in investigating Arnold Zeitlin, bureau manager of the “Associated Press” in Manila, for Zeitlin’s reporting on the rebellion of the Muslims in southern Philippines.

Both D.H. and Johnny knew the unique and special role have had to perform for the conjugal dictatorship in Malacanang. Having fortunately walked the corridors of power in the official seat of the powerful duumvirate, I became privy and witness to the sinister manipulation of one man and his scheming wife during a dark hour in the tragic life of my country. This was my scoop, my exclusive story. I owe this story not only to myself as a newspaperman; I owe it to my suffering family which I have had to temporarily deny my fatherly love and attention in my pursuit of my rendezvous with history; I owe it to my country and its correct history. I set my appointment with history when I defected from the dictatorial regime of Marcos on February 20, 1975. I feel I must continue to honor my commitment to history. I consider this a sacred duty, the performance of which should put my country’s history in its proper perspective in order that it can render its just and unflinching verdict on the power grab pulled by Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos in the Philippines on September 21, 1972.

It was with this tone of conversation that I bade goodbye to D.H. and Johnny at Naper Tandy’s that afternoon. “What we are really interested in finding out,” reiterated D.H., “is that you are okay.” “Take good care of yourself, Tibo.

If I had a terrific story like yours, and if I had the credentials to tell it as you have, I would certainly do just what you seem determined to do,” Johnny declared in the true newspaperman’s way. “Just make sure, Tibo, you don’t

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salsal *14 your story.”

(*14. The literal meaning of this word in English is “masturbation.” However, as it has been developed as Filipino newsman’s lingo, it means over-embellishment, or complete concoction, of a news story to make it appear plausible.)

“Johnny, there is no need to *salsal*. My difficulty is how to confine everything I know in 500 printed pages,” I quipped.

For D.H. and Johnny, my task was simplified into a case of a newsman writing a “scoop.” However, for my friend and now suffering comrade, Antonio Garcia, my upcoming testimony before the Subcommittee on International Organizations, of the House Committee on International Relations, was my fateful appointment with history.

I prepared for that appointment with history. Earlier, Salzberg inform me that I would have 15 minutes to read a prepared statement before the committee, which is chaired by Rep. Donald M. Fraser (D-Minn.), when I testify on June 17, 1975, as the rest of the time would be utilized by the committee members to question witnesses. I realized that 15 minutes would be too short for me to be able to spell out the lurid details of the story of an evil man’s lifetime planning to become his country’s first dictator. Would it be possible to submit a lengthy memorandum which I could submit to the committee as an integral part of my testimony? Fortunately, Salzberg answered that it would be perfectly all right. I then decided to look at my forthcoming testimony before the Fraser committee as an opportunity to make public an outline of the book I have promised myself upon defection that I would write for posterity, not as a money-making venture.

Questions are, of course, being raised why I “jumped from the *banig* to the *sahig*.”*15

(*15. This is a take-off from a Tagalog saying, which runs: *Umalis sa banig at lumundag sa sahi*. The figurative meaning is that one who was wallowing in luxury or something good abandoned it for a worse or uncertain lot.)

I have answered this by stating that what I am trying to do is to protect the integrity and patrimony of the country from the merciless plundering by Marcos and his gang. In civil law, the children have the right and obligation to take court action against their own parents to protect their legitime from being impaired by the improvident spending of their parents. It was in this spirit that I took the actions I did on February 20, 1975, and other occasions. I will persevere in this course of action. I spelled this out in my defection statement of February 20, to wit:

History fated me to bear witness at very close range, and even champion, the imposition by President Marcos of martial law in the Philippines on September 21, 1972, ostensibly to suppress an escalating Communist rebellion and to establish a New Society.

As Malacanang reporter of the Daily Express (which is owned by the President’s family), I became among Dictator Marcos’ mere handful of trusted confidants at the onset of martial law. As a media man, it then fell on my lot to support and justify the imposition of martial law; on my shoulders were entrusted an intensive and continuing campaign to bend the Filipino’s

mind toward accepting what the one-time defendant in a murder case for the cold-blooded shooting of a political rival of his father had decreed. I saw myself as nothing less than Hitler's propaganda minister, Joseph Goebbels, with oft-times more powers and prerogatives than Marcos' own docile, self-serving and egotistical information secretary, Francisco S. Tatad.

But I needed no convincing about the justice of FM's cause. Having covered Philippine Congresses and Philippine Presidents from the proclamation of Philippine Independence on July 4, 1946, I could see that what we started out to do was in the right direction. With the spreading violence and upheavals in the old Philippine social and economic structure, martial law seemed the only way for the salvation of my poor and ravished country and people. In a word, this patriotic task assigned to me by history, I did with all the honesty and sincerity of feeling I could muster.

But now, also with equal, nay, even more honesty and sincerity, I find I must sever my bonds with the so-called New Society. The false facade is off; the mask that is the "smiling martial law" irreversibly shorn off the face of its author, and the real appearance of what after all is a stern despotism is bared for all to see. President Marcos has, wittingly or unwittingly, consciously or unconsciously, digressed and treasonably betrayed — with the full and gleeful collaboration of top associates and relatives, mostly in-laws — the avowed objectives that we originally set out to do more than two years ago. By their rapacity and unbridled appetite for political and economic power, Marcos and his gang has transformed the terms "New Society" and "Bagong Lipunan" into "New Scandal" and "Bagong Likuman," respectively, to fit into a parodied term of Alexander Solzhenitsyn's "Gulag Archipelago" into a dreaded version of a Philippines' "Gulangan Archipelago."

In due time, I shall have the occasion to bare the gory and intimate details, as only a trusted (erstwhile) insider could have gleaned, of the notorious scandal going on in the Philippines that would make Watergate a drop in the bucket and President Nixon a piker placed side by side with Marcos. As an insider, I must cry out with all the vehement protest I could muster that the martial regime of Marcos was nothing but an ill-disguised plot to perpetuate himself, his wife and/or son in power by consolidating the political and economic resources of the country under his control. What President Marcos is doing in the Philippines, it has now dawned on me, is in accordance with a long-studied, methodically prepared plan to take over an entire country politically and economically for himself, his family and his cronies, preparatory to setting up an empire. And for all this, Marcos has jailed innocent people, on fabricated charges, ranging from alleged economic opportunism to plotting his assassination. Incidentally, I know for a fact, as I have gleaned from investigative reports to which I have gained access, that there is no iota of evidence about the Mafia having goofed eight times in having Marcos killed; much less is there any evidence that would link anybody now in military custody to any attempt on the life of the President. I shall be dealing on these points in the coming weeks, and with other matters involving the manipulation of the Supreme Court and the Constitutional Convention, all to suit Dictator Marcos' objectives.

Since the moment of my decision to sever ties with Marcos comes on

the eve of the holding of a multi-million peso farcical affair blatantly purveyed as the Philippine referendum, I must dwell on this point immediately. The referendum is going to be a farce; the results are a foregone conclusion. Not even all the patriotism and honesty of Commission on Elections Chairman Leonardo B. Perez can stop the gang of Marcos from reporting that the people voted overwhelmingly for the continuation of the martial law administration. I know whereof I speak. I was one of the few persons who fabricated the results of the referenda held in January, 1973, and in June-July, 1973.

Having made my decision to disengage from, and eventually expose the ills of the Marcos military dictatorship, I must, at the same time, beg the forgiveness of some good men within the Philippine government for whom I have nothing but admiration and goodwill. I wish they would take some risks in the interest of return of democracy in the Philippines — as with this step I now make.

This step I now take, knowing that it transcends all personal and official consideration, risking as I now do even the very lives of my wife and children in the Philippines. With this step, I must abandon my country temporarily and seek asylum in the United States of America along with my associate, Atty. Crisostomo D. Ibarra.

For I must now cry out to articulate the anguished cries of sorrow and pain of the millions of oppressed and dispossessed Filipinos. Having lost their civil liberties at the onset of martial law, they are now in grave danger of losing their hard-earned patrimony in the hands of the rampaging Dictator Marcos and his gang.

I might have added — but found it unnecessary to state — that I was probably naive to think that in the changed situation in the Philippines, as in the martial law situation, ideals would prevail, not realizing early enough that, as authoritarian regimes go, the ruling clique must perforce get the lion's share of everything.

I have tried to explain fully the rationale, as well as my sorrow and regrets, for the present course of action I am taking in a document which I hope would reach my family and my countrymen in the Philippines someday, although I have doubts if most of them would ever understand my motives, considering that the martial regime's propaganda machine had launched an over-kill campaign to destroy my image and credibility with what is known as "black propaganda."

To my mind, the point that should be grasped is not whether I am a good or bad man, but whether I tell the truth about the martial regime in the Philippines. Most of the things I have said — and now write about extensively — have been or are matters of public knowledge among the people of the Philippines. I am just here providing some heretofore unknown, but logically-acceptable links to fit things into the Marcos jig-saw puzzle of perfidy in my country.

Chapter II

'Manila-Gate'

“For a foreign head of state to attempt to bribe a congressional witness is unprecedented. The amazing story began a few months ago when Mijares walked out of Malacanang, the presidential palace, after three years as Marcos’ confidant and propagandist.”

Thus read a key portion of the widely-syndicated “Washington Merry-Go-Round” column of July 2, 1975.*1

(*1. *Washington Post*, Page F-II. The *New York Daily Post* published in its July 3, 1975, issue an editorial on the same subject, entitled “Manila-Gate.”)

How true it is that Washington, D.C. has always been a situs for airing, and even violent settlement, of disputes between opposing factions of certain foreign governments. It is a favorite hunting ground for foreign governments in their recruitment of American senators and congressmen who might be willing to make trips to their countries where the special guests could be wooed with wine, women and whatever. The general idea is to improve the attitude of U.S. solons towards a beleaguered foreign government which might be having a bad image in official Washington or in the U.S. mass media.

One of those established by Washington, D.C. observers as notorious for his massive lobbying campaign in the U.S. capital was Dominican Dictator Rafael Trujillo who had earned such a bad image of corruption and repression in his country at one time. However, it has been reported that Trujillo’s bribery and entertainment in the homeland, and the highly effective representation made by his ambassador have also succeeded in bringing about an improvement of the Trujillo image in Washington, D.C.

In another area of counter-lobbying in the U.S. capital, agents of opposing foreign interests have resorted to assassinations in pursuit of their objectives. One victim of such assassinations was Colonel Yosef Alon, military attache of the Israeli embassy in Washington, D.C., who was gunned down on July 1, 1973, by a group of assailants who escaped by car in the Maryland area. The Voice of Palestine Radio in Cairo subsequently claimed that Alon had been executed by their agents in reprisal for an assassination a few days earlier of an alleged Palestinian Black September representative in Paris.

Philippine lobbying in Washington, D.C. as well as its Trujillo-like penchant for wooing visiting American officials has not received much denunciatory notices from the U.S. press. Obviously, much more attention has been concentrated on the authoritarian government which President Marcos imposed in Manila on the eve of the conclusion of his constitutionally-allowable eight-year hold on the Philippine presidency.

It is a fact that the conjugal dictatorship of Ferdinand and Imelda in the

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Philippines is one of the more notorious lobbyists in Washington, D.C. There was even a time when a Philippine ambassador, now Leyte Gov. Benjamin “Kokoy” Romualdez, a brother of Mrs. Marcos, resorted to *adobo diplomacy* by regularly distributing once a week to selected American senators and congressmen, and state department officials *adobo* *2 to-go. When Mrs. Marcos heard about her ambassador-brother’s yeoman intestinal diplomacy in Washington, D.C., she even sent Kokoy a Filipino cook to enable him to pursue and expand his *adobo diplomacy*.

(*2. A Filipino dish of either pork or chicken, or both, cooked in vinegar and sauce, with crushed garlic, black pepper and bay leaf.)

The duumvirate wielding the powers of government in Manila have not spared anything in going all-out to woo visiting dignitaries, especially those of the U.S. brand. Expenditures running into millions of dollars were unnecessarily incurred to put up a so-called “spontaneous” one-million crowd welcome for visiting President and Mrs. Gerald Ford in Manila; the money presumably coming from the \$100 million foreign aid the United States doles out to the Philippines yearly.

On one occasion in 1973, the conjugal leaders in Manila broke precedent by tendering a state dinner, an honor usually reserved for visiting ranking officials of foreign governments, for Washington Post Publisher Katherine Graham and a team of staff writers. But the wining and dining did not influence the Graham team; it wrote objectively on the Philippine situation with the same seriousness that the Washington Post has chronicled the story of the Nixon Watergate saga. When clippings of the Post’s were telexed to Malacanang, Mrs. Marcos ruefully stated that she and President Marcos obviously wasted their time, money and effort on the Graham team.

The lobbying by Marcos in Washington, D.C. and in Manila for his New Society among U.S. officials has not chalked up much success. Thus, he became more apprehensive when he learned that I, his former confidant, would “tell all” before a committee of the U.S. Congress. So, he tried on a new tack — a \$100,000-bribe offer.

In a rare display of great interest and faith in the story of a foreign chief of state attempting to bribe a witness of the United States Congress, Jack Anderson agreed with his associate, Les Whitten, that a second column coming up on July 3, 1975, was in order. That follow-up “Washington Merry-Go-Round” column read thus:

“EX-AIDE REVEALS MARCOS’ CORRUPTION”

WASHINGTON — Yesterday we reported that Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos offered a former confidant, Primitivo Mijares, a \$50,000 bribe not to tell the U.S. Congress what he knows about corruption in the Philippines.

Today we can reveal the story that Marcos tried to cover up. It is another Watergate scandal, Philippine version — a story of highcrimes and misdemeanors, ranging from abuse of power to misuse of government funds.

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The story is told in a 24-page memo, which Mijares submitted to the House International Organizations subcommittee. In the memo, he freely confesses his own dirty work for Marcos.

The memo details how Marcos won reelection in 1969 using some of the same tactics that Richard Nixon picked up in 1972. Mijares describes the Marcos campaign as “the dirtiest election ever held in the Philippines.”

Marcos used “goons, guns and gold,” his former confidant charges, to win the 1969 election. The strategy was to create an atmosphere of disturbance, which called for Marcos’ strong hand to control.

The Philippine President, according to the memo, “had military personnel infiltrate the ranks of demonstrators to explode bombs in their midst and to instigate the demonstrators into committing acts of violence.”

Philippine air force infiltrators allegedly lobbed “heavy explosives in front of the (U.S.) consular offices,” and “armed forces psychological warfare units’ conducted bombings on Manila’s water system, city hall and the bathroom of the Constitutional Convention.” The violence was “later blamed by Mr. Marcos on the Maoist People’s Army.”

The incidents that Marcos secretly encouraged, Mijares alleges, had their innocent victims. When a bomb exploded inside a department store, for example, “a family man who was buying a gift for a child observing its birthday was blown to bits.” A conscience-stricken police sergeant later confessed he had planted the bomb on superior orders, claims Mijares.

To improve his press notices, Marcos allowed “heavy borrowings from the Philippine Bank,” according to the memo, so a toady could buy up a “media empire.” Allegedly the pro-Marcos media even collected “part of their salaries . . . from the President’s contingent fund.”

These tactics worked so well, charges Mijares, that the reelected Marcos continued using them to take over dictatorial power. Under the Philippine constitution, Marcos was limited to two terms, but he had no intention of retiring.

He continued to whip up a crisis fever. He staged “a supposed landing of combat weapons,” for example, “along the coast of Digoyo.” Mijares claims the weapons were planted by “a special operations groups of trusted military men,” but Marcos loudly blamed “a foreign power” and “Maoist guerrillas.”

There was also a faked ambush, Mijares charges, involving a Philippine official’s car. By exploiting these incidents, Marcos had the country psychologically ready for his proclamation of martial law on September 21, 1972.

With a great show of benevolence, he proclaimed a so-called “smiling martial law.” He quickly restored order and gave the citizenry respite from turmoil. But he also closed down opposition newspapers and jailed recalcitrant editors and rivals.

Marcos asked a Constitutional Convention to put a stamp of legitimacy upon his dictatorship. But when the delegates showed a little independence, the memo states, he “caused the arrest and detention in military stockades of delegates” and “bribed floor leaders of the convention with money and favors.”

To make doubly sure the convention gave Marcos the powers he

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wanted, alleges Mijares, the results “were manufactured by a group headed by the President’s favorite brother-in-law, Gov. Benjamin Romualdez.”

Mijares had personal knowledge that the convention vote was rigged, he writes, because “I was a member of that group.” Just as John Dean later confessed his role in the Nixon scandals, Mijares describes how he ordered the takeover of a newspaper, investigated an Associated Press reporter, prepared phony stories on revolutionaries and committed other outrages on Marcos’ orders.

The Mijares memo then tells how Marcos’ “military regime has gone absolutely corrupt.” The dictator parcelled out to his cronies the licenses to smuggle in luxury goods and to smuggle out sugar, copra, lumber and cement, charges Mijares. Military supporters have been given fabulously lucrative rackets in Manila to run as they please, he adds.

Through front men, according to Mijares, Marcos has taken over agricultural lands in northern Luzon, the Visayas and Mindanao. He also allegedly controls oil concessions, a huge export business, a free trade zone in Mariveles and even a claim on some buried World War II Japanese treasure in the Sierra Madre.

Mijares also claims that Marcos has misused some of the \$100 million in U.S. aid he gets each year. The greatest part of U.S. medical aid, for example, “goes to the United Drug Company, the biggest pharmaceutical firm in the country which is owned by a front man of the President,” alleges the memo.

Yet the U.S. State Department, swears Mijares, has thwarted Marcos’ democratic opponents by supporting “the Philippine martial regime.”

Alerted by the one-two punch delivered by the hard-hitting syndicated columnists Anderson and Whitten, major newspapers and news agencies in the United States and all over the world sought follow up stories on the expose from whatever quarters or sources they could. News agencies, notably the “Associated Press” and the “United Press International,” flashed their follow up stories world-wide. Great interest in the follow up stories which anybody could supply was evinced particularly by the newspapers which carry the Anderson column. Among the articles that came to our attention were those written by newsman Dan Gordon^{*3} and newsperson Molly Burrell.^{*4} Gordon’s front-page article in the Nevada State Journal is typical of the press coverage of the bribery expose.

(*3. Nevada State Journal, of Reno, Nevada, July 5, 1975, Page 1 headliner.

*4. Independent, Press Telegram, of Long Beach, California, July 13, 1975, Page B-15.)

However interesting the story on Marcos’ reprehensible attempt to bribe a congressional witness turned out to be, there just wasn’t enough space in the columns of Anderson or in the news stories to cram the intimate and lurid details of the bribery episode, or the gory reasons for the dastardly attempt of a foreign chief of state to commit a federal crime on American soil.

I myself didn’t have enough time to tell the U.S. Congress earlier what I really had to tell about the dark night of totalitarianism that has engulfed my

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hapless country. I could do it in only eight pages of prepared testimony which I had had to read hurriedly before the Fraser subcommittee, reserving the rest of my materials in a memorandum of 24 pages which I appended to my prepared statement. My opening statement read:

I have come to call the attention of the United States Congress to what appears right now as just another Southeast Asian sore spot. This seemingly inconsequential trouble spot could, however, develop into the proportion of a Portugal gone Communist in the context of America's global defense system.

Before I go any further, I would like to express my appreciation to the members of this honorable committee for this rare privilege of being able to bare certain hitherto unknown facets of this Southeast Asian sore spot. It is about a dictatorial martial regime that has supplanted by paramount force the republican government of what once was pridefully known as the show window of American democracy in Asia.

I fancy myself here right now as speaking in behalf of my 45 million countrymen now groaning under the yoke of a ruthless dictator. The tyrant has clamped down a harsh authoritarian rule with the guns of martial law in a country that has enjoyed for 72 years the blessings of freedom under a democracy.

Let me trace the origin and pattern of this new tyranny in Asia.

On Sept. 21, 1935, as established 'beyond reasonable doubt' by a Philippine court, a young man — an expert rifle marksman by his own account — felled dead with a single rifle shot a reelected congressman. This happened less than two days after the reelected solon had defeated for the second time the father of this young man. Of course, the Supreme Court later acquitted this young man on a "technicality."

Thirty seven years to the day after that celebrated murder of a congressman, or on Sept. 21, 1972, this same man, nearing the end of his second and last term as President of his country, having wisened to the ways of Dictators Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin and Peron, and anarchist Mikhail Bakunin, with evident premeditation and long, methodical preparation, wielded a more powerful weapon — this time the entire armed forces of his country — and snuffed out, not just the life of one man, but the light of freedom from an entire nation by placing the Philippines under martial law. The martial regime, now turned corrupt, ruthless and tyrannical, is showing all the signs that have inexorably driven free nations to the Communist tentacles.

The man who was condemned to life imprisonment by a trial court for the murder of his father's political conqueror on Sept. 21, 1935, and the man who must face a terrible verdict of history for killing democracy in the Philippines on Sept. 21, 1972, are one and the same man: Ferdinand E. Marcos.

How Mr. Marcos methodically plotted to kill democracy in the Philippines just because he did not want to be an ex-President at an early age (55), how he wielded the terrible guns of martial law to instill and maintain a pervasive climate of fear and repression, and how he continues to entrench himself in the presidential palace in a bid to reign for life and establish an imperial

dynasty in the Philippines shall be the thrust of my testimony today.

I was an unwitting tool in some of the plans of Mr. Marcos for the imposition of martial law. As a matter of fact, I was the first newspaperman to write the full story of the imposition of martial law 12 hours before its official announcement. I have access in advance to the original copies of the martial law proclamation and the first six General Orders issued by President Marcos.

I subsequently became a willing tool in the execution of measures designed to stabilize the martial regime. I became a close confidant of President Marcos, at times performing the role of a Joseph Goebbels and wielding greater powers in the propaganda field than his own official Information Secretary. And I performed my duties faithfully until it dawned on me that what I was helping to get entrenched was not a regime of constitutional authoritarianism dedicated to the establishment of law and order, and of a New Society. I began to realize that it was nothing but an infamous design dedicated shamelessly to the establishment by the law of the gun of an imperial dynasty in the Philippines.

If I now take a strong position against the martial regime of Mr. Marcos, I do so with the sense of outrage of one who has been so thoroughly betrayed. I was hoodwinked into supporting the imposition of martial law. It should not take any longer for the armed forces generals and other influential civil officials still supporting Mr. Marcos to realize that they, too, are being hoodwinked. The truth will soon come out, and history will vindicate me, that the reasons used by President Marcos in imposing martial law were deliberately manufactured by Mr. Marcos himself in a manner that makes Hitler a piker in his burning of the Reichstag.

Initially, the Filipino people dutifully supported Mr. Marcos. We had no other choice. With a series of deliberately contrived crises that created a fearsome atmosphere of anarchy, Mr. Marcos made the people lapse into a state of paralysis; he made the terror-stricken populace lose respect for duly-constituted authorities and confidence in the ability of democratic processes to maintain law and order. Then he wove a labored tale of national horror which he eventually enshrined as gospel truth in the martial law proclamation (No. 1081).

We all went along with Mr. Marcos. We convinced ourselves that in a developing country, like the Philippines, with limited resources and great demands by the population on such resources, a firm authoritarian regime would be best equipped to bring about and maintain a program of development with the allocation of resources on the basis of priorities.

While I went along with a martial regime, I never shook off my training of 22 years as a cynical newspaperman. As I walked the corridors of the constricted center of power in Malacanang, I utilized my cynically observant qualities. I began to discover after the first year of martial rule that the so-called program of building a New Society was nothing but an ill-disguised plan of Mr. Marcos to perpetuate himself, his wife and/or son, Ferdinand Jr., in power, by consolidating the political, military and economic resources of the country under his firm control. What is now being forced down the throats of Filipinos by the guns of martial law is a long-studied, methodically prepared Oriental Design to take over an entire country politically, militarily

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and economically for Mr. Marcos, his family and cronies, preparatory to setting up an empire in Southeast Asia. Originally, the empire was programmed to include a portion of the former British Crown Colony of North Borneo, now known as Sabah under the Federation of Malaysia.

And to achieve his ends, President Marcos plotted to place his country under martial law as early as 1966, having decided then that he would win a reelection in 1969 "at all cost." Upon his imposition of martial law, he jailed all his political enemies and media critics, along with youth activists whose only crime was to ask the custodians of power to give them a better government, the professionals who dared support the militant youth, business tycoons who resisted attempts to gobble them up, on fabricated charges ranging from alleged subversion, economic opportunism to plotting the President's assassination.

Let me go into some specific areas of the martial rule:

1) Upon his assumption of the presidency on Dec. 30, 1965, Mr. Marcos positioned himself for a long rule beyond the constitutionally allowable two-term tenure which should have ended on Dec. 30, 1973. His master plan called for winning reelection in 1969 "at all cost," declaration of martial law "at least one year" before the expiration of his second and last term on Dec. 30, 1973, packing the Supreme Court and the defense establishment with his hand-picked followers, capture of the local governments, and contriving crises after crises to justify a Marcos-led military putsch.

2) Having imposed martial law, Mr. Marcos ordered the arrest and detention without charges of his political opponents, business rivals, militant student and labor leaders, and media men; closed down the newspapers, radio and television stations; confiscated properties of political opponents and business rivals, proceeded to reallocate the entire resources of the country to just a few favored families, and sought to clothe his regime with a semblance of legality by extorting a new Constitution from a Convention then in session.

3) The martial regime is an authoritarian government gone absolutely corrupt.

4) The corruption of the martial regime is not confined to the insatiable acquisition of the country's material resources, but extends to the exercise of power itself. Having proclaimed martial law, he proceeded to bribe, coerce and/or intimidate the Constitutional Convention members into drafting a new charter dictated by him. For lack of time, or as an afterthought, he then ordered the falsification of the journal of the Convention to insert "explanatory notes" by delegates for the hastily-prepared provisions considered vital to his constitutional dictatorship.

5) Realizing after testing the waters that the new Constitution would not be ratified in a regular plebiscite, Mr. Marcos cancelled the scheduled plebiscite and went the regular ways of dictators by submitting the charter to a so-called referendum.

6) The New Constitution, on which Mr. Marcos relies for the constitutionality of his regime and the legality of all its acts under martial law, was not validly ratified by the Filipino people. There was no referendum at all; the results cited by Mr. Marcos in declaring the ratification of the New Constitution were manufactured by a group that included your humble

witness.

7) As the media confidant of Mr. Marcos, I orchestrated the reporting of stories on the referendum and other undertakings of the regime that were designed to stabilize the new government.

8) A dictatorial regime as it is, the martial government of Mr. Marcos has become all the more oppressive and corrupt in view of the meddling of his wife who has turned the martial regime into a conjugal dictatorship.

9) Aside from plundering an entire nation, the conjugal dictatorship is likewise misappropriating the various items of United States assistance (military, economic, cultural, etc.) to the Philippines to entrench itself in power and for personal glorification.

Towards the end of my testimony, I will request the honorable chairman of the committee to allow me to submit a lengthy memorandum, complete with exhibits, containing detailed elucidations on the points I have raised in this opening statement.

The committee will most probably be besieged by coached witnesses refuting my allegations and assailing my credibility. If anyone of them can make an honest claim that he has entered the presidential study room inside Malacanang without going through security and the appointments office, then he can speak with some competence. There are only six persons who may succeed in calling me a liar by coming before this committee and testifying personally under oath. They are President Marcos, the First Lady, Gov. Romualdez, Secretary of Defense Juan Ponce Enrile, Presidential Executive Assistant Jacobo C. Clave and Presidential Assistant Guillermo C. de Vega.

Suffice it to say, at this point, that the faces of martial law I have pictured to the committee bring to mind a sharp repartee made by the leader of our independence movement, Don Manuel Luis Quezon, to a spokesman of the proposition to make the Philippines a state of the United States: "Better a government run like hell by Filipinos than a government run like Heaven by Americans." The United States could not, even if it wanted to, have given us a government like Heaven but certainly a Filipino is now giving the Filipinos a government like hell.

In the light of the foregoing, I respectfully suggest that, in aid of legislation, the committee take into account the following points:

1) Mr. Marcos is not a "dejure" President of the Philippines. He is a usurper, at best a "de facto" ruler, who holds power in a classic demonstration of a motto of China's Mao Tse-Tung (whom Mr. Marcos had just visited) that "power flows from the barrel of a gun."

2) The lack of a designated successor, or a provision in the New Constitution for orderly succession, in case of Mr. Marcos' demise or removal from office, for whatever cause, gives investors in the Philippines, especially foreigners, no guarantee of stability.

3) The Marcos regime, having gone corrupt and betrayed the rising expectations of a weary people, may soon become easy prey to a real Communist conspiracy, which is allowed to flourish underground, while legitimate dissenting groups are mercilessly repressed.

4) The U.S. government cannot just fold its arms on the Philippines with which it has had a long tradition of friendship and history of tutelage in

democracy. In the light of the traditional American policy of fighting its defensive wars outside the American continent, the Philippines becomes America's special concern because it is a vital link in the U.S. world-wide defense network designed to keep wars away from American shores.

5) A Philippines gone Communist could present the U.S. with a problem on its defense arrangements similar to what is now the so-called Portugal Trojan horse.

6) Freedom-loving Filipinos desirous of overthrowing the dictatorial yoke of Mr. Marcos are stymied by the posture of support the state department has shown for the martial regime; various organized groups waiting for a clarion call to shed blood for the restoration of democracy in the Philippines are even more fearful that they might face American troops and arms from Clark Field, if they should take up arms to overthrow the Marcos regime.

We are not even asking the United States to come to the aid of the freedom-yearning Filipinos and actively assist them in overthrowing a dictatorial regime. We want to restore democracy to our ravished country by our own resources, animated only by our unquenchable thirst for freedom. We only ask that the United States stand aside, state categorically that it does not, and will not, support a dictatorial regime that has by now all the hallmarks of an incipient Vietnam gone Communist.

The opening statement I read before the committee was, of course, only a capsule of the story of the terrible dark night of dictatorship that has devoured the Republic of the Philippines. It was this story, so damaging to his claim of legitimacy as chief of state of the Republic of the Philippines, that President Marcos tried to prevent me from telling the American Congress and people.

However, the bizarre bribery attempt made by President Marcos to silence me did not end with the first offer he made to me in Washington, D.C. on June 16, 1975. The bribe offer followed me all the way back to San Francisco, thereby establishing a second stage, or perhaps, a second criminal act, in the attempt of Dictator-President Marcos to stop me from talking about his martial regime.

The first attempt involved an offer made to me by Marcos of a bribe amounting to \$100,000.00 as quid pro quo in the following manner:

1) \$50,000.00, if I would withhold my scheduled testimony, or in the alternative, to tone down my said testimony, on the events leading up to the imposition, and during the first three years, of martial law in the Philippines, before the Sub-committee on International Organizations; and 2) Another \$50,000.00, if I, upon compliance with the first condition, would leave the United States and reside in another country. Australia was suggested because I have a sister who resides in Perth, W. Australia

I rejected the offer and testified as scheduled at 2 p.m. on June 17, 1975, before the Subcommittee on International Organizations, denouncing the one-man military dictatorship of Marcos in the strongest and most authoritative language yet used against Marcos in a forum where it really counted so much.

I confided the bribe offer at about 8:30 a.m. on June 17, 1975, to San Francisco lawyer Gerald N. Hill; to John Salzberg, staff consultant of the Subcommittee on International Organizations at about 11 a.m. on June 18, 1975; to Les Whitten, an associate of columnist Jack Anderson, at about 5 p.m.

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on June 18, 1975; and to Abelardo "Al" Valencia in Washington, D.C. at about midnight of June 16, 1975.

The second stage, or perhaps the second criminal act involved in this bizarre case, developed when columnists Anderson and Whitten, the meticulous and exhaustive investigative reporters that they are, started looking into the bribe offer themselves on June 26, 1975. The columnists' investigations, which included telephone calls to the Philippine Consulate General in San Francisco must have somehow alerted Ambassador Alconcel to a forthcoming column of Anderson. Evidently in panic, Alconcel obtained clearance from President Marcos to offer me the lump sum of \$100,000 on the following conditions: 1) That I would immediately leave for Australia; 2) That I would desist from publishing my book on martial law; and 3) That I would repudiate the testimony I have given before the House committee, disown the Jack Anderson columns and all other press statements or public pronouncements I may have made after my defection on Feb. 20, 1975.

An affidavit embodying the conditions sought to be imposed on me in exchange for the \$100,000.00 was drafted and prepared by Ambassador Alconcel, presumably at the Philippine Consulate General on Sutter Street in San Francisco, on a consulate typewriter, and delivered to me on June 26, 1975, by an employe of the Consulate, Crispin Padagas.

Pieced together, the activities into which Alconcel dedicated himself upon direct instructions from President Marcos constituted a brazen attempt by a tinhorn Asian dictator to tamper with sacred and hallowed American institutions, i.e. seeking to prevent or pervert the testimony of a congressional witness.

This incident came at a time when the policy-making branch of the United States government had decided to initiate an inquiry into the wisdom of the U.S. government's continuing pouring of millions of U.S. taxpayer money in the form of foreign aid to unstable dictatorial regimes in Southeast Asia. This was necessitated by the debacle in South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos which required the sacrifices of 56,000 Americans killed and 500,000 others wounded, not to mention the \$200 billion in money and war materiel poured into that lengthy war.

President Marcos realized perhaps belatedly that the Fraser committee hearing would learn for the first time the gory details of his dastardly act of betrayal of democracy in the Philippines when he placed my country under martial law on September 21, 1972. He tried bribery to stop me. Lately, he has come out with a denial of the bribery attempts.

Res ipsa loquitur. This is a Latin principle of law which states that the "thing speaks for itself." A check for \$50,000.00, drawn by the Philippine National Bank Agency in San Francisco in favor of Alconcel, on June 17, 1975, and deposited jointly in a savings account in Alconcel's name and mine with the Lloyds Bank California main branch in San Francisco, also on the same day, which was the day I was to testify on the Philippine Watergate. The day after I testified, or on June 18, Alconcel returned to the bank and cancelled my name from the joint account. These undeniable events constitute the "res" or the "thing." I call it the "smoking gun." Just how the "smoking gun" was discovered is a matter that one may say was a providential happening. I reported it to the Fraser committee in this manner in Articles 12, 13, 14, and 21, of my July 10

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affidavit:

12. That, upon my return to San Francisco, I immediately inquired about the "bribe money" from my sources, particularly, with the Philippine National Bank which would be the logical instrument for such a transaction from the Philippines. Luckily, I discovered that during the first banking hour of June 17, 1975, on the day I was to testify, the Philippine National Bank had feverish activity relating to the rush issuance of a Fifty Thousand Dollar (\$50,000.00) check in favor of Ambassador Trinidad Q. Alconcel, the Consul General of the Philippines in San Francisco. My sources, however, could not tell me what Ambassador Alconcel did with the check. However, I was also informed that all transactions with the Philippine National Bank are being facilitated by three correspondent banks in San Francisco, namely, Wells Fargo Bank, First Western Bank and Lloyds Bank of California.

13. That, on the basis of the information I had gathered, I started checking by telephone with the Wells Fargo Bank, and then with the First Western Bank if any transaction of \$50,000.00 involving myself was recorded by them. I was given by both banks a negative answer.

14. That, when I checked with the Lloyds Bank of California, the person who answered my telephone inquiry was a certain Mr. Roger Pahl, who, luckily for me, was the very same person who handled the transaction of Ambassador Alconcel. Mr. Pahl informed me that at an early banking hour on June 17, 1975, a person who identified himself as Ambassador Trinidad Q. Alconcel opened a savings account jointly in his name and my name for the sum of FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$50,000.00). The number of the Savings Account was 0660-46062. The corresponding deposit slip was made in both our names for the full amount. When asked where I was so that I could sign the signature card of the bank, Ambassador Alconcel reportedly told Mr. Pahl that I was out of the country.

Mr. Pahl then informed me that the following day, June 18, 1975, the same person, Ambassador Alconcel, went to the bank again, and changed the name of our joint account to his own name alone. The account number of the Savings Deposit was changed to No. 0662-46063.

21. That, at about 3:00 P.M. on July 1, after preliminary contact with the Lloyds Bank of California, I was accompanied by my lawyer, Attorney Gerald N. Hill, and Alex A. Esclamado, Publisher and Editor-in-Chief of the Philippine News, to the Lloyds Bank of California office at 201 Montgomery Street, San Francisco, in order to personally inquire about the circumstances surrounding Alconcel's \$50,000.00 transaction. Then and there, we were able to discuss the matter with the bank's Operations Officer, Mr. Jerry R. Stanton, from whom we got the following information:

(a) That early in the morning of June 17, 1975, Ambassador Trinidad Q. Alconcel brought a Philippine National Bank, San Francisco Agency Check No. 4905 dated June 17, 1975, for the sum of FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$50,000.00) payable to "Ambassador Trinidad Q. Alconcel". A xerox copy of its face is attached hereto as Annex "E". The check was deposited to a Savings Account which was opened in the name

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of Trinidad Q. Alconcel and Primitivo Mijares. The number of the Savings Account was 0662-46062. A xerox copy of the original deposit slip, bank form No. S-150 (09-74) is attached hereto and marked as Annex "F".

(b) That, the Philippine National Bank check was endorsed on the back as follows: "PAY TO THE LLOYDS BANK CALIFORNIA FOR DEPOSIT TO SAVINGS ACCOUNT NO. 0660-46063 IN THE NAME OF PRIMITIVO MIJARES" (SIGNED) TRINIDAD Q. ALCONCEL. A xerox copy of the signed endorsement is attached hereto and marked as Annex "G".

(c) That, the following day, June 18, 1975, Ambassador Alconcel went to the same bank and at that time the account name was changed to the sole name of "ALCONCEL, TRINIDAD Q. A Universal Credit slip stamped "Substitute," was executed for the sum of \$50,000.00. A xerox copy of the form is hereto attached as Annex "H".

d) That, Mr. Stanton could not find in the records any other signature card with the joint account name of "Trinidad Q. Alconcel and Primitivo Mijares". Mr. Stanton indicated that if there was any signature card bearing the joint name aforementioned, that he has no knowledge as to what happened to it. Mr. Stanton further stated that the reason for the two account numbers was a mistake of the clerk who handled the transaction.

e) That, the amount of FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$50,000.00) is still in deposit with the Lloyds Bank of California, 201 Montgomery Street, San Francisco, in the personal name of Trinidad Q. Alconcel. However, Mr. Stanton informed me that I have no right to stop any transactions on the account because my signature does not appear on the corresponding signature card and that, based on the nature of the endorsement on the back of the check, the amount can be withdrawn by Ambassador Alconcel at any time.

The attempt of President Marcos, through his most trusted presidential assistant and his consul general in San Francisco, to bribe me out of the congressional committee witness stand and then out of the United States of America was more than just a case of obstruction of the American system of justice by a foreign chief of state beyond the territory of his dictatorship.

It is in truth and in fact a dastardly attempt by a tinhorn Asian dictator to extend the dirty and ugly hands of Marcos' dictatorial martial regime into the heartland of freedom-loving America. Obviously, Marcos, heady over the relative ease by which he had seized power in Manila, wanted to test a new political theory, the nomenclature by which he describes all steps he undertakes against the grain of democracy. He wanted to test a new political theory that he could tamper with sacred and hallowed American institutions from the seat of his military regime in Manila by obstructing the proceedings of an investigation by a proper committee of the United States Congress. In Malacanang, he rules with an iron-hand, secured in the thought that he had already successfully tampered anyway with an institution of democracy which the United States had painstakingly set up for almost half a century in Asia by

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his imposition of martial law in the Philippines in 1972. The other apparent objective of Marcos in offering me a handsome bribe was to silence the opposition set up by overseas Filipinos to the despotic military rule that has engulfed the Philippines. Marcos' objectives are quite understandable considering the stakes involved, his crime in trying to buy me out of the House committee hearing not having been his first anyway against democracy.

The most merciful thing that might be said about the bribe attempt is that Marcos simply wanted to stop me from giving the damaging testimony that I gave to the Fraser committee. Marcos has never failed before; he figured neither the risk that I just might reject his bribe nor the dire consequences that would ensue from his failure to make me shy away from the committee hearing. After all, Marcos and other past Philippine Presidents have always had their way with Mother America; U.S. aid in terms of millions of dollars squeezed out of the hard-working American taxpayers regularly come almost as a matter of course.

Thus, when Marcos proclaimed martial law in the Philippines, he took it for granted that his military dictatorship, nicknamed the New Society, could undertake, as had his pre-martial law administration as well as others before him, activities that earn Washington's condemnation, if committed by governments other than that of America's former ward in Asia.

It seems that Marcos hasn't realized that the rules of the game have already been changed. He himself changed the rules by which he should be handled in the United States when he proclaimed martial law in the Philippines; Marcos discarded the institution of democratic fair play and humane conduct by which the delicate art of government should be pursued. His very move was one of the underlying reasons for the decision of the United States Congress to conduct an inquiry into the U.S. foreign assistance program, including the dole out of millions of dollars to the Philippines; the U.S. Congress wanted to determine the wisdom of pumping millions of American taxpayer money into authoritarian regimes that go against the very objective of foreign assistance, which is the expansion of the frontiers of freedom and democracy all over the world.

It was Marcos' own conduct of an oppressive and rapacious authoritarian government that made me renounce a rule of doggish, loyal service to him. He had the gall nevertheless to assume that I was still his man whom he could keep away from a congressional witness stand with a bribe offer. Now, other rules are changing for Marcos. The United States government has decided to investigate the bribe.

The attempt to silence me, and the later attempt to make me recant my congressional testimony, were not the first of acts of similar nature committed by the martial government of Marcos by way of exportation of martial law to the United States. The exportation of Marcos' martial law has an altogether different objective from the exportation made by Fidel Castro of his Cuban revolution. Marcos' main desire is to silence criticisms and opposition abroad by both Filipinos and friends of the Filipino people in order to minimize possible alarm that might be raised by foreign governments, particularly the United States, over the repression and plunder that the military regime has launched in the Philippines.

The Manila government has prepared a "blacklist" of Filipinos residing in

the United States who cannot return to the Philippines without being subjected to reprisals for their anti-martial law activities. Pictures of these “blacklisted” persons are posted at every point of entry in the Philippines, including Clark Air Force base, so that they can be seized and detained any time they land in the Philippines. The list includes American citizens of Filipino descent.

Even the so-called “balikbayan” program, which was launched by the martial regime to induce Filipinos abroad to visit their homeland, is part of the over-all program of the regime to conceal the Philippine Watergate; it has not really boosted the Philippines’ dollar reserves as claimed by Tourism Secretary Jose D. Aspiras.

Marcos also exports his martial law to the United States through the vehicle of a well-oiled propaganda apparatus. Wherever possible, Marcos or his minions summon relatives of “blacklisted” Filipinos to Manila and order them to write their kins in the United States to stop their activities against, or their criticisms of, martial law in the Philippines.

The Manila regime has not hesitated to crack down on news organs of Filipinos which have been critical of the dictatorship. The glaring example is the pressure applied by President Marcos on the Filipino-owned travel agencies, which are raking in on the “balikbayan” project, to withdraw their advertising from the *Philippine News* and shift them to the propaganda organs operated by Gov. Benjamin “Kokoy” Romualdez in the United States.

The shenanigans that President Marcos would still resort to in order to insure the stability and long duration of his authoritarian regime in the Philippines are still inconceivable, but, considering his satanic record and infinite capacity for diabolical cunning, I expect him to go to great lengths. The stakes are so high and are still escalating for Marcos to leave anything to the normal behavior of a man. The stakes in his New Society could even involve his own neck and those of the persons collaborating with him, including the diamond-studded neck of Imelda whose wrinkles have been stretched *a la* “Ash Wednesday.”

Marcos already made a dastardly attempt to shield from the American government and people the Machiavellian design for his infamous power-grab in the Philippines when he sought to offer me a bribe to keep me out of a House committee hearing. His bribe offer appears so reprehensible when one takes note of the fact that Marcos did it to conceal the gory ways by which he went about dismantling the apparatus of a democratic government set up by the United States in Asia; it becomes specially condemnable considering that the bribe offer constitutes an attempt by a tinhorn Asian dictator to tamper with sacred and hallowed American institutions; it sounds so alarming when the fact emerges that it was done on the eve of the celebration by the United States of America of the bicentennial of the launching of the first great American experiment in democracy. To my mind, it betrayed Marcos’ utter contempt for the principles of democracy, which he dismantled in the Philippines, whether they be established in the Philippines, in the United States of America or anywhere else.

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The attempt to tamper with a congressional hearing in the U.S. was Marcos' contemptuous way of saying, "Happy Birthday, America!" It was his assault *5 to Mother America.

(*5. This is a Spanish word adopted into the Filipino language to mean a party given as a surprise to a person on the eve of his birthday.)

In my own case, Marcos has not spared any lie to hit back at me because I told the truth about his authoritarian regime before the U.S. Congress. Only Lucifer *6 knows what other schemes Marcos would come up with next to denigrate my efforts at contributing to the cause of restoration of democracy in the Philippines.

(*6. It was a matter of common knowledge in Manila before September 21, 1972, that Congressman Carmelo Z. Barbero used to swear upon a stack of Bibles (Douay version) that Marcos operates by the "book of Satan.")

However, Marcos cannot stop my irreversible course. I made an appointment with history when I defected from Marcos' regime, and I kept my date with an important chapter of Philippine history when I testified before the Fraser committee. I will continue to honor my commitment to history, and specifically to the journalistic profession in that, having fortunately or unfortunately walked the corridors of power during a dark hour in the life of my country and having been privy to the sinister manipulations of a scheming man and his more ambitious wife, I would perpetuate my knowledge and observations on this abominable chapter in the history of my country.

Chapter III

Twilight of Democracy

Dusk was settling on the ancient city of Manila, with the sun that gives the Oriental metropolis its most beautiful sunset slowly sliding away behind the clouds beyond historic Corregidor and Caballo islands. The eastern horizon was aflame with layers of red clouds, a phenomenon which a Batangas farmer would undoubtedly interpret as a portent of heavy rains, perhaps stormy days, ahead.

Out in Project 6, Quezon City, where I resided, my immediate neighbors, Lolo and Lola Adama, parents of former advertising salesgirl Fanny Adama who now resides in New York City, beckoned to my youngest son, Luis Manuel, who was driving around on his mini-motorcycle. In mixed Ilocano and Tagalog, the two old folks advised my Boyet to go home because they feared that something terrible was in the offing. Their gauge, or the basis for their superstitious belief, was the prolonged mournful howling of dogs and the cackling of chickens in the neighborhood. The phenomenon observed by the elder Adarnas manifested itself almost throughout the country that afternoon.

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The setting sun over Manila Bay gave a snugness to President Marcos' private Study Room at Malacanang that early evening of September 22, 1972. Marcos sat serene in his study, glancing once in a while at the bevy of red telephone receiver sets which linked his office with military camps all over the country.

What am I about to do? Marcos must have asked himself. Then, he imagined that in whatever direction he would be looking there would be soldiers sealing and closing down newspaper offices, and radio and television stations; soldiers knocking at and/or down locked doors and inviting or dragging out forcibly persons previously listed in an "order of battle" to go with them in a van; camps filled with men and women who have made the mistake of disagreeing with him or acting rather headily in seeking to consign Marcos prematurely to the dung heap of a lameduck presidency. How pitiful they would soon be, he must have mused.

Marcos pressed a button in his intercom, and when an ever ready aide responded to say "yes, sir," he commanded: "Get me Secretary Enrile." And then, with his line to the communications room aide still open, Marcos muttered to himself: "*Masyadong mabagal ang mga taong 'yan kung kailan pa naman kailangan magmadali.*" (Those people [without alluding to anyone in particular] move so sluggishly at a time when I want them to move fast enough.) Within a few minutes, he determined that his secretary of national defense, Juan Ponce Enrile, had left his office at Camp Emilio Aguinaldo *1 rather early in the day.

(*1. The main building at Camp Aguinaldo houses the office of the secretary of national defense and serves also as the armed forces general headquarters. Originally named Camp Murphy in honor of Frank Murphy, last American governor-general in the Philippines, the camp was renamed in 1962 in honor of the President of the first Republic.)

He was located by Sgt. Arturo Boquiren, agent on duty at the communications room near the President's Study Room, in the house of a "friend." Somewhat irritated, Marcos ordered Enrile in the following manner "Secretary Enrile? Where are you? You have to do it now . . . ya, ya, the one we discussed this noon. We cannot postpone it any longer. Another day of delay may be too late." Continuing his orders obviously after being interrupted with some remarks by Enrile, Marcos went on: "Make it look good. *Kailangan seguro ay may masaktan o kung mayroon mapatay ay mas-mabuti.* (May be it would be better if somebody got hurt or killed.) . . . O, hala, sigue, Johnnv (Okav. eo ahead) and be sure the story catches the 'Big News' and 'Newswatch'. . . and call me as soon as it is over."

My newsman's instinct told me that I would be handling the biggest news story of my life. I gained some inkling on the unfolding drama days earlier from the President himself. He instructed me during one of our luncheon sessions to prepare a "situationer" (a news round-up) on the encounters between elements of the government's armed forces and the Communist New People's Army, the "landing" of combat weapons and war materiel for the NPAs along the coast of Digoyo in Palanan, Isabela, the "terror bombings" in Manila and suburbs, and the violent demonstrations of the radicals.

"Make sure that the Daily Express puts out the situationer on or before Sunday (September 24, 1972)," Marcos said to me. "Tell them it is a direct

instruction from me.”

As Marcos completed his phone conversation with Enrile, I could not stop the jitters over my body. I pondered the seemingly inextricable depth of cooperation I was extending Marcos on his irreversible course of action.

At this stage, I felt some sense of guilt largely because weeks earlier I had a lively discussion with my first three children, Perla and Pilita, who were then high school students at St. Theresa’s; and Jose Antonio, also a high school student at Lourdes School, all in Quezon City.

All three of them and my youngest, Boyet, have mockingly called me a Marcos “tuta” (lap dog). They sang the tune that Marcos was an incompetent President who has not responded to the needs of the country for reforms. They said they were learning early in school and from schoolmates that “the establishment” which Marcos represents can no longer stem the tide of change and reform as demanded by intellectuals, professionals, businessmen, students, peasants and laborers. Even the seminarians, priests and nuns had joined the forces for change and progress, they said.

For the police and education reporters, it looked like there would be no sensational stories which they would be able to utilize to shove off from above the newspaper fold those *sa/sa* stories usually pounded out of the typewriters by the byline-hugging reporters from the Malacanang or the Palace beats. It has been a pleasant development since the advent of the decade of the seventies that the education reporters, deprecatingly looked down upon as the “dead beat” newshounds, have come up on their own as they teamed up with the glamorous police reporters to write about student activism and other demonstrations in the Manila metropolis. But this night of September 22, 1972, there was no scheduled demonstration; there was nary a hint in the police blotter that any group or groups were forming at the university belt to march along P. Burgos, the traditional route of demonstrators, or Mendiola, which leads to the gates of Malacanang Palace.

Teodorico “Teddy Laway” Santos, a former driver for police reporters turned police reporter himself for the newspaper with the widest circulation Manila Times, summed up the activist front for all the police reporters who usually converge 4 p.m. at the Manila Metropolitan Police headquarters on U.N. Avenue with a call to Crispulo Icban, Jr., the Times city editor, thus: “Jun, *tahimik ang bayan*. (The town is quiet). Don’t expect any earth-shaking story from our end.” As a matter of fact, Teddy Laway and most members of the newmen’s tribe would not be turning in any stories for a long, long time to come.

Brig. Gen. Gerardo Tamayo, MMP chief, soon joined the police reporters, shaking his head and muttering: “I don’t like it, boys. It’s too quiet for comfort.” Gerry’s sixth sense as a policeman was loudly telling him this could be the proverbial lull before a big storm.

Not being up to the minute on the news, jittery housewives huddled in the thousands of homes with their young ones in Manila and environs, wondering when the family bread-winner would come home. So fresh still in their mind was the incident involving a father who, while buying a gift for a three-year-old daughter celebrating her birthday, was blown to pieces by a bomb exploded by an alleged Communist terrorist on busy Carriedo Street in Sta. Cruz, near the

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Quiapo church. Families waited, too, for their student-daughters or sons who might get caught in whirlpools of troubles that demonstrations, whether staged by students or workers, usually generate.

In the editorial offices of the Daily Express, the newspaper established by Marcos through a silent front man, Ambassador to Japan Roberto S. Benedicto, Managing Editor Neal H. Cruz teased staff writers Marita Manuel and Jorge Arago about their *kabusisi-an* *2 (*2. A vulgar term for meticulousness.) as they demanded to review once more a special article they have jointly written two days earlier on an interview with Senator Beriigno S. Aquino, Jr., the No. 1 tormentor of our then invisible publisher. Marita shouted that, if the staff members only had a bigger editorial office, then she and Jorge wouldn't be bothering people with their looking for type-set stories. This prompted ever alert Enrique "Pocholo" Romualdez, the editor-in-chief, to butt in: "Don't worry, Marita, we will assign you the biggest cubicle when that guy Yabut finally yields this entire compound to the Daily Express". Makati Mayor Nemesio I. Yabut, an early supporter of Marcos who is now all washed up with the President ever since the killing of Delfin Cueto *3 at the lobby of the Intercontinental Hotel, had given Marcos his word during the inauguration of the Daily Express printing plant on May 7, 1972, that he would cede a vacant lot titled under his name to the President for the expansion requirements of the newspaper facility.

(*3. Cueto, said to be a half-brother of President Marcos, was a labor leader from Agusan, who allegedly tried to set up some protection rackets in the affluent suburb of Makati, Rizal. Onedayin May, 1972, Yabutintoned that "Makati elected only one king, and that's the new mayor." A few days later, Cueto was gunned down by Makati policemen "in self-defense.")

As Marita found the type-set copy of her article, she shouted to Jorge, saying: "*Halika, tignan mo ito.* (Come, look at this.) Ninoy [Aquino] said, 'If Marcos declares martial law, he better get me within the first few hours or he won't get me at all'. *Ano kaya, tumakbo kaya si Ninoy sa Sierra Madre?* (What do you think, will Ninoy flee to Sierra Madre?)." "*Ay hindi, sa U.S. embassy siya tutungo, CIA 'ata 'yan.* (Oh, no, he would run to the U.S. embassy. What's he a CIA agent for?)," Arago replied.

The old residence of the late Mayor Arsenio H. Lacson on M. Eamshaw in Sampaloc, from where venom had spouted from the mouth of the irrepressible mayor who in his lifetime had fought unceasingly against government abuses, official graft and corruption, and any slight evidence of a creeping dictatorship from Malacanang, appeared quiet, deserted from the outside view. Inside, however, Antonio Garcia was seething with rage over another piece of evidence of the continuing corruption within the administration of President Marcos. He was looking at the time at a handwritten note of Marcos directing Garcia's friend and boss at the time, Rice and Com General Manager Benny Villamor, to issue a permit for the landing in La Union of several shiploads of rice imported from abroad by Congressmen Jose D. Aspiras and Eduardo Cojuangco and Defense Secretary Enrile. Earlier, then Supreme Court Justice Julio Villamor, father of the RCA chief, warned his son that he could be sent to jail if he implemented the Marcos directive on the rice

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shipments which were illegal since only the RCA was authorized to import cereals. Garcia recalls that the directive was in Marcos's own handwriting which he (Garcia) at that time thought should have been leaked to the press.

Garcia mentally wrote the story for Jose L. Guevara, columnist of the Manila Times, and Willie Ng, of the Manila Daily Bulletin, his favorite contacts among the metropolitan newsmen. Garcia thought he would have to add as "backgrounder" some of the notorious activities that the relatives of President Marcos, his mother Dona Josefa Edralin Marcos and his youngest sister, Ms. Fortuna "Baby" Marcos-Barba, in the operations of the rice agency. Garcia recalled that in the more recent weeks, mother and daughter Marcos engaged in virtual "black-marketing" of rice while there was a severe shortage of supply of the cereal throughout the country. Dona Josefa had been making demands on Villamor that certain parties be given RCA retailer's license "because they are supporters of the Dona Josefa Marcos Foundation." Fortuna was also badgering Villamor for similar concessions. At one time, Villamor refused to receive Fortuna as she kept circling the block on G. Tuason, Quezon City, where the Villamor residence was located. An angry Fortuna was heard by Villamor's guard shouting, "The President will hear about this!" *4

(*4. Villamor was the first state official to be fired by the martial regime.)

Garcia had only recently quit as assistant administrator for public affairs of the Social Security System in disgust over the misuse by Marcos of the facilities of the system. Garcia had denounced the use for one year in 1968 and 1969 by Marcos (in his reelection campaign) of 50 brand new Toyota jeeps of the SSS, which the institution purchased from a corporation controlled by a Marcos front man, the Delta company, and of the printing press of the system. The SSS press was operated at night by personnel of the National Media Production Center for printing black propaganda materials against Marcos' rival for the presidency, Senator Sergio Osmena, Jr.

In the case of young Villamor, he decided to defy Marcos in the unloading of the illegal rice for which the RCA head paid dearly when martial law was declared. When the first issue under martial law of the Marcos-owned newspaper, Daily Express, hit the streets, Villamor was presented as the first important government official to be dismissed for "corruption". This diabolical smearing of a young Harvard-trained technocrat, scion of a respected justice, was also in retaliation for the humiliation suffered by Marcos's mother, Josefa, and Marcos's sister, Fortuna Barba, over the repeated denials by Villamor of their demands for bigger rice allocations for their clients.

Amidst a setting of anarchy, public confusion, terror and despair, the two great expressions of the Filipino people's continuing desire to preserve democracy in the island Republic were functioning, if groggily.

The latest, the Constitutional Convention called in 1970 to draft sweeping and fundamental structural changes in the government and society, was still reeling from the unexpected defeat on the floor of a so-called "ban Marcos" resolution and the surprising victory of the faction favoring the shift of the structure of government from the existing presidential to the parliamentary form.*5

(*5. See Chapter V for more detailed discussion of this point.)

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Earlier, the whole nation was shocked by the revelations of Delegate Eduardo Quintero, a former ambassador and province mate of the First Lady, that meetings of Convention delegates had been called in the Malacanang presidential palace where bribe money was given and taken. Although Quintero was generally hailed as a hero, he eventually found himself the accused rather than the complainant following a vicious process of de-glamorization applied to him under the baton of no less than President Marcos. The Convention Committee on Privileges which investigated the Quintero expose held by a split vote (5-4) that his charge that the bribe money was given and taken to cause the defeat of the “ban Marcos” resolution and the adoption of the parliamentary system was baseless and, by inference, that he was to blame for raising them in the first place.*⁶ A criminal charge was filed against Quintero. With the strange twist on the Quintero case, the charter meet was in no mood to work overtime. Former President Diosdado P. Macapagal, the Con-Con president, adjourned the sessions early on that day of September 22, 1972.

(*6. I was the major propagandist in the apparatus set up by Marcos to de-glamorize Quintero. I had to go to Tacloban City in June and coordinate with Kokoy Romualdez and Secretary De Vega in gathering “dirt” on Quintero.)

The major center of open, public concern over the unfolding national drama was Congress, where the delicate balancing of the contending factions of democracy engage in the art of give and take, with some abuses that were better tolerated than suppressed altogether. Senate and House leaders had agreed earlier not to adjourn on September 21 as earlier scheduled, but to gavel the current special session, the third for 1972, to “sine die” adjournment on September 23 instead.

In the House, there was nothing much to do. It had already disposed of the major bills assigned to the extra meet. All it had to do was wait for the Senate to act on these bills, and for some bicameral conference committees to report back on their task of reconciling Senate-House differences on certain administration bills. Speaker Cornelio T. Villareal was busy signing a mountain of vouchers which he would have to leave behind to take care of the allowances which House Secretary Inocencio B. Pareja would have to distribute to the congressmen during Villareal's absence. Villareal was to leave on September 23 as head of the Philippine delegation to the International Parliamentary Union annual general assembly in Lima, Peru. The other ranking member of the delegation, recently-ousted House Minority Leader Justiniano S. Montano, had left earlier on September 21 for Tokyo enroute to Lima. With Montano on the same Air France flight to Tokyo in September were newsmen Jesus Bigomia, of the Manila Daily Bulletin; Amante F. Paredes, of the Manila Chronicle; and Feliciano H. Magno, of the Daily Mirror who have wangled through Congressman Roque R. Ablan, Jr. non-revenue airline tickets to join the delegation to Lima.

In the Senate, there was greater concern for the national welfare. The main topic was what would happen or what the senators would do, if Marcos declared martial law. “O, Kuyang Gil (Hey, brother Gil),” Senator Jovito R. Salonga, a Liberal, sought to attract the attention of Senate President Gil J.Puy at

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"according to the thesis of Pepe here, you should be President of the Philippines by December 30, 1973, if Marcos should declare martial law now and suspend the elections in November next year." "Aw, come now, let's not kid ourselves about Marcos, replied Puyat with the ever-present smile on his face. Both Puyat and Salonga were sincerely convinced that Marcos was not about to relinquish the presidency at the end of his term on December 30, 1973. But they did not know just what steps Marcos was planning to take to perpetuate himself in power. Senator Jose W. Diokno had delivered a few days earlier a privileged speech warning Marcos that, if he proclaimed martial law in order to stay in office beyond December 30, 1973, he would be violating the Constitution; Diokno said that the lawful President of the country after high noon of December 30, 1973, would be whoever is Senate President at the time.

The more proper subject of martial law was being dealt with by the upper chamber's "whiz kid," Senator Benigno S. Aquino, Jr. at the time. Aquino told worried senators and newsmen that he believed that Marcos has laid out plans, and has finally decided, to impose martial law. However, Ninoy expressed the belief that Marcos would not declare martial law until after December, 1972. Aquino said Marcos would not dare institute a military regime and run the risk of facing a hungry nation. He pointed out that the devastating July-August floods would cause the country another rice shortage. In the meantime, Aquino said, he would continue to expose the "fake landing of arms in Digoyo" and Marcos-trained terror squads roaming the streets of Manila in the hope that these infrastructures for the imposition of martial law would be dismantled by Marcos.

Aquino recalled talks he held a month earlier, about August 19, with former Manila Mayor Antonio J. Villegas who had urged him to flee the country because martial law was in the offing. The Tarlac senator expressed surprise that Villegas had more or less the same Marcos martial law plans that he himself (Aquino) had uncovered. The only difference, Aquino noted, was that the martial plan which Villegas told the senator about had no code-name, while the plan that fell into Ninoy's hands was code-named "Oplan Sagittarius." Villegas had developed wide contacts within the intelligence community to know that the martial plan of Marcos was for real; he left for the United States on August 20, 1972. Aquino was prepared, however, to fight the imposition of martial law up to the last minute; he said that he was not about to oblige Marcos with the spectacle of an Aquino fleeing to the hills or to a foreign country on a threat of declaration of martial law. "But if Marcos declares martial law, he will have to get me within the first few hours, or he will never get me at all," Aquino restated a line he had given two days earlier to interviewers Marita and Jorge.

As Aquino was regaling Senate reporters with anecdotes, another group of beat reporters, those assigned to the defense department, were cursing the DND PIO for "inefficiency." The jeeps that usually took them to their respective offices in Manila have not arrived; they had no significant story to turn in to their desks, and yet they were going to be late for their deadlines. They didn't realize at the time that the delay in the arrival of the jeeps was intentionally planned. The newsmen were going to be used by Secretary Enrile.

Just as Aquino was saying his long goodbyes to the Senate reporters, Puyat having adjourned the Senate session to enable members of the chamber

to attend the various bicameral conference committee meetings scheduled for late that evening, an aide of the Tarlac senator rushed to his side with a typewritten note. Upon reading the note, Aquino blurted: "Here it is, boys. The Times reporter has just phoned in a story that Secretary Enrile's party was ambushed by unknown gunmen near some bushes along the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club. The secretary was unhurt, but his white Mercedes Benz car was riddled with bullets at the back. He was not inside his official car at the time of the ambush. No member of his party was hurt. And the report states that a check on slugs recovered from the bullet-riddled car showed that the ammo matched those recovered from Digoyo in Palanan, Isabela. This is it, boys. That guy Marcos must be escalating things. Let's go listen to Jose Mari Velez's 'Big News,' maybe we can have more details. I'll look into this, and I will get in touch with you guys later."

As Aquino rushed out of the Senate session hall, the journalists almost to a man, but especially *Free Press* staff writer Filemon Tutay, started thinking aloud that the government-announced discovery of a shipment of arms, purportedly for the New People's Army, at Digoyo Point in Isabela, and the series of mysterious bombings that took place in the Greater Manila area may have all been a product of a suspected Malacanang-managed "Bureau of Plant Industry" for the month of August and the first three weeks of September, 1972. Only in one case was a culprit found: a Constabulary sergeant assigned to the Firearms and Explosives Section of the Philippine Constabulary confessed responsibility for the bombing of Joe's Department store in Carriedo, in Sta. Cruz, Manila on Sept. 5, 1972. Always ever-ready to throw off any suspicion, Malacanang announced an obvious implementation of the Communist terror plan have resulted in the "bombing of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company exchange at East Avenue, and of the Philippine Sugar Institute building at North Avenue, both in Quezon City, on August 17; of a water mains on Aurora Boulevard and Madison Avenue, Quezon City, on August 19, of the Philamlife building again on August 30; of the armored car and building of the Philippine Banking Corporation as well as the buildings of the Investment Development, Inc. and the Daily Star Publications, on August 30; of the City Hall of Manila, on September 8; of the water mains in San Juan, Rizal, on September 12; of the San Miguel building in Makati, Rizal, on September 14; and of the Constitutional Convention area at the Quezon City hall on September 18.

Malacanang said the terror-bombing program of the Communists included the attempted bombing of the Congress building on July 18, when an unexploded bomb was found in the Senate Publications Division and the attempted bombing of the Department of Foreign Affairs on August 30.

Out in the city streets, blue-painted cars and buses marked with the words "METROCOM" in dull red letters cruised near the buildings of Manila's newspaper, radio and television stations, this time filled with troopers from the Philippine Constabulary Metropolitan Command. People did not mind them as the vehicles went about what had become an apparent routine exercise of passing, parking and then leaving the media buildings and surrounding areas. Three weeks earlier, when the Metrocom exercises were first noticed, people were led to believe that the troopers were sent to provide security, especially for the Daily Express, against vandalism by violent demonstrators. "Ah, the

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Metrocom is around to protect us from demonstrators,” was a common comment among the media men. Only this night, the Metrocom vehicles were not showing signs of pulling away from their assigned areas for the usual trip back to Camp Crame.

By this time, President Marcos was back in his Study Room in Malacanang after a nine-hole round of golf at the Malacanang Park. The “Big News” top announcer Jose Man Velez and Channel 9’s “Newswatch” at 8 p.m. have announced the news of Enrile’s ambush. Henry Halasan was preparing to do his thing on his nightly newscast, “The World Tonight,” over Channel 2. But Marcos was certain those scheduled news programs would go through as planned. What he wanted was a direct report. He thought that something might have gone awry with the nest of emergency telephones right beside him; why didn’t anyone of them bring in the call he had been waiting for?

The nest of red telephones were Marcos emergency link to the country’s military installations, including the offices of the defense secretary and the armed forces general headquarters at Camp Aguinaldo. The communications network was financed in its entirety with American tax dollars. The equipment had U.S. markings; they must necessarily be so, because they were bought with American taxpayer money from American suppliers; they were part of what was known as continuing U.S. foreign assistance program to the Philippines.

The network was set up for Marcos by the U.S. Agency for International Aid. The justification was that the Philippine President needed instant communication facilities for all the various regions to oversee the peace and order campaign as well as the vital national economic development projects all going on at the same time. The principal rationale for foreign aid, however, is that it must be utilized to expand the frontiers of freedom and democracy in the recipient country.

Soon, one of the phone rings, and Agent Boquiren, audibly excited, shouts simultaneously into the intercom to announce that Secretary Enrile was on the line. Picking up the ringing phone, Marcos says automatically into the receiver, “Hello, Johnny, how did it go?”

Then, in answer to what evidently was a long verbal report, Marcos intones: “Good, good!. . . Okay, Johnny, implement my proclamation. And just in case any major problem crops up, don’t hesitate to call me. Be sure you get Aquino, Diokno and Roces. They must not get away. I will be up all night to monitor direct reports from other areas. Oh, sigue, Johnny, good luck.” “Good night, sir!” Enrile replied.

The President turned to the intercom once more and barked an order to Agent Boquiren: “Get me General Ver!” In no time at all, the President was talking to Gen. Ver about the ring of steel that must be thrown around the Palace, and they reviewed the number of escape plans to be followed should the undertaking just signalled into execution by Marcos go awry and require, therefore, Marcos’ involuntary flight out of Malacanang or the country with his family and official retinue. Satisfied that the general’s presidential guard battalion could cope with any emergency, even that arising from any rebellious

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military unit, Marcos signalled the country's entire military establishment into full operation that night.

With that signal, President Marcos let loose a shocker as he placed the entire Philippines under martial law. It was sweeping as it was swift and shockingly fast. But the really shocking fact was that the act didn't seem to shock the members of Congress, particularly the opposition Liberal party leaders, lending credence to the belief that most of them knew about it.

Or, perhaps, the most worrisome possibility of all has become reality, the possibility that politicians, so engrossed in their politics of survival, including the employment of private armies, and corrupt money-making ventures, have lost all control of themselves to resist the imposition of martial law.

In my testimony before the Fraser committee, I capsulized the initial days of the proclamation of martial law in the following words:

President Marcos announced formally at about 8 p.m. on Sept. 23, 1972, that he had placed the entire Philippines under martial law as of 9 p.m. Sept. 22, 1972, by way of effective implementation of a martial law edict (Proclamation No. 1081) which he had signed on Sept. 21, 1972. Two months later, he told a convention of historians that he really signed the proclamation on Sept. 17, 1972.

The deceitful manner by which martial law was imposed in the Philippines by Marcos was so characteristic of the man who has learned to live by a gunslinger's credo of "shoot first, explain later." Former Executive Secretary Rafael M. Salas once described the "Marcos style" as the evolution of two experiences. Salas said these are Marcos' "experience with domestic politics in the Ilocos, where there are two methods: violence or money and his experience in Congress, where there are really no rules. In short, any type of dissimulation or chicanery or bribery or coercion is applicable."

The deceit employed by Marcos in the imposition of martial law was in the implementation of Proclamation No. 1081 ahead of the official announcement. Marcos also displayed the same callous contempt for the elementary requirements of democratic rules on prior publicity of presidential acts affecting the liberties of the people when he suspended the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus on August 22, 1971, in the wake of the grenade-bombing of a Liberal party rally at Plaza Miranda towards midnight on August 21, 1971. The suspension of the writ was announced by Marcos only on August 23 at 4 p.m., or almost two days after the implementation of Proclamation No. 889 from which Marcos' secret police derived authority to round up alleged subversives.

By his proclamation of martial law, Marcos became the Dictator-President of the Philippines. Having consolidated, and made certain of, the support of the government armed forces, Marcos assumed all powers of the state and placed all government agencies and instrumentalities under his personal control, including the Judiciary. He laid down the infallibility of his one-man rule by declaring in a public document ^{*7} thus:

(*7. General Order No. 1, dated Sept. 22, 1972.)

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"I do hereby (further) order that the Judiciary shall continue to function in accordance with its present organization and personnel, and shall try and decide in accordance with existing laws all criminal and civil cases, except the following (*Italics ours*):

1. Those involving the validity, legality or constitutionality of Proclamation No. 1081, dated September 21, 1972, or of any decree, order or acts issued, promulgated or performed by me or by my duly designated representative pursuant thereto.

2. Those involving the validity, legality or constitutionality of any rules, orders or acts issued, promulgated or performed by public servants pursuant to decrees, orders, rules and regulations issued and promulgated by me or by my duly designated representative x x x"

Then, Marcos bought additional insurance on the loyalty of the government armed forces by increasing by 150 percent the monthly base pay of all commissioned officers, from Second Lieutenant to General. *8 The salary increase was effective October 1, 1972.

(*8. General Order No. 11. Dated Sept. 30, 1972.)

As a one-man ruler, Marcos suddenly developed amnesia. He forgot that his battle-cry in the 1965 presidential election campaign was that "This Nation Can Be Great Again," and that upon his inauguration on Dec. 30, 1965, he translated his election to the presidency as a "Mandate for Greatness." All of a sudden, by the end of September, 1972, there was a set of brand-new slogans for a new order, proclaiming that the imposition of martial rule was ordered upon him by Divine Providence to "save the Republic and build a New Society." The New Society, Marcos declared, will come into being with the people having a new sense of discipline, uprightness, and love of country.

With the onset of the New Society, the Filipino people slowly realized that public order had been restored and the crime rate has dropped dramatically in the sheets of government press releases. In addition, the people have had to contend with the spectacle of a martial rule that paved the way for:

- 1) Shutdown of, and imposition of government control over, all media and other means of giving out information;
- 2) Arrest and detention, in most cases without charges or complaint, of thousands allegedly involved, wittingly or unwittingly, in a conspiracy to overthrow the government.

The long list of detainees included prominent oppositionists, outspoken journalists and publishers, Constitutional Convention delegates who were against the idea of prolonging the term of Marcos beyond Dec. 30, 1973, student leaders, professors, intellectuals and union organizers. The common denominator for the persons rounded up was that they protested at one time against the gross social and political injustices perpetrated or condoned by Marcos.

- 3) Placing of all public utilities under military supervision;
- 4) Banning of mass action in rallies or demonstrations, of criticisms of public officials and of the inalienable right of workers to strike and picket.

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- 5) Closing of all schools for one week.
- 6) Imposition of curfew from 12 o'clock midnight to 4 o'clock in the morning, reduced later to from 1 o'clock in the morning to 4 o'clock in the morning.
- 7) Carrying of firearms outside residence without the permission of the armed forces of the Philippines became punishable by death.
- 8) Suspension of the departure of Filipinos abroad, except on official mission.

Why did the Filipino people, the vociferous champions of civil liberties and freedom of man that they are, submit so meekly to the imposition of martial law?

A key to this attitude may have an explanation in the memoirs written by the late American jurist George Malcolm who, on writing about the Philippine Independence movement, observed: "It is true that Filipinos will tell you in strict confidence that they do not favor independence, but that, they cannot say so publicly. Why is this? *The principal reason is the desire of the Filipino to say the thing that pleases*, and he assumes that Americans are enemies of independence . . ." (Italics ours.)

The terrible truth is that, after those series of bombings and violent demonstrations, few people doubted other stories of escalating Communist activities, however implausible they may have seemed to leaders like Aquino and the skeptical newspapermen. Thus, the people accepted with open arms the imposition of martial law as a substitute for the worsening conditions, even though they may have been warned that such situations were being contrived by Marcos and his psychological war agents. The people were sick, tired and weary in the wake of those unsolved bombings, riots, ambushes, graft and corruption, inefficiency and official chicanery.

The climate of fear and repression created by Proclamation No. 1081 drove the people into a passive attitude towards martial law. The Opposition was cowed because Marcos clamped its leaders in jail and others who were allowed to go free were told in clear and unmistakable language that they could just be arrested and detained by the military.

The timing of the imposition of martial law was heavily dependent on Congress being in session and Senator Aquino being available for the planned arrest. Marcos' sense of history told him that, even after the declaration of martial law, Congress must be allowed to hold at least one session before it is gavelled to adjournment, in order that history can record the fact that Marcos did not close the lawmaking branch of government by his proclamation of martial law. His thinking then had something to do with his plans for the Constitutional Convention.

Of greater importance, however, was the consideration of Aquino's arrest. He was No. 1 in the "order of battle" outlined in accordance with the martial law plan. Marcos was particularly agitated early in the morning of September 22, 1972, when he was informed about a story coming out in his own Daily Express quoting Aquino's threat to escape Marcos' martial law dragnet, if he is not arrested within the first few hours. An Aquino leading a resistance movement in the hills would have rendered martial law inutile and, of greater

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gravity, exposed Marcos' very life to Aquino's will.

Thus, the Enrile ambush had to be staged so that Aquino could be caged.

I shudder in disbelief that Aquino did not avail of a 40-minute interregnum on the night of September 22, 1972, to carry out his threat to evade Marcos' dragnet when he might have done so before his arrest at about 12:10 a.m. on September 23. Aquino had the full 40 minutes to flee to some temporary haven from Room 1701 of the Manila Hilton where he was meeting with other members of a Senate-House conference committee on an omnibus bill amending the Tariff Code.

The 40-minute lease on freedom that Aquino could have had was offered him in three separate ways by men who were not themselves certain about the justice of what they knew was going to be done to the Tarlac senator. Behaving in the best traditions of people at war buying insurance just in case their side at the moment did not achieve complete victory, the offerors were Secretary of Defense Enrile himself, then Press Secretary now Information Secretary Francisco S. Tatad and Col. Romeo Gatan, chief of the Rizal Constabulary Command. All three told me in confidence months after the imposition of martial law that they gave Aquino a chance to escape the Manila Hilton that fateful night of September 22. Just how those goodwill messages were relayed to Aquino, the three did not tell me. Anyhow, colleagues of Aquino told of several phone calls received by the senator at Room 1701 before his arrest.

The nagging question still is, why didn't Aquino take advantage of the warning that martial law had been declared and that he was going to be arrested. One theory is that Aquino might have suspected that the friendly calls from Enrile, Tatad and Gatan could be a ploy set up by Marcos to make him flee from the Manila Hilton so that he could be gunned down as an ordinary fugitive. Another theory is that Aquino, along with other political leaders, erroneously assumed that, even if Marcos declared martial law, there would still be a free press to make heroes and martyrs out of those who would be detained by the soldiers of Marcos! How little background they have on the capacity of Marcos for overkill operations.

The last men with whom Aquino enjoyed the spirit of freedom were Senate Majority Leader Arturo M. Tolentino, Senators Ambrosio S. Padilla, Lorenzo G. Teves and John H. Osmena, and House Majority Leader Marcelino R. Veloso, among others. They were in session at Room 1701 of the Manila Hilton as Senate-House conferees on the Tariff Code.

At about 11 p.m., Aquino started receiving telephone calls, and each time he got through answering a call, he would turn pale for a few seconds before becoming his usual bouncing self. The last call that Aquino got came at about 12:10 a.m. of September 23, when most of those inside the room noted Aquino shouting into the receiver: "Pumanhik ka!" (You come up!) Then, Aquino motioned Sonny Osmena to follow him to the bathroom where he declared: "Sonny, I think I am going to be arrested. Martial law has been declared." Young Osmena insisted that Aquino inform their other colleagues about it. Emerging from the bathroom, Aquino addressed his colleagues: "Gentlemen, Marcos has just proclaimed martial law, and I am being arrested. The arresting team is downstairs at the hotel lobby waiting for me. But, I told Col. Gatan to come up here and get me by himself. I promised him that my boys won't fire at him . . .

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A dark chapter is inserting itself once more into our troubled history. I hope and pray that the dark night descending upon our beloved country would come to an early end. It's been nice being with you, gentlemen."

In disbelief, Senator Padilla remained seated and kept saying, This cannot be, this cannot be, as he puffed endlessly at his pipe.

"Are you sure, brod? Are you sure that martial law is upon us?" Senator Tolentino kept asking.

Before Aquino could satisfy all questions, Col. Gatan, a former Constabulary captain whom Aquino took care of as his protege, promoted to major and then lieutenant colonel and appointed as Tarlac Constabulary commander, came gently knocking at the door in quest of Aquino. Gatan apologized to the members of Congress for his intrusion, as he handed Aquino a brown envelope which contained a xerox copy of an "arrest and detain" order signed by Enrile. When Aquino demanded the original before he would go with Gatan, the PC commander, with his gun holster noticeably unhooked, declared that he had personal orders from President Marcos to arrest the senator. A massacre right then and there could have immediately ensued, but Aquino was quick to shout to his bodyguards: "Tahimik lang kayo, mga bata!" (Take it easy, boys.)

"Do I have any choice?" Aquino asked Gatan.

"Not anymore, sir. I am sorry, sir." Gatan replied.

Aquino shook hands with all his congressional colleagues and whispered some instructions to his boys before he went out peacefully into the dark night of infamy that Marcos had signalled from Malacanang.

Radio Newscaster Ronnie Nathaniels was waiting anxiously to inform his DZHP radio audience on the 2 a.m. broadcast that Senator Aquino had been arrested by government troops. But he never did go on the air. Metrocom troopers entered his studio shortly before 2 a.m. and told everyone to "go home, martial law is on."

Shortly before 2 a.m. Heherson "Sonny" Alvarez drowsily answered a telephone call from Lopita A. Concio, a television directress and younger sister of Senator Aquino. She called to inform Sonny that Ninoy had been arrested by the military and that Marcos has declared martial law.

Alvarez immediately, slipped out of his rented U.P. Village apartment, which had also served as a common office for himself, and fellow Convention Delegates Sotero H. Laurel, Capulong and Roco. He hid out in the house of a friend for several days, but informed Convention President Diosdado Macapagal that he was alive and well. Alvarez had ascertained earlier that he was among the Convention delegates being sought by the military for custodial detention.

Instead of turning himself in, Alvarez collaborated with some fellow Convention delegates in the production of an underground propaganda newsheet right in the City of Manila. It was at this point that the military issued a "shoot to kill order for Alvarez. On learning about the "shoot to kill order, Alvarez turned down repeated overtures from his own political ally, Isabela Governor Faustino Dy, and Delegate Celso Gangan, that he surrender peacefully and support Marcos in the Constitutional Convention.

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When he finally convinced himself that life was becoming so uncomfortable for him in Manila, Alvarez sought the help of some Convention delegates from Mindanao in making an escape to Sabah through Zamboanga and Sulu. He made good his exit from the Philippines via that route in late November, 1972.

Alvarez proceeded to Germany and then somehow obtained a visa to the United States where he joined Manglapus in setting up the "Movement for a Free Philippines."

The arrest of Aquino at the Manila Hilton was to be duplicated in a thousand other places all over the country wherever those persons listed in the AFP "order of battle" may be found; some of them were forcibly dragged out of their homes as in the case of Luis R. Mauricio, general manager-publisher of the anti-Marcos Kislap-Graphic magazine, which published the lurid details of Marcos' romance with Hollywood starlet Dovie Beams. The arrests started on the late night of September 22 and continued for several days as some of the military's quarries were either absent from their homes or have temporarily eluded arresting teams.

The deployment by Marcos of the entire armed forces to enforce martial law turned out to be an unnecessary show of force. As a matter of fact, the entire exercise of martial law was absolutely unnecessary, if the objective were only to fight off the pockets of rebellion going on in the countryside.

The only instance of armed resistance to the military efforts to enforce Marcos' martial law edict involved a pitched battle between guards at the "Iglesia ni Kristo" compound in Diliman, Quezon City (near the University of the Philippines), and Constabulary troopers. A team of PC-Metrocom troopers, acting on orders issued by Enrile and by authority of the President, sought to padlock the INK-owned Eagle Broadcasting Network which operates radio station DZEC and a television station under construction within the INK compound. However, the armed INK security guards would not let the Metrocom troopers enter without direct orders from the religious supremo, Bishop Erano Manalo. And the INK guards would not dare wake up the religious supremo at the ungodly hour of 3 a.m. Neither would the heady Metrocom troopers wait for word from any god, except Marcos. The Metrocom team leader declared that his group would force its way through. And they tried.

However, the INK security guards, who were armed with Thompson sub-machine guns blazed away at the first two arrogant Metrocom troopers nearest the INK gates, and they sought cover to await the wave of assaults they were anticipating from the rest of the raiding teams. Sure enough, the Metrocom raiders, apparently thinking that the declaration of martial law had scared the daylights out of the INK guards, sought to assault the fortress, but they were held at bay.

The Metrocom raiding team was almost wiped out to a man in the ensuing 30 minutes of gun-battle with the fanatical INK guards. The INK guards had by this time not suffered any major casualty, except superficial wounds from the bad aims of the Metrocom soldiers.

In interregnum, the leader of the raiding team radioed for reinforcements from Camp Crame, just about two miles away.

Enrile, who was at his war room at Camp Aguinaldo monitoring precisely

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the kind of incidents as the one in progress at the INK compound, gave orders that the re-enforcing troopers should stay beyond range of the guns of the INK guards until he himself could arrive at the scene of the only armed resistance to martial law.

The secretary of defense correctly assessed the situation. The INK guards were not resisting the entry of Metrocom troopers to protect the radio station. They just don't want the Constabulary to enter the compound, which they consider to be sacred and forbidden grounds to anyone without the blessings of Bishop Manalo.

By the time Enrile reached the INK compound, angry Metrocom troopers have already accounted for 12 dead INK guards. They were crying for more blood to avenge the death of their comrades in the earlier skirmishes.

Using a bullhorn mounted on top of a Metrocom car, Enrile approached the INK guard under a white flag of truce. He shouted repeatedly through the portable "This is Secretary Enrile, your friend. Stop shooting. Martial law has been declared by President Marcos. The military has come to close down your radio station. We are not interested in your church or other properties. If you don't lay down your arms, we will finish you off with all the might of the armed forces of the Philippines."

Presently, the leader of the INK guards emerged at the gates and sought a conference with Enrile. Under a flag of truce, the two talked, and the INK radio station was eventually sealed and taken off the air.

There were some who eluded arrests by various means. Former Ambassador Amelito R. Mutuc avoided arrest when the First Lady, Imelda, demanded that Mutuc's name be taken out of the "order of battle," arguing that Amelito had collaborated with her in some projects to win over certain hostile delegate factions in the Constitutional Convention to the side of Malacanang.

Mutuc's name, along with several thousand others, was included in a so-called custodial detention list prepared by Marcos and the military high command. The persons included in the list are either political enemies of the President, political enemies of the President's political friends and/or business and economic rivals. They were to be taken into custody by the military upon the imposition of martial law, not because they are subversives, but to prevent them from agitating, or organizing themselves, against the new order.

However, most of the persons listed in the "order of battle" fell into the Marcos martial law dragnet. None of the members of Congress or the delegates to the Constitutional convention tagged for arrest ever tried to escape. By their readiness to submit to arrest, they immediately disproved the accusation that they had conspired with the Communists to overthrow the Republic. As a matter of fact, one of the "most wanted" men, Joaquin P. Roces, publisher of the Manila Times who was out of his Quezon City residence when a raiding Metrocom team went there to arrest him, drove by himself to Camp Crame and placed himself in military custody on being informed by his wife over car phone that martial law had been declared and that he was being sought by the troopers of Marcos.

No leader of consequence wanted to leave the country during a month-period before September 22 even in the face of convincing proofs that Marcos was sculpturing the rapidly deteriorating situation to justify a declaration of

martial law. It was precisely their fear that martial law was imminent that made them firm up their individual resolve to be in the Philippines, when Marcos takes what they thought would be an irrational plunge towards political suicide. They believed then that martial law would give them the colorful scenario to become national heroes. Besides, none of them wanted to be accused by anyone that when martial law was imposed he was conveniently out of the country. It was going to be a priceless badge of honor to be arrested by the military when martial law is declared. One man who thought he was going to be arrested along with the critics of Marcos was former Speaker Jose B. Laurel, Jr. When Marcos suspended the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus on August 22, 1971, then Speaker Laurel, Jr., one of the foremost champions of civil liberties, roundly criticized the President. He called Marcos' act "a monumental affront to civil liberty," the grounds given by the President for the suspension "grossly exaggerated" and Marcos "an unpopular President" embarked on a "fishing expedition" for evidence "if not on a deliberate campaign of intimidation, harassment and persecution of political enemies."

Laurel cried: "Let the President declare martial law! Let us close this Congress! Let the strong survive!"

Thus, during the first few days of martial rule, Laurel would shout at his favorite hangout on Roxas Boulevard within hearing distance of heady military officers: "Why doesn't Marcos, a dictator whom I helped rise to his present status, order my arrest now? Why is he punishing a Laurel this way?"

Laurel and the other political leaders critical of Marcos were so oblivious of the warnings raised by the leading Philippine weekly newsmagazine, the Free Press, 20 months before September, 1972, that Marcos was contriving a situation to justify a declaration of martial law. *The Free Press* ^{*9} periscopeed what life would be under martial law in this wise: (*9. Issue of Jan. 23, 1971)

"With the courts and Congress reduced to impotence and the independent press shut up — with publishers who dare to disagree with Marcos placed under house arrest or in concentration camps where they would be joined sooner or later by outraged justices of the Supreme Court, senators and representatives who would not lick the boots of Marcos, as well as others who would not submit to tyranny — the nation would be polarized. The Philippines would be divided into Marcos collaborators and those who love liberty and are branded misguided elements (as during the Japanese Occupation) and declared enemies of the Marcos state, x x x

"Life under a regime of martial law or a Marcos military dictatorship would be little different from life during the Japanese Occupation. How many would submit to it? And how would Marcos ever dare restore civil law? Would he dare to leave Malacanang? Would he not be compelled to declare himself President for life, that is, a dictator forever? And how long would 'forever' be?"

This warning went unheeded; no national leader would betray the slightest sign of fear of martial law within himself.

Nevertheless, a number of prominent Filipinos who were also in the "order of battle," priority "A," were able to leave the Philippines before Sept. 22, 1972, under circumstances which they now advert to with spiritual pride as "the will of God."

Eugenio Lopez, Sr., patriarch of the Lopez economic-political empire, had left earlier in June to receive an award from his alma mater, Harvard, and from

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there decided to go on his annual foreign sojourn which usually lasts from three to four months.

Salvador Araneta, social thinker and proprietor of the FEATI Institute and Araneta University, left for the United States to visit his daughter. Actually, Araneta wanted to “cool it,” having been bitterly disillusioned by the defeat in the Constitutional Convention of the ban-Marcos resolution. He was one of the outspoken critics of President Marcos in the Convention.

The challenger of Marcos in the 1969 presidential elections, Sergio Osmena, Sr., left Manila on Sept. 16 on a trip that he had kept postponing. He did not want to leave because Cebu City, whose mayorship he assumed on Jan. 1, 1972 for the 5th time around, had serious financial problems that required his personal attention.

“I was told by the Blessed Virgin to leave the country,” Serging recalls with piety.

Osmena had made a promise to Julio Cardinal Rosales, who is the archbishop of Cebu, that he would make a pilgrimage to Lourdes, France, in mid-1972. The cardinal suggested that a bath in the blessed waters at the Shrine of the Most Blessed Virgin in Lourdes might cure the numerous physical infirmities he suffers as a result of the bombing at Plaza Miranda.*¹⁰

(*¹⁰. See Chapter on “Infrastructure for Martial Law.”)

When Osmena finally left for Lourdes, with his wife (Lourdes de la Rama) and son, Tommy, he took a route that would have taken him to Los Angeles, then to New York, and Washington, D.C. for a medical check-up at the Walter Reed Hospital and projected talks with his friends in the State Department, and then to France. He was still in Los Angeles when martial law was declared.

The initial reaction of Lopez, Araneta and Osmena upon learning that Marcos had declared martial law in Manila was to return posthaste to the Philippines and join the expected public outcry against the Palace move. Besides, they have vast private interests in the Philippines to protect. However, they decided that prudence may be the better part of valor — and waited for developments from home.

Only one of the more prominent leaders who had left Manila before the advent of martial law seems comparatively satisfied that he got out when he did. He is former Mayor Antonio J. Villegas who now lives in Portola Valley with his family. Villegas, tagged as one of the luckiest and successful man in the asphalt jungle of Manila, was able to spirit some of his liquid assets out of the Philippines.

Villegas assumed the premier post at Manila’s City Hall upon the death of colorful Mayor Lacson on April 15, 1962. He won an election to the mayoralty in his own right in 1963 and a reelection in 1967, despite the personal campaign waged against him by President Marcos and the First Lady. However, he failed to win another term in the 1971 elections, losing his post by a slim margin to Congressman Ramon D. Bagatsing, a Liberal, who used to be a “hatchet-man” for Marcos in his capacity as chairman of the Presidential Agency for Reforms and Government Operations. Villegas attributed his defeat to the emotional backlash of the Plaza Miranda bombing. Villegas left Manila on the day Bagatsing was sworn into office on January 1, 1972, for San Jose, California,

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where he had been making quiet preparations to settle down since 1970. However, Tony returned posthaste to Manila a fortnight later when his father, Epifanio T. Villegas, warned him that investigators were trying to lay the blame on him for the Plaza Miranda massacre. The former mayor demanded that charges be filed against him by investigators instead of vilifying him for the grenade-bombing by innuendo in press releases. He was never charged. During his fight to protect his name, Villegas got A-1 information from his friends in the defense and intelligence establishments that Marcos was about to declare martial law. In a series of meetings with Liberal party leaders and friends, the last being with Senator Aquino, Jr., on August 19, 1972, Villegas warned his colleagues about the Marcos plot, telling them at the same time that he would not have his family caught by the Marcos power-grab. He finally took the members of his immediate family out of Manila on August 24, 1972 — four weeks before martial law was declared — and brought them to the United States.

Former Senator Manglapus was one man who didn't want to leave the Philippines, mainly because of the imminent declaration of martial law. He was out of Manila barely 24 hours when word reached him in his Tokyo Hotel that Marcos had finally done it. His wife, Pacita Manglapus, got through to the senator before armed forces signal corps men had shut off the overseas circuits of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company and managed to inform him that martial law had been declared and that soldiers have come to their Makati resident to arrest him. Pacita said that the soldiers would not believe that Raul had left for Tokyo in the afternoon of Sept. 22 that they had to search every room and closet and in the backyard to make sure that their quarry was not just hiding out within the compound.

Manglapus' initial reaction was anger at Garcia for having "forced" him to leave and consternation that he was out of the country when martial law was declared. He wanted to fly back home and join the "resistance" movement; he packed his flight bags and headed for the Haneda airport, hoping to catch the first available flight to Manila. Fortunately, no Manila-bound plane was flying out of Tokyo as Haneda had received word that the Manila International Airport had been closed to all air traffic — by Philippine air force supervisors assigned to secure the port of entry for the martial regime. When Manglapus received news that the MIA had been re-opened to international air traffic as of Sept. 25, by which time overseas telephone communications have also been restored, he telephoned Pacita and advised her that he was on his way back home. He explained his decision to return.

"But there is no resistance battle to join here," Mrs. Manglapus protested. "All your fellow politicians and allies in the fight against Marcos have been jailed; others are either cowering in fear, waiting to be arrested at any time, or have openly pledged their support to the martial law regime!"

It turned out that, during the 36-hour isolation of Manila by overseas telephone and telegraph facilities from the outside world, Mrs. Manglapus busied herself, contacting Raul's friends on what she should tell him when they get the chance to talk again by overseas phone. The almost unanimous advice given was that Manglapus, lucky enough at having eluded arrest, should proceed immediately to the United States and organize the overseas opposition to the Marcos martial rule; they opined that any parliamentary resistance to the

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regime would have better chances of succeeding, if world attention could be drawn to the power-grab pulled by Marcos. Manglapus, they advised Pacita, would be a most articulate pacific crusader against martial law in the Philippines; he could better exploit his contacts and sources in the State Department and other foreign governments, having been a foreign secretary and well-travelled leader of the young Christian Social Movement in the Philippines.

“Are you sure this is their collective advise?” Manglapus demanded to know of his wife. And when he was assured that it was, Manglapus declared: “All right, I fear for your safety, but no sacrifice would be too great. I will do it. But you must assure the people you have been talking to that they should never collaborate with Marcos; they should not fall for a possible intrigue that I will organize the overseas opposition to martial law so that I will be imposed by the U.S. as a Ngo Din Diem in the event of Marcos’ fall from power.”

Manglapus then proceeded to Honolulu where he prevailed upon two American citizens of Filipino descent who were campaigners in his earlier bid for the Senate to make a trip to Manila and arrange for the escape of Pacita and her children. Senator Edward Kennedy worked out the grant of an entry visa for the U.S. for Mrs. Manglapus and company once they have left the Philippines surreptitiously and reached the safety of a third country.

Unknown to Pacita was that the anxiety of her husband over her and the children being completely at the mercy of Marcos was such that he was determined to return to the Philippines. This was the second time in the life of this selfless man that there was to be no hesitation in sacrificing himself for his loved ones if no other choice were possible.

In the book, *Under the Red Sun*, a best seller after World War II, author Forbes J. Monaghan related how Raul refused to flee even after being repeatedly warned that the dreaded Japanese military police were on the way to arrest him for publishing an anti-Japanese underground newspaper. “If I escape,” Manglapus explained, “they will take my mother instead.”

Manglapus was picked up by the Japanese soldiers, tortured in the dungeons of Fort Santiago in Manila, and was given a choice to do propaganda work for the enemy — or die. Manglapus refused to collaborate with the Japanese and escaped execution, Monaghan said, only because an order had come from Tokyo in October, 1942, to woo the Filipinos by showing clemency to political prisoners. Manglapus was court-martialed and sent to prison from where he escaped in August, 1944, to join the guerrillas in the hills.

Only an offer of Tony Garcia to join him in going back to the Philippines with the condition that they first attempt to smuggle the entire Manglapus family out made Raul reconsider his plan to return to the Philippines without delay. Manglapus may have been touched by the readiness of Garcia to leave his own family, then safe in San Francisco, and the argument of his long time aide and political associate that Manglapus was indispensable to the organization of a movement for the restoration of Philippine freedom in view of the lack of Filipinos in the U.S. with sufficient stature willing to fight Marcos openly.

Manglapus was scheduled to leave for the United States as early as July in accordance with a program he had authorized Tony Garcia and two other Ateneo graduates to prepare for him. Actually, it was Garcia who sold the

original idea of the program to Manglapus, which included speaking engagements and conferences with Filipino groups in the United States for the purpose of drawing their support to the infant Christian Social Movement in the Philippines. But Manglapus refused to leave during what he called a “critical hour” in the country, partly because there were those talks about the possible imposition of martial law. He also wanted to stick it out in the Constitutional Convention, where he was the chairman of the Committee on Suffrage and Electoral Reforms, so that he could continue his opposition to “further invasion” by Marcos of the charter meet. Indicative of Marcos’ successful forays into the Convention was the defeat of the ban-Marcos resolution and the adoption of the proposal to shift the Republic’s government from the presidential to the parliamentary form. But Manglapus’ refusal to leave for the U.S. had already caused two postponements of his programmed speaking engagements.

So, on September 20, an impatient Antonio Garcia barged into Manglapus’ law office in Makati and jokingly told his secretary, Evelyn Ibarra, that he “would give our boss a talking to.” Tony told an irritated Manglapus to “leave now and fulfill your speaking engagements.” “We are losing face with the Filipino leaders in the U.S. who have so willingly organized these conferences where you have been scheduled to speak. These people are potential contributors to the campaign chest of the CSM. Besides, two postponements of your schedule is just too much!” Garcia declared.

Manglapus reminded Garcia that martial law was imminent. “What will people say if martial law finds me out of the country, Tony? I will never live down their taunts that I deserted them during a critical hour in our country’s life!” the CSM leader declared.

“Well, you can always come back!” Garcia put in the clincher that finally led Manglapus to assure Tony that he would leave for the U.S. within 48 hours.

Manglapus not only did not return to Manila upon the imposition of martial rule; he was soon joined in the U.S. by the man who providentially taunted him, vigorously argued with him, to leave the Philippines when he did.

It was when Garcia finally teamed up with Manglapus in the United States that the plan to set up the “Movement for a Free Philippines” began to take shape.

Garcia himself was supposed to leave for the United States with Manglapus. However, he decided to stay behind for just a few days in order to attend to the final details of his plan to set up a packaging plant in Quezon City.

The spectacular escape of Garcia from the Philippines right under the very noses of the military supervisors of Marcos at the Manila International Airport is one blunder the martial regime will never be able to live down. This man who had given Marcos hell in the media during the 1965 presidential elections and should have been arrested on the night martial law was implemented escaped through the MIA on a special passport on account of a comedy of errors on the part of confused airport personnel.

Garcia abandoned the Lacson residence on M. Earnshaw street when he learned of the imposition of martial law. He slept in the house of a squatter in Makati, Rizal, by night. During the day, he intentionally entered Camp Aguinaldo on the pretext of having been summoned by the chief of the Judge Advocate General’s office, Brig. General Tagumpay Nanadiego, whom Garcia

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had never met before. Garcia, who has been associated for almost a decade with Manglapus as the closest aide to the brilliant senator and one-time presidential candidate, thought wisely that the army headquarters at Camp Aguinaldo would be the last place Metrocom troopers would search for the alter ego of Manglapus.

Garcia was gambling on the chance that Nanadiego would remember the one story, albeit a small one, that Garcia caused to be published in Manila newspapers announcing the candidacy for a congressional seat that Nanadiego, then a retired colonel, was aspiring for in Quezon province. Garcia did the free publicity job for Nanadiego several months before the imposition of martial law upon the request of a Nanadiego nephew. It was a now-or-never time, Garcia decided upon entering the army camp, for him to collect an I.O.U.

Aware that it was only a matter of time when he would be arrested and thrown into jail together with those who had, at one time or another, wrote stories critical of Marcos, Garcia kept pestering Nanadiego, who did remember Garcia's gratis et amore work for him, for an exit permit which at that time and for two months after that could only be granted by Secretary of Defense Juan Ponce Enrile. In one of those days, Garcia had to quickly scamper away from Nanadiego's office when he saw Tatad and Undersecretary for Home Defense Jose M. Crisol, who both knew about his close links to Manglapus, coming into the office of the JAGO head together with all the ranking generals of the martial law regime. If Tatad and Crisol saw Garcia, they would have demanded to know why Garcia was not in a military stockade. Anyway, after waiting for several days under sun and rain and standing in the mud outside an army building together with hundreds of others also seeking exit permits, Nanadiego handed Garcia his passport, saying that it had been signed. However, Nanadiego told Garcia that it was not Enrile who had signed the passport but "just one of my boys". Garcia concluded that Nanadiego simply wanted to get rid of him knowing that an unauthorized signature would not be honored at the airport anyway or that Nanadiego fell for the "matter-of-life-and-death" story about the Garcia children being sick in the United States and left alone at home while Mrs. Garcia was at work as commercial analyst in the Philippine Consulate General in San Francisco. (Garcia's wife was promptly removed from her position and ordered to go home with her entire family after it was ascertained that Garcia had indeed escaped from the Philippines).

At any rate, Garcia decided to risk departure on the strength of that signature which Garcia in America later learned was that of Undersecretary of Munitions Manuel Salientes (ironically and significantly, Nanadiego and Salientes were later summarily removed from their positions). Garcia brought his two small travelling bags, which he was later to claim to airport officials contained confidential government documents after cleverly checking them in, and booked passage to Hongkong, a route which he decided would not arouse the suspicion of the military. He correctly figured that any traveler making a straight flight to the United States in the early days of martial law would be heavily screened at the Manila International Airport which was under the direct control of the Philippine Air Force.

Garcia waited until it was almost boarding time before he showed his ticket and checked in his two small bags to give the ticket agents no opportunity to verify the story that he was on a rush confidential mission for the army and thus

had no time to obtain the Enrile signature and clearances from the Office of the President of the Philippines, the National Bureau of Investigation and the Department of Commerce and Industry. Clearance from the DCI was required of him since he was travelling on a government passport, being the husband of a commercial analyst.

Since he turned out to be the only passenger leaving Manila that day, the airline personnel were happy to find something to do and so promptly dispatched Garcia's bags to the waiting plane after having been assured by Garcia that he had all the necessary clearances. When the ticket agents found that all that was valid of Garcia's papers was the tax clearance which he obtained before martial law from the Bureau of Internal Revenue, the poor agents did not know what to do since they could not very well cross out Garcia from the passenger list having already loaded his bags on the plane.

That was when Garcia set into play his planned bluff and bluster act, setting off a comedy of errors that enabled him to escape. Garcia told the bewildered agents in the proper conspiratorial tone of his secret assignment for the military arrangements for which, Garcia said, were already known to the immigration officials on the second floor. The airline people were so relieved to have their problem taken off their hands that they promptly waved Garcia on to the immigration counter upstairs.

When immigration officials demanded arrogantly why his passport did not contain the signature of Enrile, Garcia thought that his gambit had finally come to naught. But he knew that to sheepishly back away would make matters worse so he tried his last card. Garcia raised his voice and cursed the immigration people for their lack of interest in the doings of the new martial law regime. He ordered the officials to check with the office of the President at Malacanang and asked to speak to General Nanadiego knowing full well that a recent arson at the MIA had made all telephone lines inoperative.

When one immigration official dared ask what Garcia's confidential mission was, Garcia shouted: "You SOB, I already told you it is confidential and you want to know what is confidential?"

But when Garcia demanded immigration to stamp his passport with approval to depart, the spirit of survival among the officials overcame their awe of Garcia's diatribes on civilian bureaucratic stupidities. They produced copies of Enrile's decrees that only his signature was to be valid on passports. They reminded Garcia that they were only following orders and that they had families to support.

When Garcia told the officials that they would bear the responsibility if he missed his flight and the possible loss of the documents already on the plane, the immigration people played Pontius Pilate by requesting Garcia to check with the military authorities at the transit lounge of the burnt out airport building a mile away and to come back for the immigration approval if the military said okay.

After cursing the officer collecting airport fees for trying to stop him from boarding the transit bus from the Miramar check-in building for the trip to the transit lounge at the MIA terminal because he was not yet cleared by immigration, Garcia simply boarded the vehicle hiding the immigration embarkation card jutting out from his passport that gave him as a passenger not yet allowed to depart.

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Garcia's well calculated move to check in at the last moment and the ensuing hassle over his lack of the required signature produced the delay he had hoped would deny airport officials the time and equanimity of mind to verify his story. If there were military authorities at the transit lounge Garcia never saw them. The ground stewardess, probably harassed by the pilot to get that solitary passenger delaying the flight up on the aircraft, told Garcia to get on board quickly. The desire of Marcos to keep the presence of the military to a minimum at the ports of entry to show the world that the Philippines was still under civilian control helped make the escape of a man who was to figure mightily in propaganda work exposing Marcos to the world. Up to this day, there is no record in the Philippines of Garcia having left the country.

Upon arriving in Hong Kong, Garcia phoned his wife in San Francisco to warn her about being tricked into flying to Manila for some emergency reason at the very time that her husband was winging across the Pacific to rejoin her and their children. The Garcia odyssey must be rated as one of the great escapes from the Marcos dictatorship not only because of its almost just-like-in-the-movies circumstances but more so because the man who made that hegira was to again make hell for Marcos and those promoting his regime abroad.

It was partly Garcia's sixth sense and devil's advocate skepticism that stymied my assignment to stop the scheduled demonstrations against Imelda Marcos at the inauguration of the Philippine Center building in New York City in November of 1974. His astute analysis of our plans and intentions frustrated the trap Kokoy strategists had set for Manglapus that would have discredited and wrecked the Movement For a Free Philippines. As I later told audiences in America after my defection, the MFP had more success with me than I with them. In a way, the vigilance of Garcia precipitated my own gradual and smouldering inclination to break with the Marcos dictatorship.

I had intimated to Garcia during our first meeting October of 1974 in a small restaurant across the Commodore Hotel in New York City my growing disenchantment with the Marcos government. That was supposed to be first of a series of face-to-face meetings between a panel of MFP officials and representatives of the Marcos administration to discuss terms and conditions for a possible meeting between Manglapus and Imelda. Garcia was elected by the MFP to head the panel to meet with my own panel. He was later to tell me after my defection that he believed I was becoming disillusioned with Mr. Marcos but (Garcia) told me he thought I was merely buying "insurance".

Like Garcia, Col. Eleuterio "Terry Magtanggol" Adevos, head of the ROTC Hunter's Guerillas during the Japanese Occupation and one-time secretary of labor under President Macapagal, eluded the first arresting party sent out to get him from his Paranaque residence. By that time, Adevos, who has been accused of allegedly conspiring with Sergio Osmena, Sr. in an alleged plot to assassinate Marcos, hid in the houses of friends, transferring at night and never spending more than 24 hours in one place. When his friends in the military establishment, whom he had contacted, obtained assurances for him that he would be allowed to stay in a hospital under arrest, Adevos yielded to an emissary of Secretary Enrile.

Newsmen Ernesto O. Granada, of the Manila Chronicle, and Luis D.

Beltran, of the Evening News, also eluded arrest that night. However, their more distinguished colleagues who belonged to that exclusive band known as the “gang of Marcos critics,” notably Teodoro M. Locsin, Sr., publisher of the Free Press; Napoleon Rama, senior staff writer, also of the Free Press and delegate to the Constitutional Convention; Amando Doronilla, newly-named editor of the Manila Chronicle; Maximo Soliven, columnist of the Manila Times; and Amelita Reysio-Cruz, of the Manila Daily Bulletin; Jose Mari Velez, newscaster of Channel 5; Rosalinda Galang, of the Manila Times; Rolando Fadul, of the Taliba; Go Eng Kuan, of the Chinese Commercial News; Veronica Yuyitung, wife of deported Rizal Yuyitung; Rogelio Arienda, radio commentator; and Francisco “Soc” Rodrigo, Taliba columnist, fell quickly into the Marcos martial law dragnet.

Senator Jose W. Diokno was arrested at 3 a.m. at his Roxas Boulevard residence.

Granada hid out for several days in the house of a friend. When he sought my advice, through an intermediary, on what he should do, I said: “If Ernie is in the Greater Manila area, he should surrender to the Constabulary because the team assigned to get him might become trigger-happy with each unsuccessful day of looking for him.” Granada and Beltran were eventually surrendered by Col. James G. Barbers, deputy chief of police of Manila, to Camp Crame authorities.

But what puzzles the newsmen’s tribe in Manila is the arrest of Ruben Cusipag, of the Evening News; Roberto Ordonez, of the Philippines Herald; and Manuel F. Almario, senior staff member of the Philippine News Service. Cusipag was a vociferous habitue at the National Press Club; so with Ordonez. Almario, on the other hand, was an ardent participant in the impromptu debates at the NPC bar who had written a few articles in praise of China’s Chairman Mao TseTung. Ordonez had at one time done an in-depth series of articles on units of the New People’s Army operating in the Bicol area. To console them, however, for what they felt was an unwarranted arrest and detention by the martial regime, NPC wags offered the salve that they were probably charged with “impersonating a radical.” Why not, the NPC wags would shout, hasn’t the martial regime made humor-mongering a punishable offense?

While most of the Manila newsmen are trying to bear up to the difficulties under the martial regime, one strong-willed intellectual has steadfastly refused to compromise with the dictatorship. He is in hiding from Marcos’ agents, but he is busy grinding out mimeographed newsheets for the underground press.

This man, Antonio Zumel, former two-term president of the NPC and versatile day-off reliever in the editorial staff of the Manila Daily Bulletin, bears watching. Although he has reportedly teamed up with the New People’s Army without necessarily being a card-carrying member of the Communist Party, Zumel is likely to surface one day to be an outstanding leader of his country. Tony’s elder brother, Col. Jimmy Zumel, is a ranking officer in the intelligence division of the Presidential Security Command. Young Zumel was once openly denounced by Marcos for alleged links with a group of arms suppliers to the NPA. Zumel denied the charge vehemently; he even swore to his brother Jimmy that he was not a Communist.

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On the night martial law was declared, Zumel was as usual having a late night drinking spree at the NPC bar. He was summoned to the telephone by a caller at about 1 a.m. on Sept. 23, after which he invited some of the boys to transfer with him to Taboy's "Cinco Litros," a small bar at Ermita whose owner could sing lewd songs even in polite society. Zumel's group took a cab from the NPC. On the way, he told his colleagues, including Bobby Ordonez, that martial law has been proclaimed. When the taxicab reached the Rizal monument area on the Luneta along Roxas Boulevard, Zumel commanded the car to stop and told his companions that he was getting out. "Please take care of the fare, Bobby," he said addressing Ordonez. To the rest, he said: "This is going to be a long night. I hope we will meet when the dawn of freedom breaks. All right, guys, let's all try to stay healthy. Till we meet again!" Tony faded into the night. A rumor floated by the Department of Public Information claims that Zumel has been killed in an encounter with a PC patrol in Bulacan. I know that he is very much alive. As a matter of fact, he eluded a PC raiding team in May, 1974, in a "safehouse" in Bulacan where former newsmen Satur Ocampo and Jose F. Lacaba were apprehended with printing paraphernalia for the underground press. Ocampo and Lacaba indicated that the raiding team missed catching Zumel by just about 30 minutes. I am confident Tony will continue to elude other teams.

Zumel was the first NPC president to have declared war on Marcos' martial law. He was followed by then incumbent NPC President Eddie B. Monteclaro who was authorized by martial law government to travel to New Delhi in February, 1973, to attend a "One World" conference. Instead of returning to Manila, Monteclaro denounced the martial law government and proceeded to the United States to seek political asylum. I became the third NPC President to denounce Marcos. However, I collaborated long enough with Marcos to convince myself that the imposition of martial law was just a stratagem employed by the President to perpetuate himself in power.

There were others who didn't have to wait to declare themselves against the imposition of martial law. Juan Quijano, the incorruptible lawyer of the Philippines Free Press and lawyer-later-publisher of the Chinese Commercial News, and newscaster Fred Espaldon of DZMT and Channel 5, hacked away at Marcos for what they termed as a "power-grab."

Quijano was in Taipei at the time martial law was proclaimed, having left Manila earlier on August 12 to be on hand for the release of Quintin Yuyitung on August 14 from imprisonment in a Taipei military garrison. He and Quintin proceeded to the United States in December. Later, Quijano was informed by friends in the military that the armed forces high command had "found" him "guilty of treason" for having uttered statements against the martial regime while he was in Taipei and upon his arrival in the United States.

Espaldon, on the other hand, went on record in the West Coast as the first Filipino to go on the air and submit to press interviews assailing the Marcos power grab in the Philippines. Espaldon was in San Francisco at the time, having left Manila on September 6 on a scholarship grant from Stanford University.

"We expected martial law to be resorted to by Marcos," Espaldon declared in one of his radio-TV interviews, "but there is really no justification for it. It is

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simply a device to perpetuate himself in power.”

Having issued that kind of fighting statement, Espaldon felt that his student visa in the U.S. was not good enough. He could be reached by the long arm of martial law. Again, he went on record as “the first” Filipino to seek political asylum from the Marcos dictatorship.

Two other escapees from the Philippines who are active in the anti-Marcos dictatorship movement in the United States are Elly Velez Pamatong and Danny Martinez.

As the man who denounced the “Con Con” payola, Pamatong was high on the list of persons to be arrested upon the declaration of martial law. He and Martinez escaped through Sabah where they were jailed by Kota Kinabalu authorities as “Marcos spies.” They were deported to the Philippines via Palawan. In Palawan, they took another small boat to Brunei, where they were again jailed by local authorities.

Somehow, Pamatong and Martinez got a letter through to the Philippine Consul in Singapore. They wrote that they were stranded employes of a Philippine lumber concessionaire in Indonesia and they would like to be documented as Filipinos. They were issued Philippine passports to enable them to go back to the Philippines. Instead of returning to the Philippines, they proceeded to Tokyo where they contacted a United Nations representative on refugees who asked them to choose any two countries where they would want to seek refuge. Pamatong and Martinez chose the United States and Canada, and then the U.N. official documented them as refugees for Canada — not the U.S. However, enroute to Canada, Pamatong and Martinez obtained a permit to spend a few days in the United States. They decided to stay in Los Angeles where they are prosecuting their anti-dictatorship campaign. Martinez now works as a secretary to former Senator Sergio Osmena, Jr.

Now a question most often asked is whether the United States government had any advance knowledge of Marcos’ plan to impose martial law.

Of course, the U.S. embassy in Manila knew about it. As a matter of fact, the full text of the martial law plan, officially baptized as the “Contingency Plan,” was already in the possession of American Ambassador Henry Byroade weeks before martial law was effectively and officially imposed in the Philippines. However, no other man outside President Marcos knew the exact time and date when martial law would have to be declared.

Although he has deceived many on any number of things, including his wife but mostly the Filipino people, Marcos was not prepared to deceive the United States government on the imposition of martial law. After all, Marcos already knew that Ambassador Byroade knew that the Philippine President was all set to impose martial law. He was not about to incur the hostility of the United States government by springing a complete surprise on the power-grab he was going to launch. President Marcos summoned Byroade for a luncheon conference on September 22.

I myself was going to have lunch with the President on September 22. However, I partook of my lunch together with Agent Boquiren in the communications room near the Study Room when Marcos told me earlier in the day that he was having a closed-door luncheon conference with the American envoy. I have been having lunch with the President almost every day during the

last three weeks preceding the imposition of martial law upon his instructions. Most of the time Secretary Enrile would also be around, and occasionally so would Undersecretary of Justice Efren Plana, who was former defense undersecretary. It became almost an added duty on my part to lunch with the President during those days because Marcos' lunch hour, which was about 2 p.m., was the most convenient time for both of us to discuss the news stories that should emanate from the Office of the President. Ever since I joined the Marcos-owned Daily Express as its Malacanang reporter, it had become my duty to discuss with the President what stories I would write, and subsequently share with the other Malacanang beat reporters, which could be beamed to Congress, the opposition quarters and other sectors to prepare their minds for the imposition of martial law.

Earlier that day, I walked up to the Palace a little early on instructions of Marcos the day before. When I found the official Study Room still empty, I went inside the communications cubicle where I saw that Agent Boquiren had neatly arranged the presidential papers consisting mostly of memoranda and notes which had come in during the night and early in the morning from Cabinet members and other quarters.

As I signified my intention to rummage through the papers, Boquiren said: "*O, eto, sir. Baka may mapulot ka na magandang ibalita sa column mo.*" (Here they [the papers] are, sir. You might be able to pick out some materials for your column). Then, recalling that I play monte, a Spanish card game, Boquiren added: "Did you have any luck last night, sir?" I got his message and I pulled a P50-bill out of my pocket. Boquiren left me alone to read through a paper that could give me the biggest story of my newspaper career, although I realized then and there that I wouldn't be able to write it for the next day's paper. I consoled myself with the thought that I might be able to include it in my memoirs — if I ever find the need to write one in my greying years.

But now I find myself writing the story for the first time, not in my memoirs, but in this document, this instrument of my fighting faith, my own written contribution to history, which I am confident will neither be the first nor the last.

The presidential paper that drew my undivided attention for almost thirty minutes from the moment I handed a P50-bill to Agent Boquiren was a freshly-typed memorandum of two pages, single spaced, on the stationery of the Office of the Secretary, Department of National Defense, and signed by Enrile. It was addressed to the President, naturally.

The Enrile Memorandum, dated Sept. 22, 1972, started with this line: "In connection with your scheduled conference this noon with U.S. Ambassador Byroade, may I remind you that the matters outlined herein below, as we have discussed yesterday, should be emphasized by you xxx." My recollection of the wordings may not be as accurate as I have quoted them, but I am certain that I have reproduced the tenor of the opening sentence of the Enrile Memorandum. The memorandum made an outline of what the President was to tell Byroade were the vital justifications for the imposition of martial law.

At first-blush, it would have appeared that the defense secretary was dictating to the President on what to tell the U.S. envoy. However, the presidential line suggested by the Enrile Memorandum for the Marcos-Byroade conference was not an unusual orchestration of the President by a subordinate. Then as now the President always got a proposed script from the appropriate

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office or officer on what profound ideas, lines and even jokes to utter in any important conference where a prepared speech would not be in order; sometimes, two or more such proposed scripts came from different quarters. It is not known just who among the Palace assistants started the practice of orchestrating the President. One of the most dutiful — and most followed — scriptwriter was the late Presidential Assistant Guillermo C. De Vega.

I found no rival script for the President to adopt in his meeting with Ambassador Byroade. I assumed then — and I confirmed this subsequently — that the President hardly departed from the outline of the Enrile Memorandum.

Thus, in his usual vague way of hinting about a planned course of action, a device he often resorts to when he is compelled to telegraph a message much against his will as in the instant meeting with Byroade, Marcos told the American ambassador that the Maoist-oriented New People's Army was about to seize the City of Manila, having obtained shipments of combat weapons and ammunitions from a foreign power; that only a resort to martial law could stop the advance of the NPAs who are being provided with aid and comfort by the country's oligarchs, and misguided youth, intellectuals and clergymen, that martial law would be needed to stop the wave of nationalism fanned by the Supreme Court decision making it mandatory for Americans to divest themselves of landholdings and shares of stocks in companies organized under the Parity amendment; *11 that the President needs an authoritarian rule to effectuate drastic reforms in the country; and that a martial regime would be easier for the United States government and private business to deal with than the political system of shared responsibility among the executive, legislative and judicial branches.

(*11. See Chapter on "Infrastructure for Martial law.")

The President chose to be deliberately vague about the timing of the imposition of martial law, giving Byroade only the impression that he might do it within the coming weeks, but not earlier than the next week.

Towards the end of the conference, Marcos — in accordance with the Enrile script — informed the U.S. envoy that units of the armed forces around the Clark air force base and Subic naval base were being "augmented" to "insure the protection of these bases" against probable attacks by NPA elements. The message would have been clear to Byroade: that interference by American troops from Clark Field or Subic base with the imposition of martial law will be repelled by Philippine troops, trained and equipped by the United States. Surprisingly, a few weeks after the declaration of martial law, a U.S. navy ensign and three marine privates inspecting the outer perimeter of Subic naval base were killed in an ambush allegedly staged by supposed remnants of a Huk liquidation squad from Bataan. The incident occurred just a few days after receipt by the Presidential Security Command that there were unusual troop activities within the Subic navy base.

As Byroade left, Marcos summoned me to his private study room to give me instructions on how I would have to "guide" the other Palace beat reporters with my own prepared news story on the meeting of the President with the U.S. envoy. "Sir, can we now write the line that you had informed Byroade that you are going to impose martial law?" I asked the President. He answered: "*Huwag*

mo munang sabihan iyan.”(Don’t say that yet.)

Marcos then dictated his story. “Let me see,” the President looked at the ceiling and then facing me, started the story for the day. “*Sabihin mo na lang* (just say) that the President conferred with Ambassador Byroade at lunch; that I informed him about the assessment of the military on the worsening peace and order situation in the country; that the President outlined to the ambassador the options available to him under the law and the Constitution; that I emphasized to the ambassador that I have already utilized to no avail the first two options to combat the escalating Communist rebellion, namely, the suspension of the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus and the calling out of the troops to quell lawless violence and rebellion; that the armed forces general staff had advised the President to utilize all constitutional means to protect the integrity of the Republic. You must stress that point that I have already utilized the first two options to no avail.” At this point, I interrupted the President to warn him that he is definitely forewarning everybody that he was about to impose martial law. “Why don’t we just announce it, sir. Anyway, the Opposition leaders as well as your Nacionalista critics would know about this story as they have people monitoring the city desks of newspapers for advance information on news from the Palace,” I suggested to the President, still trying to be a newspaperman out for a good story.

“Oh, yes let everyone be forewarned that I am about to impose martial law. Anyway, I have been warning that I would not hesitate to impose martial law, if I find it necessary in the interest of national security,” the President answered. “It’s the timing that is important as far as we are concerned.”

Obviously derailed in his development of the story for the day by my interruption, the President ended our session by saying: “*O, sigue, ikaw na ang maglagay ngpalabok sa estorya* (Okay, you may embellish the story the way you want it.) And try to work out the story with Secretary Tatad.*¹² *Nasaan ba siya?* (Where is he, anyway?)”

(*12. The way Marcos addresses his Cabinet members and other ranking officials of his administration, either orally or in writing, is the gauge of his temper respecting that official on any given day. He was showing his displeasure for the press secretary when he referred to him as “Secretary Tatad.” He usually called him “Kits” and the other ranking officials also by their nicknames, even in his handwritten notes to them, to indicate that they were in good standing with him. Note how he addressed Enrile in the early evening of September 22, 1972.)

I wrote the story without any help from, or consultation with, Tatad. However, as a courtesy to him, and since I have had to use the xerox machine of the Malacanang Press Office to be able to dish out copies of my finished story to the Palace beat reporters from the other Manila newspapers, I furnished Tatad a copy of my story so that he could use the same to brief the other representatives from radio and television and the foreign media. It was an SOP (standard operating procedure) which I had imposed on Tatad ever since I began representing the Daily Express in the Palace beat. This same SOP was followed for more than a year from the date of the imposition of martial law. The spectacle of Tatad briefing newsmen on presidential stories I have dished out to them in advance became the talk of the coffee shops.

I am quite certain that hardly had Ambassador Byroade stepped out of the

presidential study room that fateful noonday of September 22 when he started telling himself that the real reasons for Marcos' resort to martial law were definitely more tactical than philosophical and that the so-called reforms were going to be more cosmetic than basic. But since martial law was going to be good for the United States, it was good enough for Byroade. He was, after all, an American diplomat sent by his government to protect American interests in the Philippines, not a Filipino patriot about to starve fighting for the civil liberties of the Filipinos.

The gusts blowing across the islands of a political-aflamed Philippine archipelago in the late 60's and early 70's were not of such velocity as to constitute a justification for the imposition of martial law.

However, President Marcos discerned the national fever burning over certain aspects of national humiliation, cynicism and despair of a weary people. Marcos observed and studied the emergence of an organized and militant movement for change; he took note of the fact that the movement brought about a loose coalition among intellectuals, professionals, small businessmen, students, peasants, laborers and employees, and even elements heretofore inactive in the political field, i.e. the seminarians, priests, nuns and Catholic school students. Together they started questioning the injustices of the social and political system. With increasing support from the elite of the two major political parties and the influential media, the movement generated nationwide support through massive demonstrations and teach-ins. But it was clear that the movement never sought the destruction of democracy in the country: they wished to preserve it as they sought to police, and protect their ranks, from numerous infiltrators who were mostly military intelligence men in mufti. A significant victory of the coalesced groups came during the elections for delegates to the 1971 Constitutional Convention; about one-third of the delegate seats were won by progressives and independents who later formed a potent bloc to push through sweeping and fundamental structural changes in the government and society.

The organized reform movement did not rest on its laurels (i.e. victory in the election of Convention delegates). It attended to the much-needed politicization of the people in democracy.

Of this political transformation taking place in the Philippines, Fr. Bruno Hicks, an American Franciscan missionary deported later by the martial regime who now lives in Stockton, wrote:

"I saw more and more Filipinos getting into the political arena. I saw simple and conscientious peasants forming their own political groups, expressing themselves, beginning to vote independently of their landlords and employers."

Father Hicks then asks: "Could this have been the reason why martial law was declared: because democracy was just beginning to work (and) the grievances of the masses were finally getting organized, getting aired, bringing pressure to bear on the political institutions?"

As Marcos took note of the "pressure" brought about by the reform movement, he even sought to ride the crest of the new wave. Marcos had become an apostle of change himself, but of a different hue and color.

I recall a number of occasions when the First Lady, Imelda, would despairingly talk of how the new coalition of progressive and independent elements seem to present a formidable threat to the plans of the First Family to

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stay in power. Marcos was unperturbed; he had other things in mind.

Marcos started tossing his own theories and ideas on the burgeoning movement for change during an informal session with some of his Cabinet members following the accreditation in Malacanang of a newly-arrived ambassador of a foreign country. Members of the Cabinet are usually invited to such accreditation ceremonials, which usually take place at about 10 a.m. at the Malacanang reception hall. After the accreditation ceremony, the President sits down informally with members of his official family. On one such occasion, a member of the Cabinet, as if on a cue from Marcos himself, opened up with an observation that the "violent demonstrations" were being supported, nay openly encouraged, by the media which, he added, has even used freedom of the press as license to abuse the President and his wife. In any meeting of the President with his subordinates, only Marcos may speak lengthily on anything; the others may interrupt with only one or two short sentences, unless he has an anecdote to relate that is calculated to make the President laugh. When the President said "ahhhhh" which was his signal for anybody talking at the time to shut up and give way to him, all eyes turned to the Chief Executive. True, he stated, the confrontation started by the reformist groups with the government was becoming dangerous, posing a threat not only to the party in power, but to the entire Establishment. There is even a real possibility, Marcos declared, that a new political party made up of young, ambitious men and women who have succeeded in identifying themselves with the interests of the masses in opposing foreign capital and the elitists, may replace the Nacionalista and Liberal parties.

A Cabinet member, who has never been known for being tactful, boldly asserted that the demands of the demonstrating groups focused exploitation of the Philippines by American business interests and on the need to restrict the United States on the use of its military bases in the country.

The Cabinet member had spoken more than two lines; he was not supposed to do that. The President cut him off. And as if speaking with a prepared script, Marcos then revealed that he has been assessing the possible adverse results that the "parliament of the streets" might bring about in the Philippines' relations with the United States. The President pointed out that there was a real possibility that the U.S. would get out of the Vietnam war, thereby requiring greater protection for the U.S. naval and air bases in the Philippines as insurance against probable expansion of Soviet power in Asia. Marcos added that the approaching end of parity demanded a trade agreement equally favorable to U.S. business interests which have just suffered setbacks in the newly-handed down decisions of the Supreme Court. And Japan, which is being urged by the United States to expand in Asia so that she can share in the protection of the area from Soviet expansionism, needed favorable business terms also in the Philippines. Marcos noted that the Senate had not seen it fit to ratify the pending Philippines-Japan Treaty of Amity, Commerce and Navigation.

Then the tactless Cabinet member became pertinent for Marcos' purposes; it was as if he himself was following a script prepared by whoever drafted the President's own script for the day. What we need then, Mr. President, is martial law so that you can continue your good work for this nation; we need martial law to protect the two-party system; and we need it to protect the Republic

from the rebels. We also need it so that you can protect the U.S. bases, secure U.S. investments and allow other foreign investors to help in the development of this country.

Sometimes known as the “secretary for air pollution” because he would butt in on any subject under discussion in any Cabinet meeting, this particular Cabinet man was all of a sudden the darling of Mr. Marcos; he had performed well — perhaps, according to the script.

However, Marcos played it cool and coy. The President said he would keep the suggestions of the Cabinet members under advisement, and he would act in the best interest of the Republic. But he has driven home his point; he had delivered his message to the Cabinet, and the other people outside Malacanang whom they would be calling the moment they stepped out of the Palace gates. Marcos added as a parting shot that the so-called reform movement was not strong enough; the demonstrators were not aggressive enough. He had plans all by himself to exacerbate the revolutionary situation. When Marcos had done so, he made his decision known also to Ambassador Byroade.

Verily, the myth is now closing down on Filipinos at home and abroad that the declaration of martial law in the Philippines was caused in part by the failure of American-style democracy to cope with the growing pains of development in a country dominated by vested interests and oligarchs.

Marcos just did not prove equal to the increasing sophistication of the Filipino electorate who, on realizing their frustrations and the frustrating acts of Marcos, have had to take to the streets, organize the so-called “parliament of the streets,” which the incumbent President immediately branded as rebellion. Martial law, therefore, was more than just a vehicle for a power-grab, confession or failure or lack of capacity, to handle the open bargaining process so necessary to Philippine political and economic development.

In his first book, entitled *Today's Revolution; Democracy*, Marcos recalled an accusation that Filipinos could not make an honest revolution in 1896.*¹³ Now Marcos wants his imposition of martial law known as a “democratic revolution.” Is this an honest revolution? When Marcos first telegraphed his message us early as 1971 that there was a pressing need for a “democratic revolution from the top,” as the Dictator would now want his despotic rule known, his former Executive Secretary, Rafael M. Salas,*¹⁴ found an occasion to ridicule the President’s posture as a revolutionary by stating in an interview with Quijano de Manila, pen name of former Free Press staff writer Nick Joaquin, thus: “How can Marcos call it a ‘democratic revolution’? Does he mean it was not a working democracy before? Revolution means change; usually it comes from below. If it’s going to be from above, the word is reform. The terminology is unfortunate. Again I go back to my statement that morality is necessary to make any form of reform credible to the people.” *¹⁵

(*13. See page 93, *Today's Revolution: Democracy*, paper-bound edition.

*14. Salas is now an undersecretary in the United Nations, directly in charge of population control program. The first time Salas visited Manila under the martial regime in July, 1974, he was assigned an armed forces major as “military aide” who was actually an intelligence officer who reported directly to Marcos and Imelda on the movements and “local contacts” made by Salas.

*15. *Aaia-Philippines Leader*, issue of April, 1971.)

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There was nothing in the Philippine situation that would have generated panic or hysteria. Just a year before the imposition of martial law, the prestigious Rand Corporation surveyed the Philippine situation on commission from the U.S. Agency for International Development. The Rand report underscored among others the fact that:

1. "The political system appears to be stable and generally responsive to the desire of most people."
2. "The economy appears to be performing better than commonly thought and is spread broadly across the country."
3. "Crime is not a national problem. Violence and fear of violence are concentrated in a few areas."
4. "The HMB (dissident group) are not a serious threat to the government."

The only emergency condition that existed on or about mid-1972 revolved around the personal and political fortunes of President Marcos and his ambitious and insatiable wife, Imelda. It was a fact at the time that the second and last legally elective term of Marcos was barely one year away from an ignominious end. Influential leaders of the two major political parties, including ranking leaders of the President's own Nationalista Party, were openly talking about how Marcos and his wife would have to be made to answer to the people and the courts of law and equity for the unabashed abuse of power, and the rampant graft and corruption that pervaded the Marcos I and II Administrations. The corruption of the Marcos Administrations even compelled the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to revise its profile on Marcos to include therein an observation that Marcos was "incredibly corrupt," having amassed as of the year 1969 a total asset of cash and other holdings in the Philippines and various foreign countries, including the United States and Switzerland, to the tune of TWO BILLION (\$2,000,000,000,000.00) DOLLARS. At this time, Marcos was also faced with the personal dilemma of an Imelda Marcos who decided to set in motion a process that would make herself a candidate to succeed her husband as President of the Philippines. Imelda had already been meddling in the exercise of the powers of the presidency, including her unashamed use of public funds. Imelda as President and Marcos the First Man? It was a grim prospect which challenged the chauvinism in Marcos; a negation of his own decision that power cannot be allowed to slip from his effective control as long as he was alive. Marcos then mustered enough courage to put his foot down on Imelda's ambition while they were cruising on board the presidential yacht, RPS 777, around Manila Bay, in the latter part of June, 1972. The quarrel became so violent that the First Lady scratched Ferdinand on the face; Marcos slapped her so heavily on her beautiful face that she fell to the floor. Later, Marcos announced that his wife had suffered a miscarriage and blamed it all on the unfair criticisms on Mrs. Marcos by elements of the "sick society," including his media critics.

It was also a time when Marcos felt that all the frustrations of his political career was coming his way; there were the merciless criticisms by his political opponents and even from his own party, the untrammelled and ever-increasing crescendo of assaults on his integrity by the free-swinging Philippine news media. To Marcos, all these constituted poisoned darts and arrows which he could not evade — because he deserved them and more — simply because

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there were democratic niceties and rules with which he had to abide in his conduct of the affairs of state. Damn the legal niceties, damn democracy and free speech, he thought. With only a year left in his second term presidency, there certainly would be no time at all to even up scores with political opponents, newspapermen and the allegedly abusive oligarchy. An entire lifetime freed from the shackles of guarantees of civil liberties was needed; Marcos must have his vengeance.

That was the emergency situation that faced Marcos in mid-1972; it was very personal to him. Even from the single consideration that Marcos must carve out a nice niche for himself in Philippine history, there was a pressing emergency situation; the tightening noose of circumstances showed that, unless Marcos took some drastic steps, the inevitable verdict of history on Marcos, as of 1972, would be that he was nothing but a scoundrel.

Watergate is really peanuts, a mere drop in the bucket, compared to the chicanery that Marcos indulged in upon his assumption of power in the Philippines in 1965. At its worst, Watergate was a fumbling attempt at espionage to insure an election campaign over-kill by President Nixon's campaign strategists and a subsequent attempt at cover-up. In the case of Marcos of the Philippines, the regime is engaged in a series of cover-ups for numerous cover-ups.

My own assessment that martial law was resorted to by President Marcos as a means of perpetuating himself in power and covering up for his malfeasance and nonfeasance during his corrupt and abusive I and II presidency in Malacanang is borne out by various quarters.

From the dark confines of his solitary cell at Fort Bonifacio, the headquarters of the Philippine Army, AFP, in Makati, Rizal, imprisoned Senator Aquino, Jr. gave his own angry insight into the sanctimonious claim of Marcos that he imposed martial law only as a means of saving the Republic from its enemies.

Aquino declared:

"Mr. Marcos says he declared martial rule to establish a New Society. But what he created is the oldest society recorded by history — a society of absolute rule by one man who in various epochs was called a pharaoh, a shah, an emperor, a king, a *duce*, a *caudillo*, a *feuhrer*, a chairman or a president.

"Mr. Marcos says a new Constitution has been overwhelmingly ratified by the Filipino people in January, 1973. This new Constitution ordains a drastic change from a presidential to a parliamentary form of government. But what we have today is a worse centralized presidency, a totalitarian regime where both legislative and executive powers have been merged under one man. We have a parliamentary government without a parliament. Instead of moving forward to parliamentary democracy, we moved backwards to the very extremes of presidential authoritarianism.

"Mr. Marcos says he has checked, if not eliminated the privileges and the rule of an entrenched oligarchy. Yes, the rule of the few has been eliminated. It has been reduced to the rule of one.

"Mr. Marcos misses no stroke in his incessant flogging of the old society as if he is a complete stranger to that old society, having come from outer space on September 21, 1972.

“Lest we forget:

“It was during his incumbency, as early as 1966, when documented rake offs from public works contracts reached into the millions, when he encouraged the proliferation of private armies and the smuggling by his political henchmen of high-powered weapons with impunity, when 26 Muslim ‘Jabidah’ volunteers were murdered in cold blood in Corregidor, when our Republic nearly got embroiled in a foreign adventure with a neighboring state to secure a ‘power of attorney’ granted by the heirs of the Sultan of Sulu to Mr. Marcos.

“It was during his incumbency when our currency was debauched and devalued by an unprecedented 58% as a result of wanton election spending ‘overkill’ in 1969. Mr. Marcos squandered almost P900 million to reelect himself as per the findings of the Senate committee on finance. We are still hurting from that disastrous devaluation.

“It was during his incumbency when despairing youth took to the streets to denounce his abuses and misrule, when several idealistic young demonstrators were mowed down in cold blood while some others were picked up during the night by agents of the law and disappeared forever.

“It was during his incumbency when the prestige of the House of Representatives hit rock bottom with the revelation of scandalous fund transfers from Malacanang to finance and rig the elections of handpicked Marcos-type Constitutional Convention delegates.

“It was during his incumbency that a Constitutional Convention was openly, flagrantly and shamelessly subverted with fat ‘payola’ envelopes, triggering a massive expos[^] of lurid pay-offs in the very precinct of Malacanang. And when his Con-Con manipulations began to falter, Mr. Marcos declared martial rule, jailed the independent and opposition leaders who opposed his wishes in the Convention and rammed through a Marcos Constitution in record time.

“It was during his incumbency when a few favored presidential cronies cornered billions of loanable funds of government financing institutions while the rest of the business community starved for capital, when the national economy teetered on the brink of near-total collapse as a result of massive graft and gross mismanagement and when, finally the Filipino lost his freedoms and the flame of liberty was snuffed, x x x”

Chapter IV

A Dark Age Begins

Along dark night for the Philippines was what Senator Benigno S. Aquino, Jr. perceived in the early dawn of September 23, 1972, as he was arrested by martial law enforcers at the Manila Hilton.

The long dark night that descended on the Republic has now disgorged its monstrous two-headed offspring in the dictatorship of Ferdinand E. Marcos made conjugal by the consuming personal ambition of his No. 1 wife, Imelda Romualdez-Marcos.

Marcos baptized the conjugal dictatorship as the “New Society,” and

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alternately, as a regime of “constitutional authoritarianism” operating under the aegis of martial law. But this is merely a resort to semantics. Martial law by any name is dictatorship; it becomes a conjugal dictatorship when the ruler’s No. 1 wife not only enjoys the privileges, but also wields with greater gusto and irresponsibility the powers, of the dictator.

Marcos made no bones about his role under the new order when he went on the air at 7:30 p.m. on September 23, 1972, to announce his martial law proclamation, some 22 hours after he had given his military collaborators the command to start arresting his political opponents and closing down the media establishments. Several hours before the scheduled announcement of martial law on the air, Marcos directed Press Secretary Francisco S. Tatad to rehearse a broadcast voice that would have all the braggadocio and scary tone of an advance barker of a conquering army. Veteran radio announcer Vero Perfecto was originally tapped by the President to do it, but a jealous Tatad ordered Vero to “get lost.” Thus Tatad barked the Marcos edict through his nose:

“x x x it is imperative for the (undersigned) President of the Philippines to assume greater and more effective control over the entire Government, to have the broadest latitude and discretion in dealing with the affairs of the nation, and to exercise extraordinary powers in my capacity as commander-in-chief of all the armed forces of the Philippines in order to enable me to restore within the shortest possible time and thereafter to maintain the stability of the nation and to safeguard the integrity and security of the Philippines and to insure the tranquility of its inhabitants, by suppressing lawlessness and all subversive, seditious, rebellious and insurrectionary activities throughout the land, with all the resources and means at my command, and by adopting such other measures as I may deem necessary and expedient to take to contain and resolve the existing national emergency and for the interest of the public:

“NOW, THEREFORE, I, Ferdinand E. Marcos, President of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by the Constitution as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, do hereby proclaim that I shall govern the nation and direct the operation of the entire Government, including all its agencies and instrumentalities, in my capacity and shall exercise all the powers and prerogatives appurtenant and incident to my position as such Commander-in-Chief of all the armed forces of the Philippines, x x x” *1

(*1. General Order No. 1, dated Sept 22, 1972.)

Invoking powers within the framework of his own edict, Marcos proceeded to exercise all executive and legislative powers, lie issued General Orders to the armed forces in his capacity as commander-in-chief and Letters of Instructions to civil officials in his capacity as President. In the exercise of legislative powers, Marcos promulgated Presidential Decrees containing the vital resolatory portion stating that they “shall be part of the law of the land unless ordered repealed or amended by me or by my duly authorized representatives.”

Marcos also assumed judicial powers. However, realizing that the judicial system was too intricate for him to be able to exercise judicial functions to the

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exclusion of the Supreme Court and other inferior courts, he permitted the Judiciary to "continue to function in accordance with its present organization and personnel, and shall try and decide in accordance with existing laws all criminal and civil cases." *2 However, he specifically barred the Judiciary from vital areas of judicial functions, notable among which was any case involving the validity, legality or constitutionality of Proclamation No. 1081 itself and "any rules, orders or acts issued, promulgated or performed" by him or his duly authorized representatives. (*2. General Order No. 3, dated Sept. 22, 1972.)

In other words, there can be no challenges to the acts of martial law; Marcos has made Marcos infallible.

Although the judiciary was allowed some degree of "independence" in handling "non-political cases," Marcos still exercised judicial powers directly and indirectly; in the first method, through military commissions which he created to try civilians and whose sentences he must First approve before they can be carried out *3 and in the second means, through his influence over members of the Supreme Court *4 and through his power, under the Palace-dictated 1973 Constitution, to remove every member of the judiciary, from the lowest to the highest, at will and even without cause. *5

(*3. Presidential Decree No. 39, dated Nov. 7, 1972, as amended by PD No. 566, dated October 18, 1974.

*4. See Chapter on "Spineless Judiciary Legitimizes a Pretender."

*5. Articles XVI, Sections 9 and 10, 1973 Constitution. See also Letter of Instructions No. 11.)

By his assumption of all powers of government unto himself, Marcos became an absolute dictator, denying participation by the people, through their elected representatives, on matters that shape their life and their very livelihood. Thus, subject to no effective checks or balances and freed from any limitation on his tenure, Marcos did not have to bother about constitutional rights or civil liberties of the people.

Marcos has no intention of relinquishing the absolute rule he has imposed in the Philippines. He will continue his present course of action for as long as he is alive and in control of an imperial dynasty that he is now so cautiously setting up in the Philippines under the guise of a "smiling martial law." The whole plot of Marcos is to rule in Malacanang long enough for him to be able to prepare his son, Ferdinand, Jr., to take over as the next ruler, and from there on start a royal hereditary succession to the imperial throne; Imelda is a standby heir and is programmed to act as queen regent for 'Bongbong." Dictator-President Marcos misses no opportunity, however, to insist that the painful decision he had made to place the country under martial law to "save the Republic" and solve, through a government by martial law, the nation's abiding and persistent political, economic and social problems.

The President thereby has attempted to weave a myth that an underdeveloped nation, like the Philippines, must sacrifice civil liberties and political rights for rapid economic growth.

In another breath, however, he would attempt to hold out false hopes by making a concessionary statement that martial law was never conceived as a permanent fixture in Philippine polity, although he would continue to impose it

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beyond the simple need of restoring order, to meet the other and even more important imperative of reforming society.

When I defected from the dictatorship in the Philippines, with a warning that Marcos was setting up an imperial dynasty in his country, I was greeted with skepticism, even derision by some, that I was just an embittered and disenchanting former camp follower crying wolf.

Of course, I knew whereof I was speaking, but I was not prepared — and neither am I now — to beg anybody to believe me. I always believe that the event will tell in its hour. One such event has already materialized in the first concrete confirmation by deed on the intent of President Marcos to set up an imperial dynasty in the Philippines.

This is how the “Associated Press” reported it: *6

President Ferdinand E. Marcos’ wife, Imelda, yesterday took her first political post, as governor of Metropolitan Manila, a new government unit with 4.5 million residents.

The position will give her political exposure second only to her husband and increase the possibilities of her succeeding him in the presidency.

Marcos, who rules by decree under martial law, swore in his wife after she made a brief acceptance speech broadcast on all major television and radio stations.

Six days ago, the President rejected a movement to draft Mrs. Marcos to head the new government, which integrates 17 municipalities. Mayors and prominent businessmen had asked her to head the area government because they said it needed a figure of national stature.

Mrs. Marcos told the audience of politicians at the ceremony in the presidential palace, “Not a single one among us can afford to beg off and just watch the metropolis decay and die. It is for this reason that I have accepted, in spite of many involvements with my national projects and international commitments this year and next.”

The move was strongly supported by newspapers either controlled or edited by Mrs. Marcos’ younger brother, Benjamin Romualdez, governor of Leyte province, and by a cousin, E. P. Romualdez. *7

Before his wife spoke, Marcos signed the decree creating the Metropolitan Manila Commission for the Greater Manila Area.

(*6. “Political Job: Big Step for Mrs. Marcos,” page 17, San Francisco Chronicle, Nov. 7, 1975.

*7. Enrique “Pocholo” Romualdez is a nephew of Mrs. Marcos, his father being a first cousin of Imelda.)

Even this early, Marcos has already seen fit to hold out Imelda as his would-be successor, just in case he is incapacitated to discharge his dictatorial duties while his only son by Imelda is yet too young to assume the powers of government.

With Imelda’s new position as *gobernadora* (governor) of the Greater Manila Area, the Philippine situation graduates from the realm of speculation. It is an emerging fact that in the reasonably near future, Marcos’ assumption of a crown and scepter would become a clear and definite reality.

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What is being fashioned out in Manila now is a distinctive brand of Filipino dictatorship concocted by the self-assumed royal rulers Ferdinand and Imelda and enforced by naive military officers who have been misled by the Marcoses into believing that they are going to be heroic instruments for the rejuvenation of democracy, Philippine style, and as enforcers of martial law, the vehicle to solve the nation's pressing problems.

A greater proof of Marcos' irreversible plunge towards the establishment of a royal dictatorship in the Philippines is his resort to the ancient and historic "barangay" system of government of the early Filipinos. When Marcos made the resuscitation of the "barangay" concept of government the major function of his New Society, parlaying it as the ancient Filipino system of participatory democracy, he betrayed his innermost thoughts about his plans to set up an imperial dynasty and rule for life in the manner of royalty.

The first time Marcos made use of the "barangay" concept of government in January, 1973, "to sound out the people" on his martial law and on the newly-drafted Constitution, he immediately made the system work as in the days of yore. He allowed the people to respond to the questions he had drafted with answers he wanted. These days Marcos talks in glowing terms on the modern meaning of the "barangay" concept of government, saying it is a system where the people have full participation in government; obviously, full participation in what he wants them to do.

Any student of Philippine history would easily be able to declare that, while the "barangay" system was really the original unit of government of the ancient Filipinos, it was not the ideal form of government that Marcos now wants it to appear. It was far from being a democracy.

The "barangay" system was actually a society of unequal castes; and this is the same kind of a society which Marcos is developing in the Philippines with some refinements. This is Imelda's cup of tea, too, for it will sustain her desire to be known as one who sprung from the noblesse oblige, not from very poor beginning as traced by Carmen Navarro-Pedrosa. *8

(*8. "The Untold Story of Imelda Marcos," by Carmen Navarro-Pedrosa.)

Imelda's hobnobbing with royalties abroad, her diplomatic missions which really should be the function of Secretary of Foreign Affairs Carlos P. Romulo, her Extravagant foreign trips and jet-set parties in the Philippines and elsewhere are all scandalous expressions of a hurried desire to institutionalize as soon as possible the regime of a royal family, with the distinct element of the female half exercising equal powers with the male counterpart.

It will not be long when voluminous literature about a Philippine "Camelot" that existed during pre-Spanish times would be flooding the country's schools and the foreign outposts of the Philippines. This will be an initial soft-sell to explain the "barangay" authoritarian rule of Ferdinand and Imelda in Manila; it will be the official cover for the Conjugal Dictatorship of Ferdinand and Imelda.

The "barangay" program of government restructuring which Marcos is slowly but surely executing follows the usual caste divisions among the ancient Filipinos. Then as now, there are five castes, namely: 1) the royalty, known as the *lakan* (king or queen), 2) the warrior or *datu* class, 3) the religious leaders,

4) the freemen, and 5) the slaves.

The royalty is, of course, to be made up of King Ferdinand and Queen Imelda; *lakan* is an ancient title which does not have a place for a meddling wife. Imelda definitely covets the title and position of Ferdinand. However, her ambitions also calls for barring any of the Ilocanos in the defense establishment, including Secretary of National Defense Juan Ponce Enrile, Jr., from ever gaining any slot in the line of succession to the presidency, and for propping up her favorite brother, Kokoy, as one of the important Palace guards — against the Ilocanos.

Occupying a pivotal position next in importance only to the royal class is the “warrior group” as laid out in the Marcos hierarchical scheme. Known as the “mandirigma” in ancient times, this class is now made up of the entire public armed forces of the Philippines, the principal enforcers of the martial law edict.

The exact role of the military in the conjugal dictatorial setup of things in the New Society was succinctly spelled out by Marcos when he announced the imposition of martial law on September 23, 1973. He declared: “The proclamation of martial law is not a military takeover. I, as your duly elected President of the Republic, use this power implemented by the military authorities ...”

However, if one looks at the behavior of the members of the armed forces, he cannot but come to the conclusion that the AFP people are behaving like they were a conquering army.

While Marcos tolerates — or seems afraid to discipline — AFP members who indulge in irresponsible acts of spoliation, he had taken definite steps to insure that the military would have no higher political ambitions beyond its warrior class. Nevertheless, Marcos has awarded loyal officers and units with defined territorial jurisdictions to administer — and plunder — when they are not engaged in any action for the preservation of the royalty.

Slightly higher in esteem by Dictator Marcos, but still in the level of the “warrior” class, is the group of bodyguards of the royalty. In the modern Philippines under the conjugal dictatorship, it is designated as the Presidential Security Command, whose chief is Major General Fabian Crisologo-Ver. The main function of the PSC, as its name connotes, is securing the person of the President and his family. However, one of its major tasks is to serve as a “watchdog” on the armed forces, notably the ranking command officers like Major General Fidel V. Ramos, chief of the Philippine Constabulary; and the young colonels and majors who might be eyeing the jobs of their superior officers.

The mere existence of the Palace security command serves as a constant reminder to all other armed forces units and their commanders that, even under a martial regime where the military is supposed to be supreme, they are not supposed to aspire to anything beyond serving the interests of the commander-in-chief.

The third ranking group in the emerging Philippine system is the class of “imams” or high priests, although this caste is not allowed the privilege of enjoying worldly things. In ancient days, the “imams” were charged with the responsibility of regularly calling upon the deity to preserve the good health of the royal family.

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The “freemen”, under the Marcos program of a royal empire, are his relatives in both sides of the conjugal dictatorship, his cronies and front men in the reallocation of the country’s public and private resources unto the ruling clique. Members of this group were known in early times as the *maharlika* or *timawa*, or free men who were in the good graces of the king and queen.

The fifth and lowest class under the datu system of unequal castes is known as the alipin, or slaves. This group now constitutes the rest of the Filipino people who belong to none of the four higher castes from the royalty down. Under present conditions, the people who fit into the least of the castes are divided, as in ancient times, into two classes of still descending importance. They are: 1) *aliping namamahay* or slaves without fetters who must work the lands and enterprises of the higher castes, pay taxes and carry out the directives flowing from the seat of power as they work for their own livelihood, and, if they are lucky, to have some of their men recruited into the warrior class; and 2) *aliping saguiguilid*, or second-class slaves, which correspond under present conditions to the political prisoners. The two kinds of slaves are the very reasons for the conversion of the entire Philippines into a huge gulag or concentration camp.

The principle under which the slaves have to work the lands and properties, including the various enterprises, of the royalty and the freemen or *timawas* is that everything in the country is owned by the King and the Queen, although both King and Queen prefer to make the people understand that what they have all belong to the State.

The most nebulous and unidentifiable of the castes as of this time is that which is made up of the imams. There are strong doubts right now whether the various religious groups in the Philippines, i.e., Catholics, Protestants or Muslims, would be willing to serve more than the spiritual needs of Marcos. Although the religious would occupy a distinct place in the caste system being fashioned out by Dictator Marcos, they find the plan so disgustingly violative of the elementary freedoms of their flock. As a matter of fact, the archbishop of Manila, Msgr. Jaime Sin, has triggered an ecumenical movement directly opposed to the worldly needs of Ferdinand and Imelda; the archbishop has echoed the ecumenical demand that Marcos commit suicide by giving up his dictatorial powers.

Sin has proven to be a greater pain in the neck for Marcos than his immediate predecessor in the Manila archdiocese, the late Rufino Cardinal Santos.

An exasperated President Marcos, talking one day to Imelda and some members of the Cabinet, even bitterly observed that it seems that “only the Aglipayans are being good to us.” Presidential Assistant Jacobo C. Clave, a preacher in his own right, stated that the Methodists are also good to the administrators of the New Society. “Oh, yes, Jake, they go to worship at the Cosmopolitan Church *⁹ where Senator (Jovito) Salonga preaches more regularly than you do on Sundays,” the Dictator quipped, unable to conceal his irritation.

(*⁹. Located along Taft Avenue in front of the Phil. General Hospital.)

President Marcos is not given to making idle pronouncements; his appreciation of the “support” of the Aglipayan church for martial law and his

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displeasure on the behavior of the majority religious sects were portentous of ideas lurking in the dark recesses of his mind. He had on several occasions actually thought aloud that the New Society might just duplicate the feat of the first Philippine Republic by breaking away from Rome and designate the Philippine Independent Church (Aglipayan) as the official imam of the New Society's imperial dynasty. The Marcoses are descended from the founders of the Aglipayan church in the Philippines. The first Supreme Bishop, the Obispo Maximo, of the Philippine Independent Church was Bishop Gregorio Aglipay, after whom the nationalistic church was named.

Aglipay shot to national prominence in the wake of demands within the leadership of the Revolutionary Government in 1899 for the Filipinization of the Catholic Church. Appointed Military Vicar General of the Revolution by President Emilio Aguinaldo on October 20, 1899, Aglipay urged the Filipino clergy at the time to unite and ask the Pope to appoint Filipinos in all church positions from the archbishop down to the last parish priest. Aglipay agreed with and wholeheartedly endorsed a plan of Apolinario Mabini, the brains of the Malolos Congress, for the organization of a church administered by Filipinos. It was not until July, 1901, however, when a radical reformist, Isabelo de los Reyes, returned to the Philippines from Rome and founded the Iglesia Filipina Independiente, marking officially the beginning of the schism with Rome. Aglipay accepted the position of Supreme Bishop of the new Church.

Aglipay ventured in politics during the first Commonwealth elections in 1935 by himself running for the post of President as head of the Republican party against Manuel L. Quezon, the standard bearer of the Nacionalista-Consolidado. Gen. Aguinaldo was the third contender for President, carrying the banner of the Popular Front. Mariano Marcos, father of Marcos was a candidate of Aglipay against Julio Nalundasan, the candidate of Quezon, in congressional elections that culminated in the murder of Nalundasan and the subsequent conviction of Ferdinand Marcos for that murder by a trial court.

The thoughts and ideas of Marcos about the Aglipayan church has some historical moorings, therefore. Considering the weakness he and Imelda are now showing for things of royal hue and color, a break with Rome and other religious denominations to a degree less than the schism provoked by Aglipay may not be far-fetched. After all, the thinking of Ferdinand and Imelda show their heavy penchant for adopting the ways of British royalty which they want to be the model for their own royal reign in the Philippines. Specifically, Marcos, for his part, has in mind King Henry VIII who made his own break with Rome to be able to marry Queen Anne Boleyn.

Four of the major "reform" measures programmed by Marcos for his New Society were of such delicate nature as to offend the finer sensibilities of the religious, specifically the Catholic Church. These are: 1) legalization of gambling, 2) imposition of taxes on revenue-raising properties and institutions owned by religious organizations, 3) legalization of divorce, and 4) legalization of abortion.

Marcos has already put the first two into the statute books, the first by

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decree that paved the way for the launching of a floating casino at Manila Bay, and the second through the martial law Constitution, although he has suspended its implementation and is holding it as a Sword of Damocles on the Catholic church.

The more serious thing, legalization of divorce, which could bring the *Catolico cerrados* (dyed-in-the-wool Catholics) up in arms against Marcos is now being seriously considered by the male half of the conjugal dictatorship. A draft of the Divorce Decree was ordered by the President to be prepared and submitted to him as early as 1973.

Now, the one thing that one must bear in mind in studying the plan of Marcos to legalize divorce in the Philippines is that Dictator-President has never done anything in his life that is not calculated or designed to benefit himself first politically and personally. What benefit, politically or personally, would a divorce decree bring unto King Ferdinand? One can always hark back to the days when Marcos was repeatedly promising actress Dovie Beams ^{*10} that he will divorce Imelda and make the Hollywood lass the first American First Lady of the Philippines. Only this time (when divorce becomes legal), Miss Beams may not be the new First Lady at all.

(*10. See Chapter on "The Loves of Marcos.")

The installation of a new First Lady in Malacanang, whether Imelda is still alive or not, is not inconceivable at all. After making that cowardly decision to impose martial law, Marcos will no longer surprise anybody, if he does away with Imelda — perhaps, in the dead of night.

Stealing into the night is a forte of King Ferdinand. Aided, abetted and prodded this time by the most ambitious First Lady, Imelda, the Philippines has ever had, Marcos was like a thief in the night as he stole into the stage of history to plunder the freedom and patrimony of the Filipino people.

The man from Batac was so unlike the dearly beloved President Ramon F. Magsaysay who illumined the darkened Philippine skies as he burned so fast and so briefly as a bright shooting star — and was no more after a brief euphoria given the Filipinos.

The night holds a thousand evil plots for Marcos. He was born, by his own admission, on a dark moonless night on September 11, 1917.

It was on a dark night in 1935, as established by a Philippine trial court, that then young Ferdinand, using a rifle stolen from the armory of the University of the Philippines, gunned down Nalundasan who had just won an overwhelming election victory for the second time in a congressional election in Ilocos Norte against Mariano Marcos, father of Ferdinand. It was on a dark night on September 21, 1972, that Marcos extinguished the light of freedom in Asia's remaining bastion of democracy by using the guns of martial law to cow and oppress his countrymen.

It was also on a dark night in humid Washington, D.C. where Marcos brazenly sought to extend the dirty and ugly hands of his martial rule in the Philippines to prevent a witness, with an offer of a \$50,000.00-bribe, from talking before a committee of the House of Representatives of the U.S. Congress the lurid details of his own Watergate-style scandal in the Philippines. It was a daring attempt by a tinhorn Asian dictator to tamper with sacred and

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hallowed American institutions.

On those dark nights of September 1972 and June 16, 1975, Marcos sought alternately to insure and protect a lifetime of ambition and planning and execution to install himself as a new smiling and ascetic dictator of an imperial dynasty-in-the-making in Southeast Asia.

And now — at least temporarily — Marcos holds sway in the seat of power which he had violently grabbed with his spectacular No. 1 wife, Imelda, over the lives and fortunes of 45 million Filipinos. Their court is in the City of Manila and their headquarters is Malacanang.

Together, this powerful duumvirate exercise unchallenged power as they bleed and rule their people. As they make the Philippines endure what is probably the worst dictatorship Asia has known, Ferdinand and Imelda make laws at will, frighten masses of people into abject submission, contemptuously and callously imprison thousands who oppose them. They even prescribe the terms of intimate behavior and set every rule for living and speaking and writing — except for themselves and the privileged members of the ruling clique, the lesser lights.

When I appeared before the Fraser committee on June 17, 1975, in Washington, D.C., I underscored the following points on the role of the First Lady, Imelda, in what is now vulgarly known as the conjugal dictatorship established by the most powerful ruling duumvirate ever to grace the map of Southeast Asia:

IV. GOODBYE, DEMOCRACY

Having been provided with the final excuse, or what he prefers to call as a “final sign” from Heaven, President Marcos delivered the coup de grace to democracy in the Philippines. He moved for stability.

1) The first thing Mr. Marcos did was to order the closure of the unwary and unresisting media establishments (newspapers, radio and television stations). However, he immediately re-opened his own Philippines Daily Express and the “Kanlaon Broadcasting System” in order to disseminate his martial law proclamations.

2) Then, in accordance with a prepared order of battle, his troops fanned out all over the country to arrest and detain his political opponents, business rivals, militant student and labor leaders, critical newspapermen, columnists and radio commentators.

3) In the guise of sparing no one, the son of Mr. Marcos’ political benefactor, Rep. Roque S. Ablan, Jr., was arrested and placed in a military stockade, but only because the hapless solon was picked out as “the example” by Mrs. Marcos and her equally vindictive brother, Gov. Romualdez.

4) President Marcos signed Letters of Sequestration (unpublished) for the seizure of the properties of his critics and political opponents, and business rivals, on the pretense that these properties were used as “instruments of subversion.” The announced objective was to prevent these people from ever utilizing again their facilities to fight the government.

Most of the seized estate and properties have been taken over for free,

or bought for unconscionably low prices, by cronies of the President and his brothers-in-law.

5) Licensing commanding generals and regional and provincial military commanders to exercise within their respective jurisdiction powers which were heretofore exercised by civil authorities. A number of generals control the flourishing smuggling in of luxury goods from abroad and smuggling out of premium export products, e.g. sugar, copra, lumber, cement, etc.

V. DICTATOR FOR LIFE

Having delivered the fatal blow against democracy and having consolidated his martial regime, President Marcos then took further steps to insure his authoritarian rule for life.

1) He retained all members of his Cabinet, and in cases where he had quarreling officials in one department, he split the said department to accommodate and/or calm down the protagonists.

Even at this stage of martial law, Mr. Marcos cannot afford to dismiss or displease members of his Cabinet, most of whom are either incompetent or aging, without running the risk of being exposed by them on numerous anomalous government transactions that plague the martial regime and the previous constitutional Marcos I and II administrations.

2) Bribery, intimidation and coercion of the members of the Constitutional Convention to force them to approve the final draft of a proposed New Constitution which installed Mr. Marcos as a dictator for life.

3) Staging of a mock referendum from Jan. 10 to 15, 1973, by whose fabricated results he proclaimed that the people have voted to ratify the New Constitution.

4) Calling of other referendums as often as he wanted to in order to show his political opponents at home and the outside world, particularly the United States government and press, that his continuing martial regime had the clear mandate of the people.

5) Launching by his Department of Public Information of a program, dubbed as "Oplan Mystique", which set off the process of "deification" of Marcos the President. The central theme is the creation of an aura of mysticism around the person of Mr. Marcos.

6) Maintaining a tight grip on the country's economy by making sure that all major business transactions or the formation of new and big corporations carry his stamp of approval, or that they are undertaken with the participation of his front men, in-laws and cronies.

7) Suspension by the President for one year of a provision of the Constitution on the expiration of the so-called Parity Rights for American citizens by July 3, 1974, in order to curry favor with American big business whose home offices in the United States Mr. Marcos expects to turn in favorable reports on the martial regime to the State Department.

8) Appointment by the President of every provincial governor, city mayor, municipal mayor, provincial board member and city and municipal councilors when the term of the present incumbents expire on December 31, 1975.

9) President Marcos plans to sanitize his authoritarian regime by making a hollow gesture, perhaps in 1976 or 1977, of lifting martial law, but actually

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retaining the restrictions adopted when martial law was imposed. His plan is to issue a presidential decree on the "Internal Security Act."

10) By terrorizing the personnel of the entire civil arm of government, including members of the judiciary on the local government level, by requiring them to submit their courtesy resignations under Letters of Instructions Nos. 11 and 14. Then, those who are from time to time deemed "notoriously undesirable" are either by direct action of the President, or upon recommendation of their immediate superiors and with the approval of the President, notified that their resignations have been accepted.

11) The Supreme Court of the land is subjected to a different brand of intimidation by the martial regime. Whenever a suit is elevated to the high court challenging the martial regime's legality or any acts of Mr. Marcos, the Supreme Court is gently reminded, either in speeches of the President or press releases issued by the information office that a rebuff by the judiciary of the martial regime could compel the President to organize a revolutionary government. Justices of the high court always get the message loud and clear that they are being told they could lose their jobs at any time.

12) Continuing muzzling of the press. The only kind of freedom available to the Philippine press at this time is freedom to sing praises to the President, the First Lady and their anointed followers, what with ownership of media confined to the President's front men, cronies and brother-in-law Romualdez.

When your humble witness was still chairman of the Media Advisory Council, I stood as a fragile shield for the media workers against the arrogant interference of the department of public information and the military. I could do it then because I could always state that "the President will hear about this."

13) Expansion of the manpower strength of the armed forces from the pre-martial law complement of 65,000 to 270,000 by the end of 1976.

14) Increase of the salaries and allowances of the armed forces personnel by 150 percent over the pre-martial law scale, while the civil servants are grudgingly given a P50.00 (\$7.15) cost-of-living allowance per month.

15) A tight control on the right of the workers to strike, thus maintaining workers in the private sector in their pre-martial law minimum daily wage of P8.00 (\$1.15).

16) Expansion of the corps of Palace guards from its pre-martial law strength of just a battalion (Presidential Guard Battalion) to a full-sized Presidential Security Command. The PSC is composed of a battalion of Constabulary troops, a Philippine army battalion, a marine battalion, an air force battalion and a so-called security unit composed of plainclothesmen.

The commander of the Presidential Security Command is also the chief of the National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA) which set up a national secret police.

17) Behind the false facade of a so-called "smiling martial law," there lies a ruthless nature of the authoritarian ruler which cannot be easily concealed. Mr. Marcos displayed an example of his ruthlessness when, on one occasion when he wanted to still an incipient opposition by members of the "suspended" Congress to his regime, he amended a sentence of life

imprisonment imposed on a Chinese opium dealer to death by a firing squad.

18) Restrictions on travel abroad by Filipinos, especially those who could talk or write against the regime.

19) Final abolition by decree of the bicameral Congress, suspended since September 23, 1972, by Mr. Marcos' proclamation of martial law. He effected the dissolution of Congress by his proclamation that the New Constitution, which ushered in a parliamentary form of government, has been ratified by the Filipino people in a mock referendum.

20) Refusal of Mr. Marcos to call the "interim National Assembly" as provided for under Article XVII of the New Constitution.

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CONJUGAL XI. THE DICTATORSHIP

A dictatorship as it is, the authoritarian regime of President Marcos has become more oppressive and corrupt in view of the unmitigated meddling by his wife who has turned the martial rule into an unashamed conjugal dictatorship.

1) The First Lady dips her fingers into the public till with greater ease than the President himself. All the extravagant trips of the First Lady and her jet set parties in Malacanang and in their luxurious Leyte rest area are financed with funds drawn not only from the President's budget, but also from other executive departments of the government.

2) The First Lady has her own office in Malacanang located right next to the Presidential Study Room, known as the "Music Room" where she receives her callers. It is in this room where she summons to appear before her Cabinet members, heads of financing institutions, leaders of the business community and other leading financial figures whenever she wants her own projects implemented by them, or whenever she wants huge contributions to her many impact projects, most of which duplicate those officially undertaken by government agencies.

3) Like Evita Peron, her idol, the Philippines' First Lady has established a foundation to which funds may be contributed for every major project. All the projects she has undertaken, or plans to undertake are explained in a pamphlet, called "The Compassionate Society." It sounds like a loose translation of Evita Peron's "La Razon de mi Vida," or "My Mission in Life."

4) The decision-making power and such other powers of the President as appointment-making are shared by Mr. Marcos and Mrs. Marcos.

The First Lady scrutinizes and exercises veto power over appointments and major decisions of the President. Before an appointment is proposed or submitted to the President for his signature, the official in charge of the preparation of the appointment papers makes sure that that particular appointment is "cleared" by the First Lady; otherwise, the First Lady's light of smile will not shine on the man's face for several days or weeks or that the appointee will suffer harassment from the First Lady's Blue Ladies."

The appointment in 1969 of the incumbent Secretary of Information was forced on the President by the First Lady and her brother, Gov. Romualdez. That's the reason when, on one occasion the First Lady tried to agitate for the removal of the information secretary because the poor Cabinet man

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could not stop the adverse publicity against the First Lady in the international press, the President shot back: "I have always known his (the Cabinet man's) incompetence, but you recommended him to me!"

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It was fairly evident from the time Marcos assumed the presidency of the Philippines for the first term beginning December 30, 1965, that Imelda would not be stopped from sharing powers with the country's chief executive in what would be known as the conjugal presidency. It has ripened into a conjugal dictatorship under martial law.

Imelda herself encouraged talks about her unwarranted meddling in the exercise of the powers of the presidency. Celso G. Cabrera, former editor of the defunct Manila Chronicle where he used to write a weekly column, titled "Inside Malacanang," once wrote a Sunday piece on Imelda sharing powers with her husband, and making a forecast that the Marcos-Imelda rule in Malacanang would approximate the romantic Joint Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain. Instead of expressing resentment over the article — as Cabrera feared — Mrs. Marcos even gave the editor a personal telephone call, thanking him for the write-up and informing him that she was sending him a new set of world history books to help the journalist dig up some historical basis for the forthcoming joint rule of Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos. Imelda noted that Cabrera had written the article in a light vein. The First Lady suggested that the Chronicle editor might try a series of columns in more serious tones; she recommended that parallels in the lives of Imelda, Eva Braun-Hitler and Evita Peron be traced and publicized by Cabrera. "But Eva Braun and Evita Peron were women of loose morals, and they both suffered terrible deaths, Mrs. Marcos!" Cabrera protested. But Cabrera kept writing about Imelda in a light vein, not in the serious tones that Imelda wanted him to do.

The heavy article came very much later from the pen of a veteran Malacanang reporter, Vicente F. Barranco, and it was published in the Weekly Examiner, which is published and edited by ex-Free Press staff writer Leon O. Ty. Barranco criticized Mrs. Marcos for unwarranted meddling in affairs of state which the Constitution specifies that only her husband, President Marcos, can undertake.

Other First Ladies before Imelda were complimented by Barranco's article for preserving the honor and dignity of the Office of the President. Those he mentioned were Mrs. Teodora Agoncillo-Aguinaldo, wife of President Emilio Aguinaldo; Mrs. Aurora Aragon Quezon, wife of President Quezon; Mrs. Paciencia Laurel, wife of wartime President Jose P. Laurel, Sr.; Mrs. Esperanza Osmena, wife of President Sergio Osmena, Sr.; Mrs. Trinidad L. Roxas, wife of President Manuel A. Roxas; Victoria Quirino-Gonzales, daughter of President Elpidio Quirino; Mrs. Luz B. Magsaysay, wife of President Magsaysay; Mrs. Leonila Garcia, wife of President Carlos P. Garcia; and Mrs. Eva Macapagal, wife of President Macapagal.

From the very beginning of his presidency, Marcos really seemed so pathetically helpless in enjoining Imelda from poking her nose into the affairs of state; he was just completely unable to stop her from sauntering outside the confines of the bedroom. Marcos is not only helpless in stopping Imelda's

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dogged determination to share the powers of the presidency, and now the dictatorship, with him. There have been instances when Marcos has had to make important policy decisions and take official actions just to please Imelda.*¹¹

(*11. Marcos acknowledged privately to the late Don Eugenio Lopez, Sr. that he was goaded by Imelda into declaring war against the Lopezes in 1971 because she had caught him philandering and the only way he could appease her was to yield to her demands at the time, which happened to be her desire to crack down on the Lopez empire.)

Imelda had neither the financial security nor the respect accorded other First Ladies before her when she ascended the pedestal of power together with Marcos. However, everyone concedes that Marcos could not have achieved his goal of ascending to the presidency of his country merely by his own masculine devices. Imelda was Marcos' No. 1 king-maker; this is one important consideration that Imelda became so important as to occupy a shared rule-making not made available to any First Lady before. Marcos does not lack masculinity; as a matter of fact, he has too much of it that he has had to yield masculine powers to Imelda. One must attribute the successes of Imelda in bringing up the conjugal dictatorship to her own wiles. She knew what she wanted in life, and step by step, she had her dream realized. Imelda came out of obscurity and penury from the sleeping barrio of Olot in Tolosa, Leyte. While working as a clerk in the Central Bank of the Philippines, she became the personal beauty queen of the late Manila Mayor Arsenio H. Lacson, an event that gave clear causes for tongues to wag about the Cassanova adventures of the colorful mayor. She changed from a barrio lass, with almost nothing to wear until she was adopted by the more affluent members of the Romualdez clan, to a lady-dictator, one of the world's richest women, a multi-billionaire, with the most elaborate wardrobe in the world.

At about the time that Imelda was plunging herself deeply into the conjugal presidency in the late 60's, a box office movie hit, "Anne of a Thousand Days," was on a roadshow in Manila. The movie gave Marcos and the other aspiring presidential timbers in the country a message to think about. It was what Cardinal Wolsey quipped when warned by alarmed Palace functionaries that Queen Anne Boleyn was getting to be too powerful to the point she might edge out all other aspirants to the throne of King Henry. "Nonsense, power does not lie between the legs of a woman," declared the cardinal.

"Yes, but Marcos is putting power between Imelda's legs and abdicating his historical role," chorused the senators during a lull in their sessions. This particular incident was related to me by Antonio Zumel long before martial law was declared.

The trend set by Imelda of sharing powers with her husband caught on down the level of local governments and even in Congress to dramatize the establishment of small dynasties of politicians in the provinces. Congressman Floro Crisologo, of Ilocos Sur, made his wife, Carmen, governor of his province. Then Congressman Tito M. Dupaya, of Cagayan province, followed suit by installing his wife, Teresa, to the premier office in Cagayan. Governor of Batanes province Jorge Abad made his wife the congressperson for the province. There were also progressive trends towards making the wives

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succeed their husbands in political offices as in the cases of Mrs. Josefina Belmonte-Duran who got elected to the congressional district of Albay upon the demise of Congressman Pio Duran, and of Congressperson Magnolia Wellborn-Antonino, daughter of an American schoolteacher, winning a senatorial seat after substituting for her husband, Senator Gaudencio E. Antonino, who died in a helicopter crash the day before the elections in November, 1971.

But the biggest dynasty in the Philippines is still that of the Marcos-Imelda tandem. A rare dispatch by the "Associated Press" from Manila tells a capsulized story, to wit:

IMELDA MARCOS MANILA GOVERNOR - 'ALL IN THE FAMILY' *12

MANILA — For Imelda Romualdez Marcos, wife of the Philippines martial-law president, becoming governor of the new integrated municipal government of the 4.5 million inhabitants of metropolitan Manila is "all in the family."

(*12. The news story was published by the San Francisco Examiner on November 27, 1975, under the by-line of Arnold Zeitlin, AP Manila bureau chief.)

She becomes the third in the Marcos-Romualdez family circle to serve as a governor here.

Other members of the families are scattered prominently through government and business.

Although nepotism in the government is officially frowned upon, family ties in the Philippines are particularly strong, just as families are particularly large, with six children common.

Part of the pattern of Filipino life is doing business with relatives, not only because they need jobs, too, but because they can be trusted more easily than strangers, social scientists say.

Most major Philippine corporations remain in the control of single families, even though their stocks are on sale to the public.

Through marriage, Filipinos have built extensive financial empires with lines running from the sugar business to industry to the ownership of banks and insurance companies, almost all run by family members.

Roman Catholic sociologist Rev. Jaime C. Bulatao has reported he had found the family the strongest Filipino values, "a defense against a potentially hostile world, as insurance against hunger and old age, as a place where one can be oneself."

When President Ferdinand Marcos swore in his 46-year-old wife on November 6 as first governor of a new integrated metropolitan Manila, she joined her younger brother, Benjamin 'Kokoy' Romualdez, governor of Leyte, her family's central Philippines home province, and Elizabeth Marcos-Keon, Marcos' sister, who is governor of Ilocos Norte in northern Luzon, the Marcos family's ancestral home. Diplomatic sources have said Benjamin Romualdez may be his brother-in-law's first ambassador to Peking.

The 58-year-old President's relatives are fewer than his wife's. His brother, Dr. Pacifico Marcos, is head of the Philippines' medicare program and has been suggested as health secretary in his brother's Cabinet.

Marcos accepted last September 19 the resignation of 70-year-old

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Education Secretary Juan Manuel, an uncle.

Another uncle, Modesto Farolan, is Philippine ambassador to Indonesia. A second cousin, Maj. Gen. Fidel V. Ramos, is a West Point graduate who commands the constabulary. A top candidate to become the armed forces next chief of staff, he is one of the most powerful figures in the martial law regime.

Another cousin of Mrs. Marcos is E. P. Romualdez, executive editor of the Philippines *Daily Express*, which often represented the official martial law regime view.

The *Express and the Times-Journal*, controlled by Gov. Romualdez, led the campaign in the carefully monitored news media to publicize an effort to “draft” Mrs. Marcos as Manila governor.

The day after swearing in his wife, Marcos was shown in a picture in the Manila press playing a game of pelota with Col. Francisco Romualdez, his brother-in-law and presiding officer of a military tribunal.

Col. Edon Yap, married to Mrs. Marcos’ sister, is his sister-in-law’s aide-de-camp.

Among Imelda’s varied activities in actively sharing the powers of the dictatorship, she enjoys most the task which gives her the illusions of a woman with vast pretensions of being a world diplomat as she goes about her royal hegira. Her international jaunts, undertaken on the excuse of opening doors for the New Society, have taken her to Persepolis in Persia, to Moscow, many times to the United States, the United Kingdom and Rome, to China’s Mao Tse-Tung, Cuba’s Fidel Castro and Mexico’s Miguel Echevarria. All these trips have been quite expensive and extravagantly financed, what with the First Lady spending money in certain places like money was going out of style.

Although, for Imelda, the job of international diplomacy holds a special allure, she also feels that it is the area of the conjugal dictatorship where she has a strong rival still from the direction of the incumbent secretary of foreign affairs, Gen. Carlos P. Romulo. The *goberna-diktadura* ^{*13} realizes that old man Romulo is just too big a diplomatic giant for her to eclipse right away. For, whatever criticisms we may have labelled back home against Romulo, the inescapable reality is that the diplomat from Camiling, Tarlac, has built a name for himself in the United States and around the world, whether through genuine credits or phony strategem. The value of Romulo had long been recognized by Marcos so that the President had resisted attempts of the First Lady and Kokoy Romualdez to have the aging world statesman replaced as foreign secretary by Imelda herself. Besides, Marcos needs a respectable front for the ogre that is martial law, and Romulo is second to none in the urea where it really counts: the United States.

(*13. A corruption of the words “gobemadora” and “dictator,” female version.)

Of course, Romulo has had to make his own accommodations and personal compromises with the martial regime. Among contemporary Filipino leaders, Romulo has distinguished himself for his uncanny ability of being able to determine just what o’clock of the day it is under any post-war Philippine regime. This has enabled him to make the proper and timely 180 degree turn that he must take, if necessary, under the tried and tested principle of flexibility. CPR has superbly avoided making any direct involvement in the

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stampede for “incompetent praise” of the Marcos dictatorship in forums usually available to him in the United States. To date, he has delivered only one significant speech in favor of martial law. It was a speech entitled “Our Democratic Revolution” which Romulo delivered on May 24, 1973, before the Commonwealth Club of California in San Francisco. However, he has never stopped issuing statements whenever he is abroad in praise of President Marcos and his dictatorship, although somehow these statements surprisingly move out only through the Manila circuits of the “Associated Press” and the “United Press International,” a system of mass communication that seems to indicate that the Romulo praises for Marcos are only for the consumption of the government-controlled Manila media to be beamed exclusively to the Dictator.

But, if CPR thinks that he is entirely in the good graces of the conjugal dictatorship, he could be wrong, at least insofar as the female half of the ruling duumvirate is concerned.

Mrs. Marcos has come to distrust Romulo as a scene-stealer in the jet-set world diplomacy that she has assigned to herself.

On the other hand, it is really Romulo who should express some concrete form of protest to the usurpation by Imelda of the functions of the foreign secretary.

The first “break” between Imelda and Romulo in the job of diplomacy came when the First Lady scheduled a “first” visit to mainland China in late June, 1974, as a follow up to her “successful” trip to Indonesia earlier in May. To the consternation of Mrs. Marcos, Romulo announced in the newspapers that he was going to make a goodwill tour in behalf of President Marcos of the eastern European countries.

I had a mind to ask President Marcos at the time why he had to approve the trip of Romulo to eastern Europe at about the time that the First Lady would be visiting Peking. The thought never occurred to me at the time that the President might perhaps want to downgrade the trip of Mrs. Marcos to China in order not to unduly antagonize the Soviet bloc countries in eastern Europe.

Imelda, however, viewed the scheduled European tour of Romulo in another light. She suspected that the Romulo trip was a plot to upstage her and make Romulo share with her the newspaper in charge for the Philippines. That would diminish the luster of her expected diplomatic triumph.

Mrs. Marcos cancelled her trip and re-set it for September, allowing Romulo to undertake his trip. A new announcement was then made to the effect that Mrs. Marcos suddenly checked into the Makati Medical Center suffering from a virus infection of her respiratory tract. The First Lady had learned the usefulness of a diplomatic illness; she never went to the hospital; she never had any infection of any kind, at that time.

The First Lady still watches out for CPR’s moves that might upstage her in the world diplomatic arena! Imelda was fed some time ago with the line that her inability to obtain an audience with President Ford at the White House was due to some advance warnings allegedly given by Romulo to his friends in the State Department that Ford would be ill-advised to receive Imelda at this time.

The strength and power of Imelda as the un-expendable female half of the conjugal dictatorship is anchored to the fact that the First Lady has so conditioned the mind of President Marcos that the Apo is nothing without the

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No. 1 wife. This is one big reason that the First Lady almost always can have her way, whether it be a demand that she be dispatched to this or that coronation or to be allowed to engage in some lavish and bacchanalian festivity in Manila or abroad.

The canard is that Marcos is either only trying to humor Imelda about her potentials as a world-girdling diplomat or that he just wants to get rid of her in Manila most of the time. In any case, both suggestions are proving to be very expensive for the Filipino taxpayers.

The First Lady herself explains to her intimate crowds that she — and Kokoy to a lesser degree — constitute the President's first line of defense from criticisms from foreign quarters or from a possible coup d'état.

"I serve as the lightning rod who could blunt or draw away fire from the President," Imelda once told a small group that included myself, Clave, De Vega and Tuvera. She caught us "idling" near the communications room while waiting for Marcos to wind up a confidential session with a Lebanese visitor who was proposing then the establishment of casinos along Roxas Boulevard.

In a word, both the President and the First Lady have convinced themselves that Imelda is Marcos' strength and weakest point; without her, he would be an easy prey or target to any ambitious groups, be they supported by the CIA and/or by U.S. Ambassador William Sullivan or not.

At one time, Mrs. Marcos made a calculated leak that she suspects that Secretaries Enrile, Romulo and Tatad might be involved in a triple alliance to knock her off so that Marcos would subsequently become easy prey to their conspiracy to install themselves in power.

"The President and I will not confront any one of them, but they are bound to know that I, at least, am watching them, and suspect them of being in league with each other to embarrass me," Mrs. Marcos declared. "I know anyway that what I say around the Palace would reach these people," she added.

Then, suddenly the President was through with his Lebanese visitor. Unobtrusively placing himself in a position where he would not be noticed by the agitated First Lady, Marcos sat down and listened, all smiles.

"*Magaling mag analyze ang First Lady. Halika na at gutom-na-gutom na ako!*" (The First Lady analyzes things very well. Come on, I am very hungry!) Marcos cut in.

As a parting talk to us, and with a wink with one of her eyes, Imelda said: "Let us watch these people. And let us include (Executive Secretary Alejandro) Melchor. He is also a CIA boy, and an ambitious man."

One day, not long after that Palace talk on the conspiratorial group, the foreign press produced a spate of criticisms against the First Lady for her staging of an expensive 1974 Miss Universe Pageant while the Filipino people are wallowing in misery and want. The sudden condemnation of the staging of the MUP in Manila was triggered by a memorandum of Tatad "scolding" the Manila newspapers for too much publicity of the Miss Universe affair when people might resent the beauty pageant because of the difficulties they are wallowing in. The First Lady interpreted the Tatad memo as an application of the Tagalog saying: "*Na sa kalabaw ang hataw, nasa kabayo ang latay.*" The literal meaning is that one flogs a carabao but the horse shows all the welts. Imelda judged correctly that she was the object of the Tatad criticism but the

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information secretary went about the round-about way to avoid the ire of the First Lady, thinking apparently he would get away with it. It turned out later that the Tatad memo was actually urged on the secretary by some Cabinet members during a regular Wednesday morning inter-departmental committee session at the conference room of the Development Bank of the Philippines in Makati.

Instead of just taking it out on Tatad, the First Lady blamed the conspiracy of Enrile, Romulo, Melchor and Tatad, saying it was part of a continuing plot to get rid of the President's "first line of defense." When the First Lady launched her counter-attack, which included a conference with Secretary of Tourism Jose I. Aspiras, Secretaries Clave, De Vega and key officials of the Department of Tourism, at her Music Room, she repeated her accusations against the conspiratorial group of Enrile, Romulo, Melchor and Tatad.

About October 15, 1974, Tatad submitted a 17-page letter of resignation to the President, blaming "officials" and "other persons close to the President" for putting him in trouble with the First Lady. Marcos held the resignation under advisement. Up to now, however, he has not allowed Tatad to make any foreign trip. Tatad could be an authoritative source of confirmation or emphasis for the contents of this book, if he should ever have the chance to behave like a true newspaperman beyond the reach of the martial regime. I am sure he is rarin' to have just the opportunity I now am enjoying.

Watching out for potential threats to the stability of the conjugal rulers is another important function the First Lady has imposed upon herself. And American Ambassador Sullivan is one such object of her sentry duty.

The assignment of Sullivan as replacement of Byroade in Manila has been, and continues to be, regarded by the ruling duumvirate with grave suspicion. They think that Sullivan, more than any other U.S. resident envoy before, is the man who could set up a potentially more troublesome atmosphere for the martial regime and President Marcos personally. They feel that Sullivan was purposely assigned to the Philippines at a time when both the Parity Rights provision and the Laurel-Langley agreement were expiring by July 3, 1974.

Sullivan actually has never been thought to be a tough individual outside his office. As a matter of fact, he is all smiles when he goes to the Palace. And this is what makes Mrs. Marcos so uncomfortable when Sullivan is around the Palace. The First Lady feels jittery about Sullivan even when the American envoy is just thought to be working in the U.S. chancery or delivering speeches in far-flung areas in the Philippines. Mrs. Marcos even notices the fact that Sullivan is in great demand as a guest speaker for all kinds of gatherings in the provinces.

So unsure and suspecting are the Marcoses about Sullivan that, from the first day of the envoy's arrival in Manila up to this time, they decided that he should be tailed, and his every movement watched and reported immediately to the National Intelligence and Security Agency, the command center of Marcos' secret police. Even Sullivan's Filipino driver reports to the NISA. Some of Sullivan's clerks in the U.S. embassy also report to General Ver's office.

"Bantayan natin itong puti na ito. . . o,o, si datu Puti. . . kay ito ang gagawa ng hindi mabuti sa atin," Mrs. Marcos remarked one day. (Let's watch out for this white man . . . yes, yes, the white datu . . . because he is the kind of a man

who will do us no good.)

The ruling duumvirate believe that even now Sullivan is laying down the infrastructure of his real assignment in Manila — to engineer one day a coup d'état against Marcos when he gets the signal that the Dictator is no longer useful to military and economic objectives of the United States in the Philippines.

The credentials that Sullivan brought to the Philippines are really so impressive as to arouse suspicions of an insecure conjugal dictatorship. He was a right hand man of State Secretary Henry Kissinger who is generally believed to have given the go-signal for the coup d'état against President Allende in Chile. Before that, Sullivan was the quiet, unassuming American ambassador in Laos when Cambodian Prince-Premier Norodom Sihanouk was overthrown by General Lon Nol. It was a bloodless coup d'état believed to have been the handiwork of the CIA working through Sullivan.

Sullivan's forbidding presence alone in Manila has already produced some desired results for American interests in the Philippines. On his own volition, Marcos extended the life of the Parity Rights and the Laurel-Langley Agreement by one year. Both instruments were to have expired on June 3, 1974.*¹⁴

(*14. See Chapter on "International Protection Racket.")

While Marcos capitulated to the still unarticulated demand of Sullivan, he nevertheless resorted to breast-beating on the matter of the expiring Parity Rights and the Laurel-Langley Agreement. He did so after taking careful note of the changing mood of the U.S. Congress in the matter of continuing military and economic assistance to the regime.

Marcos declared during a press conference that the martial law regime was reexamining its foreign policy with a view to cutting off the apron strings that tie the Philippines to the United States and would diversify its foreign policy to establish ties with the Communist countries.

As Marcos aired his warnings, mainly for the consumption of Sullivan, companies of heavily armed troopers were thrown around the Greater Manila area, including the piers and the international airport, making them so conspicuous to U.S. officials and CIA agents as to convince everybody that the military, which is loyal to the President, will not be caught napping by any CIA-engineered coup d'état.

Then, as if to add another dire message for good measure, Marcos retired on the dot — not a minute longer than his mandatory retirement age — one of the few remaining decent officers in the public armed forces, Lt. Gen. Rafael Ilete, AFP vice chief of staff and heroic Huk fighter in the category of the late Colonel Napoleon Valeriano.

The action of Marcos seemed odd. But it was understandable. Ilete is generally regarded as a CIA front man in the armed forces, although, perhaps, it is an unfair accusation. He is definitely a good soldier. It is just that he showed a greater regard and respect for the honor code of the military. Ilete refused to be drawn into any plotting for the imposition of martial law. He thus came under suspicion as to his loyalty to Marcos. When martial law was declared, Ilete was placed under virtual house arrest for several days.

Ilete, from the very beginning of the Marcos presidency, made it plain that

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he would not stand for any martial law, if he can have his say. Thus, he was never invited to join the “Inner Seven” and the “Outer Eleven,” which are groups of ranking armed forces officers referred to in flattering tones by the President as “the military junta, advising me and for which I carry out orders.”

The military being the very backbone of his dictatorship, Marcos makes sure that it is not only loyal to him. He sees to it that the military does not neglect its main task of maintaining the stability of the conjugal rulers in Malacanang. Although the bulk of the military is tied down in the Mindanao campaign against the Muslim rebels, the President has made sure that he has the best trained outfit in charge of Palace Security. This is the Presidential Security Command, which is headed by Gen. Ver, who is also the NISA director general. Members of the PSC are occasionally sent out on combat missions to Mindanao, the Bicol region and Isabela in order to maintain their combat proficiency and to gain added field experience.

For instance, the skinny senior aide-de-camp to the President, Major Ely Yoro, is a medalist paratrooper, judo-karate expert and helicopter-fighter pilot. He also has a weakness for nightclubs and hostesses, and the collection of wherewithal for his future security.

As Marcos and his own security people concentrate on the conjugal leadership’s security, the other pressing problems of the state are naturally neglected.

“He cannot do it alone!” protested Tony Clifton of Newsweek in writing about how Marcos has substituted his one-man puny judgement for those of many (members of Congress) in solving the various problems of the country.

Neither can Ferdinand and Imelda do it just by the two of them. It is just impossible, and their fumbling attempts at excluding others in solving the nation’s problems and other affairs of state are wreaking havoc on the country, its government and people.

The situation deprives local officials of initiative — and yet every time the President meets with his Cabinet, he would upbraid them for their ineptitude and inaction on pressing matters in their respective departments.*¹⁵

(*15. See Daily Express, Sept. 12, 1974.)

Hoy, hindi nagustuhan ni Sir angginawa mo, “(Hey, Sir [the President] didn’t like what you did) is a warning that is often relayed by the presidential sub-alterns to the line bureaucrats.

After receiving the admonition, the tendency of the shaking and worried bureaucrat would be to freeze action on any matter pending in his office. What would come immediately to his mind is the fact that he has filed an undated letter of resignation with the Office of the President. He and the thousands of other state employees have been required to file their resignation under the terms of Letters of Instructions Nos. 11 and 14.

Sometimes it’s the male Dictator himself who would call a bureau director or Cabinet head to give direct instructions on how a particular policy should be implemented or followed through. Simple but stem instructions, like “Hold this in the meantime,” or “Submit further report on this,” or “For immediate study and report to me” are handwritten by Marcos himself on pieces of papers that

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Presidential Executive Assistant Jacobo C. Clave dutifully transmit to the official or state employee concerned.

“Huwag mo raw gawin muna iyan. Wala pang sinabi si Mam,” (Don’t do that yet. Mam [the First Lady] has not yet decided on what should be done about that), is another typical message that a government official gets from the *Diktadura’s* assistants, like Ods Villacorta or Fe Aquino.

When the orders come from Kokoy Romualdez, these are usually transmitted by either Airport Manager Luis Tabuena or Immigration Commissioner Edmundo Reyes.

These messages from the assistants of the Dictator, or the *Diktadura* or Kokoy are enough to freeze papers where they are. The bureaucrats would rather commit the sin of inaction while waiting for further word from the higher ups.

An example of this state of things is the management of the two-building Philippine Center in San Francisco. Aside from housing the offices of the Philippine Consulate General, and renting out some office spaces to favored parties, like the Bataan Travels (which is owned by a crony of President Marcos, Dr. Leonilo Malabed), nothing much has been done to improve the buildings and thus make the spaces available for rent to other parties. When Ambassador Alconcel was still actively officiating as consul general in San Francisco, he wanted to finish the re-modelling of the proposed Philippine Center. However, he was stalled by a simple message from Tabuena that, according to Kokoy, Imelda has not yet given instructions on how the Center should be re-modelled.

Imagine the stagnation in the country because nothing can move or be moved without specific direct instructions from the conjugal dictatorship. And this sense of paralyzation or do-nothing attitude has seeped down to the lowest municipal worker.

In just a very short period, the dictatorial martial regime has thus succeeded in stultifying a once functioning government, if erratically or dishonestly, into an unresponsive bureaucracy.

The lowly municipal mayor, the city mayor or provincial governor cannot do anything of major significance because he may not meet with the approval of the President or might offend the finer sensibilities of Imelda.

For lack of anything else to do, and to insure their ingratiation with the ruling duumvirate, the local executives and even the Cabinet members had made it their important concern and chores to attend to the beautification campaign of the First Lady and her more expensive impact projects, like the Heart Foundation, Nutrition Center, etc., forgetting or neglecting the more important aspects of government.

The unceremonious ouster of Executive Secretary Alejandro Melchor from all his government positions just because he steered a collision course with Imelda, the governor of Greater Manila, by opposing the over-development of the metropolitan area, is still fresh in the minds of all officials serving under the conjugal dictatorship.

For instance, Mayor Luis Santos, of Davao City in southern Philippines, would rather appropriate money for the beautification of the city parks than decide on the improvement of the waterworks system. Not that he has not considered the water requirements of Davaoenos a priority project. However, the important requisite that Malacanang should give its guidance to Santos on

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who should get the juicy award of the construction job has not yet been indicated by the Palace.

This Davao situation is typical all over the country. So the work piles up. We have the spectacle of even the matter of local waterworks requiring the go-signal from Malacanang.

In some instances, local government officials have also found it advisable to address a little courtesy communication to Secretary of National Defense, or the local provincial commander that such and such projects have been addressed to the President for clearance.

All the project proposals pile up in the Palace. And Secretary Clave and, for a time, the late Secretary De Vega, whose duty it is to reduce the work load of the Dictator "so that he does not kill himself working," necessarily have to sit down on those unnecessary communications from the local officials.

The national stagnation and worsening situation in the country is clear and convincing proof that Dictator Marcos may not be in touch at all with the world or the Filipino people in particular. Some of his actions are obviously not in tune with the national desire for a return to normalcy.

Right now, Marcos pays more attention to the lobbies of his cronies, in-laws and other organized minorities with some access to him than to the broad spectrum of opinion.

Either by choice, or by the machinations of Imelda and Kokoy, with witting or unwitting assistance from the military leaders, Marcos is now effectively isolated from the world, the Filipino people and reality.

Marcos has become a prisoner of Imelda!

Imelda and the military have so successfully and heroically convinced Marcos about the plots on his life that he is now confined to the Palace, the recreation facilities at the Malacanang Park, the presidential yacht which can take him with heavy security to either Poro Point or Nasugbu for water skiing. He can only go to these places after they are heavily secured by the elements of the Presidential Security Command some of whom are also in the payroll of Imelda as her own spies on Marcos.

Worse, Imelda keeps dreaming up those military-civilian plots about a possible coup d'etat. This has prevented Marcos ever leaving the country ; or, making only brief visits to nearby Asian neighbors as when he had to make a state visit to the Chinese mainland last June, 1975, or make a one-way visit to Menado to confer with Indonesian President Suharto.

In the case of the visit with Suharto, the Malacanang press office took great pains to announce that the trip from Davao to Menado was just as short as taking a trip from Manila to Tacloban City. The implied message was that there would hardly be enough time for any would-be plotters against Marcos in the military establishment.

The major reason for Imelda's "grounding" of her male counterpart in the conjugal dictatorship is at once clear. She would have to conduct the urgent business of global diplomacy for the Philippines, while Marcos is confined in his movements to a constricted area where the First Lady could still spy on him and check on his fidelity.

The "de factor" status attained by the conjugal dictatorship in the
Primitivo Mijares

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Philippines should be the only explanation for the confusion of the public and private functions of the President and the First Lady. It is the only excuse that historians might collate when they start asking how in heaven's name there is a well ordered confusion in their use of public funds for public and private activities.

When it comes to the needs of Imelda, and they are numerous, there can be no distinction on where the funds come from. She draws funds for her expensive impact projects and extravagant trips and jet-set parties abroad from the President's discretionary fund, from the so-called Marcos Foundation, or from any government office or financing institution.

There are no restraints on the extravagant parties, or the expensive foreign jaunts of Imelda. Her expenditures for the lavish Palace parties are no longer subject to government auditing as in the days before martial law. Who would ever dare do that?

Imelda's well-publicized extravagance in her conduct of her own share in the affairs of state is precisely a most distinguishing feature of the conjugal dictatorship in the Philippines. By her extravagance, Imelda not only empties the public till most of the time, but she even encourages further resort to graft and corruption by subordinate officials. Her flair for extravagance has also caused widespread resentment within the business community, including the big multinationals.

The Miss Universe Pageant held in Manila in July, 1974, proved to be nothing but a monument to Imelda's penchant for extravagance and high international living. So scandalous was the spending of government and private funds to put the MUP extravaganza that not even the Cabinet, the official family of the President, could keep its peace. The Cabinet slyly instigated Information Secretary Tataro into prodding the international press to inquire about the funding for the pageant, reaping for the First Lady a spate of news stories (in foreign newspapers, of course) so critical of the First Lady's sponsorship of a beauty pageant when her countrymen are wallowing in abject misery and poverty.

The President's contingent fund, the military's intelligence fund, and the trust funds of the Government Service Insurance System, the Central Bank, the Philippine National Bank, the Development Bank of the Philippines, the Social Security System, and the Philippine Veterans Bank as well as private banks, foreign companies doing business in the Philippines and the Federation of Chinese Chambers of Commerce were all tapped, or virtually subjected to extortion, for heavy contributions for the coffers of the MUP. The extorted funds were used to augment the "minimum allocation" so widely publicized in the controlled press as the only expenditure of the Philippine government for the MUP-Imelda extravaganza. In addition to direct expenditures, so many more millions of pesos were spent in connection with the pageant to underwrite the re-painting and decoration of all public and private buildings along the major thoroughfares of Manila and the suburbs, and cities in the provinces where the MUP participants toured subsequent to the pageant proper. There were also gargantuan expenses incurred by the Department of National Defense and the governments of Manila and suburban cities and towns for the security forces and hospitality arrangements provided for the beauty contestants.

Secretary Enrile wryly remarked after the MUP extravaganza: "Gosh, if only

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I can be allowed to spend the money allocated for the Miss Universe security for the peace and order campaign, I assure you I would be able to liquidate the New People's Army in northern Luzon and in the Bicol provinces in no time at all."

President Marcos just didn't know how much was really spent for and in connection with the Miss Universe Pageant. He even called my attention to what he thought was an erroneous report in my column to the effect that the amount of P40 million (roughly \$5.5 million) was spent for the Imelda extravaganza. Marcos reminded me that, when the First Lady sought his approval to hold the 1974 MUP in Manila, she said the government would have to appropriate only a minimum amount. Well, actually the First Lady didn't squawk when the President appropriated only a small amount from the government coffers for the pageant. She was so sure that she would be able to tap other sources, within or without the government, for the larger amounts needed to finance the pageant. And she conducted her fund-raising with the expertise of a special forces trooper.

Secretary of Tourism Aspiras let the word out on how much was spent for the Miss Universe affair. Answering press criticisms inspired by the Tatad memorandum, Aspiras declared that, in terms of world-wide publicity and goodwill generated by the MUP for the Philippines, "the P40 million we spent for the pageant was worth it."

The rough estimate is that Mrs. Marcos collected not less than P100 million from government and private sectors for the MUP. The estimate may well have been correct. Even provincial and city governments were given quotas on how much they would contribute to the kitty of the MUP. And these local governments were given about 50 tickets each for the beauty pageants in exchange for the P50,000.00 they were directed to raise as their respective quotas. The allocation of tickets for the provinces and cities was even made to appear as a display of the solicitude of the First Lady for the provincianos; she wanted them to see the MUP "for free" and with pride that they edged out the elite of Manila from the international show.

If the collection went up to P100 million and the cost of the MUP was only P40 million, where did the rest of the money go? There is only one answer because there is only one collector in the Philippines today.

And yet, the extravagance and ability of Imelda to raise money for such extravagance actually constitute the very secret of Imelda's "lakas" or selling point with the President. She has somehow convinced the Dictator that her irresistible charm always worked like magic on things and people so that she can accomplish so much with so little. She plays on the Ilocano spirit of the President — getting so much for so little.

Here is where the First Lady plays tricks on the President — at least on this aspect of the conjugal dictatorship. I cannot guarantee that she does not deceive the President on other affairs. On almost all the projects that she had undertaken, Imelda always had made it appear that she spend only the minimum amount, although she actually overspends just to produce results which the President would figure he would never be able to produce himself for the budget allocated by him.

Actually, the Imelda projects for which she has been greatly admired and

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credited for pushing are most expensive. The Cultural Center, the Folk Arts Theatre, the Heart Foundation, the Nutrition Center, etc. are extravagantly financed with public and private funds.

I would estimate that, if the normal expenditures for one project is made known to the President and to the public as consisting say P1 million, Imelda would normally push it through at a minimum cost of F5 million.

And how does she raise the money? Get all the funds earmarked for a particular project, say the establishment of the Heart Center by the Department of Health, and then herd the heads of government financing institutions to her Music Room, call in the chambers of commerce and the bankers' group and give them their quotas. The effect is that government financing institutions are coerced into raiding their fiduciary funds to meet Imelda's quota and other revenue-raising offices, like the internal revenue and customs bureau go back to the "tong collection" system to raise funds, while the businessmen are forced to pass on the Imelda quota to their hapless customers in the form of increased prices of goods.

Every time Imelda embarks on a project or a trip abroad, she would not let the President know her exact financial requirements. She would simply ask Marcos for an official allocation and then make him feel that whatever he authorizes would be more than enough.

For instance, the 1974 trip of Mrs. Marcos to New York to inaugurate the Philippine Center was presented to the President as a simple trip involving only herself and Fe Aquino. But in conspiracy with Kokoy, she authorized through other government offices the trip to New York of numerous government personnel from the Presidential Security Command, the National Media Production Center, the Department of Trade and Commerce, the Department of National Defense, the Department of Education, the Department of Tourism and the Department of Health.

The 1974 trip of Imelda also made use of the C-130 Hercules cargo plane given by the United States as part of the foreign assistance program to the Philippine government. The C-130 ferried Imelda's wardrobe and image-building printed materials, and the battalion of security men headed by Colonels Arturo Barangan and Romeo Ochoco.

The establishment of a network of Philippine Centers in major cities abroad is a most expensive scheme devised by the First Lady to provide her with the excuse to gallivant around the world. She is either inaugurating one center or attending ceremonies marking the anniversary of the inauguration of another.

The projects themselves are quite expensive, especially because she attends to them personally. It is now universally known that whatever Imelda handles becomes three or four times more expensive.

In the case of the Philippine Center in New York on Fifth Avenue, this window-less symbol of the closed society that martial law has established in the Philippines was designed for anything but the Filipino community in the eastern seaboard. It was really designed to suit the expensive taste of Imelda for luxurious living.

It was supposed to house the representatives of all government offices in New York, but the DPI man, Alejandro Del Rosario, doesn't even have a table space in the entire set up.

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Only five of the seven floors of the building are actually available for the various offices of the Philippine government. The basement is for a restaurant run by Nora Daza as ordered by Imelda — to prepare the food for Imelda's parties there. The sixth and seventh floors are reserved — for Imelda! The sixth floor is a presidential suite. But hasn't Imelda conditioned the mind of the President that it would be dangerous for him to venture outside Asia? So, the suite is for Imelda. So is the seventh floor which has been converted into a *pelota* court — for Imelda.

I have not seen the other Philippine Centers in Canberra and Hongkong. I assume that they have the same luxurious appointments to suit the taste of Imelda.

The Philippine Center in San Francisco is yet to be touched. Alconcel has been driven out of the San Francisco consulate general by my expose on his attempt to bribe me in behalf of the President. Perhaps, his successor, Minister Romeo Arguelles, would be able to make things move, since he is reputed to be a protege of Kokoy Romualdez.

The extravagance of Imelda and the insincerity of Marcos as they march forward with their conjugal dictatorship all the more make a mockery of martial law as an instrument of reformation in the Philippines.

So much hope was built up upon the proclamation of martial law; so much so that messages poured into the Palace in hopeful tones expecting real better days for the ravaged country.

For the accession of Marcos to absolute power was, on the whole, accepted with philosophy and even a certain degree of favorable anticipation by the Filipino people. Many sectors sent him obsequious congratulation; there were allusions that, at last, "this nation will really be great again."

Other sectors approved the martial law proclamation, believing that the nation, after its "shakings," had at last been set on a proper, enduring basis.

Marcos publicly responded by saying that, with God's guidance and the people's continuing support, he would carry on the weighty responsibilities thrust upon him to establish a New Society. He said he would reform society through a "democratic revolution." And yet, this early — is it too late? — he has fallen into the disrepute which, he recalled, was the lot of the revolutionary leaders of 1896: they could not make an honest revolution. Neither could he, not even with — or perhaps because of — the meddling of Imelda.

The only thing that I might say of Marcos is that, perhaps, he entertained the thought that he could go against the tide of history. He might have hoped that he could succeed where greater and more influential figures in history have failed. Marcos used to tell us that he had studied thoroughly — and taken steps not to fall into — the mistakes that led dictators before him to their doom. At this early stage, I am afraid that Marcos cannot escape the experience of mankind; he will go the way dictators before him have gone — the excruciatingly painful verdict of history, at a time when he can no longer defend himself.

Mankind, in its slow, imperceptible and unerring ways, has rejected through the ages the use of martial might to reform society. It is holding its truth in the Philippine situation.

While martial law was publicly held out by Marcos as a vehicle for restructuring the social, political and economic problems of the country, Marcos found them so grave and deeply rooted, and decided to abandon the

reformation task in favor of simply creating a dictatorship that Imelda has turned into a conjugal authoritarian rule.

While Marcos declared that he would reform society to eliminate the privileges of the few in order that the rights of the many may be respected, he has succeeded only in eliminating both the privileges of the few and the rights of many in order to concentrate absolute power in one man and distribute privileges only to his cronies.

While Marcos pledged to eliminate graft and corruption, these ills of the so-called old society has even assumed an even more serious proportion under the New Society, falling into the pattern that "power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." Lord Acton must be turning over in his grave over the Philippine situation.

The Philippine situation brings to mind what that foremost Filipino educator, Don Camilo Osias, said of the administration of another Ilocano, the late President Elpidio Quirino (of Ilocos Sur, also in northern Philippines). Campaigning as the vice presidential candidate of the late Jose P. Laurel, Sr., Osias said in 1949: "The government headed by Quirino is a government *off* the people, *fool* the people and *buy* the people."

However, the conjugal dictatorship will not be content for long about their present domain in the Philippines. The ruling duumvirate still think in terms of annexing Sabah to the Philippines in the not-too-distant future. They believe it is a sacred duty mandated by the martial law Constitution. Sabah and its rich resources were very much in the mind of Marcos when he personally wrote the definition of Philippine territory in the Constitution which he ordered the Constitutional Convention at gunpoint to approve. It read:

"The national territory comprises the Philippine archipelago, with all the islands and waters embraced therein, and all the other territories belonging to the Philippines by historic or legal title, including the territorial sea, the air space, the sub-soil, the sea-bed, the insular shelves, and the other submarine areas over which the Philippines has sovereignty or jurisdiction. The waters around, between and connecting the islands of the archipelago, irrespective of their breadth and dimensions, form part of the internal waters of the Philippines." (Italics supplied).

The question is often asked why Imelda has made it a consuming ambition to share the powers of the dictatorship of Marcos. The answer is that Imelda knows one vital principle of the Philippine civil code which she thinks is of appropriate usage to her: that anything brought into, or acquired during, the marriage is conjugal.

Chapter V

Infrastructure of Martial Law

Marcos did not panic into dictatorship.

Weeks before Marcos rang the curtain down on democracy in the Philippines, the whiff of revolution was sharp and unmistakable. It was evident

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that the country was on the verge of its biggest social upheaval. The pace was dizzying. And most everybody, from Marcos to the common street walkers, were blaming Communists and their agents provocateur for every rally, demonstration, or terror-bombing.

Few knew that Marcos had been exploiting the unfolding revolutionary drama.

Marcos was well on his way to setting up the excuses to extend his term in office long enough to launch an imperial dynasty in the Philippines. He was doing it with a fine Hitlerian hand that would make the burning of the German Reichstag the job of a piker.

The greatest infrastructure ever undertaken by Marcos was on. It was done behind the back of people who trusted him, people who rallied to him and who relied so much on him to bring to reality a dreamy campaign slogan that "This nation can be great again." It was treachery of the highest order, far outweighing the treacherous shooting of Julio Nalundasan.

But there were visible crowd-pleasing infrastructures, too. Ribbons of cemented highways and bridges spanning rivers and linking heretofore inaccessible areas to the main arteries of commerce. Public works and "green revolution." All these were undertaken only to conceal the greatest personal and political infrastructure that Marcos had decided to set up for himself and his gang.

The beginning infrastructure for martial law was actually laid down by Marcos as early as the first day of his assumption of the Philippine presidency on December 30, 1965.

I may be guilty of hindsight now — for hindsight can be so easy — but I can see that the first concrete step taken by Marcos to steel himself for the declaration of martial law came when he decided to appoint himself as his own Secretary of National Defense when he assumed the presidency for the first time.

And the conjugal dictatorship shaped up at about that time, too. Imelda had decided, after a few days of occupancy of Malacanang, that she and Ferdinand need not give up the Palace after eight years. Thus, the "Blue Ladies" *1 would get bored listening to Imelda talk about the enormous problems of the country which no President can solve in eight years. With the familiar naughty wink of her right eye, she would wind up her peroration by stating: "We (a vague collective pronoun which could mean including the 'Blue Indies') will stay here in Malacanang all our lives."

(*1. They were the wives and/or daughters of the supporters of Marcos in the first (1965) campaign for the presidency. Led by Mrs. Marcos, they put on a blue uniform and formed an, elite female corps of campaigners for Marcos. With victory, the female campaigners formed an exclusive group, styling themselves the "Blue Ladies.")

Thoughts of one day ruling as a strong man under martial law were already in the mind of Ferdinand E. Marcos as early as his student days in the University of the Philippines.

Oral evidence on the thoughts of Marcos about martial law was provided to me boastfully in the manner of persons revealing intimate secrets of demi gods whose confidence they want everybody to know they enjoy. They were Marcos'

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favorite classmates, Ambassador Roberto S. Benedicto, GSIS Board Vice Chairman Leonilo Ocampo and Agrarian Court Judge Felicisimo Ocampo. They were all Upsilonian fraternity brothers of Marcos. *2

(*2. The “Upsilon Sigma Phi” at the University of the Philippines was the most prestigious fraternity thereabouts.)

The President himself did repeatedly explain to me that a martial law regime for the Philippines was virtually a lifetime ambition for him. He would talk about his youthful ambition for a strong man ruler for the Philippines during his spare hours on Saturdays, about noon time, and Sundays, after the six o'clock evening mass at the Malacanang reception hall. I sort of monopolized the time of the President during those hours. It was just inconceivable that any of the presidential assistants — Clave, De Vega and Tuvera — would abandon their own personal infrastructures on weekends to be with the President.

I had compelling reasons to see the President even on Saturdays and Sundays. I was a seven-day week newspaperman. I was working as a reporter-columnist for his newspaper, and doubling as his propagandist and media censor. I took advantage of his leisure moments to shoot the breeze with him; pick his mind, so to speak. I was duty-bound to compile enough story ideas and column materials for days in advance, not only for my newspaper but also for the other newspapers whose Malacanang beat reporters rely on me for presidential “news.”

I am still puzzled up to this time though why Marcos really gave me much of his time. During those Saturday and Sunday sessions, he would ask me what the people outside were thinking about. He wanted to know from me if the people really approved of the state of things under a martial regime. It was during those talks that I would act out my role as a “Devil's Advocate.” He would also talk about future plans of the regime in jig-saw pieces, not in their entirety. He would put his ideas across in various ways. He would ask questions, or talk about ways of dealing with people who still oppose the martial regime, or declare the necessity of doing certain things. In those sessions, the President would make me feel that he was intentionally making a gesture of making me bask in the reflected glory of the dictatorship, or that history was calling upon him to make a truthful account of his stewardship of the nation through a man of his confidence like me.

Although I discovered so much out of my closeness to the President, it has exacted a toll on my family life. The heavier toll came, of course, during my last departure for the United States on an official mission for the Marcos regime. The trip led to my defection and forced separation from my family. I used to have spats with my wife over my absence from the house when I have to be with the President on Saturdays and Sundays, the only days of the week, she would argue, when she and I could both be with the children. I could not have told her then that I was being driven by an irresistible urge of history to pick the mind of Marcos — even spy on him or pry into his secret files as I did — in order that I can reveal to posterity the full and unexpurgated story of the perfidy that Marcos had foisted on the Filipino people. I myself realize this only now.

During those weekend sessions I had with him, the President would talk on any number of things, including the ambitions and incompetence of most of his

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Cabinet members, or the rapacity of the husband-wife team of Juan Tuvera and Kerima who want to be bigger newspaper oligarchs than either Benedicto or Kokoy. Almost always, his favorite topic though would be the supposed historical and legal basis of the regime of martial law he had established in the country. Then U.P. senior law student Marcos, according to the President's own account to me, wrote a legal thesis to comply with the requisites for graduation on the wisdom and necessity of a regime of "constitutional authoritarianism" to husband the economic and political development of the Philippines. He wrote that a "strongman" President was what the Commonwealth needed. Although he harped on the theme of "constitutional authoritarianism" in his legal thesis, Marcos recalled, what he actually had in mind as a student was exactly what he had established as a New Society in the Philippines. He wished then — as he had realized with martial law — a military dictatorship, with the military kept subordinate to a civilian President calling the shots all the way.

"I know what's on your mind, Tibo," he smiled at me as I knitted my eyebrows and prepared to say something about a military dictatorship. "I will never share powers with a military junta. It will be worse than sharing the powers of government with a Congress."

Marcos correctly guessed what was on my mind. I had another thought coming up. However, I dared not betray it. It would have been impudent of me to have stated that he would be further diluting his powers to share them with the martial leaders since martial law has compelled him to put up a conjugal dictatorship with Imelda.

The idea of a meddling wife being allowed to rule jointly with Marcos in Malacanang was not yet in the consciousness of law student Ferdinand when he outlined his "constitutional authoritarianism" regime in his legal thesis. His U.P. classmates, especially Benedicto and Noning Ocampo, recalled that Marcos actually subconsciously conditioned himself for the eventuality that a woman would one day share whatever political powers he might have.

Young Ferdinand eyed for conquest at the time another U.P. student, beautiful Ma. Aurora Quezon, elder daughter of then President Manuel Luis Quezon. The tune that Marcos whistled to his classmates was that, to get to the pinnacle of power politics in the Philippines, which was his ambition, he has to marry the daughter of a politically-powerful man.

It was not only Baby Quezon that young Marcos had eyed. There was also voluptuous Carmen Ortega by whom Marcos now has children. Carmen belonged to the politically powerful clan of the Ortegas in La Union; a bona fide member, not just a poor relation. Marcos really aspired that early and intended to employ cunning and deceit to be his country's dictator one day.

Marcos has never been candid to anyone when it comes to his future political plans. Conscious of his brief stint as an intelligence officer in the battle of Bataan with the Japanese, Marcos would reveal his plans in a compartmented manner. However, there were occasions when he spoke plainly and clearly. That was when he found it absolutely necessary to impress people about his program of government.

For instance, in a meeting with members of the armed forces general staff 48 hours before he ordered the implementation of the martial law proclamation, Marcos declared: "We will be a disciplinary authoritarian government, although

at the beginning it may be necessary to make concessions, to entrench the democratic revolution, which we will style the New Society, solidly in power.” As I tried to read his mind, I deduced that what he meant by disciplinary authoritarian government was some kind of an inflexible dictatorship. The events have borne out my interpretation of his statement. It has always been that way with me whenever I attend conferences of the President. I have to do some quick interpretation of the thoughts of Marcos on the assumption that I would have to write a column or news story on any particular pronouncement of the President. This particular conference was, however, deemed by the President as unnecessary for media purposes.

In that same conference, the President also outlined his thoughts this way: “We will inculcate the masses of our people with the spirit necessary to travel the heroic path on which they must be led. We will do this by guiding them through the press, movies, radio, books and education, and if possible, with the collaboration of the church people. Our information officials should be able to start devising means of communications with the people sans media. I hope to use the coercive force of the military sparingly as we progress.”

At the time, all the plans of Marcos for a military-backed take-over of the Philippine government from his virtually lame-duck and expiring constitutional presidency were well on the way to being fully implemented.

I summarized the moves that led to the power seizure by Marcos in a memorandum I submitted to the Fraser committee, as follows:

I. BEYOND CONSTITUTIONAL RULE

Upon his assumption of the presidency on December 30, 1965, Mr. Marcos positioned himself for a long rule beyond his constitutionally-allowable two-term tenure which should have ended on December 30, 1973. Mr. Marcos evolved and executed a Master Plan that called for:

1) His running for reelection in 1969 and winning a second term “at all costs.” He won it with “goons, guns and gold” in the dirtiest election ever held in the Philippines.

Owing to Mr. Marcos’ over-spending of public and privately-supplied funds for his over-kill “win at all costs” reelection campaign, and puny attempts of the opposition candidates to match this with their meager resources, the Philippine economy suffered in 1970 from an oversupply of money in circulation. The peso, floated to seek its own level, plunged from the ₱3.90 to \$ 1.00 rate to ₱6.85 to \$1.00 rate. The country’s credit standing with the World Bank plunged to an all-time low.

2) The declaration of martial law all over the country “at least one year” before the expiration of his second term on December 30, 1973.

3) Packing of the Supreme Court with his own handpicked jurists by the time he declares martial law.

When Mr. Marcos took over the presidency, he figured that in a span of six years, NINE (9) of the ELEVEN (11) seats in the Supreme Court would become vacant, hence he could pack the high tribunal with his own men. Thus, it was not surprising at all that, when questions on the constitutionality of the martial law proclamation were instituted, the Supreme Court supported the position of Mr. Marcos and lent a semblance of legality to his

declaration of martial rule and to his subsequent actuations whenever they were challenged in the high court. The complexion of the Supreme Court by the time martial law was proclaimed on September 21, 1972, was self-evident; only three justices were not Marcos appointees.

4) Control of the military establishment.

When Mr. Marcos took over the presidency on December 30, 1965, he appointed himself as his own Secretary of National Defense in a clear and unmistakable move to harmonize the thinking and complexion of the military establishment with his martial law plans. At the time he took over, he very well realized that the commands of the major armed services were in the hands of officers who were not controlled by him. But he was also aware of the provisions of the National Defense Act which retires officers after 20 years of service with the military. Thus, over the next six years, he developed friendly young officers and promoted them to major commands so that they were “in position” when martial law was declared. The military has been and continues to be the cornerstone of his regime.

5) Packing of the armed forces with officers and new enlistees mostly from the President’s region of the country, the Ilocos province.

No less than then Speaker Jose B. Laurel, Jr. took official cognizance of the abnormally heavy armed forces recruitment from among the Ilocanos. Mr. Laurel nettled Mr. Marcos no end when he filed in early 1968 a bill providing for proportionate representation of all regions of the Philippines in the country’s armed forces. The explanatory note of the Laurel bill necessarily exposed in bold figures the President’s packing of the armed forces with his fellow Ilocanos.

Opposition Senator Benigno S. Aquino, Jr., now languishing in a military stockade, denounced Mr. Marcos’ packing of the military establishment in a Senate speech as “the Ilocanization of the armed forces.”

6) Control of the local governments.

Traditionally, officials of provincial, city and municipal governments are subject to the control of the national government. But President Marcos further strengthened his hold on local governments by fielding in the 1967 and 1971 mid-term elections candidates for office who were personally loyal to him, or his wife or his brother-in-law, Benjamin Romualdez.

The elections of 1967 and 1971 were a “dry-run” and a “re-run”, respectively, of the “goons, guns and gold” elections of 1969.

Mr. Marcos subsequently got Mr. Romualdez, who won his province’s governorship in the 1967 elections, elected as president of the League of Provincial Governors and City Mayors. It is interesting to note that there is local political rivalry between congressmen and governors. Mr. Marcos exploited this rivalry for the ends of his regime.

7) Positioning of his cronies in top posts of sensitive government revenue-collecting agencies and financial lending institutions. In their positions, the Marcos cronies, always careful to remind people they were squeezing that “20 percent goes to the boss,” collected “kickbacks” on juicy government contracts and/or “commissions” on loans granted by such lending institutions as the Philippine National Bank, the Development Bank of the Philippines, the Government Service Insurance System and the Social Security System.

II. PLOT THICKENS

During his first six and a half years in office, President Marcos continuously altered and improved his “contingency plan” for reigning beyond December 30, 1973, by fabricating incidents, or exacerbating crises which offered themselves to him without presidential instigation in order to destroy the people’s faith in their existing form of government and thereby weaken their opposition to, or accept as an only viable alternative to a nationwide anarchy, the imposition of martial law.

1) Depreciation of the rival seats of power by continuously accusing Congress of obstructing vital proposals for reform of society, of utter lack of concern for the welfare of the suffering masses, of yielding to and/or serving only the vested interests, and of excessive and scandalous waste of public funds in the form of unaccountable allowances of the members.

In 1970, Congress was rocked by a so-called “fund transfer scandal.” It seems that, as a matter of practice inherited from his immediate predecessor in office, President Marcos had transferred funds in millions of pesos from his contingency fund as assistance to the House of Representatives which has always failed to live within its budget. Mr. Marcos transferred the sum of P69 million from the Palace contingency fund to the House before the elections of 1969 to give the congressmen extra campaign funds for their reelection bid. But it seems that there had been an unequal and unfair distribution of this money windfall even among the ruling Nacionalistas. Thus, when some disgruntled solons squawked, President Marcos saw a golden opportunity to rock the House, for, while the political party of the President (Nacionalista) controlled Congress, its leadership were his rivals in power. Mr. Marcos masterminded through Rep. Jose Leido, Jr., a one time assistant executive secretary in the Office of the President, a full expose of the unequal distribution of the funds and thereby caused the fall from power of the leadership of the House, but more important, the fall from public regard of Congress as a governmental institution. The press naively collaborated in this effort by giving publicity to the scandalous allowances enjoyed by the congressmen, but not to the responsibility of President Marcos for having illegally transferred the funds from the executive department to the legislative department in the first place.

The hatchet man in that infamous assault on Congress, Mr. Leido, was made, upon the imposition of martial law, Secretary of Natural Resources which controls all oil exploration leases and mineral resources. That department was created for him by the splitting (by presidential decree) of the original Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

2) Riding on the crest of a wave of dissent by the militant students, workers, intellectuals and religious elements, Mr. Marcos encouraged, abetted and himself caused the organization of other forms of demonstrations to create a situation of chaos and disorder in Manila and other centers of population throughout the country.

3) Using legitimate demonstrations, President Marcos had military personnel infiltrate the ranks of demonstrators to explode bombs in their midst and to instigate the demonstrators into committing acts of violence and vandalism.

On one occasion, demonstration leaders themselves unmasked three

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Philippine air force personnel, disguised as demonstrators, after exploding incendiaries in the midst of the demonstrating groups and lobbing some heavy explosives in front of the consular offices of the United States embassy along Roxas Boulevard in Manila.

4) Launching by armed forces special psychological warfare units of a series of terror-bombings — later blamed by Mr. Marcos on the Maoist New People's Army — on Manila's water system (NAWASA), the City Hall building of Manila, the comfort room of the Constitutional Convention in Quezon City, the business districts of Manila and other vital installations, excluding Malacanang Palace, of course, to create a climate of fear and national paralysis and a sense of despair on the part of the populace.

In a bombing incident on busy Carriedo street in downtown Manila, a family man who was buying a gift for a child observing his birthday was blown to bits by a bomb exploded right inside a department store. Two weeks later, a conscience-stricken Constabulary sergeant assigned to the firearms and explosives section of Constabulary headquarters in Camp Crame confessed to having planted the bomb with a delayed action mechanism "on superior orders."

Senator Aquino was preparing a documented expose on the criminal authorship by a special military unit of the series of terror bombings when martial law was proclaimed. President Marcos almost imposed martial law prematurely on September 20, 1972, when he was told that Mr. Aquino would deliver a privileged speech on the Senate floor in the afternoon of that day to expose the Malacanang-ordered terror-bombings as part of a plot to clamp a martial rule all over the country.

5) Bribery by the President and the First Lady of certain members of the Constitutional Convention to force action by the convention on two pivotal areas of the new Charter then being drafted, to wit:

a) Approval of a proposal to change the existing presidential form of government to the parliamentary system.

b) Defeat of a so-called "ban Marcos" provision in the new Constitution, which would have disqualified past Presidents, including especially Mr. Marcos, their spouse and relatives by consanguinity or affinity within the fourth civil degree from seeking the post of Prime Minister under the new Charter.

The objective in seeking the prostitution of the Convention, for which so much has been spent, was clear: To avoid an anticipated accusation that, having been banned from seeking the premier post under the new Constitution, President Marcos imposed martial law to hold on to power.

6) Establishment by President Marcos of his own media empire through front man Roberto S. Benedicto, with heavy borrowings from the Philippine National Bank which Mr. Benedicto himself headed during the Marcos I reign.

Failing with bribery and cajolery and other enticements into making the militant media tone down their criticism of the Marcos II administration, President Marcos caused the expansion of Benedicto's small Kanlaon Broadcasting System into a major radio-television complex. He also had Benedicto launch a daily newspaper, the "Philippines' Daily Express", at a circulation price under-selling existing newspapers more than 50 percent.

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The Benedicto tri-media aggressively mouthed the administration; all its companies paid part of the salaries of employees as “additional allowance” coming from the President’s contingent fund.

7) In a move to preempt accusations that his partisans may have engineered the grenade-bombing of a rally of the opposition Liberal party at Plaza Miranda on August 21, 1971, he immediately blamed the incident on the Maoist NPA rebels. Clearly a diabolical attempt to wipe out the entire leadership of the opposition LP, the grenade-bombing killed 11 persons and wounded 93 others. XXX

8) Mr. Marcos continued to raise the Communist bugaboo.

In January, 1972, President Marcos lifted the suspension of the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus, stating the Communist threat to the security of the state had subsided. However, by May, 1972, he was again availing of the Communist bogey, saying the rebels merely went underground during the period of suspension of the “writ” and surfaced anew, stronger than before, when the “writ” was restored.

9) By causing and directing a special operations group of trusted military men to stage a supposed landing of combat weapons, ammunition and equipment along the coast of Digoyo, in Palanan, Isabela, on July 2, 1972, and then loudly claiming it was a shipment of arms made by a foreign power to the Maoist guerillas. Incidentally, the shipment of arms purportedly purchased for Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo in his fight against the Americans — a shipment which never arrived — was scheduled for unloading in the very same area of Digoyo on July 2, 1901.

Mr. Marcos claimed the shipment of arms to Digoyo on July 2, 1972, was intended to carry out the 1972 July-August plan of the Maoist Communist rebel army to wage open war in Manila and environs against the government. Having been shown by Secretary of Defense Enrile with a few mimeographed newsheets captured in a PC raid on a lair of the NPAs in Bo. Tarimasing, Cordon, Isabela, President Marcos concocted the so-called 1972 July-August attack plan of the NPAs. He said they were revealed in the captured “Tarimasing documents.”

10. Finally, by faking an ambush on the official car of Secretary Enrile at about 8:45 p.m. on September 22, 1972, to provide the final excuse for the implementation of the martial law proclamation (which he signed on September 21, 1972).

The actual planning for martial law started when Marcos became President. Although Marcos had dreamed of the authoritarian rule early enough, he was understandably in no position to do anything until he could assume the No. 1 position within the gift of the Filipino people. Before he could make it to Malacanang, however, Marcos had had to hurdle two major obstacles, among others, from the direction of two Visayan personalities, namely, Manila Mayor Arsenio H. Lacson and then Senate President Pro Tempore Fernando Lopez. On both occasions, it was Imelda who saved the day for Marcos.

The Lacson hurdle cropped up in 1957. The colorful Manila mayor notified Nacionalista party leaders that he had compiled a “dossier” on Marcos which should help the NP candidate, Dr. Jose Peralta, defeat Marcos in the upcoming elections. Ferdinand was then up for reelection to his third term in the House of

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Representatives. Lacson was sore at Marcos because the latter had propositioned him into putting up a Lacson-Marcos team for the presidential elections that year. The mayor also had not forgotten that Marcos had married Imelda. Somehow friends of Marcos in the NP tipped off the Ilocano congressman on the Lacson dossier, which reportedly had been prepared with the legal expertise of a prominent lawyer named Jose W. Diokno. Not unlikely as one of the Marcos tipsters was Speaker Pro Tempore Daniel Z. Romualdez, a first cousin of Imelda.

The first impulse of Marcos was to have it out with Lacson, obviously thinking that Manila was Ilocos Norte where the law of the gun was supreme. He thought perhaps that this time he could settle an old score with the Visayan. Lacson had earlier beaten Marcos black and blue in a fisticuff while both were working as assistants in the law office of Don Vicente Francisco. However, Imelda pleaded with her husband to abandon his own plans of dealing with Lacson. She had her own way of neutralizing the Manila Mayor. Not long afterwards, a beaming Mayor Lacson told City Hall newsmen, including myself, that there will be no bombshell against Marcos; Imelda had talked him out of it. Instead, he would stand as godfather for the Marcoses' first born, daughter Imee.

The second obstacle came shortly after Marcos had clinched the NP presidential nomination in November, 1964. Marcos and Imelda decided that Fernando Lopez was the "best choice" for the vice presidential nomination. Lopez belonged to the NP "old guards," and his becoming Marcos' running mate would firm up the support of the Lopez economic-political bloc headed by Don Eugenio Lopez, Sr.

But Lopez had made a pledge earlier that if he lost the NP presidential nomination, he would say goodbye to politics. "No, no," Lopez declared to two emissaries dispatched by Marcos — Speaker Jose B. Laurel, Jr. and former President Carlos P. Garcia. He said he was quitting, period.

Marcos wracked his brains. On the threshold of victory, he would not allow any further obstacle. No price was too great to pay to have "Toto" Nanding in his ticket. Yes, the natural choice was Imelda. She could use her wiles, summon her tears, in talking to Lopez. Which she did when the old Politico went up to her suite at the Manila Hotel on November 17, 1964, instead of allowing Imelda to call on him to beg for the acceptance by Fernando of the vice presidential slot.

Marcos is the kind of a man who would risk anything or use anybody or any strategem to achieve his goals. No one of the techniques of Marcos in executing his plans or implementing his decisions is an end unto itself. All are part of the same continuum of attack. All are synchronized into an unremitting campaign by which he seeks to expand his operations to achieve his objectives. That was how he plotted the grand design for the establishment of his nascent imperial dynasty in Manila under the aegis of martial law.

In setting up the process for the eventual imposition of martial law, Marcos proved himself to be a consummate plotter. He is the perfect quintessence of the methodical and cunning politician. There is method in his madness; there is methodical madness in his unending drive for power, longer power, matched only by Imelda's insatiable greed for more wealth. After all, it is said that those

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whom the gods wish to destroy they first make mad.

Just as Watergate was peanuts compared to the Marcos-espoused Philippine scandal so was the Segretti operations ^{*3} a child's plaything compared to the measures undertaken by Marcos to subvert the political process ever since he captured the Philippine presidency.

(*3. Donald Segretti was an aide of U.S President Nixon who confessed to political dirty tricks.)

The entire detailed plan for the imposition of martial law was a national contingency plan. It was a product of years of preparation that started from the day Marcos first took his oath as President on December 30, 1965. He set the preparatory process in motion when he himself assumed the Cabinet portfolio of defense secretary. It was not that he felt he could not entrust the position of defense secretary to anyone outside himself. To be sure, there were more men who could have run the department more efficiently than Marcos himself under normal conditions. But he wanted a full overview and control of the military establishment to plot his martial law program. He could not afford any deviation, or hesitancy that could conceivably be shown by a disinterested secretary of defense. Even then, he anticipated that there might be some leaks to the outside quarters on his plans about martial law. Cleverly, he disguised his plans as the contingency plan to cope with any emergency that might arise in the country owing to economic difficulties and the unsettled conditions of peace and order as influenced by external and internal factors. Members of the National Security Council, which Marcos convened every now and then to perorate on the contingency plan, were invariably told the threat of the rebellious Communists were increasing continually. They were also "informed" that Marcos had sent out pensionadoes to study "crisis governments" around the world. What they were not told was that the pensionadoes were specifically directed to study martial law situations abroad to help the President formulate the steps he would have to take to justify the imposition of martial law in the Philippines by 1972 or 1973.

Marcos' assumption of the DND portfolio and his activities as defense boss should have been a sufficient forewarning to the country's leaders who have greater respect for democratic ideals. At an early stage, when Marcos could still be stopped or dissuaded, they might have realized that the newly-installed chief of state was moving towards a situation that would justify his utilization of the contingency plan, which was clearly the use of the military for, among others, martial law. But the country's leading politicians were pre-occupied with standard political activities. They were more concerned with taking potshots at Marcos and landing the front pages of the newspapers. They hardly gave any thought to the danger that Marcos had started to create for them in particular and for the entire country in general.

Preparations for the eventual imposition of martial law naturally meant talking to men of the President's confidence in the military establishment. While he took up the contingency plan with the ranking armed forces generals, who were not his appointees, Marcos quietly consulted with junior officers who were "his men." They were the colonels and majors who, in 1965, cautioned their senior officers against allowing incumbent and reelectionist President

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Diosdado P. Macapagal to use the men in uniform to beat Marcos. They were the junior officers whom Marcos had befriended in the years 1950 to 1957 when they were fresh graduates of the Philippine Military Academy. Marcos made them understand in 1966 through 1969 that they would be the “star” officers of the armed forces who would travel the “heroic path” with him when the country has become ripe for the authoritarian regime envisioned by him.

Senator Aquino, Jr. tried to ape Marcos. He also started befriending the majors and captains in the military when he became a member of the upper chamber of Congress. He figured that, by 1973, his “friends” would hold the balance within the AFP to prevent his being cheated in his bid for the presidency. Now these marked AFP officers are assigned to hardship posts, mainly in the combat areas of Mindanao and Sulu, to do the fighting and dying for Marcos’ New Society.

The martial law plan of President Marcos did not have any codename, contrary to the general belief in the Philippines even before the advent of Proclamation No. 1081. When Senator Aquino exposed the martial law plan as “Oplan Sagittarius,” Marcos grudgingly admitted that one of the steps envisioned under the contingency plan was the imposition of martial law as the occasion might demand. Even without this admission, however, there was general belief that Marcos was really preparing to impose martial law as a means of staying in power beyond December 30, 1973. The big question was when and how it was going to be imposed. So many leaders outside Marcos circle of confidence found out about the “plan from AFP officers who were probably “buying insurance.” One of them was former Mayor Villegas, who forewarned Senator Aquino on August 19, 1972. Villegas advised Aquino to either leave the country before the middle of September, 1972, or to flee to the hills. Villegas left for the United States a week later.

During the Aquino-Villegas meeting, the Tarlac senator cold-shouldered the Villegas warning, saying that Marcos won’t attempt a martial law declaration in view of the catastrophe which had just hit the country. Aquino was referring at the time to the heavy flooding of Manila and the rice-producing areas of Central Luzon.

“No, Tony, Marcos won’t do it now. Maybe a few months later!” the wonder boy of Philippine politics declared diffidently.

Towards the first week of September, however, Aquino him-self obtained a full copy of the so-called martial law plan which, he said, was codenamed “Oplan Sagittarius.” Aquino called in the press and talked about his discovery of the martial law plan, omitting details for the moment. However, he aired a threat that he would bare the essential details of “Oplan Sagittarius” in a Senate speech he had scheduled for the afternoon of September 20, 1972.

There was consternation in the Palace that the martial law plan had leaked out at a time when Marcos was not prepared to implement it. The President hastily denied the existence of a martial law plan codenamed “Oplan Sagittarius.” He did admit that the so-called “Oplan Sagittarius” was one of several dummy contingency plans intentionally leaked out by him to test the secrecy of the nation’s operational plans for an emergency and to detect any source of leakage on “state secrets” to Senator Aquino.

Marcos was not worried at all about tracing the source of the leakage of

“Oplan Sagittarius.” He even let the word out that he had some particular persons in mind as having leaked out the dummy plan to Aquino. Without naming them, he alluded as possible sources of leakage to anyone of three persons who, by Marcos’ description, were Lt. Gen. Rafael M. Iletto, the West Point graduate who was then deputy AFP chief of staff; Brig. Gen. Jose L. Rancudo, air force chief; and Col. Jimmy Zumel, a junior presidential aide and brother of rebel propagandist Antonio Zumel. Actually, Marcos merely wanted to confuse the situation further by pointing the finger of suspicion on several persons. The moment Aquino mentioned the codename “Oplan Sagittarius,” Marcos immediately determined the source of the leakage of his martial law plan. He had given “Oplan Sagittarius” to only one man.

One of the best kept secrets of the martial law planning of Marcos was that, when he had finalized the plan and he had come to a decision to impose it, he distributed the copies of the plan in sealed envelopes to the military officials and leaders of the intelligence community. He took great care and caution to assign different Zodiac code-names to the copies he handed out to the would-be martial law enforcers. The first letter of each code-name corresponded to the first letter of the surname of the recipient. The copy that was code-named “Sagittarius” went to Gen. Marcos Soliman, a Pampango who was the chief of the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency (NICA). It was so easy and convenient then to pinpoint Soliman as the source of Aquino. Thus, ranking officers of the armed forces did not have to commit mental dishonesty when they denied the existence of “Oplan Sagittarius.” They were not aware of any game plan by that code-name. However, they did acknowledge to newsmen that the contingency plan was the martial law plan itself.

There was a tragic postscript to the leakage of Soliman’s copy to Aquino. A few days after the declaration of martial law, Soliman, a relative of Mayor Villegas, was reported in the press to have died of a heart attack. The truth is that he was shot dead by Metrocom troopers personally dispatched by President Marcos to arrest and detain him at Camp Crame for “tactical interrogation” for the leakage of “Oplan Sagittarius.” The general public noted, however, that the President did not issue a message of condolence to the general’s family. Last honors due a departed general were denied Soliman by the armed forces; the Manila police department, which Soliman headed for sometime during the incumbency of President Macapagal, was not allowed to render him honors.

In preparation for the scheduled September 20 Aquino blast on “Oplan Sagittarius,” Marcos called in the members of the AFP general staff to a conference in Malacanang at about the time Aquino would forewarn the entire country, especially the subversives, on the details of “Oplan Sagittarius” and thereby tip off persons scheduled for the mass round-up.

The plan was to get the AFP general staff to “urge” the President to declare martial law right then and there, if Aquino went through with his revelation of the details of “Oplan Sagittarius.”

Earlier, in the morning of September 20, a Wednesday, the President instructed me to prepare a story for advanced distribution to the reporters covering the Malacanang beat. The gist of the story was that he the AFP generals have urged him to avail of all constitutional means to cope with the escalating Communist rebellion and the state or anarchy in the country; that

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two less serious options allowed by the Constitution, namely, suspension of the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus and calling out the troops to quell lawless violence and disorder, have already been tried unsuccessfully. The message in the story was clear. When I handed out the draft of the story as dictated by Marcos to the other newsmen covering the Palace beat, they expressed alarm and disbelief over the implication of the story. It was Francisco de Leon, of the Manila Chronicle, who correctly read the meaning of the story. Manuel Salak, of the Manila Times, was skeptical. Domingo M. Quimlat, of the Taliba, pulled to one corner of the press office, and said: "Martial law na ito, ano?" (This is martial law, isn't it?)

By 5 p.m., still September 20, 1972, the story I had released earlier had to be revised. Marcos called a rare press conference. He gave out a different story. He revealed that he and the military commanders have met and assessed the worsening peace and order situation, and they have agreed that measures in effect then would be vigorously pursued by the armed forces to reestablish peace and order. I was red in the face. Tatad was having his vengeance against me for my "usurpation" of his functions as press secretary. I had to call up *the Daily Express* desk to "kill" the story which I had sent out at 3 p.m.

Newsman De Leon stuck, however, to his analysis that martial law was in the offing. Although he also "killed" the story which I had given him, De Leon wrote the following day a news analysis for the September 22 issue of the Manila Chronicle, Op-Ed page, stating categorically that martial law was in the offing.

I was uneasy that evening of September 20, 1972. I decided to stay behind in the Study Room when the President terminated the press conference. Marcos owed me an explanation. On his way to his inner Study Room, he beckoned to me to give me what I wanted. He explained that there was nothing in the Aquino privileged speech to justify the story he dictated to me earlier in the day. Aquino withheld the details of "Oplan Sagittarius." The martial law secret was still safe.

The imposition of martial law could wait another 24 hours or so. When Marcos finally decided to impose martial law on September 22, 1972, he finally sealed off from the Filipino his deceitful and treacherous activities for the establishment of a Marcos royal dynasty in the Philippines. Started on December 30, 1965, those activities were reliant, however, on Marcos' winning a reelection in 1969.

Marcos won his reelection bid.

Former President Macapagal, reviewing Marcos' strategy in that 1969 reelection campaign, sighed to his confidants: "If I had spent but just 10 percent of the public funds President Marcos used for his election campaign in 1969, I could have beaten him, hands down."

In 1965, Imelda was the star performer in the crucial campaign against reelectionist President Macapagal. She could have garnered the same credit in the 1969 Marcos reelection campaign but for the trinity of guns, goons and gold which outshone her towards the last weeks of the election drive.

With victory secured by an over kill "win at all costs" reelection campaign, Marcos felt so cock-sure that there was no way he would be stopped from ruling in Malacanang for life. It would take a simple declaration of martial law "at least

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one year” before the expiration of his second four-year term on December 30, 1973.

While he felt that he had solidified the support of the military for the intended declaration of martial law, the action would undoubtedly be assailed as a power-grab in the Philippines and abroad. He had to insure that he would be able to function under a cloak of legitimacy, however flimsy the veil of legality might be. Marcos had also seen to that. The spineless Supreme Court of the Philippines has, as a matter of fact, over-dressed the martial regime with legitimacy.

It is a sad historical fact to note that the final act of deprivation by Marcos of the civil rights and liberties of the Filipino people was virtually given prior clearance by the Supreme Court over a case that had the name of a man named Miranda attached to it.

The backdrop of the Supreme Court’s virtual go-signal to Marcos to declare martial law in the Philippines acquires a darker color when one recalls the landmark decision of the United States Supreme Court on the Miranda case. The U.S. Miranda decision broadened the civil rights of the accused in a criminal investigation, of different circumstance and personality, the person involved in the U.S. Miranda case probably had the same origins in Spain as the man whose name got tangled up in an incident that became the “cause celebre” for the staged imposition of martial law in the Philippines. The Philippine Miranda was already a by-word among Filipinos even before the case involving him cropped up. A small square had been named after him and it was called Plaza Miranda.

Plaza Miranda is a two-acre public plaza in the heart of the City of Manila. It is in front of the Quiapo church which, however, is not located in the district of Quiapo, but in the area under the jurisdiction of the district of Sta. Cruz in downtown Manila. Plaza Miranda was sometimes fondly called the Hyde Park of the Philippines because it has ever-ready crowds of passersby and loiterers before whom persons of various political persuasions and other diverse groups could speak their minds off. The biggest political rallies are usually staged in this square. It had become a tradition among the political parties to stage their proclamation (of official candidates) rallies as well as their final *mitin de avance* on election eve at Plaza Miranda.

However, Plaza Miranda was not only a political forum. It was, and still is, a favorite area of hawkers and ambulant vendors. The plaza is usually reserved by City Hall authorities for the 48-hour period preceding All Saints’ Day for special vendors who fill up the square selling wreaths and candles for those who have to visit the cemeteries. During the Christmas season, shops in and around Quiapo and Sta. Cruz put up entertainment shows every night for the public.

The biggest show at Plaza Miranda comes up every January 9 during the observance of the feast of the Black Nazarene, the religious patron of Quiapo district.

Plaza Miranda gained notoriety in 1947 when a depressed barber, named Julio Guillen, lobbed a hand grenade at an improvised platform where then President Manuel A. Roxas and other leaders of the newly-installed Liberal party administration were preparing to deliver speeches in favor of the

ratification of the Parity Rights amendment to the Constitution.

In 1949, a man who wore dark sunglasses even at night stole the Plaza Miranda stage to become an all-time crowd-pleaser with his colorful language. He was Arsenio H. Lacson and he was the undisputed idol of Plaza Miranda until his death on April 15, 1962.

In later days, the role of Plaza Miranda in Philippine political life was immortalized by President Ramon F. Magsaysay. Whenever Magsaysay was asked by the pressure groups for government concessions, he sought to apply the test of public acceptance of the proposed deal by asking: "Can we defend this at Plaza Miranda?" In time, this Magsaysayesque became anybody's challenge to the abuses and corruption that marked the Palace administrations that succeeded the late beloved Magsaysay.

Marcos found an altogether different use for Plaza Miranda. It was at Plaza Miranda where his anger over alleged insults to Imelda and his mother, Dona Josefa Edralin, became the go-signal for his fanatical followers to massacre the leadership of the opposition Liberal party. And it was as a consequence of the failure to decimate the LP leadership that Marcos moved to cover up his culpability, and thereby spawned the Philippines' own "Miranda case" in 1971.

Before the Philippine Miranda case developed, Marcos had already had almost six years to recast the complexion of the Supreme Court from that of a sentinel of freedom against the abuses of the Executive Department to that of an outright Marcos supporter.

Plaza Miranda literally exploded on the face of the nation in the evening (about 9:30 p.m.) of August 21, 1971.

The tragic drama was earlier billed as a proclamation rally for the eight official senatorial candidates of the opposition Liberal party for the mid-term elections of 1971. Senator Aquino and other LP stalwarts, in addition to the official candidates, were scheduled to address the rally.

Top billing was reserved however to a treasure hunter, Rogelio Roxas, of Baguio City in northern Philippines. Roxas, who claims to have discovered several pure-gold statuettes of Buddha among treasures buried by retreating Japanese soldiers in Benguet, Mountain Province, was going to speak at the Liberal Party rally. Roxas was prevailed upon by the LP leadership to air publicly his complaint on how he not only lost the gold statuettes of Buddha to Imelda and Dona Josefa but also became a defendant in a complaint for theft of the statuettes in the sala of Judge Pio Marcos, in the Baguio City court of first instance. Pio is an uncle of the President. Before the Plaza Miranda rally, Liberal leaders as well as some stalwarts from Marcos' own Nacionalista party have already had a field day pillorying the President, the First Lady and Dona Josefa for what had become the "Golden Buddha" affair. The more succinct indictment was uttered by former House Speaker Jose B. Laurel, Jr. who, a few months earlier, had been deposed as House chieftain on orders of Marcos, when he declared: "*Anak ng Buddha!*" It was a corruption of the strongest condemnation a *Tagalog* can make of his fellow man. The accurate epithet is: "*Anak ng puta!*" (Son of a Whore!)

Marcos was unable to make a sincere denial of the facts aired on the "Golden Buddha" case. He did make a significant threat on his tormentors. Marcos said he would make the people who "cowardly included my wife and

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my mother in the political muckraking x x x pay for their ungentlemanly behavior.”

Thus, when two Vietnam-war type fragmentation grenades were lobbed and exploded on the stage where the entire LP leadership, except Senator Aquino, was present on that fateful night of August 21, 1971, the immediate and unavoidable suspicion fell on Malacanang as the culprit. Rogelio Roxas was about to speak when tragedy hit Plaza Miranda.

However, the “crisis management” expertise of Marcos got into the act faster even than the Plaza Miranda grenade-throwers. Marcos secretly suspended the privilege of the writ of *habeas corpus*, ordered the arrest of student activists and alleged radical leftists who might be capable of organizing nationwide demonstrations protesting the Plaza Miranda carnage, and directed the National Bureau of Investigation to take over the investigation of the incident from the Manila Metropolitan Police.

The announcement of, and the explanation for, the suspension of the privilege of the writ of *habeas corpus* within a few hours of the Plaza Miranda bombing, and the mass arrests effected throughout Sunday came more than 36 hours later. Even then, Marcos was already practicing the deceit he would have to employ in the declaration of martial law one year hence. Marcos told a press conference in the Palace at 3 p.m. on August 23, 1971, that he had suspended the writ following the Plaza Miranda grenade-bombing. He explained that, within minutes of the grenade-bombing, he sent queries to government “deep penetration” agents within the ranks of the New People’s Army. Marcos recalled that the same agents had been warning him about the existence of a “July-August terror plan” of the NPA.

Upon his return to Manila three days after the incident, Villegas ordered an intensified investigation of the incident, but the MPD was hamstrung actually by another Marcos pre-emptive move by which the NBI was to handle the probe.

“The feedback I got was that the Plaza Miranda bombing was the beginning of the implementation of the July-August terror plan,” Marcos declared. The President quickly added, however, that his ‘deep penetration agents failed to indicate which NPA unit had done the Plaza Miranda job. He then proceeded to explain that the writ had to be suspended in order to make it easier for government law enforcement agents to question the suspects on the case and to neutralize “misguided elements” who are still bent on lending aid and comfort to the “enemies of the Republic.”

He said: “Persons connected with rebellion and the crime committed during the political rally of the Opposition Party in Plaza Miranda have been apprehended and are now undergoing interrogation. The military is now in custody of these persons.”

If those guilty of the bombing of the Liberal leaders in Plaza Miranda have indeed been apprehended, it would look like one of the longest investigations in history. To this day, no one has been charged specifically with having participated and/or engineered the grenade-bombing.

The absurdity of the President’s claim on the Plaza Miranda bombing was further underscored by the position taken by Brig. Gen. Eduardo M. Garcia, chief of the Philippine Constabulary, in a story on an interview he gave the *Journal of Commerce* of New York. The interview story published by the *Journal* on June 1, 1971, quoted Garcia as having said:

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“Insurgency and subversion are not serious problems of the government now x x x .”

“In conclusion, the peace and order condition in the Philippines, now and in the immediate future, is such as not to shake at all the stability of our existing democratic institutions — political, economic, social and others. Notwithstanding the occurrence at times of some crimes against persons or property which usually result from unemployment and economic difficulties, and from which no country can claim immunity, the inhabitants of the Philippines sleep soundly in their homes, move freely and safely throughout the country and initiate enterprises on which they place their hopes for better life.

“It can safely be stated that peace and order in the Philippines can stand favorable comparison with other countries in the world.”

General Manuel T. Yan, armed forces chief of staff, also came out with a statement that the grounds for the imposition of martial law did not exist.

Even as he blamed the Communist NPA rebels for the Miranda massacre, Marcos' psychological warfare apparatus went to work to smokescreen the still persistent suspicion that the grenade-bombing was a crude attempt of Malacanang to do in the opposition Liberals and silence Rogelio Roxas. Marcos caused the floating of rumors that incumbent Manila Mayor Antonio J. Villegas pulled the Miranda job in cahoots with Senator Aquino. After all, both Aquino and Villegas were not in the rally; Aquino was on his way to the rally from a late evening baptismal party when the grenades were thrown on the LP stage. Another rumor was mongered around that Congressman Roque S. Ablan, Jr., of Ilocos Norte engineered the grenade-throwing on his own “to please President and Mrs. Marcos and Dona Josefa.” f

In mid-August, 1971, a cock-sure reelectionist Mayor Villegas, whom the Liberal party bosses headed by Senator Gerardo Roxas denied for selfish and personal reasons the mantle of official party candidate for mayor and who had to seek reelection under the banner of his own independent Liberal party faction in Manila — the “Liberal ng Maynila,” postponed his campaign and went to the United States to enrol his eldest daughter, Ma. Teresita, at the College of Notre Dame, and his son, Antonio, Jr., at the Bellarmine College Preparatory in San Jose, California. He had just landed in Tokyo on his way back to start his reelection campaign when he received a message on the Plaza Miranda carnage and the suspension of the privilege of the writ of *habeas corpus*.

Brig. Gen. Gerardo S. Tamayo, chief of the Manila police department, reported that all law enforcement agencies in the Greater Manila area, not excluding the PC Metrocom, were caught by surprise by the incident. Vice Mayor Felicisimo Cabigao, a Nacionalista like Marcos, who was acting mayor in the absence of Villegas, bitterly shook his head, asking why the carnage had to happen when he was at the helm at City Hall.

Upon his return to Manila three days after the incident, Villegas ordered an intensified investigation of the incident, but the MPD was hamstrung actually by another Marcos pre-emptive move by which the NBI was to handle the probe.

Villegas had no way, therefore, of fighting off the lingering suspicion that he had something to do with the incident. The MPD could not make a conclusive investigation on its own. He was fighting a losing reelection battle all of a sudden. It was a sharp reversal of all pre-Plaza Miranda polls.

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On election day, the might of Villegas' political machine which had won him the elections of 1963 and 1967 could not stem the tide of a sympathy vote for the Liberals who were almost massacred at Plaza Miranda. Among those Liberals who profited from the sympathy vote was Congressman Ramon D. Bagatsing, the official LP candidate for mayor who lost a leg in the bombing, but won the mayoralty from Villegas.

Villegas decided to cool off in the United States. He left Manila on Jan. 1, 1972, the day Bagatsing was inaugurated as the new mayor. However, he returned posthaste to Manila on Jan. 14, 1972, when he was warned that Bagatsing had Marcos cancel the parole of convicts Maximiano Magat and Benigno Urquico, two of Villegas' boyhood pals from his Tondo days, and investigated in pursuit of the theory that Villegas commissioned the two to do in Bagatsing during the August 21 rally. Ex-Mayor Villegas angrily demanded in Manila that charges be filed against him so that he could clear his name. No charge was ever filed in court on the Miranda carnage against anybody.

Later on, Villegas received a message from Urquico that police probers working directly under Bagatsing and certain Muntinglupa prison officials tried to induce two Muntinglupa prisoners to confess to the grenade-bombing — which they did not commit — and to implicate Villegas and Lt. Col. Alfredo Lim, a distinguished career police officer who has remained loyal to Villegas.

The theory, claim or rumor that Villegas plotted the Miranda bombing and had two "imported goons" from Muntinglupa in itself renders it implausible. He could not have been that stupid to import hit men from Muntinglupa, which was controlled by Gen. Vicente Raval, a Marcos man, when he could have very well offered such a job to any inmate at the city jail, which was under the control of the Manila police under Villegas as mayor.

I still consider Villegas one of the smartest politicians the Philippines has ever produced; he may still outmaneuver most of the active and "sidelined" leaders of the country, including Marcos himself. Although he is in the United States on a treaty investor's visa, he considers himself a political refugee. Villegas has not attempted to file for himself or any member of his family any petition for permanent resident status, which he could very well do. He said he expects to return when the Philippines "is freed from a dictatorship to which I have been opposed and to which I have rendered civil disobedience by not paying any income tax or availing of the tax amnesty offer of Marcos."

I once had an occasion to confront my compadre, Congressman Ablan, about the persistent rumor that he was responsible for the Plaza Miranda rally. His answer was: "Padre, *mahirap na lang mag-salita*. (It's dangerous to talk now.) But you might take a cue from the still unsolved murder of *Manong* Floring." Ablan was talking about the late Congressman Floro S. Crisologo, of Ilocos Sur, who was shot in the back while receiving Holy Communion inside the Vigan church one Sunday afternoon in November, 1970. Crisologo was gunned down a few weeks after he much talked about confrontation with President Marcos and then Colonel Fabian Crisologo-Ver, senior presidential aide and commander of the Presidential Guard Battalion, over their triangular tobacco monopoly in the Ilocos region. Floro had berated both Marcos and Ver for grabbing the lion's share of the proceeds of the tobacco monopoly, while he who must face the guns of his political enemies while attending to the mechanics of the monopoly is being treated as a minor

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partner. Crisologo even threatened to expose the entire operations. His subsequent reward was the silence of the grave.

With the least intention of playing detective, I casually tracked down the lead on the Crisologo shooting in the faint hope that I might obtain any clue on the Plaza Miranda bombing. In my casual talks with members of the presidential security unit in the afternoons when Marcos would enjoy his siesta, I gathered that the killer of Crisologo was “silenced” while trying to collect his “fee”, and that the same fate had already befallen the Plaza Miranda bombers.

In both the Crisologo killing and the Plaza Miranda grenade-bombing, the mad killers acted on orders emanating from a special unit of the then expanding Presidential Security Command. To this unit also belonged Colonel Romeo Ochoco, an air force officer, who led the explosives-hurlers at the United States embassy compound in April, 1972.

In the case of the Plaza Miranda carnage, as far as I have been able to gather from the President’s security men, the instruction given to the grenade-throwers was to “get Rogelio Roxas killed” to prevent him from talking about the “Golden Buddha” for the first time before the nation on television. It seems that they were left to their own devices on how to execute their assignment. They obviously opted for hand-grenades which could be hurled from a distance of relative safety.

The pre-emptive strikes of President Marcos on the Plaza Miranda incident worked out very well. The arrest of student activist leaders and some radical leftists deprived the mass movement of leadership in the meantime. The news stories on the suspension of the writ crowded out of the front pages of the newspapers statements of the opposition blaming Marcos for the carnage.

The opposition leaders, physically mangled and bed-ridden in hospitals, could only scream in rage. Marcos the methodical politician smiled, hardly betraying a sign of grief over the Miranda massacre.

The Miranda massacre was to offer Marcos another bonanza for his plan to declare martial law. The added bonus was not entirely unexpected. Marcos figured that sooner or later one or several of those arrested and detained indefinitely by the military on charges of alleged subversion would file a challenge to the constitutionality of the suspension of the privilege of the writ of *habeas corpus*.

Eventually, 39 of those arrested filed a petition for writ of *habeas corpus* with the Supreme Court, placing at issue Proclamation No. 889 by which the President had suspended the writ on August 22, 1971. Leading the challenge to the validity of the suspension of the writ was Teodosio Lansang, a Philippine College of Commerce professor who escaped to China and then Russia when then President Elpidio Quirino suspended the writ for the first time in 1950. Thus, the test case on the Marcos suspension of the writ was entitled “Lansang vs. Garcia.” It was filed against then PC chief, Brig. Gen. Eduardo Garcia.*⁴ Other detainees followed the Lansang suit.

(*4. The Supreme Court cases brought up by way of challenge to Proclamation No. 889 were docketed as G.R. Nos. L33964, D33965, L-33973, D33982, Lr34004, L-34013, L-34039, L34265 and L-34339.)

The challenge to the constitutionality of his suspension of the privilege of the writ of *habeas corpus* was precisely the legal skirmish that Marcos wanted

in a battleground of his choice — the Supreme Court of the Philippines. By that time, the high court was already dominated by Marcos appointees, namely, Associate Justices Fred Ruiz Castro, Enrique M. Fernando, Claudio Teehankee, Felix V. Makasiar and Antonio P. Barredo. Chief Justice Robert Concepcion and Associate Justices Arsenio Dizon, Jose B.L. (JBL) Reyes and Calixto O. Zaldívar were appointees of previous administrations. Castro, Teehankee, Makasiar and Barredo were known as “independently pro-Marcos operators,” while Fernando had ingratiated himself with the civil libertarian group made up of Concepcion, Dizon, JBL and Makalintal.

When the smoke of battle over the habeas corpus cases had cleared, democracy laid dying at the very doorstep of the Supreme Court. By a unanimous decision that shocked the nation, the high court upheld Marcos. Thus, through the Lansang and other cases that grew out of Plaza Miranda, the Supreme Court of the land published its notorious edition of the U.S. Miranda case in reverse. Once described as “the rock of our liberties,” the high court chose, via the Plaza Miranda cases, to deliver the liberties of the Filipino people to a nascent dictator.

The death of democracy in the Philippines should weigh heavily on the conscience of the members of the Concepcion Court. It was their decision on the Lansang cases that more than anything else assured a cloak of legitimacy to the intended declaration by Marcos of martial law. This can best be understood when one takes note of the fact that the grounds for the suspension of the privilege of the writ of *habeas corpus* are, by the provisions of the 1935 Constitution, exactly the same as those for the declaration of martial law. Thus, when the martial law proclamation (No. 1081) itself was subsequently challenged before the Supreme Court, the same Concepcion Court — this time under pressure from a martial law administrator — had to uphold its own ruling in the Lansang et al cases.*⁵

(*5. See Chapter on “Spineless Judiciary Legitimizes a Pretender.”)

The Philippine Miranda case did not come so easily to Marcos. The petition to invalidate Proclamation No. 889 was handled by a tough lawyer, Jose W. Diokno, against whom the government’s Solicitor General Estelito Mendoza was definitely no match. So, Marcos himself played the active role in winning the case before the high court. What Marcos did would have been worthy of citation as an example to history of deceit and trickery by a Chief Executive. For Marcos that was normal. Through Justice Fernando, mainly, and Justices Castro, Teehankee and Barredo, to some extent, President Marcos reached out to the other members of the Supreme Court. Marcos conveyed his warning that the very stability of the Republic was at stake in the Lansang challenge. A defeat would be catastrophic. He reminded the justices that his term was expiring in 1973, but reversal by the Supreme Court of his action would weaken the Office of the President, whoever might be occupying it by 1974.

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Fernando served as the main conduit of Marcos to the Supreme Court justices.*⁶ Fernando worked directly on Chief Justice Concepcion and Associate Justices Dizon, JBL Reyes and Makalintal.

(*6. Justice Fernando angrily denied this during a symposium at the University of San Francisco on Golden Gate Avenue. He used the word "stupid" in dismissing a question proposed to him on this point by Antonio Garcia. When I subsequently contacted him by telephone at his suite at the Sheraton Palace hotel on Market, where he had booked in the course of a few days' stop-over in San Francisco, he talked softly to me and practically begged me to correct that portion of my book. He explained that he was one of the dissenters in the decision on the Lansang case. I was almost tempted to excise this portion of the book, but I reminded myself that the records show that the decision on that case was "unanimous" and that Fernando's own brother-in-law, practising lawyer Norberto Quisumbing himself had openly talked about the role played by the good Justice in the making of that Supreme Court decision.)

Marcos sought to strengthen Fernando's hand in talking to the liberals of the Court by partially lifting the suspension of the writ in certain provinces of the Visayas and Mindanao, loudly proclaiming that there was no longer any threat of subversion in those areas. Slyly, he conveyed the message through Fernando that he would make a total lifting of the suspension of the writ a few days after the Supreme Court shall have handed down a verdict upholding Proclamation No. 889. The message was loud and clear. The high court might as well uphold him, or else the pending action would be rendered by Marcos himself as "moot and academic" by simply lifting the suspension of the writ before the Supreme Court could hand down its own ruling. That would then deprive the justices of an opportunity to show their support for Marcos and of the President of a favor to be repaid by him.

Perhaps, out of conviction or in a spirit of give and take with a President willing to demean his office, or both, the members of the Court voted unanimously to uphold the validity of the suspension of the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus. How else could the Supreme Court justices account for the fact that they relied so heavily on so-called intelligence report or evidence compiled by the army and submitted as basis for the presidential decision to suspend the writ's privileges?

Of course, champions of the Concepcion Court would most likely point out that the decision itself on the Lansang case opened a legal door of recourse for those arrested and detained under the suspension of the writ. They could, the court said, petition the Supreme Court for release. This sounded more like the Supreme Court's own way of warning Marcos that he should comply with his commitment to lift the suspension of the writ as soon as the high court shall have upheld Proclamation No. 889, or else, any of those detained persons without charges will be released by the tribunal promptly. It was Senator Lorenzo M. Tanada who took this cue from the high court. He threatened to file another case in court questioning the continued suspension of the writ.

Complying with his commitment, Marcos announced on Dec. 31, 1971, as his New Year greeting to the Filipino people that he was restoring the writ throughout the country, effective as soon as the Quezon City Court ruled on the question of the legality of the arrest without warrant of persons accused of violating the Anti-Subversion Act. The suspension, he announced, would be lifted regardless of the decision of the court. The government was merely waiting for the court to decide, he explained, so as not to make the decision

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academic before it could be handed down. The decision was handed down by Judge Felix Anover on Jan. 11, 1972, thus making the restoration of the writ also effective that date. The decision was adverse to the government, and it also adversely affected Anover when martial law was declared; he was one of the first to be canned by Marcos.

The sinister aspect of the Supreme Court decision on the Lansang case is the fact that the 1935 Constitution provided that the President, “in case of invasion, insurrection, or rebellion, or imminent danger thereof, when the public safety requires it x x x may suspend the privilege of the writ of *habeas corpus*, or place the Philippines or any part thereof under martial law.” The Supreme Court ruled that the President acted within his rights in suspending the writ on these constitutional grounds — the very same grounds enumerated by the Constitution for the imposition of martial law. The high tribunal did not bother to state, however, whether the rebellion or insurrection that goes on in the country is the kind that calls for drastic measures as the suspension of the Bill of Rights, or whether it actually jeopardizes public safety. The Court stuck to the Latin principle of *dura lex, sed lex*. (The law may be harsh, but it is the law). The Supreme Court did not take into account — a grave sin of omission to history and the Filipino people — the consequences to democracy arising from the suspension of the writ.

Marcos did take into account the significance of the high court decision in relation to his martial law powers under the Constitution. Thus, when Marcos fashioned out Proclamation No. 1081, he quoted freely from the judicial findings of the high court in the Lansang vs. Garcia case. He had decided to exploit and make hay out of the Supreme Court. He still allows the Supreme Court to function under his martial regime for only one purpose — to cloak his dictatorship with a semblance of legitimacy.

In the Lansang decision, the Supreme Court declared that it “cannot hesitate, much less refuse — when the existence of such rebellion or insurrection has been fairly established or cannot reasonably be denied — to uphold the finding of the Executive thereon, without, in effect, encroaching upon a power vested in him by the Supreme Law of the land and depriving him to this extent of such power, and therefore, without violating the Constitution and jeopardizing the very Rule of Law the Court is called upon to epitomize.”

The decision detailed the army evidence as alleged in the texts of Marcos’ Proclamation No. 889. So the main underpinning of the decision was the so-called intelligence report or evidence compiled by the military and submitted as the basis of the presidential decision to suspend the privilege of the writ of *habeas corpus*. This was actually the most unsettling feature of the *Lansang* decision.

Considered against the backdrop of the hearings on the notorious cases of the Yuyitung brothers (Quentin and Rizal) who were the publisher and editor, respectively, of the Chinese Commercial News, the Supreme Court decision became a laughing stock for the weight that it gave to the military intelligence report. The star witness in the Yuyitung hearings was an army officer who faked his name on the witness stand. He produced a bundle of documents, marked “secret,” and identified them as army intelligence “A-I” reports. He unscrambled the military abracadabra by stating that the sign “A-I” meant reports gathered

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by the army intelligence's "most reliable agents." In the middle of the trial, the army "A-I" reports collapsed. Even the Immigration Commissioner who presided over the hearings "A-I" reports. It was proved beyond reasonable doubt that the army was compelled to throw out of court the whole bunch of army intelligence evidence gathered by the army's "most reliable agents" were pure fabrications.

The army "A-I" report charged that Quintin Yuyitung went to Sapang Palay in Bulacan, north of Manila, to teach dwellers there Mao thoughts. The president of the Philippine Historical Society, priests and religious sisters who were there with Quintin testified that it was their group that invited and persuaded Quintin to do gardening with them on weekends to demonstrate to the poor in Sapang Palay the virtues of self-help. The army intelligence reported that Quintin lectured at the University of the Philippines on the virtues of communism. U.P. professors and students, including American exchange students, testified that Quintin never lectured, much less touched on Mao's regime. He was invited there to be a resource person and asked to provide his expertise on Chinese history.

According to the army "evidence," Quintin financed student demonstrations and had met with student leaders at the Manila Overseas Press Club. The student leaders mentioned in the reports were called to the stand. Most of them testified that they had seen Quintin at the hearing — for the first time. The charge that Quintin financed the student demonstrations was so silly that even the reporters present didn't bother to report it.

The army report charged that Quintin's newspaper was raising funds to promote Maoist indoctrination of the Sapang Palay poor. It was proved during the hearing that it was the Philippine Historical Society that initiated the fund drive and the funds collected by the Chinese Commercial News went into the construction of a medical clinic in Sapang Palay run by religious sisters. Before the establishment of the clinic, Sapang Palay's sick had to take a bus to Manila, a good three-or-four-hour drive, to get medical care or hospitalization.

After all the army "evidence" collapsed, the military authorities produced another report, an afterthought, that Quintin was a private banker collecting money from the Chinese in Chinatown to be sent to their relatives on the Mainland. It was so obviously a fabrication that even the professional witness hired by the army was scared and kept ducking every time defense counsel Juan T. David set his camera to take his picture.

The same military intelligence that manufactured the "dossier" on the Yuyitung brothers was the same outfit that gathered "A-I" reports, gathered by "the most reliable intelligence agents," and held out as gospel truth by Marcos before the Supreme Court. Such "A-I" report became the basis of the Supreme Court's headlong rush to hand over the civil liberties of the Filipino people to Marcos.

In the Yuyitung hearings, the defense was allowed to examine the evidence and cross-examine witnesses presented by the military — to the credit of Commissioner Edmundo Reyes. In the Lansang cases, the Supreme Court swallowed hook, line and sinker the so-called army intelligence reports. The high court accepted the military "evidence" in a closed-door session that excluded the general public, even the lawyers for petitioners Lansang, et al thought that this was a violation of the Rules of Evidence to accept as

gospel truth evidence offered by one side and not properly litigated in open hearings.

While the Supreme Court admitted the “overwhelming evidence” of Marcos, it did not even bother to take judicial notice of a very official statement of the President that would have at least cast doubt on the “evidence” then offered to support the suspension of the writ. This was the statement made by Marcos in the course of his “State of the Nation” address before a joint session of Congress on the fourth Monday of January, 1971. He said then:

“Last year, we broke the backbone of the Huk or HMB movement in Central Luzon with the capture of Faustino del Mundo, alias ‘Commander Sumulong’, and Florentino Salac, alias ‘Commander Ponting,’ and with the death of Pedro Taruc, HMB chief, during a gunbattle with government troops.

“Successes against the New People’s Army were likewise significant. We captured several NPA commanders and forced that organization to go into further hiding. Our latest intelligence reports indicate a major dissension within its ranks arising from some failures of its leadership.”

Initially, the Supreme Court showed a sign that it might just muster enough courage to strike down the suspension of the *writ*.

The old decision was rendered in the case of *Montenegros vs. Castaneda* which was an offshoot of the suspension by then President Elpidio Quirino of the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus under Proclamation No. 210 dated October 22, 1950. In the old decision, the Supreme Court washed its hands off the suspension of the writ by Quirino and assigned sole responsibility to him for the consequences of his acts. The Court declared in the *Montenegro* case that, in accordance with the doctrine of separation of powers among the three branches of government, it may not look into the act of the President in suspending the privilege of the writ, pointing out that the President is in the best position to know whether the constitutional grounds for the suspension exist. The *Montenegro* decision was bad. For it placed beyond judicial scrutiny the act of the President of suspending the privileges of the writ.

However, in reversing the *Montenegro* doctrine by inquiring very superficially into the grounds availed of by Marcos for Proclamation No. 889 and eventually affirming the constitutionality of the suspension of the writ, the Concepcion Court even took a backward step in its role as guardian of the civil liberties of the Filipinos. What the Concepcion Court certainly did was to put its stamp of approval on Marcos’ suspension of the writ, while not committing itself on whether the President’s grounds for suspension were right or wrong. The Supreme Court, in refusing to say whether the President was right or wrong in suspending the privileges of the writ, placed the Filipino people completely at the mercy of the President and declared that the President had acted within his rights, thereby delivering all liberties into Marcos’ less than immaculate hands.

Had the Supreme Court reaffirmed its old decision and said that it had no say, that it might not inquire into the grounds for the President’s suspension of the writ, invoking the doctrine of separation — of absolute separation — of powers, Marcos would have had to face adverse public opinion about his act alone. The Supreme Court even supported him. And thus, the cases that grew out of the *Miranda* bombing became an ugly and terrible reversal of the U.S. *Miranda* case.

The Conjugal Dictatorship of Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos

Shortly before the Plaza Miranda incident, Marcos' seemingly inexorable march towards dictatorship was signaled from Malacanang with the ouster of Speaker Jose B. Laurel, Jr. from the premier House post. A political opponent, but always a comrade in their unending struggle against presidential threats to civil liberties, Congressman Justiniano S. Montano, of Cavite, southwest of Manila, also fell from his pivotal post as House minority leader.

The ouster of Laurel and Montano was a well-executed Malacanang plot. It was held out to be a necessary consequence of the fund scandal that rocked the House of Representatives when Marcos surreptitiously transferred P69 million to the outlay of the lower chamber for use by congressmen in getting pro-Marcos candidates for seats in the Constitutional Convention. Laurel and Montano were accused by their respective party colleagues of allocating the lion's share unto themselves — not necessarily for their own personal enrichment. However, no one ever believed that line when Marcos signaled the replacement of Laurel by Congressman Cornelio T. Villareal, of Capiz province.

If Laurel and Montano had been in their respective vantage positions when martial law was declared, they would not have so easily submitted to the disbandment of Congress. They would have convened Congress on Jan. 24, 1973, as mandated by the Constitution. As so well figured out by Marcos, Villareal was not made of the stuff of a Laurel or Montano.

The ouster of Montano as House minority leader was very unfortunate. It was even maneuvered by the so-called "Marcos Liberals" among the 17-man Liberal group in the House of Representatives. When the "young Turks" within his thinning LP group called on Montano to resign his post as minority leader, the veteran Cavite lawmaker said he would do so only if nine of his colleagues would vote against him. By a count made by a House reporter, Feliciano H. Magno, only Congressmen Ramon V. Mitra, Jr., Jose V. Yap, Raul Daza, Moises Escueta, John H. Osmena, Jose de Venecia, Neptali Gonzales and Ramon H. Felipe voted to depose the "Tatang," one vote shy of the nine required. Congressmen Alfredo Lamen and Francisco Lecaroz stood by the Cavite politico. However, when the counting was being conducted by Osmena, Mitra sidled up to him and "ordered" him to report nine as having voted against Montano. Mitra eventually succeeded Montano as minority leader and went on to be elected senator in the November, 1971, elections.

The Laurel-Montano ouster was not the beginning of the fall from public disregard of Congress as a governmental institution. It merely served to heighten, however, the urgency of Marcos' operation to erode the standing of Congress as a rival seat of power. Rivalry or competition from another corridor of state power was something Marcos told himself he would not be able to stand for long.

Marcos' task of eroding the power of Congress from his own vantage point as President was rather easy. He himself had set the tone of corruption in Congress when he held power therein as Senate President for more than two years.

I was still covering him as a Senate reporter for the Manila Chronicle when I observed how Senate President Marcos bloated the budget of the Senate and of the Commission on Appointments so that he could draw funds therefrom for his upcoming battle with President Macapagal. As early as that period, he was already destroying Congress, at least his half of it, as an institution.

The Conjugal Dictatorship of Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos

With his second term well on the way, President Marcos started singing a different tune. In his "State of the Nation" address before a joint session of Congress in January, 1970, he boasted about the improved peace and order situation, while he warned that the general situation was like a "social volcano" that was about to erupt. The volcano virtually erupted on the faces of Marcos and his wife on January 26, 1970, minutes after his speech before Congress. Demonstrators, egged by agitators, and harassed by the Constabulary riot control troopers, threw their placards at the President and the First Lady, missing them by a hair-breadth as they prepared to enter their limousine.

This was followed closely on January 30, 1970, by a more riotous movement that ended at the gates of Malacanang which the demos tried to ram with a firetruck commandeered from Manila firemen preparing to "shoot" at them with water hoses. What followed was the so-called "Battle of Mendiola" which pitted young boys and girls, armed with bamboo sticks and stones, facing Armalite-wielding "shock troops" of Marcos from the Presidential Guard Battalion. It was a massacre.*7

(*7. Refer to Hermie Rotea's "I Saw Them Aim and Fire!")

Since that time the whiff of revolution became clear and un-mistakable. But very few knew that Marcos was instigating the unfolding revolutionary drama. Military psychological warfare experts, employing trained Constabulary and air force personnel, started cooking the books to make the data on the impending revolution conform to the desires of President Marcos. The psy-war experts staged, or instigated, violent demonstrations with only slight variations in time, alternating between 5 p.m. and 9 p.m. They established a pattern of early evening demonstrations, which in later months became more violent, with "demos" resorting to vandalism. By the third quarter of 1971, especially after the Plaza Miranda grenade-bombing, the "escalation" included sporadic bombings, most of them being just too sophisticated as to leave no room for doubt on their authorship. While Marcos was fighting his legal battle in the Supreme Court on the constitutionality of his suspension of the writ a pipe of the NAWASA (National Waterworks and Sewerage Authority) was badly damaged by a home-made bomb, the gardens of two Nacionalista solons, Senator Jose J. Roy and Congressman Eduardo Conjuango, Jr., were damaged by explosives thrown by unknown hands.

The plot and pattern were so symmetrical and neatly executed that none in Manila, except Malacanang and the Supreme Court, believed that it was the Communists who did it and not the psy-war experts of the military. None was even bruised during that "terroristic" bombing allegedly by the subversives in the Greater Manila area.

"The army psycho experts," quipped senatorial candidate and Rep. Mitra, Jr., "should at least have seen to it that a dog or puppy got hurt in their bombing operations of the gardens of NP solons to give some plausibility to their ruse."

Elements of the Presidential Guard Battalion were among the most efficient infiltrators and instigators of the student demonstrations that usually turned violent.

While Marcos' psy-war experts and "shock troops" were "implementing" the

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alleged Communist “terror plan and succeeding in creating a situation of extreme anarchy in Manila to justify the declaration of martial law, two major developments in the Constitutional Convention somehow derailed Marcos’ plans. There were early indications that the 320-man Convention might approve a resolution to include in the proposed New Constitution a provision that would ban any former President, his wife and relatives by affinity or consanguinity to the fourth degree. This became known as the ban Marcos resolution. There was even stronger indications that the Convention would preserve the existing presidential system and throw out a Marcos-espoused shift to the parliamentary form of government.

Now, martial law could not be imposed by Marcos, who always wants to cloak his every unorthodox or unconstitutional moves with legitimacy, with the unresolved problems in the Constitutional Convention. Without a shift to the parliamentary system, Marcos would be barred from further seeking reelection to the premier post of the land under the terms of the 1935 Constitution. In order to continue in power, he would have to field Imelda in the presidential elections of November, 1973. He could not accept a situation where Imelda would be in the forefront of political mudslinging, an expected bitter fight whose results either would be unacceptable to Marcos. If Imelda loses, the two of them would be out of power; if she wins, Marcos would be the unhappiest ex-President.

The possibility of the “ban-Marcos resolution” being adopted by the Convention presented President Marcos with even darker prospects for a contemplated “legal” martial law. If the ban resolution should be approved and Marcos declares martial law as the only means to stay in power, the resort to that drastic move would be completely devoid of any semblance of legality and thereby appear as a naked power-grab.

No. Marcos would have none of the plans of the Constitutional Convention. Marcos assigned Presidential Assistant De Vega the most delicate task of maneuvering in the Convention to make the sovereign gathering conform to his wishes.

At about that time, an old and respected delegate, a retired Ambassador, began exposing a Convention “payola” launched in Malacanang Palace on January 6, 1971, by no less than President Marcos and the First Lady. The objective, according to Quintero, was to win the Convention delegates into voting for the parliamentary form of government. Quintero was so maligned that he later on found himself facing charges instead of the bribe-givers.

Anyway, De Vega succeeded in his mission to manipulate the Convention. The perceptive presidential assistant got his due recognition from the First Lady sometime in November, 1972, during a conference between the President and the military leaders. At the time, the generals were gloating over the “wind-falls” that martial law has brought unto their lives. The First Lady interrupted the meeting to quip: *Pasalamat kayo at mayroong Gimo de Vega. Kung Hindi siya nag-maniobra sa Con-Con upang matalo ang ‘ban-Marcos’ resolution, wala tayong ‘1081’ ngayon.* (You people should be thankful that we have a Gimo De Vega. If he had not successfully maneuvered in the Constitutional Convention, there won’t be any martial regime that you are enjoying today.)

The maneuver of Secretary De Vega in defeating the ban-Marcos move and obtaining Convention approval of the shift to the parliamentary system was simple enough: massive spending to buy off wavering delegates and to stay

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"bought." De Vega's resources were unlimited. He had the full authority of President Marcos and the First Lady to draw any amount he needed from the "special fund" set up for him by Internal Revenue Commissioner Misael P. Vera. In fairness to De Vega, he accounted for every centavo he disbursed to the delegates-for-sale. And made sure that the error of Delegate Venancio Yaneza in withholding a P5,000-envelope intended for Delegate Quintero was not repeated. It was said at the time that Quintero received an empty envelope in the presence of the President in Malacanang on January 6, 1971.

The waves stirred by De Vega's "Operation Con-Con" was a spectacle to behold. Lousy with money, the delegates would squander their ill-gotten wealth in the plush restaurants and nightclubs, some in the legally-tolerated casinos along Roxas Boulevard. Some would gamble with just pieces of paper that, when presented by the casino operators to De Vega's lieutenants in the Convention, were immediately redeemed. The delegates were paid in full for selling their votes to Marcos. This is probably the reason Marcos has no qualms of conscience at all when he maintains in an indefinite suspended animation the interim National Assembly where the Con-Con delegates are supposed to be members, too.

The ban Marcos resolution was really a most popular proposal. All things being equal, it really should have been adopted despite the paid and loud protestations of Delegate Antonio Tupaz that it was perpetual condemnation without trial of an entire family (the Marcoses) to the ignominy of perpetual disqualification from the presidency. All logic pointed to the ban-Marcos resolution's approval. The spirit of the proposal was itself enshrined in the Constitution that the President should hold no more than two terms.

Like the ban-Marcos proposal, the proposal to retain the presidential system stood a strong chance of being approved overwhelmingly. A total of 106 delegates ran and won on the platform of "no reelection for Marcos" and "retention of the presidential system." Later, they were joined by 97 more delegates. Originally, therefore, only about 100 delegates favored the parliamentary system and rejected the presidential reelection ban.

But the anti-Marcos forces lost in the final vote because of the cockiness of delegates like Jose Mari Velez, the over-confidence of others like Sedfrey Ordenez. Most of them thought that, by embarrassing Marcos on the Quintero expose, they would get all the delegates to think that Marcos is such a repugnant and repulsive man that all delegates would just vote for the ban resolution and the presidential system. They failed to reckon with the corrupt mind and unbridled appetite for money of the unprincipled delegates and the vast resources made available by Ferdinand and Imelda to De Vega.

As Gimo was maneuvering brilliantly in the Constitutional Convention, Marcos kept hammering without let-up on the Communist bugaboo. Five days after the Supreme Court handed down its decision on the Lansang case, on December 11, 1971, Marcos summoned 1,000 newly-elected officials to listen to his lecture on the alleged Communist plans for the rural areas. He told them that the subversives have established "rural sanctuaries in the provinces in a move to expand their influence and pave the way for a Communist take-over of the country."

"It is now obvious that the subversives are implementing the original program of the Communist Party of the Philippines to erode the faith and

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confidence of the people in their leaders and government so that they will no longer resist the Communists," the President said.

By the end of the year 1971, Marcos had become an expert in manipulating Congress, utilization of the armed forces, management of the news and mobilization of the barrios. The Supreme Court also opened itself to Marcos' full exploitation upon the promulgation of the *Lansang vs. Garcia* decision.

There was only one more dramatic thing to do before Marcos would declare his well-infrastructured martial regime. The demonstrations and terror bombings were not being swallowed whole by a skeptical public. Some flavor of mystery had to embellish the tale of a revolutionary situation gripping the country.

Marcos Bureau of "Plant" Industry went to work. This time the psycho war apparatus of Marcos geared itself for the most difficult task in "crisis management" of the country. The armed forces weapons supply center at Camp Aguinaldo and the news media were called into play.

First, it was a submarine. Then, it was a "mystery ship" which allegedly unloaded military hardware and other supplies, including foodstuffs and subversive documents, supposedly for the New People's Army.

The report about the mysterious submarine allegedly came from Col. Rosendo Cruz, with headquarters in Camp Upi, Gamu, Isabela, on May 30, 1972, unloaded its cargo, then sailed away on June 1, supposedly with some passengers. The cargo allegedly discharged by the unidentified U-boat consisted of some 200 passengers, firearms and other supplies.

On June 30, or exactly one month to the day after the reported submarine landing, Brig. Gen. Fidel V. Ramos, PC chief, made a flying visit to Palanan, but failed to get confirmation on the alleged submarine landing. The PC then wrote off the intelligence report about the submarine as without basis.

Then came another intelligence report also from Palanan. The report was about a "mystery ship" marked MB Karagatan" which supposedly dropped anchor off Digoyo Point, Palanan, on July 2, 1972. The name "Karagatan" appeared to have been painted over the words, "No. 18 Hakuryu Maru" which seemed to be the old name of the vessel. The "mystery ship" unloaded shortly after midnight of July 4 military hardware, including the latest type of automatic weapons, and other supplies.

The unloading operation was still going on when a seaborne PC patrol arrived at the scene and proceeded to board the "mystery ship." The seaborne patrol found the vessel seemingly abandoned because there was nobody aboard. However, the members of the patrol also found that there were still substantial quantities of supplies aboard the ship. It was surmised that the members of the ship's crew were in the process of unloading the cargo when the PC seaborne patrol arrived at the scene and unwittingly disrupted the unloading operation. When the PC seaborne patrol was trying to go back to the motorboat to head for shore, the soldiers were fired upon by unidentified armed men deployed along the beach. The volume of fire from the beach was such that it could have been delivered only by a force much larger than the seaborne patrol. The outnumbered PC soldiers were pinned down aboard the "mystery ship."

Meanwhile, a PC combat patrol led by Lt. Edgar Aglipay of the 119th PC Company was dispatched to the scene of the reported landing. While Aglipay

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and his men were reconnoitering the area, they were fired upon by unidentified armed men whom they immediately presumed to be NPA guerrillas. Some members of the PC combat patrol were reported to have been wounded in the sharp skirmish. A report from Bng. Gen. Tranquilino Paranis, commander of Task Force Saranay, said that the PC patrol found scattered along the beach some raincoats, hundreds of empty sacks, food supplies and documents in Chinese characters.

Reinforcements were sent for both for the seaborne patrol which was pinned down in the “mystery ship and for the beleaguered combat patrol of Lt. Aglipay along the beach. Two Philippine air force helicopters sped to the scene with augmentation troops as well as food supplies and ammunition. One of the helicopters was fired upon as it approached the combat area and one of its rotor blades was hit by ground fire. The chopper, piloted by Lts. Manecio Reventar and Domingo Lagos, was able to limp back to its base in Echague, Isabela, where the headquarters of Task Force Saranay are located.

When the smoke of “battle” cleared, only the government could account for its casualties. There was no sign of any casualty on the part of the alleged NPA rebels, despite the government claim that the NPAs retreated to the forests in disarray. However, the government claimed to have captured the following:

- More than 500 M-14 and M-16 rifles, some Garands and Browning Automatic rifles;
- More than 60,000 rounds of ammo for both M-14 and M-16 rifles;
- Thirty boxes of M-79 ammo for grenade launchers; and
- An NPA camp with 15 huts.

It was claimed that the guns captured by the government forces bore no patent number, no name or manufacturer, and no country of origin.

Naturally, there were no identification marks on the captured weapons. They were obliterated at special headquarters set up by elements of the Presidential Guard Battalion in Digoyo to where the weapons were taken direct from the AFP Supply Center.

The “large force” that gave battle to the PC patrols were actually elements of the PGB. They were assigned to do the “planting” job. Being the elite of the military, the PGB personnel dispatched to Digoyo to set up another infrastructure for the declaration of martial law naturally proved better in combat with the less proficient PC combat patrol of Gen. Paranis. Most of the members of the PGB unit assigned to the Digoyo special operations are still alive, some of them have been killed in operations against the NPAs in the Bicol region. Some of the “Digoyo veterans” among the PGB personnel have talked to me about their Palanan adventures.

The “landing” of weapons and ammo by the Presidential Guard Battalion was eventually tied up with the faking of an ambush of the official car of Secretary of National Defense Juan Ponce Enrile on the night of September 22, 1972. PGB troopers who “ambushed” Enrile on Wack Wack Road in Mandaluyong, Rizal, used ammo taken from the same stockpile that was made available for the “Digoyo operations” to lay down the final excuse for President Marcos’ declaration of martial law in the Philippines.

The “crisis management” *apparat* of Marcos even implemented a project that called for weather modification in order that extraordinary heavy rainfall

would hit the Greater Manila area during the months of July, August and September. The project was, in a sense very successful. However, heavy rains hit not only the Greater Manila area, but the entire island of Luzon in what is now known as the catastrophic July-August floods of 1972. The Philippines' worst storm season in 50 years inflicted serious damage to agriculture, communications and homes.

Earlier, in 1968, the "crisis management" apparatus of Marcos embarked on one of Marcos' original plans for setting up an intricate web of excuses for the essential imposition of martial law by 1972. This involved the projected armed aggressive involvement of the Philippine government in the efforts of the heirs of the Sultan of Sulu (Kiram family) to recover the rich Sabah territory from the Federation of Malaysia.

It was a two-pronged program. The projected aggressive recovery of the disputed territory could itself create an emergency situation for the entire country to constitute a sufficient reason for the proclamation of martial law.

But Marcos was not going to be entirely averse to the actual addition of Sabah to Philippine territory. At the time, he was envisioning the former British crown colony as the Philippines' own glorious colony, to form part of an empire over which he would rule personally for life and through his son, Ferdinand, Jr., even from the grave.

The Borneo recovery program was codenamed "Project Jabidah." But the project fell not only of its own corrupt weight, but also because of the ancillary corruption, quite naturally involving the disbursement of funds from the defense department.

But the worse was yet to come. Marcos had to answer a congressional inquiry. Subsequently, the government of the Federation of Malaysia, which had infiltrated "Project Jabidah", without having to blow the cover of its infiltration agents, was accorded the most official confirmation on the program of Marcos to invade, with Muslim special troopers, and eventually annex Sabah with the Philippine Republic. The confirmation came in the denunciations made on the floor of Congress by Senator Aquino, Jr. and the subsequent investigations conducted by congressional committees.

Without admitting its counter-attack on Marcos, the government of Malaysia not only broke off diplomatic relations with the Marcos government, but also instigated the Muslims to rebel against the central Manila government, reviving in them the age-old Muslim opposition to Christian domination and other valid grievances of the Filipino Muslims against the central government in Manila. This came at about the time when the Mindanao Independent Movement was formed, with Datu Udtog Matalam as the moving force. It has since been taken over by younger elements of the more radical variety.

Now that the internal problems involving the Muslim Independence Movement have tied Marcos' hands, there is less emphasis on his plan for a union with Sabah. It is unlikely that the military would want to jump to his bidding on such a major military undertaking, nor that it has anything remotely like the military strength for such a venture. As it is, the military cannot even cope with the rebellion of the Muslims. But, one shudders to think of the possibility of a Marcos conquering Sabah for a new empire in Southeast Asia. The entire plot seems like a nightmare, but other dictators have had equally wild dreams before.

Chapter VI

The Other Villains

The unerring judgment of history would easily condemn Ferdinand E. Marcos with having, at the discerning age of 55, pulled the trigger that snuffed out the life of democracy in the Philippines by his declaration of martial law on September 21, 1972.

Whatever might be the attenuating circumstances, history will hold Marcos accountable for the dictatorship (circa: 1972-197?) that inexorably followed his proclamation of martial law. To be sure, Marcos is already compiling volumes addressed to historians to show that his decision of September 21, 1972, was a “great and heroic” one for the Philippines.

There is very little dispute indeed about the validity of an oft repeated statement that before the proclamation of martial law, the Philippines was a “sick society.”

In his second book, *Notes on the New Society*, published on the occasion of the first anniversary of the martial regime, Marcos stated:

“I am, to be sure, accountable to history for 21 September 1972 when I signed the proclamation placing the entire Philippines under martial law. And yet solely and completely responsible as I am for this decision, I cannot escape the sense that events, the thrusts of history, and even the will of the people, somehow guided my hand to the deed.”

True, the Philippines was in such an awful mess that the common man despaired over the situation. It was a challenge to the country’s leadership to avail of the bargaining process so necessary in a democratic society to harness all the energy coming from the various sectors of the national fabric. Marcos did not see it fit to accept the challenge. He chose the path of authoritarianism, with an eye single to perpetuating himself in power. He preferred to use the boundless energy of his people as an excuse to declare martial law over the entire country.

Indeed, there were many facets of Philippine life that “guided” Marcos’ hand to declare martial law. In their totality, however, they did not constitute a compelling reason for a man — and his No. 1 woman — to clamp down a dictatorial rule over the Filipino people.

Long before Marcos declared martial law, distribution of wealth and income in the Philippines was lop-sided. It was and is still the central problem of the nation. Such was the situation even before Marcos became President of his country in 1965. However, no President before Marcos ever thought of callously exploiting this situation to justify a resort to martial law.

While the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few became a favorite Marcos topic to rally the impoverished behind him and his plans to seize power, Marcos himself got frantically busy acquiring wealth from the advantageous perch of the presidency so he could belong to the nation’s grouping at the top of the pyramid controlling the bulk of wealth in the Philippines.

In other areas of national life, there was much to be desired. The press was free but often irresponsible. The courts were slow, too technical and sometimes

corrupt. Congress was a do-nothing assembly whose members were more concerned with getting reelected, making lots of money and taking care of private armies. The students and labor leaders had taken to demonstrations and rallies and marches, marked by inflammatory rhetoric and sometimes marred by violence. There was a system of separation of powers among the three branches of government, with its built-in device of checks and balances. A President impatient to get things done his way viewed this inter-play of forces and interests as exercises in non-government. There were elections that most everybody called a mockery because of the employment of guns, goons and gold.

Admittedly, the undue concentration of wealth in the hands of a few was at the core of the entire gamut of problems facing the nation. Massive poverty, unemployment, malnutrition, crime and disease, political corruption, agrarian and urban unrest, ignorance and superstition, are among its most obvious manifestations.

Social order has been a myth in some regions ever since the end of World War II. Private armies, led by notorious political warlords close to the center of power, terrorized the people in the provinces as late as 1972. Gun-smuggling was an open scandal.

Graft was rampant and devotion to public service an exceptional virtue. A remarkable aspect of the political process in the Philippines is that the principal issue in every national election since the Philippines became independent in 1946 was "graft and corruption." Corruption permeated not only the government but every aspect of the national life, including private business and industry, the professions, the labor unions and the mass media.

Though there were some political figures whose integrity could not be doubted, the run-of-the-mill politician was neither credible nor respectable. Corrupt, demagogic, and extremely partisan, he furnished a cogent reason for radical change.

Even delegates to the sovereign Constitutional Convention called to introduce sweeping and fundamental structural changes in the government and society proved no better than the politicians in Congress. They accepted bribes, too.

The "freest press in Asia" which became the distinction of Philippine mass media was irresponsible and corrupt. This indictment is directed more at the publishers and not the working journalists who tried to make Manila's free-swinging mass media lively and readable, and represent various shades of public opinion. Owned by oligarchs and vested interests, pre-martial law mass media were definitely used by their owners and publishers to espouse political views and preserve or expand political and economic interests. To own and operate a tri-media (newspaper, radio and TV chain) establishment became a consuming ambition of the wealthy and the powerful who have learned their lessons from the late Don Eugenio Lopez, Sr. and his brother, Fernando, presidential aide Hans Menzi, the Sorianos (Jose and Andres), and the Elizaldes. Marcos himself belatedly (in relation to his constitutional term in office) established overnight his own tri-media (Daily Express and the Kanlaon Broadcasting System's radio-TV network) through Roberto S. Benedicto with funds borrowed from the Philippine National Bank, of which Benedicto was president at the time the huge borrowings were made. The tri-media proved to

be a potent weapon for waging political campaigns and extorting concessions from any occupant of Malacanang. As for the working press, a number of newspapermen were known to be on the payroll of ranking officials in government and of key figures in private business. Some of them became scandalously affluent. While insuring their economic security, most newsmen, however, managed to render distinct public service by directing the spotlight on multi-million peso deals and big-time rackets which seemed to proliferate with every new Administration.

The kindest thing that might be said on Marcos' declaration of martial law was that the various forces at work in the Philippines, which are normal under a democratic set up, lend themselves for exploitation by a man looking for any number of excuses to cloak his seizure of power with any semblance of legality.

The "freest press in Asia" no doubt contributed greatly to the forces that goaded Marcos to run berserk and declare martial law. Perhaps reflecting the general sentiment of the people at the time, the mass media practically told Marcos that he no longer fits into the social milieu even before the expiration of his constitutional term. He was that bad. A skunk of the first order. The din of criticism against Marcos was deafening.

In his own book, *Today's Revolution: Democracy*, Marcos reproduced portions of editorials and columns in the *Manila Chronicle*, the *Philippines Free Press* and the *Weekly Nation* which he considered provocative enough for him to impose martial law. He wrote:

"I will let the citizen-reader judge for himself whether the supreme end of free and untrammelled criticism, the illumination of events and the search for truth, is served by these remarks from a column in the *Manila Chronicle*:

'Finally, Mr. Marcos, playing the favorite trick of every scoundrel, poses as a martyr and tells all of us that in spite of constant attacks on his honest, hardworking and great person, he will allow the press its freedom and will not do anything to abridge freedom of speech.

'First of all, if Mr. Marcos feels he is that powerful and summons that much popular support, why doesn't he try putting an end to freedom of speech in this country?

'The answer to this question is obviously that even in his insufferable arrogance, Mr. Marcos realizes that the Filipinos value freedom of speech as much as they value life and if they did not surrender this to the succeeding Spanish, American and Japanese conquerors, they certainly will not surrender to him.'

"Or take these editorial from the same paper.

'As President of a supposedly civilized Republic, Mr. Marcos should not adopt the tactics and manners of a blackmailer. As a lawyer, he knows the value of a dossier, and he knows that to use it against any man is simply to threaten him.'

"And after the Plaza Miranda grenade-throwing incident:

'But. . . the moral responsibility for the nameless disgrace that fell on the Filipinos the other night must be traced to none other than President Marcos ... it was he who set the tone of intransigence in the current electoral campaign . . .

' . . . The President must answer, but when he does, must bear in mind the pain and the agony of the victims of the violence which he, in the privacy of his conscience and in the inclosure of the confessional, must admit he alone has generated.' x x x

"There are other instances, so innumerable that I can pick a few at random:

'On the other hand, how can he bear being President — and the most hated or despised man in the country. If we have to stand him, okay, but how could he stand himself? He'd smell. And if he smelt to the nation, how could he close his nose to the odor? One of the punishments of hell so vividly described in spiritual retreats, which aim at grace through terror, is the subjection of the damned to all the Gadawful smells that the fanatical imagination can conjure up. Marcos would smell to high heavens, if he did not earn the respect of the people instead of their hatred and contempt.'

(Philippines FreePress)

"Or:

'President Marcos is not an ordinary politician. He and his Queen Elizabethan wife are a pair of power-grabbers. The duo are crazed with an almost Sybaritic dream for power and material benefits. What are a few dead citizens and mangled peers? What is to them the fate of wives of senators who may never walk again? Our photographer may lose an eye in the process of public service. He is Juanito Gullas. Can the suspension of the writ assuage the hurt of the widow and ten children of Ben Roxas of the Manila Times?' *1

(*1. Ben Roxas, a photographer, was one of those killed in the Plaza Miranda grenade-bombing.)

"The last passage is from the Weekly Nation, owned and published by the father-in-law of the president of the opposition party." *2

(*2. The publisher was J. Amado Araneta who now lives in exile in New York.)

And yet most of the mass media owners and writers, and other contending forces all helped, and contributed money generously to Marcos' campaign for the presidency in 1965, and in 1969. They did for Marcos in 1965 and 1969 the very things that, in 1970 through 1972, the Malacanang occupant interpreted as a conspiracy to overthrow the Republic. Their actions from 1970 through 1972 admittedly far exceeded their efforts for Marcos in 1965 and 1969. Perhaps, the greater intensity of their pronouncements and actuations were called in view of their perception that Marcos won't give up Malacanang easily — and now he doesn't want to give it up at all.

Marcos even sought and obtained the electoral support of the Moscow-oriented Hukbalahap rebels for the 1965 and 1969 presidential campaigns.

All these groups rallied behind his battle cry "This Nation Can Be Great Again." Little did they realize that it was the same battle cry of Hitler before he burned the reichstag and rode the autobahn to Germany's dictatorship.

When the diverse groups which supported Marcos started either collecting the Marcos IOUs or pressing him for the vital government reforms needed to make the nation great again, the President cried that they were either in rebellion or were constituting themselves into pressure groups around the presidency. He ungratefully rejected them in this wise:

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“The presidency is not designed for enduring friendships, for it attracts temporary allies. And the sentiments that the Office generates depend on favors that it confers.

“It is easy to put this down as the curse of our political system, but only the man who has become President knows that the Presidency must avail itself of the talents, skills, and influences at hand in order to pursue a policy or implement a national project.”

Marcos tried hard to throw off the accusation that he was an ingrate in his relationship with Don Eugenio Lopez. Without the Lopez millions and tri-media which went all-out for Marcos in the 1965 battle for the presidency against Macapagal, Marcos would have met a sudden political death in that pivotal electoral contest. And the first thing Marcos and Imelda did was to nail down Eugenio Lopez, and his brother, Vice President Fernando Lopez, “the biggest oligarchs among oligarchs blocking government reforms.”

The fatal mistake of the Lopezes in their dealings with Marcos was that they assumed that the Ilocano politician would turn against his benefactors. So, they simply went about twisting Marcos’ arm for government concessions so necessary for the expansion of their politico-economic empire. They tried to avail of their political influence even under the Marcos I era to further their economic horizons without even hinting to Ferdinand and Imelda that they would have a “share” in their expanding enterprises.

Quid pro quo was the principle by which Marcos started operating from the vantage point of the presidency. I give that you may give. He was not adverse to granting government concessions provided that he got a substantial kick-back later on. This was the way he dealt with all those favor-seekers or temporary allies attracted by the presidency.

The Lopezes would have none of this give and take arrangement. Besides, most of their enterprises were closed family corporations that could not admit someone like Marcos who could gobble the entire Lopez clan overnight. Even Eugenio (Geny) Lopez Jr. who had started taking active command of the Lopez business empire by 1965 took the position that the Lopezes have already given so much to Marcos before the elections and even after his ascension to Malacanang.

“No,” Geny once said, “we should not yield any more to that s.o.b.”

Marcos stood his ground. The President confided to Secretary Clave that he was declaring war on the Lopezes. He outlined the pattern of attack that would be followed against the Lopezes. Marcos had to resort to this because he knew very well that the Malacanang reporters would deal with Clave in digging out background materials for the Palace onslaught against the Lopezes. Press Secretary Tatad was too unsophisticated, too shallow to handle the kind of propaganda war Marcos had in mind waging against the Lopez oligarchy.

The thrust of the onslaught against the Lopezes was going to be a take-off from the attack which a former President, Diosdado P. Macapagal, waged against the Lopez empire. In 1962, Macapagal pinned the label of “vested interest on the Lopezes. Marcos, in 1971, decided to stigmatize the Lopezes as constituting an oligarchy exercising undue influence on the political authority, i.e. President Marcos. He would borrow the lines of Aristotle and Plato

to the effect that oligarchy and democracy are conflicting forms of government; that the historic conflict between oligarchy and democracy is over political privileges of wealth, the rights of property and the protection of special interests. He would label the Lopez oligarchy as the very antithesis of Philippine democracy. Marcos would harangue the Lopez oligarchy's pursuit of a political culture in the country that equates freedom with self-aggrandizement, and the politics of participation, so essential in a democracy, with cornering of privilege. He would vilify the Lopezes with permeating their oligarchic values through the control of the means of mass communication, such as the Manila Chronicle, the daily newspaper, and the three television channels and 21 radio stations which constitute the Lopez tri-media complex. He would crucify the Lopezes for utilizing the mass media as a weapon to make government a convenient scapegoat for the social economic ills of the country which the oligarchic society had spawned in order to blackmail the presidency for more and greater privileges and concessions.

The epic Marcos-Lopez war was on. There was nothing that either Clave or I, or the two of us combined, could do to make the two giants call off the headlong confrontation. Marcos announced that the presidency would be utilized by the Lopezes as conduit for the entrenchment of the oligarchs; the Lopezes fired back that Marcos was raising an imaginary windmill in order to conceal his real plans of setting up a dictatorial government.

What followed are miscalculations after miscalculations on the part of both antagonistic parties. Vice President Lopez resigned his position as Secretary of Agriculture and National Resources in the Marcos Cabinet. Marcos didn't figure on the Vice President exemplifying the Spanish delicadeza by resigning. But, when Lopez did resign, Marcos readily accepted it, saying that he would have fired Lopez if the Vice President had not done so.

The Lopezes resorted to the time-tested weapon of using their tri-media establishment to mercilessly attack Marcos for what he really is — a corrupt, abusive and arrogant political President. In the Manila Chronicle, cartoonist Liborio "Gat" Gatbonton created a series of cartoons all directed at Marcos, asking such questions as "Who is the richest man in Asia today?" or "Who gets all those kickbacks from government loans?" In the process, the epic political confrontation between Marcos and Lopez spilled out to rain darts and arrows, too, on the First Lady, Mrs. Marcos.

Largely on account of Imelda's prodding, Marcos pressed on his attack against the Lopezes. Actually, the initial Marcos blast and ensuing follow-up assaults on the Lopez bastion by Marcos were pressed on the President by his meddling wife. The talk was that Marcos personally did not wish to turn against the Lopezes and be branded an ingrate. However, Imelda was insistent. She wanted the Lopezes destroyed; their continued operation and flaunting of their king-maker role was a constant reminder to her of the humiliation she had to go through to get Fernando Lopez to team up with Marcos in the 1965 presidential election campaign. The Marcos onslaught against the Lopezes was, therefore, an act of propitiation for the many sins committed of infidelity against Imelda in the pursuit of Ferdinand's desire for the satisfaction of his genitalia.

The ferocity of Marcos' crackdown on the Lopez empire was in itself the product of a miscalculation. Originally, Marcos figured that the Lopezes would

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raise the white flag, or at least beat a hasty retreat. On the contrary, Marcos' war merely served to further incense the Lopezes, the politico-economic oligarchy which no incumbent President ever dared before to fight openly. Marcos issued reams of denunciatory statements through the Malacanang press office. All of a sudden, he even became accessible to Palace reporters for afternoon "news briefings" in which he mouthed his anti-Lopez oligarchy propaganda. The most he could really do against the Lopezes was to send internal revenue agents and government auditors to look at the business books of the Lopez enterprises.

Propaganda-wise, it was evident from the very start that Marcos was on the losing end. The mass media would no longer swallow his line; his credibility had sunk to its lowest ebb. On the other hand, the Lopez oligarchy found an ally in the *Manila Times* and *Daily Mirror* publications, whose publishers, editors and columnists have been exposing Marcos' shenanigans in his high office long before the outbreak of the Marcos-Lopez war. Imelda bluntly charged that Joaquin "Chino" P. Roces, the *Times* publisher, had struck an alliance with the Lopezes because the *Manila Chronicle* had agreed to buy the excess newsprint supply of the *Manila Times Publishing Company* at free market dollar rates. It was, of course, a shallow accusation.

"We will crush the Lopez oligarchy to pieces!" President Marcos once boasted to a large delegation of "workers" from Tondo. Actually, the group was made up of jobless persons carted by Congressmen Francisco G. Reyes, a Nacionalista, at the request of Presidential Assistant Guillermo C. De Vega. Marcos wanted to prove that the working class was behind him in his fight against the oligarchs. It was a useless show of force that cost Congressman Reyes no less than P10,000.00 (\$1,300.00) to organize.

Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos have spouted so much venom against the late Eugenio Lopez in their mad desire to "destroy" the man who was mainly responsible for the elevation of the Marcoses to Malacanang.

I hold no brief for the late Filipino tycoon; I don't owe him that much to serve as his defender. However, I cannot help but recall at this stage that, before the political quarrel of the century in the Philippines, Marcos had nothing but praise for Lopez. In the numerous speeches that Marcos had delivered in the various Lopez-sponsored affairs (to which he demanded that he be the guest speaker), the President invariably praised the old man for expanding the country's industrial horizons "without borrowing a single centavo from the government."

For instance, on August 3, 1968, he spoke at the inauguration of Meralco's Gardner Station No. 1 in Sucat, Paranaque, Rizal. He said then that the Gardner station was a "testimonial to the aggressiveness and capability of Filipino entrepreneur." He stressed that it is a measure of what a group of Filipino investors can do.

"Meralco's expansion should be a model in this country . . . where there is less government financial participation and the firm, pursuing its own development through the reputation of its management and the institution," Marcos declared.

Marcos had mouthed such line prior to August 3, 1968, and was to repeat the same on other occasions, specifically during the inauguration of the Gardner Station No. 2 on December 3, 1969, the inauguration of the Asian

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Institute of Management on December 9, 1969, and, much later on May 15, 1972, on the occasion of the inauguration of Meralco's Snyder Station No. 2 also in Barrio Sucat, Paranaque, Rizal.

But Marcos may even have been biased in favor of old man Lopez when he had nothing but praise for the man from whom he owed so much political debt. So, I would refer the gentle reader to a "message of inspiration" which Dr. Stephen H. Fuller, former president of the Asian Institute of Management, in introducing Eugenio Lopez during the presentation of the Distinguished Service Award to him by the Harvard Business School Association in Boston, Massachusetts, on June 9, 1972. It read:

We honor today a Harvard alumnus whose life of achievement has brought credit to his university in a great variety of ways. All of his accomplishments, however, have been firmly grounded in one single purpose: to maximize the sound growth of any organization, economic, political, educational or cultural of which he was a part, and, simultaneously, to assure the fullest personal development and greatest profit to the individuals who comprised those bodies. In an age when so many occupants of leadership positions throughout the world are being accused of irrelevancy and anachronism, and when the world's youth are faltering for lack of acceptable role models, his story brings a unique message of inspiration.

This School, like this man we honor today, has never separated the political, economic, social, and spiritual aspects of the world as we sought to develop people fit to administer it. We, and he, have worked with the whole man, the basic integrity, the unifying forces that vitalize and render even more effective the human performance. Perhaps, however, since we, like he, labor to achieve our broader goal primarily in a business milieu, we should cite, very briefly, his more conspicuous achievements in that area.

In context of the present-day problems of the under-developed countries of the world and of the discontent that rages in them because of the seeming unconcern of business and industry for the welfare of the working man, two pages in the life history of this man have special meaning for us. After completing his education in Law in the Philippines and at Harvard, he returned as a sugarcane planter to his native province many decades ago. And there he and his brother, now the Vice President of the Republic of the Philippines, revolutionized landowner-laborer relations on sugar-cane plantations by paying the highest wages in the industry and by extending to workers and their families better working conditions, modern housing, free medical care, and free education for their children — an example which other landowners in the area were soon to follow. Over time, his activities expanded to include a modern ocean shipping line, the first air way in the islands with multi-motored planes, and the re-establishment and expansion of a newspaper begun at the turn of the century by his father, a newspaper dedicated to fight for clean, democratic government and the exposure of corruption wherever it existed. In more recent times, he has led a group in acquiring the Manila Electric Company from its original American owners. And in the ten short

years of his leadership, this company has progressed far beyond the expectations of even the most optimistic, accomplishing in one decade more than had been accomplished in the previous 60 years. During this decade also, employer-employee relations at Manila Electric have never been closer than at any earlier time, reflecting the admiration and affection felt by officers, employees, and laborers alike for a leader who, they know, has their welfare and that of their country always as his chief concern.

That he has extended this concern to the youth of the Philippines in particular, and to Southeast Asia in general, is manifested now by his nearly legendary contributions to the forms of education which have built able young entrepreneurs into real assets for the development of Asia. Not only has he sent the first three of his four sons to Harvard to absorb knowledge from the same source that helped to nurture and to shape his own character, but also, as a generous and enlightened employer, he has afforded and he continues to afford, that same opportunity to study at Harvard to the promising young men in his employ. Through his extraordinary generosity, he has donated the entire physical plan of the Asian Institute of Management, and he has thus provided for able young people who are interested in management careers, a regional Asian institution of superior quality dedicated to meeting the special needs of their own region. His only condition for making that gift was that the institute have a special relationship of mutual support with the Harvard Business School. For the latter, he has endowed a special faculty research fellowship for the study of Asian managerial problems.

This man has a fierce pride and an abiding love for and faith in his own race. He plays a very significant role in forming public opinion and fostering a healthy national spirit through his newspaper, *The Manila Chronicle*, and through the largest radio-television network in Asia. He has earned this role by a life-time of personal courage and fearlessness in espousing causes which were not always orthodox and which were frequently unpopular. His steadfast advocacy of civil rights and championship of the press are known and applauded well beyond the territorial limits of his own country. He does not fear to tangle with the highest leaders of his government whenever their policies or actions cease "to promote and protect the general welfare." He employs every ounce of his personal integrity and he sacrifices any amount of his own resources to awaken such leaders to the error of their ways. For these efforts and for his capacity to listen patiently and to counsel sagely, his countrymen, have called him "the Conscience of Presidents".

To the performance of such tasks he brings a great humility and a modesty bordering on shyness. Most of his contributions to society and to education are anonymous; and many more would be if he had his way. Only when he has been persuaded that, in learning to give, as well as to live effectively, many potential contributors, especially in the developing areas of the world, need models, has he consented to public acknowledgment of his generosity.

His family life is a reflection of the same high principles and Christian values that pervade his professional life. I have yet to know a more dedicated and devoted family man. His love of family is exceeded only by

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his love of country and his love of God.

He epitomizes all that is best in the word “Nationalist,” a word so often misunderstood by representatives of our own country. A universal humanitarian and a true twentieth century Filipino — he whom we honor today has already honored Harvard more — Don Eugenio Lopez.

But it was Imelda who was the more dedicated in the fight to crush the Lopez empire. “*Tignan natin kung gaano katigas ang amo mo, Tibo,*” (Let us see how tough your boss is, Tibo.) Imelda once declared with fire in her eyes when Malacanang reporters found an occasion to talk to her following a press conference with Marcos. In those times, it was always beneficial to see the First Lady in her Music Room. The Palace reporters would have envelopes containing “money for your night-clubbing.”

The Marcos-Lopez war didn’t do either side any good. The protagonists succeeded only in hurting each other deeply. And given the circumstances of normal run of political fighting under a democratic atmosphere, it was almost a certainty that Marcos would run out of time in the fight. The Lopezes would have outlasted him; they would have succeeded in making another man elected President of the Philippines.

In the end, it was Marcos who was forced to capitulate to the Lopezes. In late May, 1972, the humiliated President of the Philippines went to the Paranaque residence of Don Eugenio Lopez Sr. for a breakfast conference. The same day, he helicoptered to the Manila Chronicle in Pasig, Rizal, for a peace conference with the Vice President.

The following day, I wrote a story of the Daily Express, entitled “Together Again” after a famous song.

The Marcos-Lopez reconciliation was actually instigated by Marcos himself. He had his brother-in-law, Leyte Gov. Benjamin “Kokoy” Romualdez, arrange a lower-level meeting with Ernesto del Rosario, former editor of the Manila Chronicle serving as Vice President for Public Relations at the Lopez-controlled Manila Electric Company (Meralco). Kokoy meekly started the approach by asking Del Rosario if he could have lunch one day at the famed Meralco “Starlite” restaurant, on the 14th floor of the Lopez building in Pasig, Rizal. Sure, Del Rosario said, he would even play host to the Leyte governor.

When Romualdez went over to the Starlite Restaurant for lunch, he brought along with him the two Marcos children, Ferdinand Jr. (Bongbong) and Irene. When Don Eugenio Lopez Sr. heard about the presence of the Marcos children and Governor Romualdez, he sent instructions that the bill would be on him. He likewise suggested to Del Rosario that he might invite the ambassadors of peace from Malacanang to pass by his office on the 13th floor on their way out. This was just the opportunity Romualdez wanted to effect a reconciliation conference between Marcos and the Lopezes. The details of the Paranaque breakfast conference and the visit to Vice President Lopez were arranged and on that very day Romualdez raised Malacanang’s white flag of surrender to the Lopezes.

The terse official announcement that the Malacanang press office made of the reconciliation was that the President and the Lopezes have agreed to forget their differences and collaborate in solving the problems of the country.

However, Marcos told a different story about that meeting when the time

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came for him to tell it without being contradicted publicly by the Lopezes. After the declaration of martial law, he said of that fateful meeting: "I again went through the humiliating exercise of seeking to propitiate some of the oligarchs, visiting them in their lairs, breaking bread with them and temporizing on their demands for special favors from Government, hoping thereby to delay their fatal decision to frankly and openly place their resources at the disposal of the rebellion."

The implication of the belated Marcos explanation was that the Lopezes were preparing to fund the alleged conspiracy of the rightists, the centrists, the leftists and all other sectors of society to seize state and political power. And yet, no one could recall a single instance when Marcos ever accused the Lopez oligarchy of siding with any rebellious group.

To borrow his own words, the efforts at effecting a reconciliation with the Lopezes was only a ruse designed by Marcos to make his intended declaration of martial law go without opposition from the Lopezes.

Marcos wanted the Lopezes to disengage from the fighting which, by that time, had already expanded its front to include almost every articulate segment of Philippine society; it was just too much for Marcos. Besides, Marcos really wanted to put everybody off guard preparatory to his imposition of martial law. If he had not sued for peace with the Lopezes and earned on his fight with them up to the time of his declaration of martial law, then Marcos would not be able to live down the accusation that he resorted to martial rule because he could not crush the Lopezes with ordinary democratic processes.

Marcos likewise wanted to win over to his side the Lopez loyalists within the Constitutional Convention. He needed their votes to defeat the so-called "ban Marcos resolution" and to push for approval of another pivotal resolution shifting the country's form of government from the presidential to the parliamentary.

There were other pressing forces that "guided" the hand of Marcos to declare martial law. They were all part of the distinct Filipino political culture that challenged a leader's manipulative skill to operate within a democratic bargaining process. They constituted the weaknesses and strengths of Philippine democracy. Marcos, however, did not have the patience to adopt a fair manipulative stance demanded of leaders engaged in nation-building. He merely looked at his former colleagues in Congress and the wealthy people who financed the campaign of 1965 and 1969 as crooked politicians and rapacious oligarchs, respectively.

Marcos eyed the Supreme Court, not as final arbiter of human justice, but as an instrument to cloak his every known official actuation with legitimacy. His respect for the high tribunal went only as far as its willingness to go along with Justice Laurel in reversing a trial court decision convicting Marcos for the murder of his father's political opponent.

The irresponsible and the unprincipled among the delegates to the 1971 Constitutional Convention are likewise accountable to history for their great contributions to the pressures they brought to bear upon Marcos to finally resort to martial law. The manipulations of the Convention delegates led Marcos to conclude that there was no other way he could retain political power except via the expediency of martial law. As a matter of fact, some of the "signs from

Heaven” which the sainted Marcos allegedly perceived as go-signals for him to declare martial rule surfaced within the halls of the Constitutional Convention.

When the Constitutional Convention came into being in 1971, Marcos pinned his hopes on this constituent assembly to extend his occupancy of Malacanang. He was confident that he could manipulate the majority of the delegates to scuttle the presidential system in favor of the parliamentary form of government. Marcos would then be able to continue at the helm of government as the Prime Minister. There would be no need for him to resort to martial law.

However, some irresponsible delegates carried their “hate campaign” against Marcos to the extreme. They filed a proposal banning former Presidents and their relatives by consanguinity or affinity to the fourth civil degree from seeking the position of President or Prime Minister under the new Constitution then being drafted by the Convention. The proposal was clearly directed against Ferdinand and Imelda and it was labelled as a “ban Marcos resolution.” Delegate Antonio Tupaz cried that the resolution was a “perpetual condemnation without trial of an entire family to the ignominy of perpetual disqualification from a public office.” The proponents of the “ban Marcos” move figured that there must be a clear and definitive ban on the Marcoses under the nascent new Constitution. They feared that Marcos was bent anyway on prolonging his hold on the presidency; he could easily re-hash with greater sophistication the machinery by which he won reelection in 1969 with the three Gs — guns, goons and gold.

The filing of the “ban Marcos” resolution proved to be the last straw for the President. Marcos felt he had been pushed to a corner, frustrated; there was no further elbow room to maneuver for a compromise with the Marcos-haters. Martial law is the last resort of a government under siege. And Marcos had decided long ago that he was the government, and the critics and enemies of Marcos were enemies of the government

But, as a man obsessed with providing a veil of legitimacy to his every move, however flimsy, Marcos felt that he had to dispose of certain matters first before he could declare martial law. The Convention had to be manipulated to approve the shift to the parliamentary form of government and to disapprove the ban Marcos resolution. Presidential Assistant Guillermo C. De Vega handled the dirty operations for Marcos. With the two ticklish issues in the Convention handled to his satisfaction, Marcos felt assured that he could legally parry any accusation that he resorted to martial law because his occupancy of Malacanang would have legally ended on December 30, 1973.

History will be able to record in its finality and proper perspective that the ambitious politicians, rapacious wealthy and the Marcos-haters actually did democracy a disservice in the Philippines. They provided Marcos with the final excuse to declare martial law with their ban Marcos resolution. The vitriolic and underhanded criticism lobbed at Marcos by presidential aspirants and his enemies constituted one more of the nails that sealed the coffin of democracy in the Philippines.

While the Marcos opponents subjected the President to pillory at every turn, they were disparate in their efforts and discordant in their voices; they were united only in their criticisms that Marcos was an unredeemable crook. They were so thoroughly divided on the approach to ending Marcos’ tenure in

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Malacanang, disunited on the objectives, and had their own selfish personal political objectives to serve. One might say that the discord among the opponents of Marcos was perhaps due to the work of Donald Segrettis let loose by the President himself within the ranks of the opposition. It was not beyond Marcos to do just that.

It is rather late in the day to imagine what might have happened, if the enemies of Marcos reached an accommodation with the man. After all, Marcos is only another mortal like all politicians (in spite of efforts of his propaganda office to deify him); he will also fade and die. Perhaps, if the opponents of Marcos had been a little more circumspect, a little more cautious and considerate, the man from Ilocandia would probably have emerged as the Prime Minister under a parliamentary system, a strong man ruling without the guns of martial law. The ambition of the man was certainly to stay a little longer in Malacanang. Even Senator Benigno S. Aquino Jr. speculated with me once that, by December 30, 1973, Marcos might decide to quit it; he might even feel sufficiently sated by his ill-gotten wealth. If Marcos had been allowed to rule constitutionally a little longer, would Aquino, Geny Lopez, Serge Osmena and all those others who have languished, or are still languishing, in filthy military stockades and the rest of the oppressed Filipino people have to suffer their present deprivations? Would I have found it necessary — as I do now — to go into self-exile, abandon my family and friends in the Philippines to turn out this book on the conjugal dictatorship that never should have been?

But when Marcos himself was jolted into an awareness that he was thoroughly hated by his people as expressed in the demonstrations of 1970 and in the ban Marcos resolution of 1971, he felt like a cornered rat. He found it absolutely necessary to implement the contingency plan for a martial law declaration. He had hoped that an accommodation within the Constitutional Convention to make him continue at the helm of the ship of state as Prime Minister would stay his decision to clamp down a martial rule over his people. The din of criticisms, the escalating violent demonstrations and the ban Marcos resolution gave him a sense of awareness that, even if he were allowed to serve under a parliamentary system as Premier, the abuses and pressures that he and Imelda would have to contend with would just be unbearable. So, he opted to squat in Malacanang under the protective mantle of martial law.

In the early skirmishes over the ban Marcos resolution, the anti-Marcos forces demanded as a price for withdrawing their move the issuance by Marcos of a public and signed pledge that neither he nor Imelda would seek the presidency after December 30, 1973. It was also demanded verbally by student leaders of a demonstration that turned into the infamous “Battle of Mendiola” on Jan. 30, 1970. In a very dishonest effort to meet the demands half-way, Marcos issued a statement through Press Secretary Tatad that neither he nor his wife would seek office in the 1973 elections. It was honest enough in the sense that there would be no elections in 1973.

A key factor that emboldened Marcos to impose martial law was his “overwhelming” reelection victory in 1969. It was, of course, an election triumph that had been marred by shameless raids on the public treasury, amounting to almost a billion pesos, and tainted by wholesale frauds and unbearable acts of violence. Whatever the cost, it was a reelection that Marcos precisely needed to declare martial law on his seventh year in office.

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Marcos could have been stopped from winning reelection, or from garnering that overwhelming margin of victory over his challenger, Senator Sergio Osmena Jr. Marcos had a built-in advantage that neutralized any strong fight to his reelection bid. It was the general belief that Marcos would step out of the Malacanang at the end of a second term on Dec. 30, 1973. On the other hand, an Osmena victory over Marcos would have prejudiced other presidential aspirants within the ranks of both the Nacionalista and Liberal parties. Osmena would certainly have to seek reelection to a second term. Thus, the Nacionalista presidential hopefuls for 1973 all worked to help Marcos win; the Liberals all helped Osmena campaign — but not hard enough to make him win.

And then, by 1970, after Marcos' inauguration as President for the second time, all the presidential aspirants from both sides of the political fence immediately classified Marcos as a crooked lameduck President. Osmena himself led the pack by filing an electoral protest against Marcos. The others just started hitting Marcos to gain publicity, or to promote their presidential ambitions over the carcass of Marcos.

In discussing the situation with me one day, Marcos said he would have to assume a posture of firm leadership “for the good of the country, for the stability of our civilized institutions.”

Marcos even began to encourage speculations through the press and among his Nacionalista partisans in Congress that he was preparing to impose martial law. Privately, he told me, he had two objectives in doing this, namely: 1) To prevent a paralyzation of government from the public knowledge that there is a lameduck and weakened presidency in Malacanang, and 2) To sound out general public reaction, or to actually condition the mind of the people, on the eventual imposition of martial law.

Drawn by the bait, the opposition hacked away mercilessly on Marcos for planning martial law for the country. The gambit of the opposition was that, if the plan were exposed and publicly discussed, Marcos would be dissuaded from going through with it. It turned out to be a wrong gambit. Marcos fired back that he would not hesitate to declare martial law if the situation so demanded. Marcos had by that time allowed the clock on his “crisis management” in the country to tick away the hour of martial law.

One of the biggest mistakes committed by the opponents of Marcos was the handling of the ban Marcos proposal and the presidential vs. parliamentary affair in the Constitutional Convention. Having gotten Delegate Eduardo Quintero to expose the “Con-Con payola” and Elly Velez Pamatong the “Operation Con-Con” of Malacanang,^{*3}

(*3. For more details, see Chapter on “Infrastructure for Martial Law.”)

opposition partisans thought they had cornered Marcos and rendered him helpless. They became so heady with an imaginary decapitation of Marcos. They moved for an immediate voting on the ban Marcos proposal as well as on the parliamentary plan. The immediate voting was precisely what Marcos himself wanted. For, if he had lost, he would have had enough time to maneuver before the elections of November, 1973, came up.

Moving into battle with Marcos on the convention floor, the opposition

partisans erroneously judged that the concerted voices of the *Manila Times*, *the Manila Chronicle*, *the Philippines Free Press*, *the Weekly Nation* and *the Graphic* and other mass media who had joined the chorus denouncing Marcos' inexorable march towards dictatorship would provide them with the needed votes. As it turned out, the anti-Marcos elements garnered all the laudatory columns and editorials, but the Marcos convention managers got the votes to defeat the ban Marcos move and to approve the proposal for a parliamentary system of government for the Philippines.

The headlong rush into what the opposition partisans thought would be an arena for a spectacular decapitation of Marcos as a power in Philippine politics turned into a rout — eventually signalling the demise of democracy.

Chapter VII

The Reign of Greed

The underlying philosophy of the conjugal dictatorship of Ferdinand and Imelda is basically intestinal. A digestive interpretation of this philosophy easily reveals that the regime in developing a feudal factory system that would enable just a few families to run the Philippines as a private business.

Admittedly, with the brutal use of the guns of martial law, the New Society has rid the country of the old oligarchy.

However, the same coercive and extortionate process has produced overnight a new oligarchy. More powerful than the old, the new oligarchy assumed control of a growing, seemingly endless list of corporations and business firms in the country. The new oligarchy is made up of the ruling duumvirate themselves, their relatives, their cronies and a few favored military commanders.

And the new oligarchy has not been discriminating in its oppressive business manipulations. By dictatorial decrees promulgated by Marcos, the working class had been stripped of its right to free self-organization and to strike. A policy of keeping wages low has been adopted so that maximum profits can be had with minimum investments.

The very few who could bask in the reflected notoriety of the conjugal dictatorship have become the *nouveau riche* as they mustered the levers and uses of power made available by the guns of martial law.

The best illustration of the intestinal philosophy of the New Society is in the field of mass media. Contrary to the pledge of the martial regime to "democratize" mass media ownership, today the ownership of newspapers and other periodicals, radio and television is concentrated in different but fewer hands.*1

(*1. See Chapter on "The Era of Thought Control.")

In the area of business and finance, new tycoons have flourished to replace or even surpass the two or three whom the martial regime has branded as malefactors of great wealth. Other captains of industry who have learned to kow-tow to the new regime remain as firmly at the helm today, as they were before martial law.

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The so-called “New Society” or “Bagong Lipunan” might as well be renamed the “New Scourge” or “Bagong Likuman,” respectively. The latter term means “New Collection.” The territorial jurisdiction of the New Society could appropriately be called “Gulangan Archipelago,” in a most comprehensive adaptation of Alexander Solzhenitsyn’s “Gulag Archipelago.” The Philippines is an archipelagic state converted overnight by the conjugal dictatorship into a huge concentration camp for dissenters. The work “gulangan” itself is a Tagalog term meaning one man’s continuous cheating in the division of goodies with the use of wives or superior strength.

There has never been any sincere attempt to provide a philosophy for the much-ballyhooed New Society. This is quite understandable since the conjugal dictatorship is too pre-occupied with the notorious task of plundering the country. Once in a while, Marcos finds time to talk about the needs of the people in a dramatic show of his knowledge of intestinal philosophy — an intestinal philosophy solely dedicated to the speculative and unjust enrichment of the ruling duumvirate, members of their families and cronies, including a few military commanders.

The ruling clique and its cronies have come to demonstrate that the highly-touted new reforms of the dictatorial regime are meant only to affect certain “grand issues” and nothing was really supposed to change when it comes to the members of the ruling clique’s comfort and convenience, and economic and political interests.

The “*dramatis personae*” have changed, but the “*modus operandi*” based on the principle of selfish self-interest has not. And having committed the mistakes of amateurs, the new plunderers of the Philippines seek to hide their criminal looting of the national treasury, and of the public and private resources by the more convenient process of cover-up. In so doing, they commit more mistakes. This is exactly the predicament that Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos, Kokoy Romualdez, Benedicto, et al, find themselves in.

In short, they are blundering ahead selfishly to destroy the country in a fashion that says to the rest of the Filipino nation: “Listen to what I say, but don’t watch what I do.”

The brutal establishment of a tall oligarchic pyramid with reserved places for Ferdinand and Imelda, Kokoy Romualdez, Benedicto, Enrile and some military commanders was, of course, a necessity. In the first place, they must safeguard and defend the interests of foreign investors with whom they must work to reallocate unto themselves the country’s resources. In the second place, it is fairly obvious that a financial and economic base was necessary for the survival of the martial regime itself. The oligarchic structures were not only necessary, but also inevitable, because they are the instruments in the interplay of economic forces that must amass and consolidate wealth which, in turn, must produce the profits and public taxes.

On September 20, 1975, the Honolulu Star-Bulletin came out editorially, with a piece entitled “Corruption as Usual.” The editorial declared:

Indirect evidence that martial law has not ended corruption in the Philippines has been provided by the government itself. It consists of an announcement that President Ferdinand Marcos has ordered a large scale purging of corrupt officials.

Martial law has been in force in the Philippines for three years. One of

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its chief objectives was to wipe out corruption, and in fact soon after it was instituted Marcos fired 6,000 bureaucrats and military personnel.

Yet the announcement said the new housecleaning was needed 'to check misconduct in government and to restore declining public confidence in public office'. Among those being dismissed are 99 judges.

It all sounds familiar to persons acquainted with the innumerable crusades against government corruption in the post-World War II Philippines. The difference is that martial law was supposed to do the job — but three years after, by the government's own admission, it hasn't.

The truth probably is that there was some decrease in corruption at the outset of martial law in reaction to the mass dismissals that were made possible by Marcos' assumption of total power. But as time passed, the shock wore off and there has been a tendency to return to business (and corruption) as usual.

Dictatorship in the Philippines, as elsewhere, has made it easier to deal with corruption because the bureaucrats have lost their protection against arbitrary dismissal. But there is also a disadvantage — there is no independent body to seek out corruption in the executive. Thus the elimination of corruption depends solely on the administration itself.

It is believed in Manila that high military officers have grown rich under martial law by exploiting power that far exceeds what they had in the old days. But with the press brought to heel and Congress closed, there is no way to bring such cases to light if Marcos chooses to protect the offenders.

There is also the question of Marcos' own honesty, which was repeatedly challenged in pre-martial law days. With the political opposition suppressed, there is no one to prevent the President from acquiring as much illicit wealth as he chooses. And his critics outside the Philippines claim that he has been rapacious. (Italics ours).

But if corruption has flourished under martial law, one of its chief justifications is lost. That could set the people to wondering what they gave up their liberties for. No wonder Marcos has set out to eradicate "misdeeds that have shaken deeply the faith of the people in government".

I have my serious doubts on the determination of the President to "eradicate 'misdeeds that have shaken deeply the faith of the people in government'." How can he eradicate those "misdeeds" when he himself and his wife, their close relatives and cronies are deeply mired in those misdeeds on a far greater scale?

Barely two years after the imposition of martial law, I became convinced that the reforms so loftily held out by Marcos on September 23, 1972, were mere promises. Marcos had not shown any sign that he would shed off his cocoon as a "promising man." One day I mustered the courage, with the prior clearance of Secretaries Clave and De Vega, to tell Marcos what was happening to the New Society. I warned Marcos that the real New Society was not taking shape at all. I reported that the people refer to the so-called reforms as nothing but acronyms and government by sloganeering.

At the time, I thought I should really give it to him. I was under the illusion then that, in the event a counter-revolution succeeds against Marcos, I would

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be among those who might be left behind to face a firing squad, along with Secretaries Clave and De Vega. I figured that Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos would be able to escape Malacanang, and perhaps the Philippines, to enjoy their billions of ill-gotten wealth among the discarded royalties of Europe and Asia.

I told the President that the people outside the Palace gates were laughing their hearts out over the high-sounding acronyms and slogans of the New Society. I reported that the people think they are mere smoke screens to cover up the plundering of the country by Marcos and Imelda themselves, their relatives and cronies.

Marcos' braintrusts had earlier come up with the slogan, "*Sa ikauunlad ng bayan, disiplina ang kailangan*" (For the country's prosperity, discipline is necessary). They also coined high-sounding acronyms, like PLEDGES, PROD and COPE. "Pledges" stood for the initial letters of the seven-point reform program of the New Society, to wit: peace and order, land reform, economic reforms, development of new moral values, government reorganization, educational reforms and social reform. "Prod" meant Presidential Regional Officers for Development, while "Cope" were the Coordinating Officers for Program Execution. The "Prods" and "Copes" were to coordinate in the speedy implementation of the reform program embodied in the "Pledges" of the New Society.

Marcos originally bargained with his political enemies through intermediaries. He did the same thing with the Catholic church, the Federation of Free Farmers, the sugar lobby and other powerful groups in the country. Those who cooperated were temporarily allowed to go about their businesses. However, those who did not were subjected to further harassment and dispossession of their interests.

The initial motivation of Marcos in these moves was to strengthen his position in power and weaken the influence of his political opponents. He wanted to utilize martial law to dismantle their economic interests and put an end to this old feud in the oligarchy. But, as his regime aged, Marcos could not content himself anymore with divesting his political foes of the economic wealth which they could later utilize again to fight the dictator. He was tempted by his own greed — and those of Imelda and her relatives, notably Kokoy — to take over the Lopez-owned tri-media facilities and the Meralco (Manila Electric Company). The clique has also taken over the various enterprises of Osmena.

Members of each of the Lopez and Osmena clans are still under arrest on charges of plotting the assassination of the Marcos family.

When I was still in Manila and moving within the inner circle of the ruling clique in Malacanang, Imelda would tell us (De Vega, Clave and me): "*Hindi natin maaaring pakawalan si Geny Lopez habang may nalalabing kayamanan pa ang mga Lopezes. Kailangang isuka muna nilang lahat ang kayamanan nila. Baka gamitin na naman nila iyan laban sa atin.*" (We cannot give Geny Lopez his freedom as long as the Lopezes are still in possession of great wealth. They must divest themselves first of their economic power. They might use this again to fight us.) This was before the death of Don Eugenio Lopez and the acquisition by Kokoy of the \$300-million Meralco on a downpayment of \$1,500.00.

Upon the advent of the Marcos administration in 1965, business tycoons

Lopez, Osmena and a few others felt the pinch of a new principle of economics invented by Marcos and Imelda. The ruling duumvirate wanted substantial participation in the stock structure of established enterprises for free or for nominal considerations. The reasoning of Ferdinand and Imelda was that they had dispensed so many favors to these business enterprises by way of loans and other concessions from government institutions. When the established wealthy businessmen resisted the new economics principle of Ferdinand and Imelda, they were denounced as oligarchs bleeding the country. They were publicly accused of allegedly wielding their economic and political power to amass greater wealth.

One of those who stood up to the encroachments of Ferdinand and Imelda was businessman Fernando Jacinto, whose family had pioneered in steel smelting and other undertakings involving the processing of steel. Don Fernando told Marcos one day to “go to hell, I won’t share with you the work of a lifetime, the product of blood, sweat and tears of my family for free.” Even before martial law was declared, government institutions began squeezing Jacinto. The steel magnate was forced to flee the country.

When martial law was declared, President Marcos lost no time in seizing the properties of Fernando Jacinto. He didn’t do it for himself this time though. It was a spoil of war that he felt should go to the military commanders. Always with an eye to providing legitimacy to even the most illegal operation, Marcos effected the seizure in a most subtle way (even under martial law standards). On October 28, 1972, Marcos directed the Secretary of National Defense “to take over and control the assets” of the corporations owned by Fernando Jacinto “in the national interest.” *2 These were the Jacinto Steel, Incorporated, Jacinto Iron and Steel Sheets Corporation, J&P Shipping Corporation, Beatriz Marketing and Trading Corporation, and Ferro Products, Incorporated. Covered by the seizure order were a newspaper, complete with a printing plant, and two radio stations. (*2. Letter of Instructions No.35, dated October 28, 1972.)

Overnight, a new oligarchy of military officers was created. They were the colonels, majors, and captains who took over the executive positions in the Jacinto enterprises. General Romeo Espino, the armed forces chief of staff, sits as the chairman in all the boards of directors of the Jacinto enterprises.

On June 17, 1975, 1 submitted the following capsule report to the Fraser committee of the House of Representatives on the systematic plundering of the country:

VI. POWER CORRUPTS, ABSOLUTE POWER CORRUPTS ABSOLUTELY

With absolute and unchallenged power consolidated into his authoritarian regime, the Marcos military regime has gone absolutely corrupt.

1) President Marcos now thinks and acts in terms of establishing an empire. Palace advisers are talking in terms of whether he should assume sometime later the title of emperor or king of an imperial dynasty that is coming into being in Manila.

2) As an integral part of the program to organize an imperial dynasty, the martial regime is developing a feudal factory system that would enable just a few families to run the country as a private business.

3) “Ley de embudo” has become a statute in the land. Only President

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Marcos, or his anointed front men, cronies and in-laws may venture into profitable business enterprises, with foreigners or with the use of government credit.

4) The extension of the Parity Rights provision of the Constitution up to July 3, 1975, was by no means an altruistic gesture on the part of President Marcos. The one-year period enabled his front men and in-laws to fan out and enter into purchase agreements with American citizens divesting themselves of holdings in agricultural, mining and public utility firms in the Philippines. Since such divestments by Americans must necessarily be approved by two or more state agencies, no other enterprising Filipino could hope to compete with the front men and cronies of the President in obtaining the required approval by state agencies of any purchase agreement.

5) The leaders of the martial regime and anointed families/cronies monopolize the media industry.

6) The regime and its anointed families/cronies own the major land, water and air transportation companies.

7) President Marcos owns the controlling stocks, through his front men, of course, in the major private commercial banks. Ownership has been acquired through the years since 1966, but with greater ease upon the imposition of martial law.

8) In early 1973, Mr. Marcos promulgated a decree providing for automatic foreclosure of mortgages on properties used as collaterals in obtaining loans from government financing institutions, should the borrowers be unable to update their amortizations on their loans. Hundreds of agricultural and business enterprises were foreclosed by virtue of this decree.

The hapless owners of these foreclosed properties were actually enticed into borrowing from the lending institutions, what with assurances of unrealistically big loans on over-valued collaterals provided they would contribute a certain percentage (a total of 27%) to the campaign chest of Mr. Marcos in the 1969 elections. The borrowers obtained the initial releases on their loans, but have had to cough up the full value of their commitment to the campaign chest. However, when the economy floundered in 1970 because of an over-supply of money in circulation, President Marcos ordered further releases on the approved loans stopped — thereby forcing the borrowers to neglect or abandon their projects and default in their repayments.

Now, the front men and cronies and-brother-in-law of the President, headed this time by Alfredo Romualdez, are busy restructuring with the government lending institutions the loans on the foreclosed properties.

In one case involving the Pampanga Sugar Milling Company, an offer of an independent Filipino group was turned down by the Philippine National Bank in favor of an offer of Roberto S. Benedicto to manage the firm for the PNB. The independent group wanted to purchase the mill outright; in the case of Benedicto's offer, the PNB would continue to pump money into the Benedicto management of the milling company.

9) President Marcos ratified the long-pending Philippines-Japan Treaty of Amity, Commerce and Navigation, a bilateral pact granting Japan a "most-favored-nation" treatment in the Philippines.

The 24-man Philippine Senate would not ratify the treaty for 13 years in view of widespread fear that it would hand over to Japan on a silver platter what

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the former enemy country sought to win by force of arms during World War II, i.e. the economic domination of the Philippines.

Ratification by presidential decree of the trade treaty came after Benedicto had cornered all conceivable deals with prospective Japanese investors in the Philippines.

10) Military personnel have been allowed to take over the rackets of members of Congress and the protection rackets run by local policemen at soaring rates proportionate to the inflationary trends.

11) Authorship of crimes has changed. The crime syndicates have been wiped out, most of their more notorious leaders have been jailed. But organized crime is surfacing anew. This time groups of military personnel, unable to share in the graft of their commanders, engage themselves in syndicated kidnapping for ransom, arson, murder, car-napping and robbery hold-up.

12) President Marcos has become the biggest landowner in the Philippines. Aside from heavy participation in a number of mining companies, which he naturally acquired for free with the use of the vast powers of the presidency, Mr. Marcos holds ownership through his front men vast tracts of agricultural lands in Northern Luzon, the Visayas and Mindanao and is eyeing ownership of thousands of hectares more of virgin agricultural lands which he soon will declare by decree as free and disposable forest lands.

13) Mr. Marcos is in the oil business. Almost immediately after he declared martial law, the President signed a decree easing the heretofore strict requirements of Philippine laws on oil exploration within the country by foreign drillers. In that decree, he provided for attractive terms to entice foreign oil drillers into entering into exploration service contracts with Philippine oil concession holders. Before any such contract is signed (with appropriate ceremonies in Malacanang), the personal equity participation of the President through front men is first assured.

14) Mr. Marcos is in the free trade zone. He is a partner, the major one quite obviously, of former Rep. Pablo P. Roman in the ownership and operation of a large portion of the commercial area in the Free Trade Zone in Mariveles, Bataan. Under the guise of dispersing industries from overcrowded Manila, the President signed a decree requiring the transfer of big industrial firms, especially garments and embroidery mills, to move to the free trade zone.

15) The President is in the export business. Through a series of manipulations disguised as an aggressive foreign trade program, the President now controls through Roberto S. Benedicto and other front men the exportation of Philippine sugar, copra and cement. These export products are acquired by several national exporting centers from Filipino producers at 50 percent of the prevailing world prices.

16) Mr. Marcos is a treasure hunter. In early January, 1970, when accusations that he had become the "richest man in Asia" was reaching fever pitch, he called in Malacanang reporters and admitted to them that he was really rich. But the source of his wealth, Mr. Marcos said, was the treasure of Yamashita which he had discovered in Northern Luzon. Incredible as it may sound, the claim had some truth in it, although it may not have been the fabled buried treasure of Yamashita.

What is certain is that a unit of the Presidential Security Command had, during the Marcos I administration, discovered some buried Japanese treasure

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in the Sierra Madre area. It did so while screening all applications for permits to hunt for buried treasures in any part of the country.

One might ask: Why the insatiable desire for wealth and more wealth?

This becomes a paradox when one watches the President eat. He eats his simple Ilocano food and with his own hands. He does not drink, does not smoke, he dresses simply — all of which might perhaps be due to his Ilocano upbringing.

Why are President Marcos and Imelda then behaving as if they own the entire Philippines?

First, because it is their decision and unto-the-death wish that they stay in power for as long as they are alive. They wish to insure that the ill-gotten fruits of such prolonged squatting in power will not be taken away from them or their heirs;

Second, they have convinced themselves that they have just embarked on a radical step to restructure Philippine society to save it from certain collapse. They are possessed with a messianic complex;

Third, as a result of the second, they suffer from a paranoia that they are really loved by the people and that the people will not take for a ruler anybody but the Marcoses;

Fourth, as a consequence of the second and third reasons, they feel that they took a bold step for which they are now risking their very necks, and those of their children, for the benefit of the people. As their thinking goes, the Filipino people must render them blind loyalty and obedience so they can continue in their ways of restricting society. At the same time, they must take steps to protect themselves from the enemies they have made because of the “sacrifices” they are making for the people.

They feel that, if a counter-revolution succeeds, they would be placed before the firing squad by the new victors. How true.

The “big deals” in the country are, without exception, cleared by the President. It is the President who must devise eventually the formula that respects the Constitution even if they involve multi-million dollar scandals. This was the same procedure followed in the approval of the first floating casino off Manila Bay.

The tenor of the conversations that take place in Malacanang behind the President’s study desk when a business deal or proposal which calls for government exposure in terms of funding or concessions goes this way:

“Mr. President, you know, there is a proposal which has been submitted to you and which (Secretary Melchor or so and so) has already endorsed favorably.

“Oh, huh,”

“The company is asking for this and that...”

“Oh, huh.”

“What do you think, Mr. President?”

“What are the requirements of your company? Perhaps, you should send me a new memorandum because the one sent by Secretary Melchor has been filed away by Fe.” (He calls for Fe, asks for the memorandum, but quickly suggests that Fe is inefficient about these things. Fe does not answer, of

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course. This is a typical script in the Palace, to get somebody to accept the blame for any failures that might be traceable to the President.)

At this point, an experienced man, who knows the mentality of the President, would immediately state:

“Sir, the new company’s stock structure will be divided among (the names of the persons)... Do you think it would be all right to include anymore?”

“Bakit naman panay Intsik (o Hapon) iyang mga iyan?” (Why are they mostly Chinese [or Japanese]?)

“Mabuti seguro . . . ay . . . isama mo sina (he gives the names).

“Yes, sir. And, sir... (in whispers) in whose name should we register the 20 percent equity?”

“Oh, just put in the name of (he gives the name of his front man) and tell him to be active in the affaire of your group so that we will know what we can do for you.”

Such is the subtlety of Marcos in “demanding” his equity from huge corporations being formed; he waits until his equity is offered to him.

As for Mrs. Marcos, she is an unrefined arm-twister, and demands in direct unequivocal terms what she wants. She and her brothers and sisters, notably Kokoy Romualdez, are plain stick up people.

When a deal is elevated by Mrs. Marcos or by her brothers and sisters to the President, it is assumed that a definite figure on the equity they would have in the new project has been agreed upon.

Only recently, a Filipino engineer obtained a grant from the U.S. AID (Agency for International Development) for a comprehensive aerial photogrammetry of public lands and forests in the Philippines. The engineer needed, however, the go-signal of Marcos to undertake the project.

Unaware of the Palace “protocol,” he simply wrote the President that he has been granted a multi-million dollar funding by AID to undertake the photogrammetry project. He needed Malacanang cooperation.

Not long afterwards, the engineer was summoned by the First Lady to her Music Room in the Palace and given a lecture. Didn’t he know that all projects involving financing from the United States must pass through her or Kokoy Romualdez?

Imelda hinted to the engineer that all she wanted was credit for the project. This seems quite understandable. In spite of her already being “gobemadora of the Metropolitan Manila Area, she still has been unable to conduct any meaningful and fruitful negotiations with U.S. institutions for funding of her impact projects. She would have wanted to present the photogrammetry project to the President as her achievement.

The engineer, in the meantime, has been advised by a Palace assistant that his project was under study.

The grabbing of the Lopez properties by Benedicto and Kokoy Romualdez is something that the dispossessed won’t easily forget or forgive.

A man more easily forgets his father’s death than the loss of his patrimony. And so it is with the heirs of Don Eugenio Lopez, it seems pertinent to recall at this point that it was the Lopez money that contributed to their own tragedy under martial law. Don Eugenio not only financed Marcos’ 1965 campaign, his wife, Pacita, and daughter, Presy, practically killed themselves campaigning as

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“Blue Ladies” of Imelda for the victory of Marcos.

I would like to quote at this point a report submitted to the United States Congress on the acquisition of the Lopez assets by Marcos’ friends and relatives.

The dual case of political prisoners Eugenio Lopez, Jr. and Sergio Osmena III has served to bring to light another result of the martial law of President Ferdinand Marcos and his closest advisers, including his wife, the beautiful Imelda Romualdez Marcos.

XXX

In 1965 when Marcos left the liberal party to attempt to unseat the incumbent President on the conservative ticket, it was Eugenio Lopez, Sr. who sold Marcos to the conservative convention. Fernando Lopez went on the ticket to help the team to victory. (Voted upon separately, Lopez out-pollled Marcos in both 1965 and 1969.)

The reasons for the Marcos retaliation against the Lopezes — in which the imprisonment of the younger Lopez is a key element — appear to be three: (1) a desire to destroy the Lopezes as a political force; (2) a stifling of freedom of the press; and (3) a naked desire for money. It is with that third goal we deal here.

The Lopez family was wealthy — one of the wealthiest in the Philippines. Furthermore, it was “old” money, grounded in sugar cane and rice. After the Japanese occupation (in which the Lopez family at times lived in caves in the hills), principally through the abilities of Eugenio Lopez, Sr. the fortunes were increased by branching out into industries including the newspaper and the radio and television network. In 1960, Lopez, Sr. organized group of investors as “Meralco” to purchase the Manila Electric Company from American ownership. As Manila became larger and more modern he guided the enterprise to eight or nine times its former size — now worth more than \$400,000,000. The stock went public, but the Lopez interest was still sufficient to maintain management control — in fact, it had never been questioned.

Upon declaration of martial law the Manila Chronicle, increasingly critical of Marcos, was shut down under a censorship order. Later the facilities were taken over by the Times-Journal owned by Governor Benjamin Romualdez, brother of Mrs. Marcos, under agreement for leasing of the facilities from the Lopezes. The contract of lease itself was not based on a free negotiation. Payments have been sporadic and amount to about half the amount due. With the publisher in prison and the other two owners — Eugenio Lopez, Sr. and Fernando Lopez — effectively silenced, there was no one to complain.

The confiscation of the media network, ABS-CBN, was cruder. Upon the arrest of Eugenio Lopez, Jr., president of the company (and other officials) the government ordered all ABS-CBN stations closed down. Commencing June 8, 1973, the ABS-CBN outlets were turned over by the military one-by-one to a small network, KBS, owned and operated by Ambassador Roberto Benedicto, a close associate of President Marcos and an option to purchase given to Governor Romualdez (brother of Mrs. Marcos). At first, “leases” were prepared by KBS which included the

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remarkable provision that the compensation would be “reasonable” and determined at a later time. Eugenio Lopez, Sr. claimed in a recent interview that “not a single peso” has been paid. By 1974 the takeover by KBS of the further facilities was simply by order of Defense Secretary Juan Ponce Enrile. Capturing the Lopez controlling interest in the Manila Electric Company was a more sophisticated enterprise. Unlike the Chronicle and ABS-CBN, Meralco Securities Corporation (the holding company for Manila Electric) was a publicly-held company with the Lopez family as the largest bloc of stock.

Following a series of conferences in the United States conducted between Eugenio Lopez, Sr. and Governor Benjamin Romualdez (brother of Mrs. Marcos) and Romualdez aide, Antonio Ayala, a meeting was held in Honolulu, Hawaii, on November 29, 1973 and Lopez was presented a “Stock Purchase Agreement” purporting to be an agreement between Benpres Company (the Lopez family corporation) and a newly-created Meralco “Foundation.” The senior Lopez had been told by Romualdez and his aides that if he would execute this agreement, his son “Geny” would be released. Mr. Lopez signed. One Senen J. Gabaldon signed for Meralco Foundation, Inc. — he has since declared that he had nothing to do with negotiating the agreement, but that the agreement was presented by Ayala (who signed as a witness), who was not an official of the Foundation but a personal representative of Governor Romualdez.

The stock purchase agreement is replete with formalities, providing for a down-payment of \$1,500 (sic) upon closing and a series of payments on promissory notes for some \$6,000,000 over a period of years. However, in reality, no further payment is required since the agreement contains the following language:

“The principal installments and interest on each Series B Note [the notes to Benpres] shall be payable x x x only to the extent that the cash flow of the Foundation (as determined by the independent external auditors of the Foundation) permits payment of interest and principal installments as these fall due****”

The \$1,500 was paid more than a year later — after the hunger strike. It has been reported that the Meralco Foundation is purchasing a jet airplane for approximately \$1 million (in addition to three already owned — used by the Marcoses), thus reducing the cash flow.

The senior Lopez has stated that he never expected to be paid anything and that his son was held hostage to extort the Lopez interest in Meralco from them. Government control of the utility rate structure has also been used, according to Lopez, first to threaten Meralco with bankruptcy and then to enrich the participants in the new “foundation.” This was accomplished by reducing a previously authorized rate increase from 36.5% to 20.9% before negotiation of the stock purchase agreement and then upon acquisition raising the rates more than 100%.

Meralco Foundation responded in an article in *the Manila Times Journal* (lessee of the *Chronicle* facilities) on January 18, 1975 that Lopez had asked to sell the family stock. What Lopez actually originally proposed was to sell to

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a “cooperative composed of Meralco employees, customers and the general public . . .” That was suggested on February 19, 1973. He offered to sell to a foundation only after he had been told that was the way it was going to be handled.

The imprisonment of Eugenio Lopez, Jr. not only purchased the silence of the Lopez family, but became the instrument by which major Lopez holdings were acquired by the Marcos family and associates.

The following is the text of the interview that Lopez gave to the newsman Benozza as published by the Philippine News on January 2, 1975:

MR. BENOZA: Mr. Lopez, on November 29, 1973, you signed a “Stock Purchase Agreement” on behalf of Benpres wherein all of the MSC shares held by Benpres were sold to a certain “Foundation”. Did you personally conduct the negotiations for this agreement?

MR LOPEZ: Yes, I handled the important aspects of the negotiations.

MR. BENOZA: The total stated purchase price in the agreement is Pesos 133,337,000 (about \$19,000,000) with approximately \$5,700,000 payable to your corporation and the balance of approximately \$13,300,000 payable by the Foundation directly to the creditors of Benpres. Do you feel the purchase price is a fair price?

MR. LOPEZ: Well, the purchase is not important. The agreement is only a document which enables the Foundation to take over our family’s holdings of MSC. According to the terms of the agreement, the Foundation is not really obligated to pay me anything, except the down payment of Pesos 10,000 (\$1,500). The agreement states that the net principal amount of \$5,700,000 plus interest is payable over a ten-year period with the first payment due 30 months after the “closing”. However, the terms of the agreement provide that the payments to Benpres shall be made only if the “cash flow” of the Foundation permits. This simply means that payments will be made to me if the Foundation has excess funds after all other obligations, expenses, etc., are met. Since the income of the Foundation is controlled by the Foundation itself and by the Philippine Government through its control on the electric rates of MECO, it is very simple to regulate the “cash flow” so that there will never be any excess funds to pay Benpres. I do not expect to ever receive anything out of the sale of Benpres.

MR BENOZA: You mean that you gave away Benpres worth several million dollars to this Foundation?

MR LOPEZ: Well, this is what the agreement basically specifies; here is a copy of the actual signed agreement for your own study and verification.

This agreement was not a business transaction. It was one of the agreements wherein our family was giving up our multi-million dollar assets in exchange for the life and freedom of my imprisoned son and the safety of the rest of my family residing in the Philippines.

MR BENOZA: Who then negotiated the terms of the agreement?

MR. LOPEZ: The important negotiations were conducted by Governor Benjamin Romualdez, the brother of Mrs. Imelda Marcos. However, these negotiations were not on the terms of the agreement; I had agreed with

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Governor Romualdez that he could take over all of the assets of Benpres at no cost in exchange for the freedom of my son and the safety of the rest of my family. I authorized Governor Romualdez to prepare the agreement on his own terms so that it would appear like a legal transaction, but there is no way really one can purchase a multi-million dollar company for nothing and make it appear legal. When I signed the agreement in Honolulu on November 29, 1973, it was the first time I ever saw it. I believe it also was the first time Mr. Gabaldon, the President of the Foundation, saw it, just before it was signed.

MR. BENOZA: We noticed that Mr. Antonio Ayala and Miss Delia Tantuico are the only other two signatories of the agreement, as witnesses. Who are they?

MR LOPEZ: Mr. Ayala is a close associate of Governor Romualdez and was sent to my residence many times during the past two years to discuss, on behalf of Governor Romualdez matters pertaining to our family business holdings and matters relating to my son's release. Mr. Ayala is actually an employee of MECO and is not supposed to be (is not officially) associated in any way with the Foundation.

On January 23, 1975, the Philippine News published this second interview of newsman Benozza with Don Eugenio:

MR. BENOZA: What did Marcos actually do?

MR. LOPEZ: What he did was really very simple. Having the power to regulate the income of Meralco by his control over the electric rates, he ordered a reduction in the already approved reasonable rate increase awarded by the Public Service Commission prior to martial law. Specifically, on May 29, 1972, the Public Service Commission approved an increase in rate of 36.5% above the existing rate to cover added operation costs. However, after martial law was declared, Marcos reduced the previously authorized increase from 36.5% to 20.9%. This reduction aggravated Meralco's financial position. As a result, Benpres actually defaulted in its payments for the first time in its history.

MR. BENOZA: Are those reduced rates still applicable today under the new Meralco management and ownership?

MR. LOPEZ: Not at all. After the Foundation took over Meralco, Marcos increased its rates by more than 100%. As a result, the millions of poor Filipino consumers of light and power carry the burden. They are now paying more than double what they were paying under our management.

MR. BENOZA: Mr. Lopez, the Foundation in its defense on the purchase of your Meralco shares stated that "the incorporation papers of the Foundation provide that no part of the Foundation's property or income would inure to the benefit of any trustee, officer, or member thereof." What is your opinion of this claim?

MR. LOPEZ: I wonder who Mr. Marcos is trying to deceive. Everyone knows in the Philippines that the so-called "Foundation" is just a front of the Marcos-Romualdez business interest

An article last week by your business editor, Mr. L. Quintana, mentioned the fact that during the birthday party of Mrs. Marcos last July 2, 1974, all of the catering personnel of the Meralco employees' restaurant and

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cafeteria, together with most of the restaurant facilities (silverware, glassware, china, etc.) were flown to Leyte Island to serve the personal guests of Mrs. Marcos. Also the Meralco planes were used continuously to transport many of Mrs. Marcos' invited guests. These facts are known by thousands of Meralco employees and Mrs. Marcos' guests. Mr. Quintana also mentioned that in addition to the three planes which it now owns, Meralco has ordered a new private 9-seater pure jet aircraft costing about one million dollars. There is no justification in buying an expensive jet for Meralco's operation. Obviously, the plane will be used not for Meralco purposes, but mostly for the First Couple's and that of their friends.

Now, Mr. Benoza, can you ask the Foundation officials under what section of the Articles of Incorporation of the Foundation are the Marcoses and the Romualdezes allowed to use the facilities of Meralco when they are not even officially officers of the corporation? Remember that all of these costs are actual burdens being shouldered by the poor Filipino masses who use electricity.

One of the maneuvers set into motion by President Marcos and his brother-in-law, Kokoy Romualdez, to weaken the Lopezes into submission involved the person of Vice President Fernando Lopez. It is a classic story of a man's inhumanity to man.

However, the inhumanity committed against the former Vice President finds an explanation, if deplorable, when one considers the fact that the perpetrators of the deed were motivated by a greed for the properties of the Vice President and his brother, Eugenio.

The little saga of the Vice President began when he received word that his elder brother, Eugenio, Sr., was "dying" in San Francisco. He decided he must see his "dying" brother before the latter goes to the great beyond.

I then became an unwilling participant in the sad experience of Toto Nanding.

The Vice President, it seems, sent a telegram to the President asking for an audience so that he could seek permission to leave for the United States for what might be a last meeting with his sick brother.

Lopez never got an answer from the Palace, and after the lapse of several days, he requested me to visit him at his Forbes Park residence. There he explained his predicament to me. I readily consented to submit a note to the President reminding him of the Lopez request.

I did not get an immediate "feedback" from the President. So I decided to suggest to the Vice President that he write a personal letter to the President, asking for permission to leave the country and to guarantee his return, he would place all his properties as bond. To insure that he would not utter any derogatory remark against the New Society, I suggested he should state in the letter that he would be willing to have me accompany him on the trip.

The President reacted to the Vice President's letter the following day when he told me that he, Kokoy and I should get together in Malacanang on the case of the Vice President, and that he had asked Ambassador Trinidad Q. Alconcel to check on the state of health of Eugenio Lopez.

I waited for Kokoy in the Palace that day. And I did see him in the company

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of Airport Manager Luis Tabuena. However, he abrasively put me off when I reminded him that the President wanted a conference on the Lopez case, saying “*Pabayaan mo na muna ang mga Lopezes.*” (Leave the Lopezes to their doom.)

A week passed and Kokoy did not do anything. In the meantime, a friend who has been acting as the Veep’s contact man with me, informed me that because of the tension of waiting for the Marcos clearance, the Vice President collapsed in his home one night. He quoted the Vice President as saying that, “unless Tibo helps” in the effort to get him a passport, he might die ahead of his brother.

At the risk of being accused of showing an unusual interest in the passport application of the Vice President, I approached the President again. He told me that he had given instructions to Kokoy to see the Vice President.

The following day I sought out Kokoy at the coffee shop of the Intercontinental Hotel and told him about what the President had told. I inquired if he would see the Vice President, and he said he would. I then called up the house of the Vice President to say that Kokoy would see him that day. Before leaving the lobby of the Intercontinental Hotel, Kokoy asked me to prepare a series of statements which the Vice President would have to issue in his own name in connection with the trip.

I found out three days later, when I submitted to Kokoy the prepared statements he sought from me, that Kokoy had not seen the Vice President at all. It was becoming evident to me then that Kokoy wanted to give the Vice President a hard time.

I even tried to guess at the time that it was possible Kokoy wanted to renew or extend his option to buy the ABS-CBN network from the Lopezes. In any case, he clearly showed resentment over my attempts to press him on the passport of the Vice President.

Then it happened all of a sudden. This came about when the international press raised hell about the investigation I was conducting, in my capacity as chairman of the Media Advisory Council, of Arnold Zeitlin, “Associated Press” bureau chief in Manila. The President disauthorized me publicly from continuing the investigation.*4 (*4. See Chapter on “The Era of Thought Control.”)

On the same day, Kokoy sought out the Vice President, brought him to the presidential yacht to be told that he would be allowed to leave to see his ailing brother in San Francisco.

The statements which I prepared were subsequently issued by the Vice President abroad.

The Vice President wrote Marcos a letter pledging to return to the Philippines and placing his properties at the disposal of Marcos.

The New Society of Marcos and his gang is a society of the *nouveaux riche*. They are the new oligarchs who did not have any “seed money”. And yet they succeeded in taking over lock, stock and barrel, the properties of the Lopezes and of other established affluent families in the country.

The rapacious plundering jobs undertaken by Kokoy and Roberto S. Benedicto on the properties of the Lopezes is one of the more notorious ever known. However, there have been equally more heinous extortion activities carried on with the brutal use of the naked powers of martial law by other

anointed cronies of the President.

The more notorious front men of the President in various spheres of economic plunder are Benedicto, in addition to media, for the Japanese business; Rodolfo Cuenca, for the various infrastructure projects; Ricardo Silverio, for the car and appliances manufacturing field; Gilberto Duavit, for organizing mining ventures; Eusebio Agonias, for grabbing mining claims previously staked out; Director of Mines Juanito Fernandez, who works in close cooperation with Agonias on direct instructions from the President; Ralph Nubia, who also fronts for the First Lady, in setting up business within the Chinese community; Lucio Tan, who works closely with Deputy Commissioner of Internal Revenue Conrado Diaz, for the tobacco business; Joselito Yao, for the drug business; and Tantoco, for the Rustan conglomerate.

Some suggestions have been made that these so-called front men of the President may just be in business for themselves. Such an idea must be rejected altogether. It is actually Marcos who tells, or approves, of all major transactions in the country. An all-seeing big brother, Marcos is on top of all things. Nobody, not even Kokoy, would think of doing anything without the signal or subsequent approval or ratification of his acts by Dictator Marcos.

No one can guarantee that the crooked deals of Kokoy, Benedicto, et al happened beyond the scope of Marcos' comprehension. He ratified them subsequently.

The capture of the Lopez empire is a classic case in point. I was asked sometime in February, 1973, by former Vice President Fernando Lopez to visit him. My compadre, Pete S. Deyto, who relayed the message said it was rather urgent that I see the Vice President. It turned out that the Lopezes were ready to sell all their holdings in the Meralco and ABS-CBN companies to the government of the martial regime. I wrote Marcos a memorandum on what the former Vice President told me. Marcos, in turn, told me to inform Fernando Lopez that the definite response would have to await the arrival of Kokoy. Kokoy was then in the United States, obviously visiting his women in New York. I never took up the matter again with the President, since it did not concern my area of operations in the first place. Around July, 1973, Kokoy started teasing me at the coffee shop of the Hotel Intercontinental in Makati that I have a "very rich client" in the person of the Lopezes. I deduced by then that Marcos had already directed him to handle the Lopez offer to sell out. I then mustered enough gall to ask the President about the Lopez deal, and he told me to "leave the entire matter to the Governor (Kokoy)."

Although Kokoy operates for, and by authority of, President Marcos, I am sure he would not pass up some golden opportunities to be in business for himself to expand his ill-gotten wealth. As the man granted by the President exclusive franchise to operate in the United States, Kokoy's has the rare opportunity to deal with the foreign multi-nationals doing, or planning to do, business in the Philippines under the protective mantle of the martial regime.

Every new company set up in the Philippines must cough up "gratis et amore" from 10 to 25 percent of their equity holdings to Kokoy. He always stresses, of course, that he holds such shares in the name of President Marcos. In smaller areas of operation, Kokoy holds the shares in his own name. Established businesses in the Philippines, whether owned by Filipinos or

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Americans, have been approached by Kokoy directly or through emissaries and told that they would get better business from, or establish better relations with the biggest business establishment in the Philippines — the government — if they should make it appear or make known that the honorable governor from Leyte is a major stockholder of theirs. The gratuitous equity usually demanded is 25% to 40% from domestic firms, and from 10% to 25% of foreign owned companies.

Aside from Kokoy, the other brothers and sisters of Imelda, and to a lesser degree, the sisters and brother of the President, have their allocated private preserves to plunder. But in comparison to the insatiability of the Romualdez group, the relatives on the side of the Marcoses and the Edralins appear as poor relations.

There is no doubt that the President has condoned, or encouraged and ratified the insatiable drive of Imelda, Kokoy, Mrs. Fortuna, “Baby” Marcos-Barba, Ferdinand’s youngest sister, Alfredo “Bejo” Romualdez, et al for amassing wealth by the outright naked use of power to grab existing and prospering business enterprises from their legitimate owners/possessors.

The martial law syndrome is so pervasive among the top cronies and associates of Dictator Marcos they behave as if they alone have a monopoly on patriotism. Not only that. They behave as if they are being paid by the people in order to be oppressive, as if they would suffer a sense of guilt if they permitted themselves to be kind and understanding.

Within the Central Bank of the Philippines and the Department of Agriculture, the “franchise holder” is Alita Martel, a younger sister of Imelda. Alita’s husband, Rodolfo, and brother-in-law, Antonio Martel, are in charge of supplying the agriculture department with “Kubota” farming materials and supplies. This is one reason Marcos has been unable to fire Secretary of Agriculture Arturo R. Tanco. Alita protects him.

Only recently, the Martels succeeded in getting the City of Manila to approve the establishment of another Jai-Alai fronton at the city government lot at the corner of Vito Cruz and F.B. Harrison streets, near the Central Bank compound. Now, the new fronton will operate in full competition with the Jai-Alai of the Madrigals. The Madrigal Jai-Alai enterprise has been a closed family corporation which the Marcoses and their front men could not penetrate by strong-arm tactics.

The younger brother of Imelda, Alfredo, a commander in the Philippine Navy, has his own allocation of areas to be plundered. Naturally, it has something to do with his training. To him was awarded an entire national shipping enterprise. Alfredo controls the BASECO (Bataan Shipyards and Engineering Company) which has acquired the disbanded NASSCO (National Shipyards and Steel Corporation). Of course, BASECO was funded with loans extended on liberal terms, upon direct authorization by Marcos, by the National Investments Development Company, a subsidiary of the state-owned Philippine National Bank.

One other concession granted by President Marcos to “Bejo” is the segregation of a 300-hectare portion of the Mariveles Free Trade Zone for use by the BASECO. This was done by the issuance of an unpublished presidential decree. The BASECO-Bejo special decree contravened a policy laid down by

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Congress when it enacted the law establishing the Free Trade Zone in Bataan. The original statute specified that no portion of the Free Trade Zone may be segregated from the reservation unless the area to be segregated is covered by a Torrens Title. The area segregated for BASECO was covered only by an "informacion posesoria" title. Small farmers whose lands within the Free Trade Zone are covered only by "informacion posesoria" have been unable to win any grant similar to Bejo's.

One rich field for the plundering activities of Marcos and company is the area of agro-industrial enterprises. This field yielded millions of pesos of campaign funds for him in 1969. Under martial law, it again became an easy area for picking.

The tragedy of the agro-industrial field, which Marcos and his gang are now exploiting, started in the 1969 elections. At that time, an open borrowing season was declared by Marcos in the government financing institutions. Anybody with any agricultural or industrial enterprise could borrow huge amounts from the Development Bank of the Philippines, the Philippine National Bank, the Social Security System and the Government Service Insurance System.

Among those encouraged to borrow were the operators and/or owners of rice mills, pasture lands, fishponds, ranches, or any agricultural enterprise, and captains of various industries. Approval of the loan application meant an immediate release of 50 percent of the amount applied for. The catch was that one-third of the amount released should be immediately forked over to the campaign coffers of re-electionist President Marcos.

The proceeds from this loan "kickbacks" provided a major source of the electioneering funds of Marcos. The conservative estimate is that Marcos spent almost FI billion (\$250 million in 1969) for his reelection campaign. The overspending brought about an oversupply of money in circulation, bringing the Philippine economy to near total collapse. The International Monetary Fund then ordered the Philippine government to float the peso, a move which brought a sudden devaluation. Marcos was also compelled to "freeze" the release of the remaining 50 percent of the loans approved before the elections by the government financing institutions.

The borrowers were then left holding an empty bag. In no time at all, the projects so ambitiously started were either abandoned or suffered for lack of additional operating capital. The borrowers defaulted in their payments.

The unkindest blow came when martial law was declared. Marcos promulgated Presidential Decree No. 385 providing for automatic foreclosure of all mortgages where the mortgagors have been delinquent in their payments to the government financing institutions. The decree provided that its implementation may not be hampered by any restraining order, or temporary or permanent injunction issued by any court of law.

As the government financing institutions foreclosed on the mortgages, the relatives of Ferdinand and Imelda, and their cronies got busy gobbling up the re-possessioned properties.

Bejo Romualdez, a rural banker as well, branched out into the rice warehousing business by organizing the Kamalig, Philippines, Inc. The new corporation found it easy to open doors at the DBP, PNB and SSS to restructure the indebtedness of the thousands of rice mill owners whose properties Bejo's

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corporation started acquiring.

Benedicto concentrated on the foreclosed sugar mills. He was more crude in his operations. He simply entered into contracts with the Philippine National Bank for the management of the sugar mills. By such an arrangement, Benedicto assured himself of continuous funding of his management by the PNB. In one case, Benedicto took over the management of the foreclosed Pampanga Sugar Milling Company. This despite the fact that a French-backed Filipino corporation had offered to buy the Pasumil and relieve PNB forever of sinking in more in the enterprise.

Lesser lights able to bask in the reflected notoriety of the New Society also maneuvered for themselves. Anos Fonacier organized, with the backing of Tourism Secretary Jose D. Aspiras, a corporation that took over the management of the debt-ridden Bay View Hotel, which had also been foreclosed by the DBP. During a Malacanang conference on the Bay View Hotel take-over by Fonacier's group, President Marcos personally directed that Aspiras' balae,^{*5} Jose Teodoro, be included among the investors in the hotel management firm. (*5. A daughter of Aspiras got married to the son of Teodoro.)

The truth of the matter is that the few people who can have a pipeline with President Marcos are engaged in unrestrained plundering of the public and private resources of the country.

Military commanders have their own areas of responsibility. Brig. Gen. Tomas Diaz, commander of the First Military Area, is in league with Major General Fabian C. Ver, commander of the Presidential Security Command and director general of the Marcos secret police, in the smuggling of luxury items from the coastal area of Bataan, Zambales, and the Ilocos.

This is not to say that there are no decent men who have managed to keep their noses relatively clean. Some of them are Presidential Executive Assistant Jacobo C. Clave and the late Presidential Assistant Guillermo C. De Vega.

In the military, I could point only to Major General Fidel V. Ramos, Constabulary chief, as the only relatively clean ranking officer of the armed forces. On a number of occasions, General Ramos and I have compared notes on cases of graft and corruption within the military and in the Cabinet of the President which we have reported to Marcos. Ramos is especially irked by the activities of Benedicto and Kokoy, and the graft in the Department of Public Information.

However, Clave, De Vega and General Ramos are just droplets of clean water in a bucketful of mud. At times, they have had to swallow their pride and junk principles to obey the orders of President Marcos himself, the First Lady and Kokoy Romualdez.

Marcos has been unable to crack down on the racketeering military officers and the dishonest Cabinet officials. I did appreciate his position while I was still working for him. Marcos could not just offend the military. He could not dismiss a Cabinet member and run the risk of being exposed by his own man on his own graft and abuse of power. The only way Marcos has been able to show his displeasure to a Cabinet member is to split the department he heads. This is what happened in the case of Secretary Tanco whose department was split into two, one for agriculture and another for natural resources.

While the ranking armed forces and other lesser lights in Cabinet and sub-

Cabinet levels of the martial regime are making hay, the lion's share still goes to the unholy trinity consisting of Ferdinand and Imelda, and Kokoy. Somehow, Benedicto is nearing approximation of the degree of sophistication which the unholy trio had perfected in their insatiable drive for wealth, and more wealth from their bleeding countrymen.

One of the finest moments for Kokoy and Benedicto came during the second year of martial law.

In May, 1974, the President unilaterally extended the Parity Rights for Americans in the Philippines. At the same time, he reversed the Supreme Court decisions in the Quasha case *6 (nullifying all sales of private lands to U.S. citizens after 1945) and the Luzon Stevedoring case *7 (banning foreign directors in corporations engaged in Filipinized industries.)

In another area, at almost about the time that the "American theatre" was left open for Kokoy's exploitation, Marcos made the Japanese theatre of investment available to his business front man, Benedicto. Marcos ratified the Philippines-Japan treaty of amity, commerce and navigation. Before this was done, however, Benedicto obtained his authorizations to corner for himself and the President all the arrangements by which Japanese investors might be allowed to avail of the "most favored nation" treatment in the lucrative Philippine market.

The plunder of the Philippines by Marcos and his gang has been so thoroughly planned. The plans are being executed with precision. It just defies comprehension when people ask what Marcos and his gang intended to do with their loot. "They cannot take their wealth to their grave. Besides, we don't think they are enjoying their wealth as wealth should be enjoyed," people would say.

The magnitude of thievery in which Marcos and his gang are engaged may never be assessed. Long after they shall have gone from this world, archivists and researchers would still be discovering bits of evidence of their wanton plunder of the country.

(*6. Republic vs. Quasha (1972), 46 SCRA 160; Constitution, Article XVII, Sections 11 and 12.)

(*7. Luzon Stevedoring vs. Anti-Dummy Board (1972), 46 SCRA 479; 1973 Constitution, Art. XIV, Section 5.)

Chapter VIII

The Unholy Trinity

Gaining national notoriety for his conviction as the gunman in the first known political assassination in Philippine history in 1935, sought by Filipino guerrillas in 1945 for allowing a Japanese convoy to pass his line unmolested, winning the presidency in 1965 and a reelection in 1969 through "guns, goons and gold," absolute dictator of the Philippines by 1972 — Ferdinand E. Marcos.

A miserably poor, but good-looking barrio lass, salesgirl in a piano wholesale-retail store in the early 1950s, made a personal beauty queen by a dashing Cassanova-like mayor of Manila, "gobemadora" of the Greater Manila area, aside from being a meddling First Lady in exact negation of Cardinal

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Wolsey's historical protest that "power does not lie between the legs of a woman," the seventh richest woman in the world by 1975 — Imelda Romualdez-Marcos.

A law graduate too scared to take the bar examinations, errand boy of newspapermen then being spoiled by ambitious politician Ferdinand E. Marcos, thrown out of the "Supper Club" gambling casino of Ted Lewin for so many "sabit" (unsettled gambling debts), "husband-in-law" to many husbands (both in the United States and in the Philippines), now among the wealthiest Filipinos and holder of gratuitously acquired equity shares in numerous foreign corporations established in the Philippines, absentee governor of his native province of Leyte, pretending to play the role of a Henry Kissinger for his brother-in-law-President — Benjamin "Kokoy" Romualdez.

This is the trinity of power in Malacanang under the martial regime of Marcos. Someday, when Marcos kicks the bucket, "Kokoy" Romualdez will himself seek to fit into Marcos' shoes. Some day, Kokoy will seek to rule at the expense, physically, of Ferdinand R. "Bongbong" Marcos, Jr. Bongbong is the second child and only son of the loose union of Ferdinand and Imelda. Ferdinand wants him to succeed to the presidency ala Chang Ching-kuo of Taiwan.

One of the factors Marcos considers in mind when he continually reminds his abusive and arrogant Cabinet members that the regime has not yet sufficiently stabilized itself is the ever present threat of Imelda and her brother, Kokoy, carrying out their plan to shove Marcos out of his tenuous Malacanang pedestal.

The First Lady and Kokoy have a joint timetable for getting rid of, or liquidating, the President. They are moving rather cautiously now in the guise of "doing everything for the greatness of "Da sir". They find it most difficult to keep their motives, ambitions and moves from the prying eyes of the Ilocano relatives and cronies of Marcos.

All indications seem to point to a timetable that the sister-and-brother team might be working for their own joint rule of the Philippines, 1) in the event of Marcos' sudden demise through causes sans human intervention, or 2) when they perhaps might be able to knock off Marcos and rule on their own.

This can be very evident in the voracious and insatiable drive of Imelda and Kokoy to amass jointly and separately as much wealth as they could.

The plotting by Imelda and Kokoy on the "throne of bayonets" that Marcos has established in Malacanang is not without historical precedents. Imelda herself has absorbed so much of the lessons of ancient Rome when the Borghese families warred on each other, installing their own Popes and Emperors.

Imelda and Kokoy are also developmg (jointly again) the image of a topnotch sister-brother team adept at diplomatic trouble-shooting team, although they seem to have separate, but similar culturally-motivated objectives in going to New York three or four times a year. Imelda goes to New York for her Israeli connection, Kokoy for his married "queridas."

On the home front, the Imelda-Kokoy operations also form parallel lines. Imelda cultivates the loyalty of the local officials by calling them one by one to the Palace; Kokoy does it through the League of Provincial Governors and City Mayors, with the assistance of Secretary of Local Government Jose Rono.

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So the gambit becomes evident. Imelda would emerge, upon the demise of Marcos, as the only logical successor, what with her being “gobemardora” of the biggest metropolitan area in the country; and Kokoy would provide the advise and assistance to his sister.

Or, they might feel one day that they are strong enough to knock off President Marcos so they can advance the timetable of their take-over of the reins of government. Then Imelda will be known as Queen Imelda, with complete freedom for her jet-setting parties abroad.

Kokoy is developing his strength among the governors and city mayors by his handling of the mock referendum for Marcos. He also makes sure that presidential favors granted or sought for the governors and city mayor are so declared to the effect that they could not be given without his clearance.

But I do maintain that the Imelda-Kokoy dream is impossible. Without Marcos, they are nothing. Their strength lies in Marcos’ strength. Take Marcos out and the next minute Kokoy will be tied to the nearest lamp post by the angry Ilocanos.

A number of Ilocanos are just waiting for the demise of President Marcos to get their hands on Kokoy. *Igagapos sa langgaman* (to be tied to a post atop an anthill) is the term used by the Ilocanos, borrowing a term from the Tagalogs.

One of them is former Congressman Roque S. Ablan, Jr. And, in the United States, Dr. Leonilo Malabed, and to a certian extent, even Ambassador Trinidad Q. Alconcel, are damn mad at Kokoy for his behavior towards the Ilocanos.

Both Imelda and Kokoy are aware of the resentment that they have generated among the Ilocanos. That is the reason they make it a point to intrigue against every Ilocano of consequence who might be showing signs of leadership, or who may be capable of contesting their own plans to succeed Marcos.

On top of their list are Secretary of National Defense Juan Ponce Enrile; Major General Fabian Crisolago Ver, chief of the Marcos secret police; and Major General Fidel V. Ramos, chief of the Philippine Constabulary. Nor are these three unaware of the machinations of Imelda and Kokoy. They have their own plans of neutralizing Imelda and Kokoy in the event of Marcos’ sudden demise.

My knowledge of this particular situation was gained by me owing to the particular advantageous relationship I have had with Marcos. Being one of the just about five persons outside his immediate family who could see the President at any time, I was looked up to by most Cabinet members who could not enter the Palace without being called by the President as a reliable “informant” on the “weather in the Palace” (i.e. what the mood of the President is, or what inside dope they could possibly use for their own aggrandizement). The Cabinet members would invite me to see them in their offices for luncheon conferences as they try to find out just how they rate with the dictator, the First Lady or Kokoy. One Cabinet member with whom I kept a regular luncheon date was Secretary Enrile. The secretary knew that although administratively, he is the No. 1 implementor of the martial edicts of the dictator, and therefore the No. 2 man in the official ruling clique, his own stability in the defense office could very well be undermined by the First Lady and Kokoy, two members of the Unholy Trinity about whom he (Enrile) had adopted a realistic attitude;

that he could have only their neutrality, but never their support by way of putting in a good word with the President. Enrile just cannot swallow his pride and accept the fact that a woman and her brother could be sharing the vast powers of the dictatorship with President Marcos.

"It just isn't done. How long can the President stand for this government of laws, in-laws and outlaws?" Enrile asked me one day when we were alone together in his conference room, his executive assistant, Rolando de la Cuesta, and senior aide, Col. Flor Aquino Jr., having just stepped outside to attend to some other matters of the defense establishment.

As I pried into the mind of Enrile, I discovered his own ambitions of succeeding Marcos one day. But the resentment he has against the First Lady and Kokoy was very revealing; it was of such depth and magnitude that he could just engineer the assassination of the two members of the Unholy Trinity. And this is not hindsight, either; I took action as early as that time to warn the President that some of his most trusted people were already planning to succeed him. I even supplied him a list of "possibles" among the AFP ranking officers, and even members of the Presidential Security Command, who might be sympathetic to Enrile in his expressed madness at the two officious members of the Unholy Trinity.

Whatever action the President took on my report, he did not see fit to so inform me. It has always been that way with us when I pass on information to him — he would not tell me about the counter-action unless it directly concerned my department. Besides, the President must have thought at the time that it was just as well that Mrs. Marcos and Kokoy would have opposition on whatever plans that they might have concocted for themselves in the event of his demise.

Enrile especially resents the attempts of the First Lady to "act as the guardian of my morals." Enrile questioned her competence to be just that to him. "What moral right has she got to meddle in my affairs, or to tell me with which woman I should go to bed with on my own time? She should first try to control her own husband's rampage on young women. Besides, she should watch her movements, especially when she is abroad. My intelligence officers and military attaches have turned in reports that, if shown to the President, would justify the old man's killing her with his bare hands." Enrile exploded one day.

Enrile turned his wrath on the First Lady, but I could sense that he was attacking her with Kokoy in mind, too. He voiced his own suspicions that Kokoy is working through Presidential Assistant Guillermo C. De Vega — at the instigation of the First Lady — to have him removed as defense secretary. On this point, Enrile turned on De Vega, stating that he was surprised at De Vega's posture of hostility towards him.

It was from Enrile that I first learned one of the tried and tested tactics being employed by the brothers and sisters of Mrs. Marcos to get the President to "make them presents," grant concessions or yield in violation of established policies on certain contracts involving multi-million peso deals.*1

(*1. The wealth of the in-laws of the President and his cronies is treated extensively in another chapter of this book.)

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The brothers and sisters of Imelda (Kokoy, Alfredo, Francipng, Alita, Mrs. Edon Yap, et al) have their own corps of spies which has only one mission: to spy on Dictator Marcos to find out which woman he had taken, or plans to take, to bed. If any of them makes such a discovery, the matter is usually not immediately reported to the First Lady. The bearer of the “bad news” usually waits for such time as when he or she had a fat government deal which only the President can approve or disapprove. After breaking the “bad news” to the First Lady, the particular spying brother or sister — Kokoy is topnotch among them on such projects — asks Mrs. Marcos for the favor of having the President approve the deal in mind as quid pro quo for the vital piece of information furnished the scorned queen of the Palace by the Pasig. The First Lady then raises hell with the Dictator for his latest act of infidelity, and demands that appropriate propitiation be made. In addition, would the President kindly favor a “neglected” brother or sister with the approval of this particular government contract? A cornered President then reluctantly makes his peace offering, and to get her off his back and to cut off her nagging, yields to her importunings in favor of the brother or sister. One such concession could be permission for her to make another trip abroad to visit some potentate in the Middle East or to New York to cavort with her jet-set crowds and display her multi-million dollar jewelry collection.

In the beginning, I treated the Enrile story on how the First Lady and her brothers and sisters terrorize Dictator Marcos into yielding to their demands with some degree of skepticism. After all, Enrile was the kind of a man who is liable to utter anything in the heat of anger. Later, I personally confirmed this particular situation of “terrorism” perpetrated on the Dictator by the Romualdez. Information Secretary Tatad, Immigration Commissioner Edmundo Reyes and Airport Manager Luis G. Tabuena have also told me about this situation, but in a boastful manner as if to brag that they were privy to some of the mischiefs of their chief, Kokoy. I treated such boasting as part of the braggadocio of people out to prove a claim of closeness to the powers that be.

For instance, about two months before martial law was proclaimed, Imelda boarded a Philippine air force Fokker plane for Tacloban City at about 8:30 a.m. On that particular day, several important people were scheduled to be received by Marcos. The appointments calendar was suddenly cancelled by Appointments Secretary Venancio Duque, on orders from Marcos. At about 10:00 a.m. the First Lady suddenly materialized in the Palace, and quite naturally, started looking for her husband — who was nowhere to be found; or, so the Palace aides told the First lady. At about 11:00 a.m., the President himself turned up in his Study Room, and started receiving, surprisingly, all the visitors whose appointments with him were suddenly cancelled just a few hours earlier but who nevertheless had gone to the Palace, the notices of cancellation of their appointments having reached their offices when they were already on their way to Malacanang. As the President was giving an audience to a visitor from a foreign country Mrs. Marcos barged into the Study Room, intentionally making her presence known by closing the door heavily behind her. The President, alert that he must undertake some peace offering, called out to her, saying: “Darling, come and meet the representative of. . .” The President was unable to complete his statement of invitation; he even failed to get the eye of the First Lady who breezed through the erect security people whom she

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normally greets but this time did not. "*Gago! Hindi pa ako nakakaalis*" (Stupid, I haven't even left yet!) shouted the First Lady, evidently meaning that Marcos, the lover boy, had not even bothered to wait until she was definitely on her way to Tacloban City before going about his sexual therapy with another woman.

"*Nahuli na naman si boss!*" (the President got caught again) whispered De Vega to Clave and me. What De Vega meant was that the President got caught again with his pants down by the secret police of Imelda. Later, Tatad, without realizing that I was myself in the Study Room that noon while he was gallivanting somewhere else, called me to his inner sanctum at the old Press Office building and in a patronizing manner, confided to me the Study Room incident. "The President", Tatad said, "got caught by the intelligence network of 'Puti' again!" Kokoy was sometimes referred to as "Puti" by his cronies because of the premature whitening of his hair. I said I knew about the First Lady's discovering another case of infidelity on the part of her husband, but not Kokoy's part in it. Tatad then explained to me that the First Lady was already airborne on her way to Tacloban City when Kokoy reached her pilot with a message that brought her back to Manila. Tatad recounted that Kokoy and his agents spotted the President's whereabouts (in a most unlikely place obviously) at about the time the First Lady was barely 10 minutes airborne enroute to Tacloban City. Tatad added that Tabuena gave him the full details of the story of the President's being discovered in the company of another woman.

It was just an incident, one of those things for which a man, the son of his father, really must be crowned.

Marcos, however, was no ordinary man; neither were the circumstances around him. He was (and still is illegally this time) President, with scheming in-laws who use their sister, Imelda, after driving her to anger, to extort concessions from the ruler who is supposed to be dictating things to the other 45 million oppressed Filipinos. That particular incident must have, based on Enrile's story, yielded Kokoy some priceless rewards from the First Lady.

In other aspects of government, however, one may observe the members of the unholy trinity working in harmony and close cooperation that one is liable to forget the fact that Imelda and Kokoy have a Sword of Damocles hanging over the head of Marcos at all times.

Imelda and Kokoy do have their own areas of operation where the President seems to have very little interest. For instance, Imelda and Kokoy mastered the politics of revenge, conducted in a very crude manner. Unlike Marcos, who could be exacting vengeance on former tormentors and yet make the victim feel and believe that Marcos is actually doing him a favor - and with a smile.

Both Imelda and Kokoy have a common proclivity to wreak vengeance on people who had at one time or another oppressed or sneered at their lowly beginnings; they would force these people into a situation of eating off their palms. Such is the treatment Imelda and Kokoy are now dishing out to former *Manila Times* staff, members, starting from former MT executive editor Jose Luna Castro. Kokoy has made it his personal business to exact vengeance on the newspapermen who used to shout at him when he was doing errands for Marcos the candidate by now making them work as his lowly employes in the newly established *Times Journal*. Newsmen who unhappily receive such treatment are Castro, Manuel B. Salak, Bernie de Leon, and Julie Yap-Daza,

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among others. In the case of the pre-martial law critic of Imelda in the old *Manila Daily Bulletin*, Amelita Reysio-Cruz, she was clamped in jail, too, along with other pre-martial law media critics of the President.

As for Imelda, her obsession is to make the rich families who ignored, despised or shied away from her when she was not yet the First Lady of the land pay for their impudence by now forcing them to pay obeisance to her as the Lady Dictator of the Philippines. Ladies forced into this humiliation belong to the affluent families of the Yulos, the Madrigals. Lopezes, Aranetas, Cojuangcos, Felicianos, et al. Now, most of them are her "Blue Ladies" subject to her beck and call. After all, she is now more wealthy than all of them put together.

But what they consider insufferable is the paranoiac fits Imelda goes into when, without warning, she would regale them with tales of men and women, young and old, dirty and unwashed, swooning over her as she passes them. All these, she would claim, mean that the people have nothing but love and admiration and adoration for her.

One of the reasons that eventually goaded the Marcoses to declare war on the Lopezes in 1971 was the resentment that had built up in Imelda over the continuing claims in public and private circles that the Lopezes were the principal power brokers that won the 1964 Nacionalista presidential nomination and the 1965 presidential election of Ferdinand. Imelda would not acknowledge the big role played by the Lopezes in the capture by Marcos of Malacanang.

"*Wala naman talagang naitulong sa atin 'yan mga bosses mo, Tibo.* (Your bosses did not really help us.) We had to pay for every minute of air time that they gave us in 1964 and 1965 at the ABS-CBN radio-TV networks," Imelda told me one day. Imelda insists that she was the vital difference in that heated 1965 election battle between President Macapagal and challenger Marcos, and because she is being disputed, nay belittled by the Lopezes, she would show the real power of a woman whose efforts the Lopezes were doing everything to denigrate.

As for Kokoy, he has made a deal with Imelda that he would establish their power base among the officials of the local governments, who are more numerous than the members of the armed forces which they have written off as "lost" in the event of a power struggle with Enrile et al upon the disability or demise of Dictator Marcos. Imelda and Kokoy realize that they cannot rely on the armed forces for support to any Ilocano leader of consequence in a post-Ferdinand power struggle — for the simple reason that 70 percent of the manpower of the public armed forces are Ilocanos. Thus, Imelda and Kokoy are concentrating on the local officials, making them swear personal oaths of loyalty to them. As a matter of fact, a question included in the February 27 (1975) referendum asking the people to indicate their position on whether they would want to empower the President or not with the task of appointing local officials after the expiration of their term on December 31, 1975, was the handiwork of Kokoy. This was fed by Kokoy to the late Secretary De Vega and Secretary of Local Government Rono, a recommendee of Kokov. who formed the draft of the questions for the referendum for submission by President Marcos to the Commission on Elections. Of course, the "vote of the people" was "overwhelmingly" in favor of granting the President the power to appoint

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the successors of the local officials. Subsequently, at the instigation of Kokoy, Dr. De Vega and Rono drafted the text of a Letter of Instructions (No. 265) which created a 12-man performance audit team headed by, of course, Rono, to make recommendations to the President on who among the local officials - provincial governors, city and municipal councilors — should be re-appointed, or replaced, and who should replace those to be canned. It is a foregone conclusion that, outside the Ilocano area proper, the recommendees of Rono will be the men handpicked by Kokoy. That is the kind of report that would suit the ambitions of Kokoy to gain control of the local governments — away from the Ilocanos and the military officials who would swing to the Ilocanos in the event of the President's demise.

The operations of Kokoy, the third member of the unholy trinity, both in the Philippines and elsewhere abroad, is something to marvel about. When Kokoy is in the United States or anywhere else, nobody, but nobody, not even Marcos can call him. Everytime the President instructs the agent on duty at the Study Room's communication center to call Kokoy, the agent on duty has to call up somebody first and then that somebody notifies Kokoy who, in turn, contacts the President. "Don't call me, I'll call you!" is the apparent posture of Kokoy. In the United States, it is Al Mamaed, Kokoy's driver bodyguard and confidant, who must first be contacted by the Palace's agent on duty before the former notifies Kokoy.

Kokoy is moving in rather hurriedly on local governments and other sensitive government offices, like the General Auditing Commission, the Bureau of Customs and the Bureau of Internal Revenue. His long range objective is to solidify his hold on these offices so that he could draw on their support in the event of a confrontation with the military upon the removal of Marcos from the seat of dictatorship.

Kokoy's influence right now with the civil arm of government is quite enormous already, and he seeks to expand such influence further by the methodical use of his vantage position and qualities as a compulsive intriguer. Men who otherwise should work for good government, like Clave, De Vega and others both fear and hate him because he virtually runs so many things from behind the scenes, and without him, certain power structures in the martial regime would collapse. He acquired such influence because he had succeeded in leading government officials to believe that, if they did not cooperate with Kokoy, Imelda would go after them.

The most telling example of this Imelda-Kokoy operation is the unceremonious dismissal of Undersecretary of Munitions Manuel Salientes last September 21, 1975. Salientes was known as the "businessman" of the defense department by reason of the fact that he is the over-all arms and equipment buying official of DND. Salientes incurred the ire of Kokoy when he summarily rejected a representation made by Imelda's brother that the DND buy its electronic equipment, worth millions of dollars, from a company designated by the Leyte governor. Salientes pointed out that another company had earlier offered a lower quotation for the DND requisition. Salientes refused to bow to repeated demands of Kokoy that the DND official change his position on the procuremental deal - on pain of being removed from his vital DND position.

The ruthlessness of this third member of the unholy trinity in Malacanang

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is known all over the country. It was his insolence of power that caused partially my disaffection with the dictatorship of Marcos. Teodoro F. Valencia, an institution in Philippine media (the free and the controlled), has had to suffer the insolence of Kokoy almost daily at the coffee shop of the Hotel Intercontinental in Makati, Rizal. The most surprising thing about it all is why Valencia has to stand Kokoy. I really wonder when Kaka (Valencia) would tell Kokoy to his face to "go to hell."

Kokoy, however, reserves some real harsh treatment for the former hirelings of Ted Lewin. He has never felt himself fully satisfied with the initial scolding he had given (right after the martial law proclamation) to Ted Lewin's hirelings. Kokoy feels he can never fully avenge himself on Lewin's hirelings who threw him out of the Lewin-run supper club along Roxas Boulevard because he could not settle his gambling debts.

If Kokoy's thirst for vengeance is unquenchable, his quest for power seems unending. And in doing so, he had somehow betrayed, the little regard which he has for his brother-in-law, Ferdinand, in moments when he wanted to impress people around him on the power he could wield, Kokoy would tell them that he could get Marcos to "do anything I want." "*Kayang kaya naming paikutan ni Meldy si boss. Hawak namin "yan sa bayag."* (Meldy and I can run circles around Marcos. We hold him by the balls.)

It is true that the in-laws and the close blood kins of the President are scared of the Apo. However, in-law Kokoy has managed to run circles around the President because he has developed an SOP for the agents and security people on duty to implement when Marcos looks for him.

Why the intricate communications system involving Kokoy? One reason is that he wants to impress a lot of people. Another is that — he does not want to be caught with his pants down in New York. Kokoy really has to hide from so many people, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation; he also has got a lot of things, tiny delicate two-legged creatures in the United States. I didn't realize that the President's brother-in-law, who amasses wealth by squealing on the philandering of Dictator Marcos to the First Lady, has a harem in New York until my trip to that city in October-November, 1974. I discovered this from one member of his harem, now almost a neglected woman who in a moment of emotional need violated her fidelity to Kokoy, with my humble self as a co-conspirator. Kokoy's harem is supported by public funds, presumably part of it coming from the American taxpayers themselves who contribute to the tune of ONE HUNDRED MILLION (\$100,000,000.00) DOLLARS by way of US aid to the Philippines. Kokoy has a girl in every major Philippine office or agency in the United States; they are at his beck and call whenever he travels to their respective areas.

Kokoy has two girls in the offices of the Philippine Mission to the United Nations. One of them is a girl estranged from her husband in Manila who sometimes serves as an assistant to Fe Roa, the First Lady's girl Friday, whenever Mrs. Marcos is in the New York area. The punning most often expressed among us who were working with and/or for Kokoy is that the girl was a doubly "good secretary." In the morning, so the punning goes, she says. "It's morning already sir" to Kokoy. and then a few minutes later says "Good morning, Ma'am" to Imelda.

Kokoy also has two girl friends in the Philippine Consulate General in New

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York, one of them also a married woman, both of them are personally protected by Ambassador Ernesto Pineda, the consul general, as part of his duties for the sock-less governor of Leyte. He found another place where he could exile one of his Philippine girls when the Philippine Center was opened in New York in November. The girl, who used to be a receptionist in one of the big hotels in Manila, came to New York to work at the restaurant of Nora V. Daza in the center.

But the more notorious affair of Kokoy in New York is his involvement with Mrs. Baby A.F., wife of a doctor - son of a famous surgeon - who is residing in New York with her five children. Baby is the daughter of a millionaire now in self-exile in the United States, and also residing in New York. This international love affair of Kokoy with Baby A.F. is the one thing that forced Juliet Gomez, daughter of rich hacenderos from Negros and Pampanga provinces, to leave the conjugal home she had built (largely from her resources) after they got married in 1958. Kokoy and Juliet met at the Lyceum of the Philippines where they both took up college courses.

When in New York, Kokoy usually becomes very partial to Baby A.F. in comparison with other girls he maintains, or pretends to be in love with, in the great American city of New York. He does not even take pains to shield this affair from Filipinos in New York. Kokoy usually takes Baby A.F. out to dinner at Club 21, the Stork Club, and at times to the Plaza Hotel, in the company of Patty Araneta and Pichy Boo Prieto. Pichy is usually accompanied by her American boy friend when she goes out with the Kokoy pair, obviously fearful that Kokoy would not hesitate to annex her into his New York harem. At one time, when the group ordered expensive dishes from the Stork Club, the American boy friend of Pichy, true to his upbringing, offered to pay part of the food bill to ease his conscience. Kokoy cut him off, saying: "You don't pay, the Filipino people pay for my expenses anywhere!"

Kokoy and Baby A.F. do not make any bones about their illicit relationship. They have openly made trips together to Las Vegas, San Francisco and other beautiful spots in the United States as husband and wife. Kokoy even sleeps in Baby A.F.'s apartment when he does not feel like taking Baby A. F. to his luxurious suite at the Hotel Carlyle. At one time, during a Christmas period, Kokoy was almost caught by A.F.'s husband in Baby's apartment and he had to run through the backdoor to avoid an ugly scene with the pendejo. A.F.'s husband usually visits Baby and her five children at Christmas time, and Kokoy just did not have that foresight to avoid Baby's apartment at that time. Perhaps, he had become so callous in a dramatic exemplification of the insolence of power that marks his personal behavior.

It is the immorality of their, respective lives, their bankrupt morals, that bind, as a matter of fact, the three members of the unholy trinity in Malacanang.

Just what is the rationale for the metamorphosis of a man into a dictator?

In the case of Ferdinand E. Marcos, it started from the time he decided to snuff out the life of Julio Nalundasan, followed by his bitterness over his murder trial and the realization that he had failed to commit a perfect crime in shooting down Nalundasan. Then, realizing that the ghost of Nalundasan would continue to haunt him, along with the newer ghost of his scandals and misdeeds in the office of the President which he had demeaned, Marcos sought to cover up all these by a headlong plunge into dictatorship.

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In the December 1975 issue of *Cosmopolitan* magazine what had long been rumored in the Philippines was finally confirmed.

An article reported that Imelda 46, wife of Philippine Dictator 58, is one of the 10 richest women in the world.

She was listed along with Queen Elizabeth of England, Queen Juliana of The Netherlands, Christina Onassis of Greece, the Duchess of Alba, Madeliene Dessault of France, The Begum or widow of Aga Khan, Barbara Hutton, Doris Duke and Dina Merrill.

In the same month that the article came out, the Philippine celebrity, while basking under the glory of the report, flew back to New York City where columnist Earl Wilson reported on December 15: "x x x Playing it like a queen Philippine First Lady Marcos gave costly baubles (diamonds and pearls) to party guests Monique Van Vooren, Rudolf Nureyev and Van Cliburn. ." between champagne.

Nobody therefore can question the veracity of the *Cosmopolitan* magazine article on her wealth. That Imelda Marcos is indeed one of the world's 10 richest women, she herself has not denied.

Being wife of a chief of state, illegally though in power he may be, it may seem natural to her fellow-international jetsetters that she is a rich woman, but to Filipinos who know her background, where she came from and how she started, this feeling is not shared.

Manglapus, leader of the Philippine opposition in the United States, succinctly reported that "If Imelda is the richest woman in the world today it is because Marcos is the biggest thief!"

Indeed, if Marcos is the biggest thief, then he must also be the richest man in the world today.

Which brings us to the big question, how on earth did Imelda Marcos amass such wealth? What is the story of her rise from rags to riches?

In 1970 Chit Pedrosa, former staff member of *The Manila Chronicle*, after two years of research, provided part of the answer when she came up with a very revealing book, the *Untold Story of Imelda Marcos*.

It traced Imelda Marcos' history, ancestry, and fabulous rise from the gutter to wealth and fame, complete with official records, eyewitness accounts, and family photos.

For writing that book, the writer was sued for libel and hounded out of the Philippines. She is now living in exile in England, like a few other Filipino journalists who have incurred the wrath of the Marcoses and who are now also living in exile abroad.

Imelda Marcos was always a big question mark from the time she was born on July 2, 1927, in Manila. Her baptismal certificate at the San Miguel Cathedral was unsigned by the parish priest.

Until 1938, she lived in a garage in San Miguel district, just walking distance to Malacanang Palace, with her mother and kid brother Kokoy.

Imelda's family tree goes back to her grandfather Daniel Rongialdez of Pandacan, Manila, who married Trinidad Lopez of Ermita, Manila. They bore three sons - Norberto, Miguel, and Vicente.

Norberto had a son Norberto Jr. who later became secretary of labor, Miguel produced two sons — Daniel who became speaker of the House of Representatives, and Eduardo who is now Philippine ambassador to the U.S.,

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while Vicente became the father of Imelda.

Of the three sons, Vicente, or Imelda's father, was the poorest or the least known of the Romualdezes.

Interestingly, Imelda was only a daughter of Vicente Romualdez by a second marriage. Her father's first wife, Acereda, of Leyte had died and left him five children - Vicente Jr., Lourdes, Dulce, Victoria and Francisco.

Later Vicente married Imelda's mother. Vicente's new set of children included, aside from Imelda, the now Leyte Governor Benjamin or Kokoy, Alita, Alfredo, Armando and Conchita.

Under this mixed situation, Imelda's father was caught in the crossfire of family squabbles between his dominant children by the first marriage and his wife and children by the second marriage to which Imelda unfortunately belonged.

In addition to this, Vicente Romualdez was buried in debts, his house being heavily mortgaged and unpaid.

Inevitably Imelda's parents themselves quarreled, later became estranged, forcing her mother to move out of their house at General Solano in San Miguel, Manila, and live in its garage.

There Imelda lived with her sick and fragile mother, her kid brother Kokoy, and their ever faithful maid from Leyte named Estrella who took care of Imelda since she was born.

Imelda underwent this kind of life as a child sustained only by dwindling allowances from her father and what little her poor mother could earn outside despite her bad physical condition.

Her mother worked like a slave to make both ends meet, aggravated by her continuing disagreements with her husband and his children by his first marriage.

From this situation, Imelda, in effect, never enjoyed the love of a father, the warmth of home, and perhaps not even the personal care of her mother who was always trying to make a living.

It was their maid, Estrella, who spent more time with her, caring for her, and attending to her needs.

Then, as fate had it, one night her mother returned home to their garage with a high fever. Complicated by her emotional distress, the poor woman finally passed away.

Imelda's mother died sick and heart-broken. That was in 1938 when Imelda was only nine years old.

Thus twice in a row - first her father's first wife Acereda, and now her own mother Remedios died. too.

The tragedy-stricken Vicente Romualdez, to try to forget his big family's sad fate, sold his General Solano house in Manila and returned to Leyte. He brought with him his two sets of orphaned children by his two marriages.

Once again Imelda was forced to live with her dominant step brothers and sisters older than her.

What ran in Imelda's mind then, under such miserable family situation, was to be revealed years later when she grew up to be a woman.

But somehow at the age of 16, Imelda, gifted with natural beauty, became the Muse of Tacloban, Leyte. After she acquired her BSE degree from St. Paul's College there, she taught at a local Chinese High School.

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At this time, she was said to have a rich Chinese boyfriend. But she dropped him when she returned to Manila, city of her birth and miserable childhood, and lived in the house of her cousin. Rep. Romualdez, who later became House speaker.

Now a ripe woman, Imelda first worked as a salesgirl at the P.E. Domingo Piano and Music store at the Escolta in Manila. She would stand inside and wait for customers. Her duty also included singing the lyrics of musical pieces to prospective patrons.

During the time of Mayor Arsenio II. Lacson of Manila, he sponsored her candidacy for "Miss Manila" but she lost to the representative of the International Fair, Norma Jimenez.

For some reason, the city executive protested the result of the beauty contest. As a compromise, it was amended with Imelda being awarded the consolation prize of "Muse of Manila" title.

But the publicity over the beauty contest controversy put her in the limelight for the first time.

Inevitably she had some suitors. Her ideal type was Justo Zibal who had courted her in Leyte. He was tall, dark, and with deep set eyes.

Now that Imelda was in Manila, she finally settled for Ariston Nakpil, an architect, son of Juan Nakpil and the former Anita Noble, pre-war Miss Philippines, and brother of Edita Nakpil, post-war Miss Philippines.

Ariston studied at the Fountainebleau School of Fine Arts in France and was estranged from his wife, but Imelda accepted him as her steady boyfriend and they dated.

Imelda landed a job at the Central Bank and received a salary of 250 pesos a month. She was assigned to the Intelligence Division. Her duty included filing cards, indexing and recording official documents.

While off duty, she served as a governess and girl Friday of the Daniel Romualdezes.

One late evening in 1954 while accompanying Mrs. Romualdez to Congress to fetch her husband. Speaker Romualdez, Imelda and then Rep. Ferdinand Marcos of Ilocos Norte, met at the capitol building's cafeteria on the basement floor.

To the young Ilocano it appeared to be love at first sight, although he had already acquired the reputation of a lothario, being then a rising congressman who emerged from World War II as the country's allegedly most decorated soldier but whose medals were said to have been obtained through forgery and misrepresentation.

As narrated in his biographical book, *For Every Tear A Victory*, Marcos had himself introduced to Imelda by fellow-Rep. Jacobo Gonzales of Laguna, an old guerrilla buddy.

"Would you mind standing up?" Marcos requested Imelda. Puzzled, the 36-23-35 bundle of a woman complied. He stood back to back with her, measured their heights with his hand, and verified that he was at least a half-inch taller than her — on low heels and unpiled hair.

Suspicious of what the young congressman was up to, the Romualdezes quickly spirited Imelda away.

The next day at her Central Bank office desk she received two red roses — one in full bloom and the other in tight bud. When she opened the note she

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learned it came from Marcos.

It said: "Everything is so rosy. I wonder why." When her office mates saw the roses they teased her. They told her that in the Ilocano courtship custom, the bud denoted her tightly closed un-awareness of what was about to blossom, while the open rose symbolized his mature love and flat declaration of marriage.

Without her knowledge then, the young Marcos was actually employing his now famous blitzkrieg tactics. He pursued her up to Baguio where he refused to accept no for an answer.

Eleven days after they had met and following a whirlwind courtship, Ferdinand Marcos and Imelda Romualdez were married in Baguio City before Judge Jose Maria Chanco.

But when they planned for their Catholic Church marriage a hitch developed. They could not be wedded there because he was not a Catholic, having been born an Aglipayan.

His father Mariano was a leader of Gregorio Aglipay, founder of the religious sect, Philippine Independent Church or Aglipayan, for short.

So arrangement was hastily made to have Congressman Marcos, at the late age, be formally converted to Catholicism. He was baptised a Catholic.

Thus Imelda Marcos, whose own baptismal certificate was unsigned by the parish priest in San Miguel Cathedral Church in 1929, became the wife of a man whose baptism was made out of convenience.

It was in effect a church wedding between a man and a woman whose religious upbringings were both a big question mark, if not a fraud.

Is it any wonder then that when Imelda Marcos became the First Lady of the Land, and now wife of the First Filipino Dictator, she would also lead a highly questionable life?

Is it surprising also that although she started very poor, an ill-starred daughter of a sick and heart-broken woman who once lived in a garage, worked as a salesgirl, would now be what she is today - one of the world's richest women?

As a footnote to Imelda Romualdez-Marcos' rise from rags to riches, it is pertinent to mention here, in order to get a glimpse of her true character as a person, what happened after she became First Lady.

Imelda returned to Tacloban, Leyte, where she grew up to be a young woman before she finally found her place in Manila. It was like a triumphal return.

Now surrounded by her Blue Ladies and many other girl Fridays, of which once upon a time she was herself one, she failed or refused to recognize a now old woman named Estrella.

The stranger approached her, wanted to greet her, if only for old time's sake. After all, she was the maid who used to take care of her when she was a child.

But Imelda did not recognize her, or refused to recognize her. She went about her way as if she had never seen Estrella, as if the very woman who took care of her never existed at all.

Then there was Adoracion Reyes, a voice teacher at the Philippine Women's University in Manila, who used to coach her when she was studying how to sing.

Reyes also was her constant companion when she aspired to be Miss

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Manila, getting pointers here and there. But when she became First Lady did Imelda recognize her? No.

She actually made some kind of a valid request for help. After all, Imelda owed her a favor. It was only fair that she got her help now that Reyes needed it and Imelda could afford it. But Imelda said no.

So what kind of a person is Imelda Marcos?

Perhaps the case of her own mother can provide a more convincing answer. Her grave at North Cemetery in Manila up to now reportedly remains unmarked and unmourned.

Did Imelda Marcos, who now lives in her own Cinderella fairy tale, shut off her dark past? Was she ashamed of her own mother who was just an *agraciada* or kitchen helper?

Could she not bear the thought that she once lived in a garage in a, hand to mouth existence that eventually contributed to her mother's death when she was only nine?

Have the tears long dried that now she has a heart like stone, perhaps even mad that she cannot be proud of her own dark past, that such a past is really embarrassing now that she is rich and famous?

Or when Imelda Marcos came of age, with the bitter memory of her mother's death and miserable childhood fresh in her memory, like Scarlet O'Hara in David O. Selznick's American Civil War epic "Gone With the Wind," did she vow then, "I swear I'll never go hungry again!"?

However, Imelda is not content with self-assurance that she would never go hungry again. She wants to acquire and display hard physical evidence on her magical transformation from a poor, wretched girl into a most affluent woman; she would undertake activities to demonstrate that, too.

For instance, during the wedding of Princess Anne, to which Imelda wangled an invitation, the First Lady wanted to wear a diamond tiara atop her head, but she was told that she could not because she was not of royal blood. So Imelda ordered a "chignon" hairdo (*nagpusod*) and wore the diamond tiara behind her head.

In her mad desire to behave as a royal-blooded conjugal ruler of the Philippines, Imelda makes it a point to attend all coronations of minor kings and other discarded royalties.

She has succeeded in drawing world attention to her ill-gotten wealth. Witness this newspaper account:*2

(*2. "Suzy Says column, New York Daily News, Feb 9, page 12.)

THE PEARL OF THE PHILIPPINES

The chic thing to do just now is to nip off to Manila to visit Madame Imelda Marcos, wife of the President of the Philippines, who's wildly generous, if she likes you, and the very essence of hospitality. Madame Marcos practically flings Philippine pearls to her friends, and they get to keep everything they find in their closets upon arrival (clothes that somehow fit, gorgeous caftans, etc.) After a stay like that, you leave the Islands humming the scenery.

The latest chums to visit Madam are CeeZee and Winston Guest and Mrs. Henry Ford II, otherwise Christina, Imelda's bosom buddy. After

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they've knocked off Manila, they and Madame Marcos will fly to Katmandu, Nepal, in the Marcos private jet, to see the coronation of King Birendra, who else?

Or, this dispatch by Bernard Weinraub on the Birendra coronation: *3

(*3. "Reporter's Notebook: Nepal Coronation Lured the World's Partygoers – Invited or Not." The New York Times, Feb 28, 1975.)

If the coronation was a theatrical drama. King Birendra would, of course, be the star. But the two figures who virtually upstaged him were Prince Charles and Mrs. Marcos. The striking wife of the Philippine President arrived here with an entourage that included a secretary, a military aide and a bodyguard, as well as Mrs. Ford and the Christian N. Barnards, who had been in the Philippines for the opening of a hospital for heart surgery.

Diplomats and journalists were *somewhat awed and dazzled by Mrs. Marcos' flawless tactics for keeping herself firmly in the spotlight.* At the morning coronation and at a tent on the parade group in the afternoon she managed to sit beside Prince Charles. "She's certainly keeping Charles amused," said a British correspondent. She keeps talking and Charles keeps saying, "Really? Really?"

With the foreign press and many photographers behind a rope outside the tent, waiting, bored, for the King to arrive on an elephant, Mrs. Marcos abruptly decided to take a walk. She opened her white parasol with Princess Michiko, walked for several yards. They were soon joined by Prince Charles, and the photographers used up rolls of film.

"At these receptions, Mrs. Marcos always manages to arrive at the right moment, the most dramatic time," said the wife of one senior diplomat. "She's quite formidable, you know." (Italics supplied.)

Popular San Francisco columnist Herb Caen wrote of the event from another angle, thus: *4 (*4. San Francisco Chronicle, March 11, 1975, page 22.)

ADD SOCIAL NOTES: A conspicuous consumption award to Mrs. Ferdinand Marcos, wife of the Pres. of the Philippines, who attended the coronation of King Birendra in Nepal with an entourage of 80, including six hairdressers and Christina Ford, wife of the Santa Barbara playboy. The Marcos group arrived in four government jets, one of which flew back to Manila to pick up food for her group. Have I been underestimating Filipino fare all these years?

If newsman Weinraub thought that the "scene-stealing" shows of Mrs. Marcos were "abrupt" decisions, he has another thing coming. All activities of Mrs. Marcos are pre-programmed as image-building moves; even the way she should dress up or move her hands and wave on given occasions are well-rehearsed.

For instance, Mrs. Marcos appearance at the inauguration of the Philippine Center in New York on November 14 was well programmed. Even the matter of neutralizing the Manglapus demonstrations was planned with the cooperation of officials of the Miss Universe Pageant at the MUP offices in New York. Kokoy Romualdez, Secretary of Tourism Jose D. Aspiras, Ambassador

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Ernest Pineda, Col. Barangan, Col. Romeo Ochoco, Press Counsellor Alejandro del Rosario and I attended the conference at the MUP offices. We came up with the following draft of a "strategy" to neutralize the Manglapus demonstration:

Talk Strategy with Picketers

Friends would be strategically located on the East side of the street. Friends would approach the picketers and engage them in conversation. We will try to keep their attention away from the action across the street if necessary.

Talk to Newsmen

If local newsmen ask questions of the picketers the Friends would barge in and ask of the newsmen an American's opinion of the Philippines having returned from five weeks visit.

Contact News Executives

News stations would do a story of Pre-Opening, Pre-Interview and Opening especially with the involvement of so important a personality as we are discussing.

New York news-hounds are a special breed and do not like to be led astray. The mere mention of "at the opening there might be some clowns with pickets" told in a straight forward manner and with security thrown in for good measure, might completely divert their attention away from the picketers to only the main story -- The opening of the building.

Package offered to the News Executives

Pre-Opening -- A tour of the building with the First Lady on a pool basis or exclusive.

The Opening -- If ribbon cutting outside between 4 pm and 8 pm is still the desired approach, supplemental lighting would be required for the dusk and dark event. A small generator would be required for good picture quality of the celebrities. Newfilm crews on a daily basis use "sun gun" equipment. This necessitates tight shots. Newfilm crews would use "sun gun" equipment across the street questioning picketers (few people in picture, not full demonstration, due to darkness).

Adding Screen of Vegetation

Adding large pots (same type as directly across the street) with; Philippine National Vegetation for the event would screen off the main event from the picketers across the street.

Rush Hour

The normal rush hour of buses, taxis and other vehicles also screen off main event and picketers across the street not only by traffic but by noise level.

Bus Screen

Get permission to park special charter buses for dignitary arrival and departure in front of the building.

Cafe Manila visits

Friends can visit to try and overhear any discussion of the opening event. In so small a place hard to do especially if the same people keep coming back.

Actually, in the matter of gaining publicity mileage and an improved press image abroad, the unholy trinity in the Philippines would go to any length, spare no expense. They would wine, dine and whatever visiting media people.

An instance where the Philippine dictatorship had invested so much is that of Ms. Elizabeth Day. In the two trips that Ms. Day made to the Philippines, while I was still with the martial regime, I know that her transportation and hotel expenses were paid for by the Philippine government, specifically by the Department of Public Information. In turn, she has written a favorable book on martial law and a complimentary article in the Reader's Digest on Mrs. Marcos.

The book that author Ms. Day produced on President Marcos was a form of propitiation or offering by Romulo to salvage his faltering image before the conjugal dictatorship. Ms. Day, a close and intimate friend of Romulo, went to the Philippines with all expenses paid by the government on the recommendation of Romulo. The good general even recommended that Ms. Day be made a house guest of the conjugal dictatorship.

But for some reason or other, the First Lady didn't think it wise to have her as a house guest. In any case, she was billeted in a handsome suite at the Hotel Intercontinental. Kokoy made sure that the Department of Public Information would foot Ms. Day's bill.

Kokoy assigned me to attend to the requirements of Ms. Day on news gathering, but I soon found out that it was the desire of Secretary Romulo that he be left alone to attend to Beth. I decided to make the good secretary of foreign affairs jealous or suspicious, at least. On the day Ms. Day had an 11 a.m. appointment to interview the First Lady, I prevailed upon Ms. Day to ride in my car to Malacanang instead of waiting for Romulo's car. I told her that traffic was awful this particular time of the day and that she might be late for her appointment with the First Lady. Since I only wanted to make Romulo a little jealous, but not kill him with it, I instructed the doorman at the Hotel Intercontinental in Makati, Rizal, to inform the secretary when he arrived that Ms. Day and I have gone ahead of him.

We had been inside the Malacanang reception hall only about 10 minutes when I noticed Gen. Romulo panting his way up the stairs. He immediately grabbed Ms. Day's tape recorder from me and said he would carry it for Beth going into the Music Room for the interview with the First Lady.

After the interview, the First Lady turned to Secretary Romulo and, with her usual play-acting of touching her chest with her open right hand palm and making a dejected look towards heaven, asked how she fared in the interview with Ms. Day.

"Oh, don't worry Mrs. Marcos. I'll edit whatever she writes about you. In fact, I might write it myself from memory," Gen. Romulo quickly answered. As a matter of fact anybody can write about what the First Lady said to Ms. Day for there was really nothing spectacular in her answers.

The truth, however, was that Ms. Day wasn't going to write anything about the First Lady. She only wanted to talk to the President and Mrs. Marcos to

'acquire some scenario for the real thing which brought her to the Philippines: An assignment from *Readers Digest* to write a full-length article on the car accident Romulo had a year before martial law, and his miraculous recovery.

Romulo never told either the President or the First Lady about the real purpose of Ms. Day's trip to Manila. But she was candid about it to me.

An irritated President Marcos sought to "punish" his foreign secretary for bringing in an American writer at the expense of the conjugal dictatorship to gather materials for a story that was just for the personal glorification of the general at a time when the main preoccupation of the propaganda machine was to deify the ruling duumvirate.

Since he had also consented to an interview by Ms. Day the following day, Marcos gave specific instructions that Romulo was not to be admitted into the Palace on the day of the interview. "Ms. Day will interview me alone!" the President told the appointments secretary.

Following the President's cue, Secretary Tatad then telephoned Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs Manuel Collantes to tell him that CPR was to be "kept busy on something else somewhere" at the time of the interview. It so happened that the President had a speaking engagement before a group which would discuss foreign policy among others, but which the President had previously assigned to Collantes. Tatad told Collantes that it was the desire of the President that he pass on the assignment to the unknowing secretary of foreign affairs - just to keep him away from the Palace during the day of the interview.

But to make sure that CPR would not come barging into the Palace after delivering the speech for the President, Dictator Marcos told the appointments secretary, Minister Mariano Ruiz, that he would have no callers for that day except Ms. Day.

Romulo didn't attempt to get inside the Palace that day, perhaps having sensed the conspiracy to separate him from Ms. Day or that he just decided to be prudent for which he was noted. In any case, he would have been turned down in the first sentry gate, if he had tried to get into the Palace that day. Somehow, CPR got to find out that the First Couple were sore at him over the Day trip. Ever the adjustable diplomat, Romulo came up to the Palace on another occasion to inform the President casually that he was deep at work on Miss Day, convincing her to write a full-length book on the New Society. On her next trip around, Ms. Day was billeted at the Manila Hilton - all expense paid by the DPI again - as she gathered materials for her book, which was later on published under the title of *Philippines: A Shattered Showcase of Democracy*.

Chapter IX

Too late the hero

Ferdinand E. Marcos has done nothing right for the Filipino people. His legal presidency (1966 to 1972) and unconstitutional martial law reign have brought about nothing but a confused policy built on a quicksand of hypocrisy, double standards, plain lies and corruption.

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Marcos is just a tinpot dictator whose lust for power knows no limit. Everywhere one may gaze, he would see nothing but a vast river of hypocrisy and deception about building of a New Society. Democracy, to which Marcos pays lip service every now and then, is headed into a mist of might-have-been.

In early years, we used to brand the Communists as having a monopoly of the ability to prevaricate. Not anymore since the advent of Marcos.

One must not be prepared to assume the sincerity of the statements of Marcos and his readiness to abide by the few fundamental rules of intellectual honesty. He has lied himself blue in the face to achieve a desired rhetorical effect. And lying is almost the best of the weapons he is prepared to deploy on behalf of his grim faith.

And yet, because he is not an avowed Communist, Americans are willing to take wildly optimistic assumption of his sincerity and intellectual honesty.

One of the few persons who apparently foresaw the kind of life that Marcos would fashion out for the Filipinos was former Manila Mayor Arsenio H. Lacson. He preferred to die than see Marcos subjugate the Filipino people.

"Di puta gid, yawa. (Damn that s.o.b.) If that guy ever becomes President, God save the Philippines!" swore the irrepressible Lacson, the best mayor Manila ever had and the best President the Philippines never had.

"Why, *hijo*, what has come to you? You are swearing at 7 o'clock in the morning, and you haven't even had a drink yet?" asked the slowly awakening Luchi Lacson, wife of the Manila mayor. Luchi belonged to that rare variety of politicians' wives whose sense of delicadeza told her to maintain a prudent distance between her bedroom and the Office of the Mayor of Manila. She would not even recommend a simple job-seeker to her husband, if it meant interfering in the affairs of the government at City Hall.

Unmindful of Luchi's questioning, Lacson continued his early morning monologue, "That bastard is crazy, if he thinks that people have forgotten that he killed Nalundasan. I know that he did, and 10 angels and 10 fatherly Laurels telling me that Ferdinand Marcos did not do it would not change my mind. I know it, I was a part of his defense panel".

Luchi caught on the angry monologue, and herself asked rhetorical questions: You mean Ferdinand Marcos has declared that he is seeking the presidency of the Philippines? Did he say he was joking, Arsenio? At this point, Lacson finally took notice of his wife, and faced her. "Yes, *hija*, that pug-nosed killer of Nalundasan had the gall to come here and proposition me into teaming up with him for a crack at the leadership of this country".

It was on an early morning in late March, 1957, hardly had a shocked and grieving nation buried its most beloved of all Presidents, Ramon F. Magsaysay, when Ferdinand E. Marcos paid a visit to Lacson at the latter's residence on M. Earnshaw Street in Sampaloc, Manila. Marcos, then completing his second term as congressman for second district of Ilocos Norte, said he was advised by "Papa Laurel" to propose to Lacson the formation of a "dream presidential ticket" which would have the support of the politically-powerful Laurel clan.

"Yes, padre, I will subordinate myself to you. I will be your vice presidential running mate — on one condition, that you will pledge not to seek reelection, if our team wins." Lacson quoted Marcos as having stated to him during their conference at Lacson's underground den at his M. Earnshaw residence.

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"Oh, no, wait a minute. Ferdinand. I really would want to serve this country as President one of these days. But, if the condition is that you will be my Vice President, forget it. I love life, too, and I want to live a little longer, while serving my people. Don't ever think that I have forgotten the sharp aim of that man who felled Nalundasan with a single rifle shot. In these days of the telescopic sight, my God, I may hardly have the time to take my oath as President before my own Vice President guns me down with that deadly aim of yours. Oh, no, Ferdinand, forget it."

"Padre, puro ka biro, eh. Kalimutan mo na iyan kalokohan natin, nakaraan na iyon (Padre, you are always joking. Let's forget the past mischiefs)", cut in Marcos.

Lacson boomed: "I am not kidding, Ferdinand. I will not do anything which would in any way help you become President of this country. As a matter of fact, I make you this promise. You can become President of this country only over my dead body!"

Lacson was still fuming mad over the Marcos proposition long after the Ilocos Norte congressman had left the M. Earnshaw residence.

"Salbahe talaga itong si Marcos. (This guy Marcos is really a scheming deadly man). Just because I was ahead of him with Imelda, he wants to get even with me in a most complicated manner!" Lacson would declare occasionally in recalling the Marcos visit to his house, and with a mischievous look on his Visayan face, would add: "Of course, if I should be President, and Marcos is my No. 2 man, then maybe I can requisition the Vice President's lady once in a while." *1

(*1. Lacson died on April 15, 1962 of apparent heart attack. At the time, he was already being groomed by the Nacionalista leadership to become the party's presidential candidate in 1965, while incumbent President Macapagal was being egged by Marcos to make good his pledge to support Marcos for the Liberal party presidential nomination.)

At that time, the nation had just very little knowledge of the workings of the heart and mind of Marcos.

The shot that catapulted Marcos for the first time into national notoriety was fired, according to a trial court, on September 21, 1935. Marcos, according to later findings of the trial court, gunned down reelected Assemblyman Julio Nalundasan.

Nalundasan was a perennial political rival of the father of Ferdinand, Mariano Marcos. Julio Nalundasan and Mariano Marcos, both of Batac, Ilocos Norte, were rival candidates for the office of representative for the second district of said province in the elections of 1934. Nalundasan was elected. The term for which Nalundasan was elected was, however, cut short as a result of the approval of the 1935 Constitution under which the general elections for members of the National Assembly were by law set for September 17, 1935. In the general elections, Julio Nalundasan and Mariano Marcos resumed their political rivalry and were opposing candidates for assemblyman in the same district. In the strife, Nalundasan again came out triumphant over Marcos. In the afternoon of September 19, 1935, in celebration of Nalundasan's victory, a number of his followers and partymen paraded in cars and trucks through the municipalities of Qirrinao, Paoay and Batac, Ilocos Norte, and passed in front of the house of the Marcoses. One of the trucks in the parade was so made up

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as to appear like a hearse carrying the coffin of a dead Marcos, as if to proclaim that Mariano Marcos was politically dead - and to be buried. The parade was described as provocative and humiliating for the defeated candidate, Mariano Marcos.

The assemblyman reelect, Nalundasan, was not, however, destined to reap the fruits of his political laurels for on the night of September 21, 1935, he was shot and killed with a single rifle shot after brushing his teeth in his house in Batac. Newly-elected President Manuel L. Quezon was greatly disturbed by the killing as he sensed that politics was getting to be too heated, let alone the fact that Nalundasan was his candidate against Mariano Marcos. Quezon subsequently sent a special team of prosecutors headed by then Fiscal Higinio Macadaeg to handle the prosecution of the accused in the killing for the crime of murder. The accused were Mariano Marcos, Pio Marcos,*2 Ferdinand E. Marcos and Quirino Lizardo. The trial was presided over by Judge Roman Cruz.*3

(*2. Pio Marcos was a younger brother of Mariano. He is currently a judge of the court of first instance branch in Baguio City and sits as board chairman or member of several mining and industrial corporations organized upon the imposition of martial law and which appear to be operating profitably. It was Judge Marcos who found a complainant against Dona Josefa Edralin-Marcos in the celebrated "Golden Buddha" case guilty of robbery, instead.)

(*3. Judge Cruz is the father of two Cruzes close to the ruling clique. They are J.V. Cruz, one time press secretary and now ambassador to Cairo, and Roman Cruz, Jr., Manager of the Government Service Insurance System, but better known as the principal "tong" collector of the First Lady.)

A brilliant lawyer, the late Vicente Francisco, headed the defense panel. Two of Francisco's assistants then were young lawyers named Arsenio H. Lacson and Estanislao A. Fernandez. At that time, Marcos was a law student at the University of the Philippines and, after preliminary investigation, was detained at the Ilocos Norte provincial jail. Coming from a prominent family and looked upon as the up and coming personality from the North, young Marcos was given special treatment.*4

(*4. Fernandez turned out to be a brilliant lawyer, but he was better known for the elasticity of his spine. He opposed Marcos originally in the Presidential elections of 1965 and then in the Constitutional Convention, but he later accepted an appointment to the Supreme Court where he became one of the more ardent spokesmen of the Marcos dictatorship.)

The evidence (oral and physical) against the Marcoses and Lizardo, especially young Marcos, was strong. Young Marcos was a member of the U.P. rifle team. Although his own rifle was found in the gun rack of the U.P. ROTC armory, the rifle of the team captain, Teodoro M. Kalaw, Jr., was missing at the time and NBI had evidence that it was the one used in the shooting of Nalundasan. Among the accused, only young Ferdinand Marcos had access to the U.P. armory. Judge Cruz found Marcos guilty of the crime of murder and sentenced him to life imprisonment. When Marcos signified his intention to appeal. President Quezon assigned another young lawyer, an Atenean, Leon Ma. Guerrero who was then with the office of the Solicitor General, to handle the government side.

In the meantime, Marcos took the bar examinations and, in spite of being in jail, or perhaps because of it, he topped the results. With a bar topnotcher

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defending himself on a murder conviction by a trial court, and the most brilliant orator of his day, Leon Ma. Guererro, prosecuting for the government, the Marcos murder case in the Supreme Court easily became the most publicized and followed case.

Then as now, the feeling of people who had access to the matters brought into the record is that Marcos could not have escaped imprisonment, however lenient a court would have tried, for the murder of Nalundasan.

Fortunately for young Marcos, and unfortunately for Philippine democracy, an up and coming jurist, Jose P. Laurel, a native of Tanauan, Batangas, but a long time resident of the district of Paco in Manila, was a member of the Supreme Court when the high tribunal calendared the Marcos murder case for hearing and decision. Laurel displayed an unusual interest in the case of Marcos and eventually preempted whatever thoughts his colleagues might have on the case by announcing during a session "en banc" that he himself would pen the majority decision on the young Marcos case. Justice Laurel's behavior raised some quizzical eyebrows, but smiles of understanding later pervaded sessions on young Marcos' case as some members of the court gathered it that old man Laurel was simply taking fatherly posture on young Marcos. After all, did not young Marcos present features similar to Justice Laurel, in height, shape of the nose, and eyes? The President has distinctive facial features, similar to old man Laurel, and yet not found among his sisters, Elizabeth M. Keon, and Fortuna M. Barba, nor in his other brother, Pacifico, or half-brother, Mayor Rubio, of Pasuquin. At least, President Marcos and the First Lady, Imelda Romualdez-Marcos, have this characteristic in common. Both the President and the First Lady possess physical features that their brothers and sisters after them do not have. And to stretch comparisons, neither does the first born of Ferdinand and Imelda have the features of her brother, Ferdinand, Jr. or sister, Irene; neither does she look like her father-President. Did not Marcos himself direct his own biographers to point out how sharply different he was from Mariano Marcos? "To Ferdinand, Mariano was a restless, caged and frustrated man," *Marcos of the Philippines* states on page 27. "The father had no sense of humor, which puzzled Ferdinand, whose humorous bent is sharply cultivated, a trait encouraged by his rollicking Edralin grandsire."

Aside from whatever fatherly feelings which Justice Laurel had for young Marcos, a feeling which he displayed anew for the young man from Ilocos Norte during the Japanese occupation of the Philippines, there were other considerations that readily found acceptance amongst a skeptical people, even President Quezon himself. During his youth, Laurel figured in a much similar fiasco, a case of homicide. He was courting a local belle in his hometown of Tanauan but was having a difficult time winning the girl's favor. Actually, the young lass favored another young man, and to force the issue, Laurel embraced the girl while the latter was taking a stroll with the other young man at the town park. Thereafter, Laurel ran. About a week later, Laurel attended a party where the girl and her young man were also present. When the young man saw Laurel, he went after him with a cane. Laurel stood his ground, drew a "balisong" (Batangas fan knife) and stabbed the fellow, killing him. Laurel was tried and found guilty by a trial court of homicide. He appealed to the Supreme Court. At the time, an American Jurist, George A. Malcolm, dean of the College of Law, University of the Philippines, had just been appointed to the Supreme

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Court. Malcolm knew Laurel to be a bright young man, having been his student at the U.P. college of law, and notwithstanding the evidence, urged his colleagues to acquit young Laurel. Laurel had always acknowledged his debt to society in this respect, and when the Marcos case came before him on appeal at the Supreme Court, he saw the opportunity to repay his debt -- privately to Marcos. Laurel saw also in Marcos, not just his own physical features, but a very promising man, perhaps a mirror of himself. Laurel thus went individually to all the members of the Supreme Court and pleaded in tears for the acquittal of young Ferdinand. Laurel succeeded and thus Marcos was also acquitted by a benevolent Supreme Court and in the same way that Laurel was given a chance by society, Marcos was given his. The difference is that, while Laurel led his country heroically during a most difficult time under Japanese occupation, Marcos has decided to plunder an entire country which had given him a new lease on life.

Marcos' path in life seems to have been smiled upon by death. The death, or killing, of certain persons provided the solutions to most of Marcos' problems. This is not to say that Marcos himself caused their deaths.

The first case of a man's death favoring Marcos was Nalundasan's. If Julio had lived, Marcos would never have had a chance to rise in politics in Ilocos Norte. The still baffling death of Mayor Lacson is another. A Lacson alive would have done everything to stop Marcos from becoming President in 1965. As a matter of fact, Lacson could have been elected President in the 1965 elections. And then, a Lacson alive would have died fighting Marcos' imposition of martial law in 1972.

Even after Marcos had won the Nacionalista presidential nomination in November, 1964, he was still in a very precarious position within the NP itself. He was just a newcomer, having been a dyed-in-the-wool Liberal until his defection to the NP in April, 1964. However, the death of the venerable Don Eulogio "Amang" Rodriguez, Sr. favored Marcos anew. Some say the "Amang", who was the NP president, died of pain and sorrow because "interloper Marcos" had won his party's presidential nomination. As the party's presidential nominee, Marcos instantly became the NP titular head with the Amang dead.

Then, in 1969, when rival presidential candidate Sergio Osmena, Jr. had succeeded in creating for himself the image of "The American boy," former President Dwight D. Eisenhower died. This gave Marcos the opportunity to attend Eisenhower's funeral and to visit then President Nixon at the White House. When he returned to the Philippines, Marcos said, he was "Nixon's boy."

The terroristic activities of Congressman Floro Crisologo and his private army in Ilocos Sur was providing to be a national embarrassment for Marcos in 1970. Crisologo himself was rebelling against Marcos's domination of the tobacco monopoly in the North. A solution came when the congressman was shot dead in November, 1970, by an unidentified gunman. The assailant was reported eliminated right after the shooting while trying to collect his fee.

Marcos was compelled, by circumstances to support former President Garcia for the presidency of the Constitutional Convention in 1971. However, Marcos had difficulty convincing the former President to support his proposal

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to shift the form of government from the then existing presidential system to the parliamentary system. Marcos' problem was resolved when Garcia died of a heart attack on June 14, 1971, three days after his election to the Con-Con presidency.

The real motivation for the Nalundasan murder can only be truly gleaned into at this time — in the light of Marcos' own declaration, Marcos had nurtured his dream of becoming a dictator of the Philippines as early as his U.P. days when he would tell Leonilo "Noning" Ocampo, Felicisimo Ocampo and Roberto S. Benedicto about what they should get from marriage. For his part, Marcos said he would look for a girl coming from a rich and politically-powerful family so he can short-circuit his travel to power. He actually sought Baby Quezon, but things soured when he was accused on the Nalundasan murder.

Noning Ocampo was to comment wryly later, "*E yon pala ay isang salesgirl lang ang kailangan to become President,*" (For all his planning, Marcos needed only a salesgirl to help him become President!) For his tactless statement, which had been relayed to the Palace by Imelda's spies and courtiers, Noning Ocampo has never been forgiven by the First Lady.

The real motive then behind Nalundasan murder was the goal of Marcos to become the dictator of the Philippines. When the father was defeated by Julio Nalundasan, Marcos obviously saw what could have been a political eclipse for the Marcos family. As one who could coolly scheme in crisis, Marcos assessed the situation and decided on the ultimate solution to the big stumbling block to his political future: Kill Nalundasan. This was his first display of the "overkill" type of operation for which he has acquired notoriety.

There seems to have developed for some time a nationwide Nalundasan syndrome in the wake of first political killing in the Philippines. When people would talk about politics, the conversation would invariably turn to Nalundasan's murder, and end with a joking statement that one should be careful about his political enemies, "*baka ma-Nalundasan ka.* (You might be killed like Nalundasan). And it seems to have possessed Marcos himself. Everytime he would make a speech, Marcos would characteristically make a motion with his right hand, with the trigger finger pointing up straight. On one occasion, Arsenio H. Lacson and Ferdinand E. Marcos, then both freshmen members of the House of Representatives, were engaged in a debate over President Quirino's suspension of the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus, when Marcos showed his mannerism of the trigger-finger pointed towards Lacson. Lacson, then already noted for his irrepressible character, addressed the chair, thusly: "Mr. Speaker."

"What is the pleasure of the gentleman from the second district of Manila?"

"Mr. Speaker, I demand protection from the chair!"

"The gentleman from Manila should explain his demand for protection."

"Mr. Speaker, I demand protection from the gentleman from Ilocos Norte who reminds me, every time he points his trigger finger at me, of the murder of Nalundasan."

Marcos managed to shout, "*Anak ka ng tao*" (You son of a....) before the entire hall and the gallery burst into uncontrolled laughter. Lacson was one of the junior assistants of Vicente Francisco who handled the defense of Marcos, et al in the murder trial.

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Marcos is a sophisticated con man. He had realized early enough that there were certain problems that nearly every Filipino, or any human being for that matter, was beset with. And his so-called magical or charismatic power were nothing but the ability to utter basic truisms to the right persons at the right time.

Little did Filipinos realize that the shared madness he had for all those, who followed him, out of conviction, necessity or convenience, would lead to the establishment of the first imperial dynasty in Southeast Asia in this modern day and age.

Marcos was not going to be the President of the Philippines on December 30, 1965. He did not even rate a slim chance of winning the Liberal party presidential nomination from incumbent President Macapagal, much less the Nacionalista presidential nomination. By 1962, he was a colorful man, but no one was considering him seriously for the presidency in 1965. True, in the year 1962, he received all his "over due" war decorations from the Secretary of National Defense under a Liberal administration. But most everybody considered him a dangerous man, having been a convicted murderer of Nalundasan. Macapagal was determined to seek reelection; he didn't feel he should yield the LP presidential nomination to Marcos. And the Nacionalista candidate was going to be colorful Manila Mayor Lacson. However, things changed radically upon the death of Lacson on April 15, 1962, under very suspicious circumstances.

At that time, President Macapagal was running amuck against the Lopezes. What Macapagal did not know was that he was put up to it by Marcos who had adopted, as part of his strategy, the promotion of a direct frontal clash between Macapagal and the Lopezes. Marcos recognized at the time the invincibility of the Lopez politico-economic machine. He had his timetable on making the Lopezes support him.

The professional kingmakers that they were, the Lopezes, aside from seeking Macapagal's downfall for the harm done them, wanted to really find a candidate they could catapult to the presidency.

I was called one day to give my political assessment to Don Eugenio Lopez. Others were similarly asked. Without hesitation. I told the old man Lopez that Marcos was the man who could beat Macapagal.. Several months later, a conference was convened by Lopez. Roberto S. Benedicto and Claudio Teehankee, then both in the private practise of law and acting as legal consultants to the Lopez enterprises, thumbed down Marcos, saying the people would not accept Marcos because of his Nalundasan record. "No," said Benedicto and Teehankee almost in unison, "Marcos killed Nalundasan. People are convinced about that, even if he had won acquittal from old man Laurel. We should not have a murderer in Malacanang. It would be like aligning ourselves with the devil to achieve our objectives of toppling Macapagal." Benedicto and Teehankee were supported by almost all of those present in the conference, among them being then Senate President Pro Tempore Fernando Lopez, economist Alfredo Montelibano, Manila Chronicle editor-in-chief Ernesto del Rosario, and fellow political writers Ernesto O. Granada, Benjamin Penaranda and Francisco de Leon. I argued alone in favor of Marcos.

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One day, I got secret instructions from old man Lopez to work closely with Marcos. Manila Chronicle General Manager Rafael Salas received the same instructions. Since I was "covering" Marcos as part of my duties as Senate reporter of the Manila Chronicle, and having earlier offered him my endorsement upon the death of Lacson, I carried old man Lopez's instructions to "cooperate" with Marcos with gusto.

Later on, when then Senate Pro Tempore Fernando Lopez found out about my working for Marcos, he demanded that I be fired from the Manila Chronicle. Lopez said: "How this Mijares works for the Chronicle, of which I am half-owner, and he supports my opponent!" Lopez, the politician, was himself a candidate for the Nacionalista presidential nomination in direct rivalry with Marcos. However, on direct instructions from his father, then Chronicle publisher Eugenio "Geny" Lopez, Jr. stood by me. When his uncle (Fernando) lost the NP presidential nomination to Marcos on Nov. 17, 1964, Geny shed tears over the defeat of Don Fernando, and even gave me accusing looks for what happened.

The ascension of Marcos to the highest position within the gift of the Filipino people gives us license to take a close look at the character and manner of life of the man.

"If Imelda Marcos is the richest woman in the world today, it is because Ferdinand Marcos is the biggest thief in the world today."

This was the most applauded line in the speech of Manglapus, considered the Philippines' best orator in many languages and former foreign secretary, during the third annual convention in Los Angeles of the Movement For A Free Philippines of which he is the president.

Manglapus was referring to the article in the December 1975 issue of Cosmopolitan magazine listing Imelda Marcos as one of the ten richest women in the world and "is rumored to be the richest woman in the world bar none."

On May 11, 1975, eight months before the Cosmopolitan expose of the incredible Marcos wealth, John Marks, co-author of the best selling book "CIA-Cult of Intelligence," stunned an audience of scholars attending a seminar at the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago with the revelation that as early as 1969 Marcos had already amassed "stolen funds ranging from not lower than several hundred million US dollars to two billion US dollars!"

Marks, former assistant in the bureau of intelligence and research under Ray Cline in the US Department of State, told his audience in Chicago that he was risking legal sanctions and jail by revealing the psychology profile prepared by the CIA on Marcos which he saw while he (Marks) was still with the State Department in 1969.

Marks said the document showed how "incredibly corrupt" Marcos was. The Marks expose elicited from the audience, according to newspaper reports from Chicago, "whistling and head-shaking spiced by remarks such as Marcos could easily make two billion American dollars before martial law with all those supposed checks and balances, one can imagine how much he and Imelda are able to milk from a Philippines now under their total control."

In my own memorandum dated August 26, 1975 to the Fraser Congressional Committee on International Organizations, I reported:

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The greed of Mr. Marcos is such that he even pocketed the 300 million yen (one million dollars) that the Japanese government sent as gift to the Philippines in reparation for the killing of Filipino civilians by Lt. Hiroo Onoda, the World War II Japanese straggler who gave up after hiding in the jungles of the Philippines for thirty years.

From all indications, Marcos may indeed be the biggest thief in the world but this well deserved title is nothing compared to the hoaxes and frauds he has perpetrated and continues to perpetrate on the world. However, he does not enjoy a perfect score in his game of fooling a trusting humanity.

In the archives of official records in Washington, D.C. are the papers of the multi-million dollar fake war damage claim filed by Marcos demanding payment for cattle he claimed he supplied starving American and Filipino troops during World War II in the Philippines. This claim of Marcos for war reparations was rejected as "fake" by the US government.

Marcos and his wife, Imelda, had also tried to pull a fast one on the newspapermen from all over the world then covering Pope Paul's visit to the Philippines by concocting the story that it was Marcos, using a "karate chop," who saved the Pontiffs life from the knife of a Bolivian would-be assassin. Not only did the Pope fail to acknowledge Marcos' supposed role in saving the Papal life but pictures of the incident showed that Marcos was hundreds of feet from the Bolivian knife wielder and it was, in fact, a Korean bishop who stopped the would-be killer.

But the biggest fairytale from Marcos that the world seemed to have swallowed hook, line and sinker is his claim to be the "most decorated Filipino soldier of World War II who single-handedly delayed the surrender of Bataan by three months and saved Australia and New Zealand from Japanese conquest." Marcos had made so many specious claims on his war exploits. He has bloated apparent minor war exploits into a great saga.

Unfortunately for Marcos, it is not his critics who have supplied the proof that he is a fake war hero. Probably from over-confidence or plain stupidity, Marcos' own Department of Public Information in September 1972 published and distributed to libraries all over the world the official pictorial biography of Marcos showing that the dictator, in fact, received his medals "for wartime exploits" in 1962, fully 21 years after the war.

In other words, Marcos received his awards (which made him the so-called most decorated Filipino soldier in World War II) when he was already a member of the Philippine Congress. The late Macario Peralta, an authentic war hero who was then serving as Secretary of National Defense, told newsmen that Marcos had asked President Macapagal for the decorations because, according to Peralta, Marcos needed the awards as props for his reelection campaign to the Senate.

For the supporting papers for the awards, Marcos persuaded a Filipino officer who fought with extraordinary heroism and bravery in Bataan, now an official of a Filipino veterans organization, to apply the affidavits containing some authentic details added the concoctions about Marcos. A notorious forger from the National Penitentiary was utilized to sign the signatures of deceased American and Filipino army officers who were supposed to have testified to Marcos' "war-time exploits" before they died.

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Epigenio Dorotheo a police officer in Canada and brother to a new member of Marcos' Cabinet, revealed to delegates attending the third annual convention of the Movement For A Free Philippines in Los Angeles the names of the people whom Marcos used in perpetrating his most decorated Filipino soldier of World War II hoax. To protect the persons involved by Marcos in the fraud from reprisals in Manila, I am withholding their identities in this book. If they survive and outlive the Marcos dictatorship, the world can get its confirmation of this incredible falsification of war records.

Meanwhile, at great cost to his already impoverished country Marcos has caused to be struck for worldwide sale gold coins honoring himself. In whole page advertisements in the leading newspapers and magazines in the world, Marcos said this of himself:

"A Tribute to a Hero, The 1000 Piso Gold Coin is the first coin to honor Ferdinand E. Marcos, who this year celebrates his tenth anniversary as President of the Republic of the Philippines. President Marcos became a living legend as a World War II guerrilla leader and then, as lawyer, statesman, congressman, and senator and President, devoted himself to the development of the Philippines as an independent, strong and stable nation.

"The Philippines' most decorated war hero, President Marcos won nearly every medal and decoration the Philippine and American governments could bestow on a soldier, including the US Distinguished Service Cross which was personally pinned on the Filipino hero by General Douglas MacArthur."

In its September 13-19, 1975 issue, the Philippine News exposed this hoax of Marcos in an editorial entitled "The 30 pieces of silver of Ferdinand Marcos".

There is no report, paper, article or book on World War II about or by any of the generals who fought that war in the Pacific. MacArthur. Wainwright, Willoughby, Whitney, Fertig or even Carlos (I saw the Fall of the Philippines) Romulo, now the propaganda man of Marcos, which either supports the claims of Marcos nor mentions him at all, directly or indirectly, in spite of Marcos' claims to have delayed the surrender of Bataan by three months and to have single-handedly saved Australia and New Zealand or that had he. Marcos, been born white instead of brown, would be counted as one of America's greatest heroes (see dedication of the Marcos official biography, For Every Tear A Victory).

Wainwright, after whose death the Marcos biography said recommended Marcos for the Congressional Medal of Honor (see page 139 of Marcos of the Philippines), included almost everybody who played a role in Bataan in his (Wainwright's) war memoirs. Marcos is nowhere in the book.

Significantly. two Marcos-sponsored biographies, *Marcos of the Philippines*, and *Rendezvous with Destiny*, carry contradictory statements on the oft-reported claim of Marcos that General Douglas MacArthur personally pinned on Marcos the US Distinguished Service Cross. On page 174 of *Rendezvous with Destiny*. Marcos is said to have reminisced with MacArthur "that extraordinary moment when MacArthur insisted on presenting the

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Distinguished Service Cross to Lt. Marcos in a foxhole for exceptional gallantry in action."

Marcos of the Philippines has it on page 123 that "General Douglas MacArthur, pinning on Ferdinand Marcos the Distinguished Service Cross for valor in battle far beyond the call of duty, commented publicly that without Ferdinand's exploits, Bataan would have fallen three months sooner than it did." The question is how could MacArthur attribute an accomplished feat to Marcos when the great American general was supposed to have been saying this in a foxhole with the battle of Bataan still going on?

What Marcos himself confirms is that during the Japanese occupation, he was under the care and protection of Jose Laurel, the Japanese puppet government president who of course was the supreme court justice who fought for the acquittal of Marcos on a murder conviction on rather astonishing reasons, including the eyebrow-raising technicality that there were no more witnesses that Marcos should not go to jail because of his intelligence.

The Marcos book details how Marcos spent months in a Japanese controlled hospital in Manila recovering from malaria under the care and full knowledge of the Japanese puppet government.

Equally eye-opening are the accounts that Marcos openly used a Japanese staff car, accompanied by two colonels of the Japanese-sponsored Filipino army and himself (Marcos) in the full uniform of a Japanese Philippine Constabulary officer, travelling all over Luzon unmolested and unchallenged by the Japanese military. It is perhaps pertinent to mention that the Marcos book describes how fluent in speaking Japanese the brother of Marcos, Pacifico, had become.

All this mystery raises the question: what is there in Marcos' record during the war which makes him invent outrageous fairy tales to prove to all the world that he is really the patriotic and courageous man he claims to be?

Marcos himself admits that he escaped liquidation many times by the guerrillas who believed that he was a Japanese spy, a reputation rather strange for one supposedly known throughout the Philippines as the super hero of Bataan. In the February 28, 1976. issue of the *Philippine Daily Express*, Marcos told columnist Teodoro F. Valencia that resistance fighters "did not believe he was a guerrilla, and instead suspected him to be an infiltrator for the Japanese."

The fact is that nobody heard of Marcos as a war hero until the appearance of his biography. *For Every Tear A Victory*, and significantly at a time when Generals MacArthur and Jonathan Wainwright, the real heroes of the Pacific War to whom Marcos attributed all the statements confirming his so-called exploits in Bataan, were already long dead and in no position to confirm or deny Marcos' wild claims of heroism and courage.

Immediately after World War II, when Filipinos talked about their heroes, the names mentioned were Villamor, Basa, Kangleon, Lim, Adevosos and Balao of the Bessang Pass fame. Marcos was totally unknown.

In chapter seven of his biography, Marcos' evaluation of his role in the Pacific war was that he fought it all himself. "Military historians," the Marcos book declares "concede that the heroic stand at Bataan upset the Japanese timetable of conquest, gave the allies time to defend the South Pacific, and thus saved Australia and New Zealand. In a very real sense, therefore, the refusal of Ferdinand Marcos to admit he was beaten made a contribution to the

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war that was of enormous consequence to the world.”

The claim of the Marcos book “that without Ferdinand’s exploits, Bataan would have fallen three months sooner than it did” not only insults the intelligence but is of itself ridiculous. The entire battle of Bataan took exactly three months, from January 9, 1942 to April 9, 1942. The proud MacArthur could not have made a statement crediting Marcos with having single-handedly fought the Battle of Bataan. As a matter of fact, there is no mention of Marcos by MacArthur in any writing, article, paper, or book which would be anomalous if indeed Marcos is to be taken at his word.

The Marcos book claims that “Wainwright also directed that papers be prepared recommending Marcos for the Congressional Medal of Honor. This was done. Had papers not been lost in the last days of Bataan, Marcos would have been the only Filipino army officer to win the United States’ highest valor award in the Bataan campaign.”

Curiously and with great insult to intelligence again, the Marcos book which claims that the papers citing him for the Medal of Honor were “lost in the last days of Bataan.” The “lost papers” are cited word for word on page 138 and 139:

“In disregard of his personal safety,” the Congressional Medal citation reads, “notwithstanding the fact he had just been captured by the enemy and tortured, realizing the defense of the Salian junction was crucial to the entire USAFFE (U.S. Armed Forces in the Far East), and it was unprotected since all units were withdrawing southward without waiting for orders, he gathered elements of the 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry, 21st Division headquarters personnel, and stragglers from the 51st Division, with which he fought his way to the junction of the Salian River and the Abo-Abo River to set up a defense block against the Japanese elements of the 9th Infantry under Colonel Susumu Takechi, which was then beginning to feel its way eastward to the Salian River. After inflicting and also suffering, severe casualties, he and his men fought their way back to the USAFFE lines at Pilar-Bagac on 26 January, 1942 (six days later)

“By his initiative, his example of extraordinary valor and heroism, courage and daring in fighting at the junction of the Salian River and the Abo-Abo River, he encouraged the demoralized men under him. inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy and successfully blocking the Japanese 9th Infantry... under orders to move southeast ... and turn the flank of the entire 2nd Corps under General Parker. With this heroism beyond the call of duty and utter disregard for personal safety and extraordinary heroism, he prevented the possible rout of the USAFFE troops then withdrawing to the USAFFE Bataan second line of defense.

“Had he not done so, the citation states, “the 2nd Corps would have been routed and Bataan might have fallen sooner”.

Notice how the words “Bataan might have fallen sooner”, which are supposed to be MacArthur’s words, keep appearing in other people’s mouths. Curiously again, Marcos is credited with, the outcome of the battle of Bataan even while that particular battle was still being fought. Here was Marcos

claiming to be cited for the Medal of Honor in the early days of the war for supposedly delaying a surrender that was yet several months away.

Of course. Marcos was to repeat this familiar fakery when he imposes martial law in the Philippines on September 22, 1972. When, Marcos appeared on the television channel that was allowed to go on the air that black Saturday evening, the first Filipino dictator said he imposed martial law because of the ambush of his defense secretary in the early evening of September 22. Weeks later by a faux pas, Marcos admitted that he signed his declaration of martial law on September 21. In other words, here was Marcos declaring martial law giving as his reason an event (the supposed Enrile ambushade) that had not yet happened.

Even if it were true that the Medal of Honor papers were lost in the last days of Bataan, Wainwright, who was supposed to have had the citation prepared, survived the war and lived long after that. He could have confirmed Marcos' supposed world-shaking contribution in the war. Marcos, by his own admission was such an expert on the gathering and preparation of affidavits, could have had his greatest claim verified by going to Wainwright as he indeed went to great lengths and trouble in obtaining sworn statements even for obscure Philippine war decorations.

The fact is that Wainwright, like MacArthur and all the generals who fought in that war, has not said or written one word about Ferdinand Marcos. This oversight did not prevent the Marcos book from carrying a dedication addressed to Marcos himself "who, had he been bom white-skinned on the American mainland rather than brown-skinned in the U.S. Philippines, would today be counted one of America's greatest heroes."

A surviving orderly of MacArthur still becomes livid with anger when he hears about the "falsified claim" that Wainwright had recommended Marcos for the Congressional Medal of Honor. "That's a lot of bull. I would have known about it, if the good General had recommended Marcos to receive the medal." divulged by retired US Army Major Edward Ferrrandez. Fernandez started serving MacArthur as an orderly long before the war and continued to do so until 1945. retiring with the rank of major, years after the liberation of the Philippines. Major Fernandez now lives in San Francisco.

The greatest hoax of the Philippines has now been internationalized, with the minting of gold coins for worldwide circulation.

After reading the advertisement blurb that "Marcos won nearly every medal and decoration the Philippine and American governments could bestow on a soldier," an FBI agent was surprised to know that 26 of Marcos' supposed decorations are Philippine medals he obtained twenty years after the war.

"Until Marcos made this claim, I thought Audie Murphy was the most decorated soldier of World War II," the FBI agent said.

But Bataan is not the only fraudulent claim that Marcos has made. In the September 12, 1973 issue of *Asia Magazine*, then printed in Hongkong and distributed with the leading English dailies in Asia, Marcos not only claimed he fought in Bessang Pass but that Yamashita, the Tiger of Malaya and the highest ranking Japanese general in the Philippines, actually surrendered to him:

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"... in the bloody battle of Bessang Pass, he (Marcos) received the surrender of General Yamashita. Commander of the Japanese forces in the Philippines." Yamashita surrendered on Sept. 3. 1945.

In a front page article in its November 28-December 4, 1974 issue, the *Philippine News* reported:

Marcos himself up to now, has never replied to the charges aired by former Senator Osmena, Jr. in Congress that Marcos also collected a medal by claiming to be the hero of the Battle of Bessang Pass when witnesses and records indicated that Marcos was nowhere near Bessang Pass at the time the battle was being fought.

Reporting on the 36-page privileged speech of Osmena Jr. in congress that week, the *Philippine Free Press* (now suppressed by Marcos) in its issue of April 20, 1965 quoted Osmena, Jr.:

He (Marcos) claims he was at Bessang Pass fighting the Japanese for which he was awarded a medal as the hero of Bessang Pass. Those who actually fought at Bessang Pass say that they had never seen Mr. Marcos there or his whereabouts. One of these is a political reporter of the "Evening News" who, in his column published last year, made the startling revelation that Mr. Marcos never took part in the critical battle which broke the back of the Japanese forces in the North.

There are those who attest to the fact that Mr. Marcos was during all that time at Luna, La Union, attending to military cases as a judge advocate. This notwithstanding, he got a medal and even caused a distortion in history by having himself proclaimed as the Hero of Bessang Pass.

Expressweek, a magazine which appeared after martial law and which is owned by Marcos, carried an article in its October 25, 1973 issue about Capt. Arthur W. Wermuth, the famed Bataan veteran officially credited with killing 116 Japanese soldiers and capturing hundreds of prisoners. Wermuth was visiting Manila then and had a reunion with his Filipino Bataan buddies. Wermuth's comrades in arms told *Expressweek* that Wermuth probably killed 300 Japanese soldiers, more than what he had been officially credited with.

The Wermuth visit that Marcos had wanted to make propaganda of, boomeranged when Filipinos suddenly realized that here was Wennuth, whom even *the Expressweek* agreed deserved his title of "The One Man Army of Bataan" losing war honors to Marcos who instead is credited with "winning every medal and decoration the US government could bestow."

The Marcos book tells of the supposed invincibility of Marcos in battle. According to the book the story of war exploits of Marcos "spread throughout Bataan. Indeed, the legend spread all over the Pacific."

What is mystifying about this is that Carlos Romulo who was senior aide-de-camp and press relations officer of Gen. MacArthur and reportedly the last man out of Bataan, apparently never heard of nor was told of the supposed heroics of Marcos which supposedly were legend and known throughout Bataan. This was most surprising because Romulo won a Pulitzer Prize for some of his writings of that war and had written a book, *I Saw the Fall of the Philippines*, which was a best seller in the United States during World War II.

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Romulo, now the chief propagandist of Marcos abroad, wrote about almost everybody who had some contribution in Bataan but the Romulo book mentions not one word about Marcos who supposedly delayed the surrender of Bataan, saved Australia and New Zealand, and should be counted as one of America's greatest heroes.

Indeed, how could have Romulo missed the exploits of Marcos which were supposed to be on everybody's lips in Bataan? Colonel N.L. Manzano of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, whose war exploits were documented by Generals Wainwright, Willoughby and even by Romulo himself, says that they were in need of stories to bolster the morale of the Filipino and American troops in Bataan that they would have used the Marcos exploits to inspire the soldiers if those stories were true.

The Marcos war tales of his heroism and courage are straight out of Walter Mitty. Here are samples from the official Marcos biography:

On page 129:

"Ferdinand faced a Japanese Officer's saber when suddenly he heard a voice in Ilocano: 'Attorney, your back!' He ducked and whirled, missing a bayonet as he did so, and dispatched both attackers with his pistol." .

On page 135:

The enemy was so busy firing that the surprise was complete. Hugging up under concealment of the cogon, the patrol was within twenty-five yards of the battery before Ferdinand knocked off its commander with a rifle shot. Confusion made pandemonium of the ridge. It boiled with soldiers. In the chaos the patrol did its work. Fire two rounds, then roll. Fire and roll. Grenades finished the job.

Now from the trail emerged two officers with machine guns, and Ferdinand destroyed them. Salvaging one of the weapons, he turned it on the ammunition-carriers. That cleared the top of the mountain in a hurry. More than fifty men, eight of them officers, lay dead.

On page 137:

"Don't resist," Ferdinand commanded in Tagalog.

Disarmed, they were taken to a command post in the jungle. Beaten with gun butts, they "confessed" that a gap existed in their lines at Barrio Guitol, at precisely the point where Capinpin's 21st Infantry was strongest. Finally exhausted from the torture, they were tied and left on the ground with a guard of two soldiers. In the night, Ferdinand charged free of his bonds, slit the throats of the guards, released his companion, and led them safely back to their own camp.

On page 149:

Ferdinand watched again for an opportunity to escape.

On the fourth day he found it. Tall cogon grass encroached to the edge of the road. Across a wide expanse of it eastward beckoned the cool, blue mountains. He dived into the weeds. But the Japanese had seen him. Making no effort at pursuit, the guards halted the column and lined up nine men before a firing squad.

Ferdinand, who had not gone far, returned. The Japanese laughed, beat him in the face with a rifle butt, and the march continued.

There are many stories of men who have escaped from the Bataan Death

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March along the way. The escapists were concerned in putting as much distance between themselves and the enemy that it is ridiculous that anyone thus fleeing would linger behind and watch what the enemy would do.

Based on the Marcos story of his attempted escape, it was obvious that the Japanese knew that Marcos was watching them because they did not shoot him but instead took time to line up nine men and organize a firing squad apparently all for Marcos' benefit. The truth is the Japanese had no time or patience in playing games that they just shot anybody who faltered in the march or attempted escape.

But the tallest of the tall tales of Marcos is the one on his supposed talisman, charm or anting-anting as locally known. The Marcos book makes the most of this fairytale obviously because of the effect it might have on the less literate and more superstitious Filipinos. Marcos sought to accomplish this by declaring as reported in the New York Times issue of November 29, 1972, that he imposed martial law after "consulting God and receiving signs from Him to act."

The Marcos book attributes powers to Marcos bordering on the supernatural. On page seven it says:

"The Marcos charm is a famous one. It is a silver of petrified medicinal wood, so the story goes, bequeathed to Marcos by a legendary figure of the previous generation, Gregorio Aglipay. Its origins are Tagalog. Among its virtues, it permits its holder to disappear and reappear at will. It has other supernatural attributes, one of them being that under some circumstances the use of it can restore the dead to life.

"Aglipay was a Catholic priest who joined the revolution of 1892 against Spain, resisted the American occupation, and afterward founded a revolutionary, independent church. Ferdinand's maternal grandfather, Fructuoso Edralin, had followed Aglipay during the revolution's final guerrilla phase, and Ferdinand's father had been supported by the Aglipay faction in the national congress for two terms under the American occupation. Ferdinand's aunt Antonia, a noted poet in the Ilocano tribal vernacular had given Aglipay the land for his most imposing church. As a reward for all these loyalties, the legend says, Aglipay, before he died, gave his magic talisman to Marcos to protect him during the Battle of Bataan, making an incision in Ferdinand's back with his own hand to insert the amulet.

"At Bataan, men knew that to go on patrol with Lieutenant Ferdinand Marcos, an intelligence officer who ranged well behind the enemy lines, was an infallible way to win the Purple Heart, if not a gold star. They admitted that Ferdinand, as patrol leader, was the first man to face danger in any fracas and the last to hold a rear guard, yet he always escaped unscathed. For three months the Battle of Bataan enveloped the peninsula. In all that time Marcos was on almost constant patrol, or engaging in formidable exploits which will be described later. What interests us here is that his comrades said he could not have survived without the anting anting of Aglipay."

Obviously the potency of the Marcos anting-anting expired at the advent of martial law. Now Marcos dares not venture from his heavily fortified palace at Malacanang without his massive corps of bodyguards recently enlarged to a full army division which is the best equipped in the land. To further insure the

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security of Marcos, the houses and buildings around the presidential palace have been permanently emptied of their occupants.

Marcos never travels far from his Palace without a "hospital on wheels" immediately following the presidential car. This mobile hospital is completely equipped, blood plasma and all, for an emergency operation with 24-hour duty doctors and nurses ready to save the life of Marcos in an emergency, natural or man-made.

So blatant are the hoaxes pulled by Marcos in his obsession at self-mythification that a newspaper columnist in the United States referred to the Filipino dictator as Fraud-inand E. Marcos and Fake-dinand E. Marcos. In copying the techniques of Adolf Hitler in fooling the world, Marcos did not overlook the success of the Nazi leader's minister of propaganda minister, Dr. Joseph Goebbels, at image building. Handicapped by a left leg which was shorter than his right because of an unsuccessful operation, Goebbels explained his limp by passing himself off as a wounded war veteran.

The Education of Ferdinand Marcos

Bribery, treachery, violence and murder dominate the genealogy of the Marcos and Edralin families and served as the molds which formed the mentality and character of Ferdinand Marcos as subsequent events proved.

An uncle, Mariano Edralin, was stabbed in the back and died while attempting to reposses a church in 1910 before Ferdinand was born. Ferdinand's own father, Mariano, was executed by the guerrillas for being a Japanese spy. Ferdinand, of course, was a convicted murderer before he was eighteen.

Marcos himself tries to explain this streak of blood and death in his ancestry by claiming in his official biography, *Marcos of the Philippines* (page 19), that his forbear was probably "a fifteenth-century pirate who had overrun much of the coast along the China Sea."

Marcos never tires of relating how he and his brother, Pacifico, were reared at an early age in the use of firearms starting from their maternal grandfather to their father.

In an attempt to attribute his ruthlessness in dealing with rivals to training he had received as a child, Marcos points out on page 26 of his book:

"The father's emphasis was not on sportsmanship, it was on the victory. He was a bad loser."

Marcos went on to point out that his father took "defeat badly" on losing the election for assemblyman of his province to Julio Nalundasan; that his father "for almost a year was so emotionally upset that he could not practice law."

Marcos remembers with obvious pride how as a young boy he watched his father gun down a Muslim fanatic called *juramentado*.

The Marcos biography also reveals that gratitude is not one of the virtues of Ferdinand. Marcos had placed the blame, rather bitterly, on Manuel Quezon, the president of the Philippine Commonwealth, for the electoral defeat of Mariano by Nalundasan.

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Marcos admits that "in the extremity" of his father's election defeat, President Quezon appointed Mariano governor of Davao, the choicest province in Mindanao. It was in Davao that the Marcos family was able to acquire an hacienda "in the vast Padada Valley" which Ferdinand was to use after World War II as his basis for his unsuccessful attempt to collect \$8 million from the United ranch Marcos swore he supplied starving American and Filipino troops.

It was also "after two summers on Davao," Marcos claimed that at the age of sixteen he "won the small-bore rifle and pistol championship of the Philippines." This was a barefaced lie that Marcos was to repeat successfully to American Sports-writer Mark Kram who was in Manila covering the Ali-Frazier fight for *Sports Illustrated*.

In a special interview with Kram, which appeared in the States in fraudulent war claims in reparations for cattle from his September 29, 1975 issue of *Sports Illustrated*, Marcos lied:

"Well, I was the national champion in shooting. I won the championship when I was 16 and kept it for many years. My shooting got me in trouble. I was charged with murder, but was acquitted."

The Philippine News exposed the hoax of Marcos in its October 11-17, 1975 issue:

"Senator Ambrosio Padilla then president of the Philippine Amateur Athletic Federation, exposed this fraudulent claim of Marcos by proving that it was actually Teddy Kalaw who won the shooting championship with the name of Marcos nowhere in the records in any year, a revelation that Marcos never contested."

Furthermore, Marcos was born on September 11, 1917. If Marcos had indeed won the shooting championship at 16 this would place his so called garnering the title in 1933. Marcos could not have "kept it for many years" because he spent most of his time in court and jail for several years after 1935.

Anyway, the generosity of President Quezon to the Marcos family did not bother Ferdinand in maligning the memory of the dead, both Quezon and his daughter, in the Marcos biography. In a narration that could have come only from Marcos, Marcos' biographer relates an incident whose only meaning is that Quezon offered and gave away the virtue of his daughter, Baby, to Marcos.

"What you need is someone your own age to show you what a fool you are," the President said. He sent for his oldest daughter, Maria Aurora, and introduced her to Ferdinand.

"This young hothead needs someone like you to cool him off," the President told his daughter. "He is puffed up like an adder in his own conceit and pride. But he has a great deal to recommend him. I leave his education to you.

"He left the two of them alone."

"The Presidential instinct was unerring. Maria Aurora did teach young Ferdinand a few practical lessons which he needed. He courted her, in his lighter moments, for nearly ten years."

This ungallant and defamatory concoction of Marcos, including the book's reference (page 212) to Maria Aurora as "Ferdinand Marcos' enamorata" so outraged the surviving children of the dead father and daughter and the entire Philippine nation that Marcos had to delete the offensive and malicious falsehood from a revised version of his biography.

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What kind of a woman was Ferdinand's mother and what traits did Marcos inherit from her?

The Marcos biography describes her as "scarcely five feet tall with a distinct Mongolian cast to her eyes" attributed to "blood" deposited by the pirate that Marcos claimed was his ancestor.

This infusion of pirate blood was probably the reason why Marcos said his family and relatives "were shrewder than their neighbors, cannier in business, and more resourceful."

Expectedly, the Marcos book refers to Ferdinand's mother as "an honors student and gifted in speech" together with the adjectives "thrifty, hardworking and ambitious."

But a deeper reading of the Marcos book reveals a side of the character of Josefa Edralin Marcos which may account for Ferdinand's acknowledged mastery of bribery either as a giver or taker.

On page 154 of the Marcos book is the incredible claim that the Japanese military in charge of the prisoners of war camp in Capas where Ferdinand was supposed to be imprisoned had accepted bribes from Josefa first, to be with her son all day, and second, to set Ferdinand free:

"One day he was mustered into a telephone-line crew. His mother had bribed a sergeant to arrange this. All day she remained with her son, and the sergeant permitted them to talk together.

"Josefa Marcos bribed the authorities to hasten her son's freedom. On August 4, 1942, Ferdinand was summoned to camp headquarters. A man in civilian clothes confronted him. "Your family and friends," the man said, "are anxious for you. They have asked me to inquire whether you wish to be released."

It is simply unbelievable that the victorious Japanese troops who could get at will anything and everything they wanted would have the need to be "bribed" or could have been bribed fanatically loyal as they were to their soldier's code of Bushido which made them prefer death to dishonor.

How and why was Marcos freed ahead of the rest if this story of his mother having corrupted the Japanese camp authorities is to be discounted. Who really bribed whom to do what?

Y.S. Kwong, a Filipino millionaire who recently sold out his businesses in the Philippines and has now settled in Vancouver, Canada, told an audience composed of a publisher and newsmen at the San Francisco Press Club that "contrary to Ferdinand's claims as the most decorated Filipino soldier of World War II, Marcos, in fact, spent the four years of the Japanese occupation as a buy and sell agent."

Kwong made the stunning revelation that Josefa Edralin was arrested in a public high school in Manila (Arellano High School) for having opium and heroin in her possession. Kwong even mentioned the name of the arresting police officer as Telesforo Tenorio, then a detective but later to become a chief of police of Manila.

The suspicion was that Josefa was selling drugs to the students of the school where she was a teacher and librarian. According to Kwong, Josefa was able to either bribe or cry her way out of the incident.

According to Kwong, the Marcos family was so poor that it was living from day to day and from hand to mouth. Ferdinand, Kwong said, sold anything he

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could lay his hands on — including scrap metal which may have found its way to Japanese factories and used in the manufacture of bombs and armaments.

It appears that the mother of Marcos was the practical one in the family and by her wits fed and supported the family through its hard times. The father on the other hand remained an eccentric recluse alternately given to moods of depression and dreams of grandeur.

A physician in San Francisco, Dr. Ernesto Hilario, a provincemate and friend of Ferdinand, said that Mariano Marcos and his family “were different from you and me.” Asked to elaborate, Dr. Hilario pointed out that Marcos’ father, for example, would often walk around his town dressed up in riding togs, breeches, horse whip and all, but without a horse.

Rafael Salas, now an Undersecretary General of the United Nations who served as the first executive secretary of Marcos, summed in an interview for the Asia Philippines Leader April 1, 1971 issue the most accurate and prophetic evaluation of the type of person that evolved from the turbulent and sinister factors that influenced the thinking and character of Ferdinand Marcos.

According to Salas “Marcos has a certain style of politics. It’s unique with him and I think he’s a most successful practitioner of it. He may not know his individuals but he knows the average Filipino: to what degree this average Filipino can be scared, what are the limits before he becomes violent. Within these limits, he will apply any sort of artifice. I think thus far he has succeeded.

“Now this style he evolved from two experiences: his experience with domestic politics in the Ilocos, where there are only two methods; violence and money; and his experience in Congress, where there are really no rules. In short, any type of dissimulation or chicanery or bribery or coercion is applicable. This he brought to the Executive Office.”

ORIGIN OF THE MARCOS WEALTH

The December issue of the glamour magazine *Cosmopolitan* is making the rounds of Filipino circles here.

The issue has struck the fancy of its dazzling article on “The Ten Richest Women in the World” in which Mrs. Imelda Marcos — hail! — was voted as one of the walking gold mines.

The inclusion of Imelda in the fabulous list was indeed judicious considering that the yardstick used, apparently, was ostentatious wealth.

Writer Richard Baker, however, appeared to have deliberately spun a veil of mystery as to how the fabulous Imelda and her consort came to their fortune which *Cosmopolitan* gingerly estimated at “multimillions,” and with a question mark, at that.

All Baker did was to hint at it by using the apt verb “amassed.” If he probed any further, then, he might have decided to place Imelda in another list — that one for “the world’s top women of ill-gotten wealth.”

Of course, Imelda has a very naive way of denying that they only found their treasure chest right at the doorsteps of Malacanang Palace.

Imelda is very vocal about the fact that when she met and married Mr. Marcos after a whirlwind courtship, Ferdie — then a congressman — was already a millionaire in his own right.

There is a story she apparently loves to recall to friends which she did tell one time (before martial law) to Malacanang reporters.

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In her child-like, excited way, when she married Ferdie she was brought to his private bank vault. And there it was before her eyes: piles and piles of cold cash!

Immediately, she got in touch with her aunt, the wife of the late former Speaker Daniel R. Romualdez. She described to her aunt how many rows and how high the rows of bills in various denominations were.

At her aunt's computation, she recalled, the vault money would have run to two or three million pesos! And what about Ferdie's other assets such as huge tracts of land during that time?

But Imelda, quite prudently, did not go through the length of describing how then-Congressman Ferdinand E. Marcos arrived at such wealth.

Suggestions that she and her husband accumulated money through kickbacks make her openly furious.

Why should they go through such degrading method, she would ask, when there were other ways available through the presidency?

She once told Malacanang reporters — which included myself and disenchanted former martial law propagandist Primitivo Mijares — that in their positions she and her husband could easily borrow money from any bank in the world or from rich personal friends in the international jet set.

Why, if she'd only run for the presidency, she said, she'd easily have \$100 million as pledged by Cristina Ford!

And she tried to drive home her point by saying that through the presidency, they could legitimately make money since they could have advance information on government actions and decisions which are useful in business. r

To borrow a phrase from the *Cosmopolitan*, "the cat is out of the money bag."

The foregoing was a dispatch from Toronto published in the Chicago-based *Philippine Times* in its December 16-31, 1975 issue. The author was Ruben Cusipag, a Filipino newspaperman who is now of the *Toronto Times*. Cusipag and I were "Malacanang beat reporters."

The version of Imelda that Marcos showed her his wealth in not so petty cash in a vault of a Manila bank is contested only with regards to the date of the event. What is universally accepted in the Philippines is the story that the Marcos fortune in millions of cold cash was displayed to Imelda *before* her marriage to Ferdinand. So smitten was Marcos with Imelda that to inveigle her to accepting a dinner date, he asked two ladies then with Imelda to come along.

On the way to the restaurant, Marcos made some excuse to stop by his bank and invited the three ladies to step inside the vault. As later recounted by one of the witnesses, Imelda's eyes nearly popped out beholding all that cash, not in pesos but in good old American dollars. Forthwith the courtship of Imelda by Marcos became not only smooth sailing but whirlwind. It is perfectly understandable, of course, that Madame Marcos would now want to dispel any notion that she married Ferdinand for reasons other than love.

The two ladies who "chaperoned" Imelda are still alive. One of them is an ex-newspaperwoman.

Where did Marcos get all that cash since he was neither an industrialist, businessman or financial wizard with stocks and bonds but was supposed to be an underpaid Filipino congressman? The Marcos family was so poor that by

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Ferdinand's own account he nearly did not graduate from college because he could not take his final examinations for lack of tuition money. The Marcos biography relates that it was to get this tuition money from his grandparents that explained Ferdinand's hurried trip to his hometown coincidentally at the time of the Nalundasan murder.

The Marcos biography supplies us with the bases for the premise that a less than honest and evil genius could easily amass a fortune by making use of the situation over which he had total control. The Marcos biography, on pages 198-199 tells us, in fact, the role Marcos played in collecting war backpay based on "documents" on which later, the Marcos biography had to admit, "the United States government placed an embargo."

A portion of the Marcos biography stated:

"While all this occurred, Marcos was also busy as adjutant general of the USAFIP-NL, which in its last months of the Bessang Pass campaign numbered about twenty thousand men. Most of them had no proof of their military records. All the official archives had been lost during the war. Many of the guerrillas had promoted themselves. With peace, all these warriors would be mustered out. None of them had a penny with which to resume civilian life and most of their homes had been destroyed. The reactivation of the Commonwealth had placed them on the U.S. Army payroll, and General MacArthur had promised publicly that any rewards given by a grateful nation to the warriors of World War II, treatment of their injuries, and relief for their families, would include the Filipinos who were on active duty prior to December 8, 1941, had not deserted (as many had done), and who had not collaborated. All of the eligibles were presumed to have been on active duty throughout the war. Thus they might collect with proof of service, four years of backpay and living allowances, plus any benefits which the Congress might bestow later.

"Starting with his own Maharlika, then embracing the entire force of northern Luzon, Marcos as adjutant general legitimized the roster of this army. His procedure was to obtain massive affidavits, with supporting proofs, where possible from eyewitnesses in authority, for every man's war record. Where wounds were suffered, medals won, promotions given, sworn statements were gathered from those who had prepared the orders or seen them written. The graves of the dead were located witnesses testified to the ultimate heroism of thousands of missing men, thus extending their back pay and insurance to their widows and children. Guerrilla commanders attested to the loyalty of their followers. As a result of this enormous work, the U.S. Adjutant General recognized about 3500 claims from individual soldiers formerly in Ferdinand's command.

"Marcos then encouraged other military units to conduct similar studies along the identical affidavit pattern. He wrote the constitutions for more than thirty veterans' organizations, and finally for the united group, the Philippine Veterans Legion.

"Thousands of warriors and their families acknowledge debt to Marcos for initiating and validating their claims before the U.S. government placed an embargo on such documents. For this work alone, Marcos is undoubtedly the most popular man in the Philippines among veterans."

It is clear from the foregoing that Marcos not only began and perfected the practice of collecting war reparations on “massive affidavits” but controlled the filling and collection of the greatest number of claims in the entire country. It is easy to see how useful the experience and expertise that Marcos obtained from this business of benefiting from the war became to him. When he decided, twenty years after the war, to claim and collect the medals which were to make him, in his words, “the most decorated Filipino soldier of World War II,” mastery of the production of affidavits and documents came in handy.

The success of Marcos with the claims filed in the names of others must have emboldened him to try one big one for himself. Claiming that he supplied starving American and Filipino soldiers with several thousand heads of cattle, Marcos decided to file that fake multi-million dollar war reparations claim in Washington, D.C.

Marcos has never denied this smelly deal. Apparently this attempt of his to palm off on Uncle Sam a totally fake claim did not deter Marcos from later promoting and picturing himself as a patriot and hero willing to offer his life unselfishly and nobly for no other reason but to serve his country and fellowmen.

One man who actually risked his life, fought in the underground, and at times, (see “Under the Red Sun” by Father Monaghan) had face-to-face confrontations with the Japanese was Arsenio H. Lacson. Lacson was the most colorful and effective mayor of Manila, the toast of great newspapers including the New York Times, who would have become President of the Philippines and made ascendancy of Marcos impossible had he not died prematurely from a heart attack. Lacson told me when I was covering him at the Manila City Hall that Marcos made further money smuggling arms to the Sukarno forces then fighting their Dutch masters in Indonesia.

According to Y.S. Kwong, Lacson has figured in the lives of both Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos. Kwong recalled how Lacson had beaten Marcos black and blue in fisticuffs when both were young assistants in the well-known Francisco Law Office in Manila.

But it was definitely the import-control law which Marcos authored, pushed in congress and conned his fellow Ilocano, President Elpidio Quirino, into signing into law that must have skyrocketed the Marcos accumulation of cash into the millions that popped the eyeballs of Imelda out of their sockets that memorable day at the vault.

As in the backpay racket, Marcos was the lord tong collector of every sizeable import license approved by the Central Bank. He had full time staffs both at his office in Congress and at his residence at San Juan, Rizal to process, follow up and receive “cumshaw” from grateful businessmen. According to Heherson Alvarez, delegate from Isabela province who is now in exile in America, the minimum fee demanded by Marcos for every import license release was P10,000.

So pernicious, pervasive and total the hold and control of Marcos of the peddling of import licenses that on one occasion he himself went to obtain at the point of a gun the approval of papers the release of which were being held up by an official of the Central Bank. So terrified was the bank official that when Marcos burst into his office, pointed a gun at his (the official) forehead that the poor man lost no time in resigning from the bank and emigrating with his family

to the United States.

In January, 1970, when there was widespread indignation over Marcos' having suddenly become the "richest man in Asia," Marcos called in the Malacanang reporters for a news briefing at the ninth hole of the Malacanang golf course. He complained that he was being unduly pilloried by the mass media and the opposition party for his alleged ill-gotten wealth.

"I will admit that I am rich. But, you know boys, how I made my pile? I discovered the treasure of Yamashita," Marcos declared.

It was widely reputed in the Philippines that Yamashita, the last commander of the Japanese Imperial forces in the Philippines, buried a lot of treasures which he had looted from Burma, Malaya and Singapore before he surrendered to American forces.

If it is true, then Marcos has committed and continues to commit a violation of law. He has not shared half of the hidden treasure he had discovered with the Philippine government as provided by law.

Chapter X

The loves of Marcos

"Sabihin mo sa sir mo, at nasabi ko na rin sa kaniya ito. Kapag hindi siya tumigil ng pagloloko, gagawan ko siya ng eskandalo na maluluma si Profumo. "(Tell your sir (i.e. President Marcos), and I have myself told him about this. If he does not stop his philandering, I will expose a scandal about him that would dwarf the Profumo case.)

British Defense Minister John Profumo was forced to resign from the Cabinet of Prime Minister Harold MacMillan when he was denounced for having allegedly consorted with a prostitute, Christine Keeler. This brought down the government of MacMillan.*1

(*1. British Defense Minister John Profumo was forced to resign from the Cabinet of Prime Minister Harold MacMillan when he was denounced for having consorted with a prostitute, Christine Keeler. This brought down the government of MacMillan.)

The party giving the warning was none other than the First Lady, Mrs. Imelda Romualdez-Marcos, who was so distraught one day that she found Teodoro F. Valencia, pro-Marcos newspaperman willing to listen to her sympathetically.

At the time, Mrs. Marcos felt like a woman scorned. She had good reasons to be. She had discovered not by herself, but by the admission of the "other woman," that her husband had acquired a mistress who, according to the woman, was promised by the President the prospect of being a future First Lady in lieu of Imelda Romualdez who was becoming fat and obese, and an old wag. The other woman turned out to be Dovie Beams, an upcoming star from Hollywood. Of course, there were other Marcos affairs, but this was the one that made the headlines; the only instance wherein the woman herself admitted to being a mistress of the President of the Philippines.

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Before Dovie Beams and even before Imelda, the loves of Marcos were quite known. There was Carmen Ortega, by whom the President has begotten four children, two of them before he became senator of the Philippines. It was Carmen whom the President's mother wanted to have as a daughter-in-law. But Imelda proved faster than Carmen in getting Ferdinand to marry her on May 1, 1955, before Judge Francisco Ma. Chanco in La Trinidad Valley, Benguet, in the Mountain Province.

Up till now, the Old Lady Dona Josefa, still voices regrets that her son did not marry Carmen, a beautiful Ilocano mestiza.

Anyway Carmen has been amply provided for, along with her brood of four small Marcoses. As a matter of fact, the welfare of Carmen and her children was the reason President Marcos could not dismiss his forestry director, Antonio Quejado, despite the presentation by then Vice President Fernando Lopez, then concurrently secretary of agriculture and natural resources, of overwhelming evidence of graft and corruption involving Quejado. Quejado was assigned by the President and Dona Josefa to "take care" of Carmen and her brood. In the coordinated efforts to take care of Carmen, there were occasions when Dona Josefa has had to call on former Congressman Roquito S. Ablan, Jr., a protege of President Marcos, to shelter Carmen and her children from the prying eyes of Imelda Marcos and her agents. For Mrs. Imelda Marcos had demanded that Carmen and her brood be "thrown away, some way far from my sight" or from her circle of friends. The woman's presence in Manila was a dagger pointed at her back, Imelda would say.

Like any lothario, the President would like to lay every available beautiful woman. The big difference is that he has the vast resources of the presidency, restrained only by the somewhat weakened opposition of an Imelda Marcos rendered in estoppel by her own relationship with the President on matters of hymeneal concern. International beauty contestants, young movie actresses and prominent young society matrons make up the sexual-therapeutic coterie available only to President Marcos in the Philippines.

No prize or price is too high to pay by the President or by his procurers in the matter of satisfying the presidential genitals. It could be a fat government contract, an unsecured multimillion peso loan or anything of valuable consideration; the presidential egomaniacal desire to prove that he still is a sexually virile man has had to be served.

There were times when military briefings or conferences outside the Palace have had to be faked by the President's No. 1 pimp, Major General Fabian Ver-Crisologo, who is also the chief of the Palace secret police. The President's sexual trips are classified as high priority security matters; justifiably so, because the First Lady has her own legion of special agents spying on Marcos. But the First Lady has been unable to crack the solid group of "seven special agents" who would kill fellow agents spying on the President.

It is quite understandable that, for all the womanizing of the President, public funds, including American aid dollars to the Philippines, have had to be squandered. For the expensive romantic escapades of Mr. Marcos includes the procurement of young girls from all over the world every now and then; the favorite hunting grounds being the world of starlets in Hollywood and the domicile of beautiful Eurasians in Hong Kong and Singapore.

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On the local scene, it is of common knowledge that the President ordered the Philippine National Bank to lend a decrepit movie-making company P3 million (\$750,000.00 at the time) without collaterals in exchange for the "right" to ravish the film company's top young actress (H.K.).*2 Later on, the movie actress starred in a movie whose title was generally accepted in Manila as referring to "sir," (the President).

(*2. The woman-chasing propensity of Marcos is of universal knowledge. I have advisedly chosen to use only initials to identify the women in the more, notorious sexual adventures of Marcos out of a desire to save the women - definitely not Marcos - from public embarrassment.)

Only recently, Marcos married off a young girl (M.R.) to the son of his crony. Unknown to the young man, the President had thoroughly ravished this girl, who is a daughter of a one-time movie idol, after he had lured her into playing "pelota" with him at the Malacanang Park. I remember the case of this girl vividly, because she was even introduced to me by the President one evening in November, 1973, when I went to see him at the pelota court at the Malacanang Park, south of the Pasig River. At the time, Salvador Corcino Tan, manager of the Kanlaon Broadcasting System, was also waiting for certain instructions from the President on how the radio-TV network owned by Marcos and cronies could be expanded by the acquisition of the facilities of the ABS-CBN, which is owned by the Lopez family. Buddy Tan even mischievously remarked to me, "Maganda ang bagong 'chick' ni boss." (The boss had a beautiful new chick.) I nodded with a smile, reminding him that Mrs. Marcos was around.

The funny part of it all was that the President had even asked the same girl he has been going to bed with to play "pelota" with Mrs. Marcos. At the time, I entertained the thought that Mrs. Marcos might have already adopted herself to the ways of the Moslems, contenting herself with being the No. 1 wife, but allowing her husband to maintain a harem.

In the interest of political glory, Imelda had come to adopt a seeming tolerance of the philandering of Ferdie. This became evident as early as 1965, the year the Marcoses campaigned vigorously to capture Malacanang from incumbent President Macapagal. It was a political campaign that featured a so-called "battle of the sexes" as both political camps formed their respective corps of female campaigners. The Marcos' female campaigners, organized by Meldy among the beautiful wives or daughters of Marcos' backers and/or-supporters, were known as the "Blue Ladies." Macapagal's female corps was made up of the "Lakambinis."

Soon Marcos found himself campaigning with the "Blue Ladies" not only for votes of the electorate but also for the amorous attention of his very lady campaigners. At one time, his affairs with three of the "Blue Ladies" almost wrecked his campaign as the Macapagal camp thought of utilizing the scandal as "black propaganda" against Marcos. However, the more noble among the Liberal leaders vetoed the idea.

However, the coffee shops would not be silenced. In fact, some Macapagal campaigners made use of the coffee shop circuit to spread the Marcos amorous affairs with his "Blue Ladies." The talk was that Marcos would be able to win

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more "Blue Ladies" from their respective husbands than votes. The more notorious, of course, was Marcos' affair with "Blue Lady" G.C. It is said that G.C.'s husband, who found out about this affair, simply agreed to behave like a *pendejo* as he loved his wife too much and could not live without her. Besides, he was more preoccupied with helping Marcos win the presidency in order that he would have a power base to trounce his own political rival in his own constituency.

The affair of F.M. with G.C. also came to the attention of Mrs. Marcos. However, Meldy restrained herself from warring on either Ferdie or G.C. as she herself was more concerned with Marcos' winning the presidency. No, she decided, she would not rock the boat during a most critical period of the campaign. She would steel herself. The support of G.C. in the campaign effort was more than providing Ferdinand with emotional comfort in bed. G.C. and her husband were also among the heaviest financial contributors to the campaign chest.

However, Meldy felt one day during the campaign that Ferdie's affair was something she could no longer stand and must be stopped — diplomatically. She summoned another "Blue Lady," a Mrs. P, and requested her to gently warn G.C. that "the coffee shops are ripe with rumors" about her affair with Ferdie, and that she should break off her *tete-a-tete* with Ferdie as "further spread of this vile rumor" might wreck the presidential campaign efforts. Mrs. P did as she was told by Imelda, and her beautiful friendship with G.C. ended right then and there.

Mrs. P also incurred the ire of Ferdie who confronted her several days later with these words: "*Hoy, ano ba ang pinagsasabi mo kay (G.C.). Aba, eh, hindi na yata titigil ng kaiiyak ang kawawang babaeng 'yan* (Hey, whatever did you tell G.C.? Gosh, it seems that the poor woman will no longer stop weeping.) Ferdie intimated that G.C. had come to him weeping as soon as Mrs. P had delivered Imelda's message to G.C.

Somehow, the G.C.-FM affair ended with the presidential victory.

As President, Marcos acquired greater means and power of persuasion to satisfy his lusts, he went after celebrities, mostly movie actresses and nightclub singers.

A television and nightclub singer who caught the fancy of Marcos was a woman named C.S. She was statuesque and looked very much like Imelda in height, but she was more stately, and was equipped with a more comely face, legs better shaped than Imelda's and bosomy. She also had a better voice than Imelda.

C.S. was one woman Imelda really hated. At one time, Imelda even sought out C.S. in 1970 in San Francisco - even after she had given up Ferdie — to get her to make a statement that she had never gone to bed with Marcos. They met in an apartment house in San Francisco. Imelda was accompanied by then PNB Executive Vice President Ernesto Villatuya. When C.S. told Imelda to go to hell, Imelda took a swing at C.S. who managed to duck. Villatuya, who was standing near C.S. at the time, caught the blow and fell to the floor. For catching Imelda's blow, Villatuya was rewarded with an appointment to the presidency of the Philippine National Bank which he held until 1972.

Easily, however, the most notorious of the romantic escapades of Marcos

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was his affair with Dovie; it merited world-wide attention, having appeared in major newspapers and newsmagazines around the world.

The Ferdinand Marcos-Dovie Beams love scandal broke out into the open in October 1970 in the Philippines and grabbed newspaper headlines for weeks. As to be expected, it also became a major political issue against President Marcos, and embarrassed both the Philippine and American governments.

It was a case of rumor becoming a fact. In the beginning it was already rumored of course that the President was having an affair with Dovie, an American actress from Beverly Hills, but it was confined only to those in the know. The more popular rumor in the local movie industry and the bakya crowd is that Dovie was romantically linked to Filipino actor Pepito Rodriguez.

It turned out to be only a ruse. Even Marcos himself had encouraged the Dovie-Pepito rumor to get public suspicion off his back. Thus the actor did not even know he was just used as a decoy by Dovie's encouragement of his flirtings. It was almost a perfect game as it lasted.

But a secret, no matter how well kept, cannot be hidden for long. And so it was with Marcos and Dovie. The ironic part of it is that their secret, which both of them had tried hard to conceal, was exposed and confirmed by no less than Dovie herself. And that was when it became too hot for both of them to handle.

Several months back Dovie had arrived in the Philippines purportedly to star as the leading girl in the projected motion picture "Maharlika" which revolved on the story in real life of President Marcos while he was a guerrilla officer and head of an underground intelligence unit called "Maharlika" which means "free man".

The film was shot all right, which was how Dovie was introduced to the movie industry. Because of her good public relations and of course her pretty looks, she became almost an instant hit with the general public. Soon she started gracing the news, gossip columns, and cover pages. After all American actresses are a rarity in the local scene.

It was businessman Potenciano Ilusorio, a crony of President Marcos, who made possible Dovie's casting in the film. Through Paul Mason, a producer at Universal Studio in Hollywood, Ilusorio got Dovie. His interest in the picture was obvious. After all if it was based on the life of his crony. President Marcos, it had to be good. It was his way of serving a good friend.

Dovie was recruited from among several names. She turned out to be no less than what President Marcos had specified - beautiful, intelligent, friendly, game but secretive. Apparently Marcos and Ilusorio did not only want an American actress; they wanted somebody who was game enough for Marcos to make love with while the picture was being filmed.

Marcos had been known to his close friends and others in the know as a woman chaser. His expensive taste for beautiful women was already an open secret to them. And Dovie was intended to be just one of those things. After all, as they say in government, what are we in power for?

Naturally when Dovie landed in the Philippines, Ilusorio followed the script to the letter. He introduced her to "Fred" without identifying him as no less than the President of the Philippines. From there "Fred" took over the situation. And characteristic of his blitzkrieg style, he simply battered down her defenses. Later he told her the truth.

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Thus began a very secret loves affair that was to last for several months without the First Lady, Imelda Marcos, knowing it at first. The Filipino people did not know that their President was keeping an American mistress behind their back, thanks to the loyalty of his cronies who were in on the secret.

There was senior presidential aide, Gen. Fabian Ver, commander of the elite Presidential Guard Battalion at Malacanang Palace who, by the nature of his position, had to know what was happening inside and outside the palace. And indeed he played his role well.

If Paul Mason in reality had acted as the procurer, and Potenciano Ilusorio as the pimp, Gen. Ver served as the bouncer. He was always on the eternal lookout — and fear of — the First Lady and her aides, as well as other persons. Since Marcos and Dovie could not be seen together, it was through Ver that the President many times had to transmit messages to her. And on several instances, it was Ver who served as guard whenever Marcos made love to Dovie.

Their secret rendezvous for such love affairs was a \$300,000 mansion on Northwestern St. in Greenhills, San Juan, Rizal, a suburb of Manila. Formerly owned by Ilusorio, Marcos supposedly bought it for Dovie. It was luxurious and complete with a swimming pool and isolated from the prying eyes of the public. It was almost a perfect love nest.

It was there that Marcos and Dovie made love behind the back of his wife, the First Lady. Day or night, it did not matter. Even in the middle of a busy schedule for the President. He even slept there at times, especially when Mrs. Imelda Marcos was on her usual expensive shopping sprees abroad.

Until Dovie came, Marcos more or less was a hit-and-run driver. He did not stick to one woman that long. But it seemed that Dovie was different. She was special. And if Dovie were to be believed, it was a case of true love, yes, for both of them. Even if the whole thing has started in bad faith, in one, or both.

Soon Marcos and Dovie had to agree on an official residence for her. She had already, like him, become a public figure by virtue of her being an imported American actress from Hollywood, and Filipinos in general were crazy over anybody or anything from Hollywood due to their “stateside mentality.”

So President Marcos rented a house on Princeton St. in Mandaluyong, Rizal, just near the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club, where another crony of his, Diosdado Bote, was the general manager. That is how Bote came into the picture. He served as guide and another lookout for Dovie and Marcos. It was here that Dovie entertained any request for press interviews, although she actually lived with Marcos in Greenhills, San Juan.

If Dovie's houses — private and official — served a good purpose for her and Marcos, so was her reported romantic link to actor Pepito Rodriguez. She met him at one of the press conferences arranged by the local movie industry to promote certain pictures. It looked like love at first sight — to the movie media and general public anyway.

Soon the gossip columns and wagging tongues filled the air with talks of a Dovie-Pepito romance. Teenage clubs sprouted promoting such an affair. Pepito, scion of a rich family, at the time was already a popular actor. The public thought his being steady with Dovie just tickled his fans no end — and hers too. But Dovie and Marcos were having their last laugh, and poor Pepito did not even know that he was just being toyed around like a decoy to divert public

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suspicion, if there was any at the time, from the very real love interludes between Marcos and Dovie.

But the First Lady, Imelda Marcos, was not sleeping. The instinct of a woman, after all, cannot be underestimated. And she was no exception. With so many aides serving her, it was but natural that soon she began to hear of gossips about her naughty husband having another affair, this time with an American actress. Her pride was hurt, and at that point the situation entered a different twist.

When Imelda was finally convinced that there was truth to such rumor, she made her own plans. She had her own husband President watched by her aides, and his aides in turn watched her aides. It was a weird situation, with both their aides caught in the crossfire of a gathering storm. They felt very uneasy, not wanting to displease anyone of them who after all were their own bosses.

The opposition Liberal Party was also doing its own Sherlock Holmes sleuthing. Soon its intelligence operatives discovered the Marcos-Dovie love nest and began digging up more dirty details. Wagging tongues in both mass media and the general public also got busy.

At this point the motion picture "Maharlika" finally was completed after so many delays and minor controversies. But it was to be a complete waste, for it was never shown in the Philippines. It was bruited about that the First Lady, not wanting to be humiliated by the film, stopped it.

It must have been during this time that both Marcos and Dovie realized that their days were numbered. With their love affair becoming a subject of public talk, it must have dawned on them that their love interludes, good while they lasted, had to come to an end whether they liked it or not as it was already getting out of their control.

In one of their subsequent lovemakings Marcos and Dovie thus exchanged souvenirs - for Dovie, with a tape-recorded voice of Marcos singing the popular Ilocano folk song Pamulinawen (the love bird) and some other personal stuff; for Marcos, nude pictures of Dovie he himself took. What Marcos did not know at the time was that Dovie was tape-recording warbling during their love encounter, complete with moans and bed creakings.

After this, when the situation became really too hot for President Marcos, he stopped seeing Dovie to play it safe. At first she did not mind it for she knew the predicament he was in. Because she had learned in fact to love him, and he had made her believe he too loved her as much.

But soon agents of the First Lady began to harass her. Mrs. Marcos apparently wanted her out of the way. There were even talks that unless she left the country something might happen to her. She did not like that kind of rumor. Besides she still believed that President Marcos would not allow anything bad to happen to her, even if his own wife was behind the harassment. In fact he had made her understand that he had fallen out of love with his wife.

Marcos was recorded as having explained that his falling out with his wife was because "Imelda has vaginitis." After listening to the tape of this statement about her by her husband, Imelda was reported to have hurled the tape recorder in Marcos' face.

Dovie at any rate made moves to reach the President to get reassurance. But this time he became hard to see. His cronies like Ilusorio and Ver could

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only say that he was too busy. Soon it dawned on her that he was actually avoiding her, not because he did not love her anymore, but to protect his political future. She clung to that thought.

The situation turned from bad to worse when, after a visit to Hollywood, she returned to the Philippines to find her house which Marcos had bought and given to her as their love nest was no longer hers. Then she knew that she had lost President Marcos, although she still would like to make a clearcut assurance or clarification from him.

Dovie got emotionally upset, affecting her physical condition, until finally she landed at the hospital. At about this time the press was already hot on her heels. So she had to check in incognito. Up to that time she did not want any interview with the news media for fear that it might only aggravate the situation. For one thing, she did not really want to confirm that Marcos was her secret lover although it was already beginning to be the talk of the town.

But the more Dovie remained silent, the more agents of the First Lady harassed her. Finally even no less than the commissioner on immigration, Edinundo Reyes, who was close to the First Lady, himself tried to serve a deportation notice on her — first at the Manila Hilton before she got sick, and now at the Manila Doctors Hospital where she had checked in.

That was the last straw for her. Dovie at that time realized that her great lover, President Marcos, was not actually protecting her, that perhaps he himself wanted her out of the country to get the heat off of him. And the more she felt bad when she heard that Marcos had branded her a cheap woman by way of denying he had anything to do with her. Under pressure from the press she finally admitted her romantic link to Marcos.

Thus the battleline was drawn. Dovie resisted the repeated attempts of Immigration Commissioner Reyes to deport her. She stuck to her rights, explaining that she had not committed any crime, and that she would leave the country on her own voluntary free will and not because she was being deported as an undesirable alien. Even Ilusorio and Honorio Poblador also tried to convince her to leave. They were apparently more scared of the First Lady.

Being an American citizen, the U.S. Embassy in Manila had to intervene. Ambassador Henry Byroade sent his aides to protect her from further harassments while at the same time careful not to antagonize the President and the First Lady who were both implicated in the Dovie Beams case. The U.S. Embassy booked her at the Bay View Hotel which is just across the street to keep a close watch on her.

Dovie was so mad that she decided to get out of the country not because she was chickening out of the situation but just to get it over with. But as a final step before her departure, against the advice of U.S. Embassy officials, she called a press conference to prove once and for all what she had stated earlier, which is that she and President Marcos had really been lovers.

During the press conference Dovie produced and played a tape recording of her love encounter with Marcos, complete with moans, murmurs, creakings of bed, and even a love song which Marcos himself sang under the tune of Pamulinawen which every Filipino knew to be his favorite Ilocano song. His voice and that of Dovie were doubtless genuine.

With that, Ambassador Byroade's aides hustled Dovie to the airport. In her wake, she left a whole country reeling from the impact of the worst love scandal

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in Philippine history. Newspapers, television and radio stations screamed with news of the celebrated Marcos-Dovie secret love affair. It was November 1970.*3

(*3. During the first "commune" staged by student revolutionaries at the University of the Philippines, the students commandeered the university radio station and broadcast continuously over it a looped tape recording of Marcos making love to Dovie Beams. For over a week, the President's hoarse injunctions to Dovie to commit fellatio with him boomed out over university loudspeakers. Hardened special forces troopers called in to recapture the University campus kept doubling up in laughter.)

But it turned out her departure did not necessarily write finis to her case. Upon landing in Hong Kong on her way to the United States, Philippine Consul General Rafael Gonzales, apparently acting on orders from Malacanang Palace, "assaulted, molested, and delayed", her return to the U.S.

The consulate official blocked the departure of two of her four companions - two maids and two photographers. Worst, she learned then and there that Delfin Cueto, said to be a half-brother of President Marcos, had trailed her throughout her trip to Hong Kong. Thus she feared for her life in view of Cueto's violent reputation as a hatchet man of Marcos.

While in Hong Kong Dovie and her companions played hide and seek with him and his conspirators. Just as in Manila, the Hong Kong newspapers played up her story due no doubt to its international impact. Soon the British authorities in the Crown Colony came to her rescue. The Hong Kong police threw 2,000 policemen in search for the killer, who was of course supposedly Cueto.

They later captured, disarmed, and booked him for unauthorized possession of firearms. Later he was forced to leave the country. As for Dovie, British and American authorities facilitated her safe return to America - but minus her two Filipino maids whose passports the Philippine Consulate had just cancelled.

The saga of Dovie Beams in the Philippines was not by any means over at this point. A book which will document her love affair with President Marcos, including facts and events she came to know while she served as his mistress, facts and events which have relevance to the eventual declaration of martial law in the Philippines, would be written, and she would write it herself — she announced then.

In anticipation of that book, President Marcos through his *Republic* magazine sought to destroy her credibility. Smarting obviously from the public playing of their love tape, in April 1971 the weekly began publication of a series of anti-Dovie Beams articles, including her nude pictures.

Dovie retaliated by mailing a copy of the controversial love tape to Graphic magazine, an anti-Marcos weekly, in reply to an accusation from the Marcos camp that the tape was fake or tampered with. For a time the case rekindled an old controversy and for a time Dovie carried the fight by remote control.

Declaration of martial law by President Marcos finally put a stop to it, what with the news blackout. Meantime Dovie was supposed to have written a book as she had served notice before upon her departure from the Philippines. It has yet to come out.

Ferdie's doctor from Switzerland left Manila recently after having completed the sixth session of "rejuvenating injections" to maintain Marcos' virility up to

standard.

On the other hand, Meldy, the OLD beauty queen, has also completed her second "face-lifting" which, reportedly, raised her navel to a dimple on her chin. While the dimple looks cute on her chin, the "lifting" created a new "unexpected problem".

It seems that everything else of Meldy has been raised up in proportion to her navel, and Ferdie now has to search "elsewhere" to find what he can no longer find in Meldy.

Chapter XI

Philippine 'Gulag': A Paralysis of Fear

A telling evidence on the repressive character of the military dictatorship of Marcos is the unending interment of thousands of political prisoners in various military stockades and concentration camps all over the Philippines. The truth is that the entire Philippines is one vast "Gulag Archipelago" where the Filipinos, whether inside or outside a military stockade, are subjected to continuing deprivation of their civil rights, some of them suffering cruel and unjust punishments in the hands of verdugos.

The undermining effect of the military concentration camps on Filipino society constitutes an open and apparently unhealing wound, but at this stage it would be difficult to quantify the national tragedy represented by the indiscriminate detention without charges of non-supporters and opponents of the Marcos military regime, or the influence it continues to have in ordinary Philippine life.

For as long as Marcos rules as a dictator backed by the military, the horror of internment of political prisoners would go on and on. And like Alexander Solzhenitsyn, I must apologize to those whose plight I may be unable to reproduce in this work for I am unable to remember or acquire knowledge of every incident, every injustice, every cruelty of the regime, of which I was a part and which I have renounced. As Solzhenitsyn wrote, "The whole scope of this story, and of the truth, is beyond the capabilities of one lonely pen."

While still working for Marcos as his chief press censor, I have had occasions to look into the isolated cases of political prisoners. One of them was the case of Lilia Hilao, whose death was brought to my attention two days after it happened by her own sister. I did bring this matter to the attention of President Marcos, but he never saw it fit to inform me about the action he had taken on the most glaring "atrociousness ever committed on a political prisoner under the martial regime."

The matter of political prisoners has always been a source of monumental embarrassment for Marcos. He even earned the sobriquet of "lying dictator" for his many prevarications on the issue of prisoners of conscience. That the Marcos military regime has adopted as part of its official policy the shameless resort to prevarications, falsifications and even bribery of a congressional witness, to mislead or prevent the United States and other foreign governments from gaining full knowledge, on political repression and tyranny in the

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Philippines is an established fact. This has been confirmed not just by the world press, but by world statesmen, notable among them leading members of the U.S. Congress. The U.S. congressional record is replete with ringing truths on the various devious ways by which the military regime of Marcos has trifled with the truth about the Philippine situation.

Witness Rep. Michael Harrington (D-Mass) who declared in the House of Representatives on June 3, 1975 as follows:*1

(*1. See Page E 2816, "Congressional Record – Extension of remarks.")

"Mr. Speaker, this week Mr. Eraser's Subcommittee of International Relations is holding hearings to investigate political repression in the Philippines. I urge my colleagues to follow these hearings closely because they concern two very important issues. The first is political repression itself; the second is the manner in which the Marcos government has responded to inquiries about its policies both to Members of Congress and to State Department officials.

"I am also extremely concerned with the manner in which the Philippine Government has responded to official inquiries by Members of Congress and State Department officials. The Marcos regime has not hesitated to mislead officials of our Government. First they denied that any prisoners were being held. Then they implied that the prisoners, whose existence was earlier denied, would soon be released. Now they are silent on the matter.

"It does not make sense to me that a nation as powerful internationally as we are can justify the use of full force against a small nation that captures one of our merchant ships while continuing military aid to a small nation that is both politically repressive and less than open in its diplomatic relations with us. If we are unwilling to make clear to President Marcos that we seriously disapprove of his policies, then I wonder how seriously other nations will take our own pledge of support to democratic governments &nd the universal protection of human rights.

"I have contacted Robert J. McCloskey, the Assistant Secretary of State of Congressional Relations, and he assures me that the Philippine Government is fully aware of the concern being voiced in the Congress and by the American people over the continued detention of individuals without charge or trial. But that assurance itself makes clear that President Marcos does not take our concern seriously, for if he did, he would have changed his policies."

Senator James R. Abourezk gave the Senate on April 23, 1975, a detailed account of the various attempts of the military regime of Mr. Marcos to lie about conditions obtaining in the Philippines.

In a speech on "Human Rights in the Philippines," *2 Senator Abourezk declared:

(*2. See Page S 6588, "Congressional Record – Senate" of April 23, 1975.)

Mr. President, I have become increasingly concerned about the reports of repression of human and civil rights in the Philippines,

particularly as symbolized by the continued imprisonment of Eugenio Lopez, Jr., Sergio Osmena III, Senator Benigno Aquino, and several thousand others, xxx

"My concern led me to write to Philippine Ambassador Romualdez on January 6. I soon received a response dated January 8 from the Philippine Charge d'Affaires enclosing a speech by Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos delivered December 11, 1974, to the Philippine people. I regret to inform the Senate that in both the letter and the speech the Philippine Government was less than candid. Some of Marcos' claims and the true facts are illustrative.

"The Charge d'Affaires and President Marcos both stated that the President ordered that Mr. Lopez have 'the privilege to visit his home'.

"The fact is, however, that neither Mr. Lopez nor Mr. Osmena have been allowed to visit their homes, but both remain under guard at the military hospital which is their prison.

"The Charge d'Affaires and President Marcos both state Lopez — as well as Osmena — were charged August 19, 1973, with involvement in eight attempts on the life of President Marcos, that the government has confessions of the 'co-accused' — including Osmena — and that the President has ordered Lopez and Osmena tried before a civilian court as common criminals.

"According to reports outside the Marcos government, however, Lopez and Osmena were arrested separately in November 1972, shortly after martial law was declared. More than 5,000 Filipinos have been arrested and detained in this fashion. Lopez and Osmena remained in prison without charged being presented against them until they began a 'hunger strike' on November 18, 1974. They smuggled out statements protesting the continued detention of 'political prisoners,' including themselves, and other alleged abuses under martial law such as the absence of a free press and an independent judiciary. On the 10th day of the hunger strike they were informed that they had been charged with involvement in a conspiracy to assassinate the President, and that the charges had been filed in August 1973.

"On the 11th day of the hunger strike the two men ended their fast upon an understanding that many of the 'political prisoners' would be released, that they would be released shortly and that the charges against them would be dismissed.

"On December 1, 1974, the Philippine press published the alleged 'confession' of Osmena. Osmena claims it is a fraud, but in any event it contains no confession of any involvement in any assassination plot and does not mention Lopez at all.

"The same day the Philippine press also published a statement of an unidentified 'suspected participant' that contends that young Osmena, his father, and young Lopez were involved. It is a rambling, disconnected tale which strains one's credulity.

"But even were these charges believable, despite the President's claim that he had ordered a trial of the two men, no steps have been taken toward bringing them to trial despite their repeated demands for a public impartial trial on the merits.

"According to President Marcos' speech, Lopez and Osmena broke their fast upon being confronted with the evidence against them.

"To this day the two men have not been presented with any evidence against them. They ended their hunger strike based upon the promises of the Philippine Secretary of National Defense that they and other political prisoners would be released. The Secretary has since denied making these promises, but I have a copy of a letter he wrote to Lopez on the last day of the hunger strike agreeing to let Lopez be free on 'pass every now and then' and agreeing to work toward house arrest by Christmas 'and in due time, hopefully, your temporary release from detention.' Lopez' attorneys, who met with the Secretary at the time, claim there was a further promise of full release by February.

"Since this case has attracted the attention of many of my colleagues, numerous inquiries by Members of Congress and by the State Department have been made to the Philippine Government through the Philippine Embassy. The Philippine Secretary of Public Information and other officials regularly replied that the two men had been given rights to visit their homes while preparing 'their defense'. I regret to say that this, too, was not true. Neither man has been allowed home visits and as to preparing their defense neither has been permitted to see his counsel even in prison. This, too, has been verified by the State Department.

"These are not the first examples of misinformation promulgated by the Philippine Government in the case of the Lopez family. In December 1972, the *Washington Star-News* reported that 'sources close to Marcos' had implicated the elderly father of the imprisoned Lopez, Eugenio Lopez, Sr. — who now lives in the United States — as a member of a 'rightist plot' against the President. This information was reportedly the result of investigations by the Philippine Government and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. In response to a query by a Lopez attorney, acting FBI Director L. Patrick Gray replied in writing that 'the FBI conducted no investigation' concerning Eugenio Lopez, Sr.

"In the speech of December 11, President Marcos responded to continued claims by Philippine religious groups, Amnesty International, the foreign press, and others that many of the political prisoners had been tortured and even murdered. Marcos stated that — no one, but no one, has been tortured.

"Nevertheless, pressure mounted for an investigation. On December 28, Manila Archbishop Jaime Sin demanded an impartial investigation of the torture claims. On January 2, 1975, President Marcos ordered the military to investigate and two weeks later they admitted that there had been incidents of torture and recommended stem measures to correct the situation. No corrective measures have been reported, but the admission is at least some progress. President Marcos has misinformed the American people as to the true state of affairs in the Philippines in regard to other aspects of human and civil rights. In an interview by Edwin Newman on the NBC 'Today' show, September 2, 1974, he was asked:

" 'Is it correct that there is still about 5,000 of your political opponents in prison?'

"Marcos replied:

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“ ‘Of course, not. We have just released the last of the detention prisoners who are not facing criminal charges.’

“Nevertheless, in his December 11 speech President Marcos stated -

“ ‘In our jails today, there are 5,234 people under detention in direct consequence of the martial law proclamation. Four thousand sixty-nine of these are ordinary criminal offenders. One thousand one hundred sixty-five are political detainees.’

“This less than two months after he had said there were none. Fortunately, Marcos has ordered the release of a total of more than 1,500 of these prisoners which is more than 1,165 political detainees he admitted to in December. This progress seems to be the one achievement of the publicity caused by the Lopez-Osmena hunger strike.

“On the same ‘Today’ show interview President Marcos stated that “there is ‘no censorship’ of the media, and explained that the media was controlled by a committee of ‘publishers’ and ‘the owners of radio and TV stations’.

“What he did not tell the American people was that all newspapers, as well as radio and television facilities, except a handful owned by Marcos’ relatives and friends, had been seized by the Government in September 1972. Moreover, these facilities had been turned over — sometimes with partial payment and often with none — to newspapers and broadcasters who were friends, relatives, and business associates of President Marcos and his wife. No publication, broadcast or distribution of printed material is permitted which reflects adversely on the President and his policies. The present captive nature of the media has been verified by an independent study by Dr. John L. Lent, associate professor of communications of Temple University. The prestigious industry magazine, Editor and Publisher on January 25, 1975, reported that ‘freedom of the press has disappeared’ in the Philippines.

“While I am concerned with the continued imprisonment of Lopez and Osmena without due regard for their legal rights, they are but symptoms of broader and deeper questions in regard to Philippine-American relations.

“The Philippines is now well into its third year of martial law and more than a year beyond the end of the normal elected term of President Marcos. By his own count some 3,500 persons remain in prison without bail, without trial, and without due process. The writ of *habeas corpus* is still suspended. The right to visit with legal counsel, at least in some cases, is not permitted. Judicial process apparently is not free and independent since military cases are reviewable by the President, and civil judges now serve at the pleasure of the President.

“The Philippine press and media are completely controlled by relatives and allies of Marcos. An extensive Government press information office feeds them the news.

“Philippine elections are not to be conducted in the foreseeable future. Marcos claims he rules on the basis of referendums in which the people vote in public on whether he should continue. The referendum of February 27 empowered the President to appoint the nation’s mayors.

“To me this almost complete denial of human and civil rights by

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America's old friend, the Philippines, is a deplorable state of affairs. Equally bothersome to me is the fact that President Marcos and his subordinates have not squared with the world press, the State Department, or the U.S. Congress, in regard to both specific questions and the overall state of human and civil rights in that country."

Early this year, a veteran senator of the United States, Vance Hartke, became so exasperated with the lies and half-truths being dished out by the Philippine martial regime to inquiring members of Congress on the true situation in the Philippines. On January 29, 1975, Senator Hartke addressed a letter to the Philippine ambassador to Washington, DC, stating, among others that:

"Finally, I have seen answers of the Philippine government to inquiries on this situation from other members of Congress. This is not the true state of affairs. I believe that a friend of the United States such as the Philippines should exercise the highest degree of candor with this nation's officials."

The Documentation Committee for Philippine Political Prisoners, a creation of the National Coordinating Committee of the Anti-Martial Law Movement (Philippines), has documented a number of notorious cases of political imprisonment under the Marcos military regime. Without any reservations, I reproduce the noteworthy cases and would like to confirm their veracity.

I. NILO TAYAG

Even before the declaration of martial law in the Philippines, the trend towards increased militarization by the Marcos regime became crystal clear in the arrest and detention of Nilo Tayag and other political prisoners. On June 11, 1970, Nilo Tayag, the National Chairman of the Kabataang Makabayan (Patriotic Youth) was arrested in a secluded barrio on Laguna province. Tayag has been detained since that time under charges of violating the Anti-Subversion Act (Republic Act 1700) which outlawed membership in the Communist Party of the Philippines.

While attending the University of the Philippines, Tayag joined the mainstream of nationalist student activities and became a charter member of the Student Cultural Association of the U.P. (S.C.A.U.P.). In 1961, the S.C.A.U.P.-stormed the House Committee on Un-Filipino Activities of the Philippine Legislature to protest their undemocratic and witch-hunting character. The active organizing and education work of these early protests set the basis for the founding of the KM in 1964, in which Nilo Tayag developed quickly as a leading member.

As the KM developed rapidly as the strongest and most militant of the patriotic mass organizations, the Marcos government launched a series of fascist attacks to remove the organization's leadership and cripple the mass movement. First came the arrest of Nilo Tayag.

Finally, Marcos moved openly towards martial law with the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus in August, 1971. Under this act, Marcos could have anyone arrested without warrant, and they can be detained indefinitely without immediate charges or trial. The Marcos regime moved quickly to single out

the many new leaders of the national democratic movement and have them arrested and detained.

Although some were later released, Nilo Tayag and other key leaders have been kept imprisoned in Camp Crame for years now as the Marcos regime hopes their hardships will discourage others from joining the resistance movement. However, since the declaration of martial law, the prisons and concentration camps bulge with the thousands of new political prisoners who have followed in the resistance much like Nilo Tayag. Within the confines of the prison camps, Nilo has remained an active leader fighting for better conditions for all prisoners and keeping alive the spirit of resistance. In the last few months, he has borne the brunt of, the military's suppression even inside the camp, being held in solitary confinement, deprived of exercise, with visiting privileges for his family cut to 5-10 minutes. It is speculated that this harassment is somehow linked to the military's discovery of an escape tunnel in the Fort Bonifacio Youth Rehabilitation Center after the escape of two activist leaders, Ma. Lorena Barros and Judy Taguiwalo. According to a letter from Sen. Jose Diokno requesting an end to this harassment of Tayag, Diokno states, "I asked him (Tayag) if he had admitted having taken part in any violation of prison regulations. He replied that he had not even been questioned before being thrown into solitary confinement, and that he had nothing improper or illegal among his personal effects."

II. LILIOSA HILAO

Liliosa Hilao, 21 years old, was the seventh child of an impoverished fisherman from Bulan, Sorsogon. She would have graduated summa cum laude at the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila. Lily was the President of the student body in her university and was active in fighting for academic freedom in her school. Before martial law, she was the editor of *Hasik*, the official newspaper of the Pamantasan. More than anything else, Lily became an active national democrat during the first quarter storm of 1970. She joined the Samahan ng Demokratikong Kabataan (Democratic Youth Alliance), then the Aletheia. Together with other activists, she worked in the slums of Intramuros, helping the squatters with their basic needs.

Her active life of serving the people changed drastically when on April 4, 1973, a group of 15 men alighted near the Hilao residence in Project 3, Quezon City. The heavily armed men and a woman who strode toward the apartment were a raiding team including Col. Felix, Lt. Castillo, Lt. Garcia, Sgt. de Sagun, George Ong, a certain Felix, and a WAC (Women's Auxiliary Constabulary) called Ester. The rest of the military squad positioned themselves some 20 meters away.

The Hilao residence was ransacked. Her mother, who was in a plaster cast recovering from an accident, the youngest daughter Gigi, 16, and the second to the youngest daughter, Marie, were at the apartment at the time it was raided. Gigi was held by the WAC and was interrogated in one room. Marie was also held by two men in another room.

At about 3 to 4 p.m., Marie managed to escape. She leapt over the high concrete walls and past the howling dogs. She didn't even mind the warning that she would be shot. The military men were so furious they decided to bring

Gigi to Camp Crame, but brought her back at around 6 p.m.

Realizing what was happening, a neighbor waited for Lily at the bus stop where she usually got off after school to warn her not to go home. Lily proceeded to her brother-in-law, Capt. Rogelio Roque of the PC (Philippine Constabulary) Special Forces and the CIS (Central Intelligence Service), thinking that he could be trusted and that she could get some help from him. She asked if he could provide her money to escape and secret aid for the release of her sister. But things turned out differently. At around 9 p.m., she was brought home by her brother-in-law who traitorously turned her in to the brutal military men. The torture of Lily began.

Events prior to her death

Cries of protest were heard from her place by the neighbors until 1:30 to 2:00 a.m. A loud anguished scream was heard and that was the time she was being undressed by a Lt. Castillo. There was much tension in the neighborhood as she shouted for help. Though the neighbors were anxious to rescue her, they couldn't do anything. Lily struggled so hard that the attempt at rape failed.

Shortly afterward she was brought to Camp Crame, handcuffed. On April 5 there was no news about her. The family was under heavy surveillance all throughout the day. Lily's cousin Arnold, who was also severely tortured, was not able to work the next day.

April 6 was the last day Lily was seen alive. The youngest daughter Gigi was summoned by the WAC to bring clothes for Lily at Crame. She wasn't brought back that day.

On April 7, early in the morning, one of the guards in the house received a phone call that someone was dead. The owner of a house where he received the call asked who was dead. And the guard just replied a "friend." That afternoon Gigi came home and had to inform a neighbor through a placard saying, "Sister is dead."

Mutilated

When the victim's body was turned over to the family, it was clothed in Lily's bloodied and torn skirt, while the entire torso was covered with bandages. Her underclothing was missing and her face, especially her mouth, was scorched by muriatic acid. Her neck and throat were badly burned. Two pin punctures were found on the arm. In an attempt to prevent an impartial autopsy, the internal organs were removed. Hypodermic needles were deliberately jabbed into the arms to make it appear as if she was a drug addict. Her eyes and mouth were wide open. These observations were made at the V. Luna Hospital.

Versions of her death

The reasons that the military gave on her death were inconsistent. Her torturer said she had committed suicide by taking muriatic acid found in the men's room in Camp Crame. In a telegram to her teachers and classmates at the Pamantasan, the military said she had died of drug addiction. The most ridiculous of all reasons was sent to her father in Bulan: "Lily had died of a heart attack."

Bits of information

The day before the burial, the military tried to fool the students by attempting to hide Lily's body. The body was taken out of the coffin and placed in a stretcher purportedly for re-autopsy at the Funeraria Popular. The military actually tried to hide it in the basement and planned to transfer it to another place but this plan failed because a group of students were coming to the Memorial Center at that time. The guards who were trying to get near the coffin were driven away by the angry students and teachers who formed a human cordon around Lily's body. It is speculated that the reason why the military took special interest in Lily and her family was because her brother has been the object of a manhunt in Bicol where he is suspected of being the finance officer of the NPA.

III. FORTUNATO BAYOTLANG

The case of Fortunato Bayotlang came to us in a letter sent through a missionary order which has a mission in Mindanao. It contains an account of the torture and murder of Fortunato Bayotlang, a salesman for a pharmaceutical firm in Davao. The identity of the author as well as his religious order were withheld for obvious reasons.

Dear X,

In August, I began an assigned 6-week language review to acquire some polish and get the unknowns to fall into place. During this time I became involved in a case involving the Tagum constabulary police and Davao pharmaceutical firm salesman, Fortunato Bayotlang.

Fortunato was beaten to death by the constabulary security unit - apparently a case of mistaken identity, and his two younger brothers, Fernando, 15, and Ruperto, 8, were imprisoned. They had been accompanying Fortunato because it was Saturday, and they had no school. I was asked by the Association of Major Religious Superiors to photograph the deceased and gather evidence for them two days after the incident occurred.

Two days more passed, and I became concerned for the welfare of the two younger brothers, still imprisoned in the Tagum stockade. I gathered members of the Justice and Peace Commission of Bishop Regan had attempted to get them released, and/or find out what the military charges of subversion consisted of. They had been released overnight to attend the wake and funeral of their brother, under armed escort, so we found them at their family home and humiliated the guard to get him out of hearing range so we could talk to the boys.

Fernando, obviously relieved and happy to see us, told of six plain-clothesmen curbing his brother's company car, taking them to the PC compound and interrogating them. Fortunato was handcuffed behind his back and continually punched enroute to the stockade while being asked over and over, "Where is Dodung?" (This is the only question they ever asked any of the three). At the compound, Fortunato was taken to a small shed less than 30 feet behind the command post building. The two younger boys were manhandled by two men in a parked car less than 10 feet away while three men "cared for" Fortunato.

"Father," Fernando told me, "Fortunato screamed, begged, pleaded — and

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his last words were 'if you are going to kill me, or must kill me, please shoot me because I've done no wrong.' Also, the men mauling him came out three times in blood-soaked clothing to get more 2x2's because they were breaking too easily." This - in spite of the fact that the Bayotlangs are civilians, and there was no warrant on file, no identification of the arresting officers, no "bookings," no civil liberties.

A doctor in a cell over 50 yards away, upon hearing the screams and seeing the bloody clothing, threatened to file charges against the military unless Fortunato was taken to the Davao Provincial Hospital of Tagum. There, he was administered first aid, and a hospital employee told me, "We have no facilities. Father, for a man who has been that badly mauled." Three hours later, he died of "subdural hemorrhage caused by severe beating to the head and the whole body," according to the coroner's report.

During this same period, Fernando was being taken by his captors to see Fortunato at the hospital. A detour was made through a banana plantation, and he was tied "spread eagle" around a tree. He was then beaten with clasped, clenched fists, jabbed with a rifle butt and barrel, and struck with a pistol. This is part of a "tactical investigation" - no, not for a commando - for a 15-year-old boy.

At present, Fernando is frightened by all strangers, and physically runs from them. He also continually extends and retracts his tongue unconsciously — the result of another "tactical investigation" where his tongue was repeatedly pulled, beaten against his teeth, and burned with cigarettes. He now lives with Brother J. C., MM. in Sigaboy to allay his anxiety.

The case of Fortunato Bayotlang and his brothers was thoroughly investigated by the Police Constabulary and the Department of National Defense because Bishop Regan and Maryknoll would give them no peace. Military findings were that there is a case, and warrants for arrest have been issued, but none of the six Constabulary Security Unit members have been apprehended, although they have been frequently seen loitering in the market place. The only ordinary Police Constabulary involved was Fernando's mauler, who was demoted. When I told Fernando the demotion was given for the constabulary's "indiscretion," he replied: "If that's what an 'indiscretion' is, I'd hate to see what a 'mistake' looked like."

IV. MARSMAN ALVAREZ

Marsman Alvarez, 24, was the brother of exiled ex-Constitutional Convention delegate Heherson (Sonny) Alvarez, who is active in the anti-martial law movement in the U.S. At the time of his brutal murder, he was a senior university student in Manila.

In a letter to Secretary of Defense Juan Ponce Enrile, his brother had described him as an "idealistic young man," who shared his convictions of freedom and democracy in the Philippines and who opposed martial law.

The military's attempts to turn him into a government informer had failed.

Friends testified that on June 26, 1974, Marsman was picked up from their house, then his mutilated body was found near the town's church the following morning. "He was mangled beyond recognition," was the identifying remark by a friend who recognized him only by his hair and pants. The killers had completely beaten up his face, and his jaw was broken. They had cut his nose

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and scratched out one of his eyeballs. They had pulled out all his teeth but two and had slashed his tongue. After viewing the body, Marsman's father described that, "his head was beaten to a pulp, his face was bashed beyond recognition and his throat was stabbed on both sides just below the jaw."

The gory crime caught public attention, and the government, alarmed over the widespread public knowledge on the true circumstances of the killing, immediately went to work suppressing the truth. In a press release, Secretary Enrile quickly put the blame on the New People's Army (NPA). In this deception, he credited Marsman's performance as a government informer but who was foolish to reveal his military connections in his "undercover work."

Contrary to the government reports, however, Marsman was killed in full view of several citizens near the church. His killers are known to the people in the community where he was killed. The names of the killers, including the witnesses were furnished in a complaint to Secretary Enrile. Unfortunately, the government has chosen to suppress the truth and negate in a compulsive design to make it appear that my brother was killed by the NPA," Heherson said.

Months after Marsman's death, Archbishop Jaime Sin of Manila mentioned the murder to a group of foreign correspondents. Government intelligence agents then visited Marsman's relatives to convince them to accept "hush" money. The offer was promptly rejected.

His father, after a period of prolonged depression and extreme frustration over the death of Marsman succumbed to heart failure five months later.

V. PERLA SOMONOD

Tagum, Davao del Norte, 1 April - A political prisoner, a member of the New People's Army, suffered a miscarriage two weeks after a block of ice was placed on her chest.

The torture of Perla Somonod, 24, of Gingoog City, Misamis Oriental, was done in a safehouse inside the PC barracks in Tagum, Davao del Norte in the first week of December, 1974.

The military claimed that Perla played basketball so that she would lose her baby.

Perla denied this stating, "I wanted to keep my baby. Why would I insist on hospitalization if I really had intentions of losing it? "

Two sworn statements on her pregnant condition and on her torture were made by her at the Provincial Capitol of Tagum.

Perla was two months pregnant when the Intelligence Division of the PC arrested her and a companion in a supply house in Sasa, Davao City on November 25, 1974.

She was in charge of the medicine and ammunition supply for members of the New People's Army to which she and her husband belonged.

Perla immediately underwent interrogation.

They asked her who her fellow cadres were and where they could be found.

She merely stared at them.

They asked her who and where her husband was.

Again, she merely stared at them.

Their interrogation of her lasted from November 28 to December 6, 1974.

Unable to extract vital information from their "hard-headed" captive (an

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adjective the military would often use against her), they proceeded with their torture of her.

They placed a block of ice on her chest.

They ordered her to put her arms around the block of ice and to clasp her hands before it.

Slowly, the ice melted, sending trickles of cold water down her chest. . . her arms . . . her legs.

Perla felt no pain, only the cold seeping into every pore of her body.

When the ice was merely a pool of water around Perla, she could hardly move her hands. These had become numb.

After that, she developed a cough. Every time she expelled air, it seemed as if her stomach were being wrenched and going along with the air out of her mouth.

The cough persisted for two weeks. The fetus was slowly slipping out of her womb.

On a Friday evening, December 18, Perla requested her captors to bring her to the hospital, for she was feeling stomach pains.

She was accompanied to the Tagum Provincial Hospital by Captain Roberto Cuyos, Officer-in-Charge of the detainees and the Citizen's Home Defense Force (CHDF) in Davao del Norte.

The next day, December 19, she again asked to be brought to the hospital, for her stomach pains had intensified.

But the captain told her, "Why should we bring you again to the ospital? Anyway, you already have your medicines. Besides, we cannot afford your hospitalization."

In the evening of Saturday, December 20, Perla continued to bleed.

Perla tried desperately to keep the fetus.

But the blood kept on flowing and flowing, soaking her pants till she could just crouch in pain.

Her friends, six of them crammed in the small, hot room, could only cry and watch her helplessly.

When a nun visited her and the other detainees that Sunday, December 21, Perla complained of her stomach pains. She didn't know she had already lost her baby.

It was only on a Monday, December 22, when she was brought to the Tagum Provincial Hospital. With her was a plastic bag full of her blood. A doctor in the hospital examined the blood inside the plastic bag. The blood had now acquired an offensive smell. The doctor said that the plastic bag also contained her fetus.

For those who do not understand Perla, they may say that she should have learned her lesson.

One abortion should "teach" her to go back to the normal life that she had with her family and friends in Gingoog City.

VI. EDDIE CENEZA

The newspapers of January 3, 1975 listed a certain "alias" 'Rey,' 'Frank', 'Dave' (cf, *Times Journal* January 3, 1975, p. 10) as among the group arrested in connection with Fr. Edicio de la Torre. In the subsequent list published in the papers on Sunday, January 26, 1975, his name does not reappear. What has

happened to this young man? Why has his name suddenly been dropped without explanation? The following verified story provides the answers.

Association of Major Religious Superiors.

From well-informed sources we received the following report in a blatant case of murder perpetrated by the military in Baguio City in the morning of Monday, December 9, 1974. The report is based on an eyewitness account by a certain Ofelia Castillo, a former public school teacher.

The murder victim was Eddie Ceneza, 21 years of age and a native of Bo. Salinognon, San Mateo, Isabela. He was also known by the names of "Rey," "Dave" and "Frank" and to neighbors in Baguio Citlas "Eleazar Bartolome." He endured the savage torment dealt by the military without compromising his principles. The killers included such military men as Arnold Sineres and Jose Rivera.

For a clearer picture of what happened, a narration of events in chronological order follows:

- 8 December 1974: Eddie Ceneza and his companion Alberto Yanes were taken, to the agents' residence at Leonila Hill. Ofelia Castillo was arrested that same day and brought to the agents' residence. The three were then taken to a nearby "safehouse" of the military agents.

- 9 December: All three were tortured while being interrogated. In addition to being beaten up mercilessly, Ceneza and Yanes were made to endure electrodes (electric shock) applied to different parts of the body. Ceneza was continuously clubbed on the head until blood oozed out of his nose and ears. Ofelia Castillo was stripped of her clothes, subjected to indignities, slapped, kicked and beaten with a .38 caliber revolver. The torture session took all of December 9 and went into the following day.

- 10 December: There was no let-up in the brutal treatment of Eddie Ceneza. Unable to break his spirit, the military concentrated on hitting him with a .45 caliber pistol. Later, his body was found on the pavement outside the house apparently flung from a second floor window. Ofelia Castillo escaped while the agents were distracted.

Alberto Yanes, Ofelia Castillo and Eddie Ceneza were mentioned by the Times Journal of January 3, 1975, as numbering among the 30 plus persons arrested in the same series of raids during which Fr. Edicio de la Torre SVD and Fr. Manuel Lahoz were arrested. They were supposed to be under military custody and were to be charged on January 25, 1975 with conspiracy to commit rebellion. But Alberto Yanes has for reasons known only to the military "escaped". Ofelia Castillo escaped from the military safe houses (houses outside the prison camps where the military can 'safely' torture or dispose of political prisoners) in Baguio and is now in hiding. And Eddie Ceneza — no one knows where his remains lie, except perhaps his killers.

VII. COMMITTED RELIGIOUS LEADERS

Even priests, nuns and lay leaders have not escaped the political persecution of the Marcos dictatorship. As a consequence, the various religious organizations have united to become a major voice in denouncing the dictatorship.

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The persecution of members of the clergy by a right-wing political regime such as Marcos' is somewhat a surprise, for religious institutions have been historically conservative in their political and social outlook. The religious institutions in the Philippines, which is 80% Catholic are certainly no exception to this rule. Thus, a question that immediately comes to mind as one hears of priests and nuns being detained as political prisoners is, "What have they done to draw the attention of the dictatorship?" The cases cited herein show that for the most part, these priests and nuns have distinguished themselves by their concern for social justice in their missionary work. They have tried to develop in the people they work with, social and political awareness, and have urged them to take a more active role in bringing about changes in their conditions. These priests and nuns have also pressured their religious superiors to support and adopt social policies which are more responsive to the needs of the people. This is true, not only of those who work with the rural population, but also of those who work in the urban area.

For example, Fr. Jose Reyes Nacu, active in the defense of civil liberties in his work with the Tondo (a district of Manila) urban poor was arrested on January 29, 1973; Fr. Luis Jalandoni, who later was accused by the government of being a member of the Communist Party of the Philippines, tried all means to call the government's attention to the plight of the sacada (peasant) and sugar planters in the Negros region (Southern Philippines). Among foreign priests who were detained, Fr. Bruno Hicks and Rev. Peterson were actively involved in peasant work organizing in the Negros sugar plantations. They were arrested after martial law was declared for less than a month, and were deported two weeks later. Rev. Edward Gerlock, a Maryknoll missionary and director of Social Action in Davao, helped small Davao farmers in their fight against the big producers of bananas who are granted vast tracts of land by the Marcos regime. In an interview with "Associated Press," Fr. Gerlock cited the practices of the U.S. corporations of bulldozing the people right off their lands, and their use of aerial sprays which harm farm the people. He was arrested, and placed under house arrest while facing deportation charges. Fr. Luigi Riciarelli, an Italian priest, was arrested when he was framed by a Marcos PC informer whom he had helped. His work with the poor made him a target of suspicion by the government agents. The government, however, finds this type of dedication, this type of humanitarian work to be "subversive" for it is under this charge that members of the clergy have been commonly arrested.

Immediately after the martial law declaration, arrests of priests, nuns and church leaders swept the country. Raids were conducted on dorms, chapels, colleges and schools run by the church groups.

It is worthwhile to describe how the military personnel of Marcos conduct the raids and arrests. The raids are usually carried out during early morning hours. Rooms are searched, and religious books are confiscated together with personal belongings of the occupants. The military officers feast on food they see, they ransack files in offices, libraries, including sleeping quarters. In the raid of St. Joseph's College, the sisters were "held-up" in their quarters and \$370 was taken from them. The military people conducting the raids never have name tags nor carry any identifications for the victim to use in case complaints are made.

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At St. Joseph's College, where a 50-man strong contingent of the PC (Philippine Constabulary) raided the dormitories, Sister Marianni, the registrar of the college, was also arrested.

In Novaliches, about 20 miles from Manila, a widely publicized raid occurred at the Sacred Heart Novitiate. A contingent of 150 army men in "combat" gear arrested Fr. Jose Blanco along with 20 students while at a seminar defining goals for Christian students.

Fr. Ysingco in Misamis Oriental was arrested together with Fr. Ed Gerlock, two days after the declaration of martial law. Fr. Tom Marti was arrested at his Maryknoll office in Davao del Norte. Two months after martial law, Fr. Woodrow Gubuan, the director of a radio-TV station and professor at the Sacred Heart Seminary was also arrested. At a PC raid of the Redemptorist Monastery in Tacloban City, Fr. Emerardo Manigo was arrested.

Raids similar to the one which descended on St. Joseph's College, were conducted in the dormitories of Ateneo de Manila (a leading Jesuit university in the Philippines), the Seminary of Our Lady of Angeles in Novaliches and the Mission of the Sacred Heart in Cebu.

VIII. TORTURES

Members of the clergy, as a group, have been more fortunate than most other groups in the type of treatment they have received under detention. The Marcos military and police have as a rule been more considerate toward nuns and priests than toward lay persons. This is due in part to the religious institutions which have generally supported them. But cases of priests and nuns being hospitalized due to injuries received while in detention are not unknown.

Fr. Edicio de la Torre, though not as brutally tortured as the prisoners/priests who suffered almost all the tortures mentioned above (their case studies are treated separately in another section), testified to the evidence of extreme physical torture inflicted on fellow prisoners. Fr. Ed went on hunger strike, together with Fr. Lahoz, after he received beatings on his stomach, to protest the inhuman treatment they see being done on their fellow prisoners. There are evidences of bruises, bloodied eyes, cut brows, and electric wire scars.

Josefina Karagdag, a volunteer secretary of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines, is now under treatment for mental and nervous breakdown at the National Mental Hospital due to the mental stress and physical tortures she suffered during detention. Her mother is appealing personally to newsmen and sympathizers with letters.

IX. MASS RESPONSE FROM CLERGY/SHOW OF OPPOSITION

A mass vigil prayer to protest the brutal treatment of political prisoners was held in Septwater 1974, at the Manila Cathedral, led by Archbishop Sin of Manila. About 5,000 attended. It was the biggest demonstration staged against the Marcos regime by the civilian population.

Organizations like the Association of Major Religious Superiors in the Philippines (AMRSP) and the National Council of Churches (NCCP) are the major informants to local communities and abroad regarding political prisoners. They have also taken on the tasks of sending protest letters and petitions about the deplorable plights of prisoners to "leaders" of the country. In early 1975, they were among those who made an open petition to boycott the National

Referendum proposed by the regime for the continuation of the martial law. In their open petition, they, declared, "As long as the restrictions and prohibitions of martial law are in force, a referendum on martial law becomes a farce."

A Church-Military Liaison Committee was formed, in the early days of martial law, to oversee the specific cases of complaints against the military. It was a concession made by the government due to constant denunciations and pressures exerted by the clergy. The committee was empowered to serve as a clearing house for complaints and act as a channel for clarification of church-military communications and questions on political prisoners. The agreement between church and military includes a commitment from the military to inform bishops or religious superiors about clergy arrests, and whenever possible, to place such arrested priests in the custody of their superiors with the guaranteed presence of the prisoners whenever needed by the military. The agreement was not implemented and remained only on paper.

The AMRSP issued a Manifesto on Torture on January 9, 1975, as a result of repeated reports of torture, which were confirmed. It strongly protests such practices. The Manifesto declares that:

1. the use of torture of any kind, on any person, for any purpose, is not justified under any conditions and that it constitutes a serious crime;

2. most tortures are committed during "tactical interrogation", yet, technically tactical interrogation is employed only on captured enemy soldiers in time of war for the purpose of adopting immediate tactical maneuvers. But the Philippines is not in a state of war, and the arrested suspects are Filipinos, "our very own blood brothers."

The Manifesto further denounced the little evidence of the national leadership to really do its sincere best to put a stop to the torture and maltreatment of detainees. It warned the government that if the practices continue, "despite all appeals, the Committee shall elevate the matter to international bodies such as the United Nations, the World Courts and the Pontifical Commission on Justice and Peace."

X. FR. ED DE LA TORRE

Fr. Ed de la Torre, a 31-year old priest with the Society of the Divine Word was a chaplain for the Federation of Free Farmers in the early 60's. Later, he disavowed reformism and developed a politico-theological radicalism. In the pre-martial law period, he spoke of shedding one's theological/academic baggage in order to start anew and serve others, rather than oneself. He knew the dilemma of the middle class Christians who are limited to "flirting" with radical option because they pine for perfect situations and perfect solutions which exist only in minds of political virgins. He also stressed that love of neighbor must be efficacious, the greatest good for the greatest number. Not the other-worldly slaves of liturgy, or the professional do-goodism of charity but bread here and now and the power to change the present and shape the future.

Chronology of arrest and detention

December 13, 1974 - At 1:15 in the afternoon, Fr. Ed was arrested, by men in civilian clothes at the Luisa and Son restaurant in Manila. He was keeping an appointment which had been requested of him by note. He was then taken to

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Camp Crame, Manila for several hours, and then to Camp Olivas, Pampanga the same day. He was charged along with 29 persons with "illegal printing, possession, distribution, circulation of subversive materials."

December 14, 1974 — At 11:30 a.m., Fr. Restituto Lumanlan, the highest acting superior of the SVD's available in Manila at the time, was handed a xerox copy of a Memorandum to the Chief of the Constabulary, Camp Crame, with the authorization of the President, to arrest Fr. Edicio de la Torre "for acts inimical to national security and public order." Fr. Lumanlan objected that Fr. Ed de la Torre's arrest was in violation of prior agreements between the government and the Church-Military Liaison Committee which provides that the religious superiors be first informed of an impending arrest.

December 15, 1974 - 2:30 p.m., the military chaplain returned to Fr. Lumanlan with a Memo, this time for the arrest of another priest, Fr. Manuel Lahoz. Fr. Lumanlan then asked the military chaplain where Fr. Ed was. He said he wasn't sure but would check if he was already in Camp Olivas. Pampanga.

December 16, 1974 - At 9:00 a.m., not being able to get any further information, Fr. Lumanlan finally drove to Pampanga to check for himself the whereabouts of Fr. Ed. When Fr. Lumanlan was allowed to go into the detention cell, he found Fr. Ed and Fr. Manny Lahoz eating. He also noticed a large bruise and a bad contusion on the neck of Fr. Ed. Fr. Ed explained that this was a result of the manhandling at the time of his arrest. Fr. Ed continued that on December 15, a military visitor barged into Fr. Ed's cell shouting, "You. You say you are a priest. You are fooling us," and with that the military person hit Fr. Ed in the abdomen with a heavy fist blow. In his surprise and unexpected pain, Fr. Ed cried out, "My God" and then called for help. The man hit him once more on the nape and answered, "You still believe in God pala. We thought you were a member of the Communist Party." Fr. Ed was then handcuffed to his bed.

December 26, 1974 - More specifically in his letter to all concerned, and on the 36th hour of his fast, he clarified the reasons for this hunger strike:

1. "It is not primarily to protest the "symbolic" blows I have received. It is not even to protest Fr. Lahoz' and my own prolonged detention without investigation although these are reasons enough for a protest. Despite the relatively privileged treatment we have received (separate quarters, visitors, food) detention is still imprisonment and freedom remains wanting. A comfortable cage is still a cage.
2. The primary reason is to focus attention on the other political prisoners who are not as well known and who are not treated as well. For snatches of conversation, we have gathered that there is not much sign of torture in Z-2 itself, although cases worse than what happened to me have happened. However, during arrest and "tactical interrogation," severe torture has been reported and we have seen some of the results.
3. Another reason is to share with the poor, the starving, the malnourished, especially laid off workers, sugar workers, "squatters" and share tenants - the experience of hunger and poverty."

December 27, 1974 - On the 72nd hour of his fast, Fr. Ed exposed excerpts of notes from recent prisoners.

"For nine continuous hours last December 16, I was tortured at M-2. They badly hit my shoulders with hard wqod, a .45, and iron fists. My chest was badly damaged by hard fists and pistol blows. My lower ribs were nearly broken. My groin and testicles and lower stomach were also badly hurt. They hit my back which nearly damaged my spine. They beat my head and burnt my ears with cigarettes. These were their answers to all my denials.

"All of us here received the same treatment. They burnt our bodies with a hot flat iron; they applied electric shocks to all parts of the body.

"They asked my wife to undress, mashed her entire body, inserted their fingers into her lower sexual organ, and put a lighted cigarette on it. Her screams saved her from possible rape by the military men. One got his rib broken, many lost their sense of hearing, bodies, marked with cigarette butts. Others received electric - shock in their penis, resulting in bleeding.

Fr. Ed also expressed that the protest fast was aimed at influencing medical investigation to be conducted on other detention camps like 5th CSU and ISAFP (Camp Crame), Fort Bonifacio (YRC, IRC, and MSU) and the provincial prisons where most reports of atrocities come from, especially MIG Baguio. Lastly, Fr. Ed asked for the support of all. Fr. Ed has already told his interrogators that it is "a genuinely free and democratic Philippines" that he has lived for and that he hopes he is ready to die for. For him, freedom means not just the release of detainees, but the liberation of thousands of sugar workers who work and slave for \$2.50 a day, and die "natural" deaths at the age of 45. Freedom means deliverance from the scourge of death which claims 78% of children of sugar workers before they reach the age of three. This protest fast by Fr. Ed de la Torre and Fr. Manny Lahoz spurred superiors and members of 35 congregations to join in a community sympathy fast on December 24, 1974 to protest the torture and indefinite detention of political prisoners. Twenty Catholic students in Hong Kong also fasted for 24 hours on December 30 for the same purpose.

Msgr. Jaime Sin likewise wrote a letter of concern to the PC (Philippine Constabulary) Chief Fidel Ramos suggesting that the alleged cases of torture be investigated (the amount of reports brought to his attention by clergy members who were in touch with the detainees was rather persistent and very disturbing). He submitted*that the investigating body be made up of government military representatives and a group of doctors, a nurse and lawyer representing the church.

In the last Church-Military Liaison Committee (CM LC) meeting held last January 6, 1975, the military apologized for "isolated excesses" committed during "tactical interrogation." Nonetheless, non-military personnel were denied entry into prison camps to conduct independent investigation on the torture of political prisoners who are still imprisoned either without cause or because of their sincere convictions.

XI. REV. CESAR TAGUBA

Rev. Cesar Taguba who graduated from Silliman Divinity School is a minister of the United Church of Christ.

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On February 24, 1974, he was arrested and detained at Fort Bonifacio without formal charges. For three days, he was denied food and water. During his interrogation he was savagely beaten and made to drink his urine in the hope of forcing a confession from him. The military authorities also gave him constant serum injections and electric shock treatment to various parts of his body. Rev. Taguba was subjected to so severe abuses and torture that he required hospitalization at the V. Luna Medical Center.

As of January, 1975, Rev. Taguba was in his tenth month of detention despite a military circular assuring the release of the religious to their immediate superiors. Reports claim that because of this inhumane ordeal. Rev. Taguba is suffering from a case of schizophrenia.

On January 8, 1975, an Ecumenical Worship on Human Rights was held in Manila on behalf of all Filipinos who have suffered under the martial law repression. Sponsored by the NCCP Ecumenical Ministry to Political Detainees, the service cited Rev. Taguba along with many others who suffered torture and martyrdom in the hands of the military.

XII. REV. PAUL WILSON

Rev. Paul Wilson is a minister of the Christian Church. He served as a consultant for the Commission on Development and Social Concerns for the NCCP (National Council of Churches in the Philippines). He assisted in promoting cooperatives and credit unions among the churches and private sectors in the Philippines. Arriving in Manila in September 1973, he was to serve a "two-year term" in cooperation with the Philippine Government's Department of Local Government and Community Development.

Facts about arrest, charges and detention

On June 26, 1974, officers of the Philippine military forces barged in during a dinner at the Wilson's residence and arrested Rev. Paul Wilson together with all the men present. They were all taken to Camp Crame in the Manila Area where they were interrogated and held "incommunicado" for four days. Later that night, the military forces came back and arrested Wilson's wife and their ten-year-old son. Their home and jeep were searched five times in their absence. Their books, magazines, private pictures and about \$1000 in personal property and cash were stolen by military personnel from their home. For ten days, Rev. Paul Wilson was imprisoned at one of the detention centers at Camp Crame. The last four days of his stay in the Philippines, he was held by the Department of Immigration and Deportation and deported back to the U.S. on July 12, 1974.

Bits of Information

During his interview at the Dirksen Senate Building on December 9, 1974, Rev. Paul Wilson described the conditions of the detention center as deplorable.

For the first four nights, we were made to sleep on bare concrete floors. Food consisted of rice, thin soup and coffee. Once or twice a week, we would get a small piece of fish. For the 200 political prisoners, four toilets and four showers were shared among themselves. I brushed my teeth over the urinal and it was not uncommon to wade through 3-4 inches deep of water in the

bathroom. I slept in the same cell with a Filipino who had tuberculosis in its active and advanced stages. One prisoner was finally given medical attention when heard coughing up blood.

Rev. Wilson further related that all 200 political prisoners in that detention center were waiting for their cases to be investigated. Many of them have waited for over two years. More than that, he witnessed physical abuse and torture of these prisoners. In his own words, he described the tortures in the following:

I heard late at night the screams and cries of grown men and women. I saw the lacerations on the legs of my Filipino friends who had been beaten with a steel bar. I saw and felt the bruises and welts on the bodies of young men whose only crime was that the military was looking for their sister. One NCCP secretary had a complete mental breakdown while in prison. From her conversations with my wife after her interrogation, I believe she was raped or otherwise sexually assaulted. Such techniques as rape, making women sit nude on cases of ice, using drug addiction and electrical shocks are commonplace. My wife was told that one Filipina died of multiple rape the week prior to our arrest. One NCCP clergy person, arrested prior to our arrests, was tortured to the point where he required 28 days in the hospital to recover. At one point in his interrogation, officers placed a .45 caliber gun on the table in front of him and told him that he might as well kill himself because they were going to kill him anyway. The minister took the gun, placed it against his head and pulled the trigger. The gun was empty.

These tortures, while blanketly applied on Filipino political prisoners suspected of any crime, are discriminately applied on clergy and on foreigners. "We were not mistreated because we were Americans," Rev. Wilson commented.

Before any person is released from prison in the Philippines, he must pledge support to the present government and agree not to talk to any domestic or foreign media representatives. Rev. Wilson's wife, released on July 26, 1974 was forced to sign such a pledge over the protests of a representative of the U.S. Embassy who was with her. Throughout the period of time they were interrogated and detained, they did not have access to any legal counsel or due process. The emotional and mental torture was so enormous that Rev. Wilson lost 10 lbs. in 16 days.

In conclusion, Rev. Wilson said, "These are the realities of some 16,000 political prisoners in the Philippines, today." He likewise drew attention to the climate of fear predominating in the Philippines.

XIII. FR. JOSE REYES NACU

Father Jose R. Nacu studied philosophy and theology at the La Salette Seminary in Attleboro, Massachusetts and was ordained in 1957 when he was 24 years old as the first Filipino member of the La Salette Order in Isabela. He had been head of the La Salette Academy and the order's director for recruitment and admission.

Fr. Nacu was active in community work among the poor in Hillcrest, Quezon City. He was well-known for his work in the "Mga Kaibigan ng Zoto" (Friends of

Zoto), a support group of Zona One Tondo Organization. He integrated with Tondo's urban poor before martial law and helped them resist persecution.

He was arrested and imprisoned on January 29, 1973 following the "Misa ng Kalayaan" (Freedom Mass) at the Binondo Church in Manila. He was then detained without charges at Fort Bonifacio, "despite the inquiries of religious superiors, confreres, family and friends."

On June 4, Fr. Nacu escaped from his military guard, while out on a pass to visit his ailing father. He proceeded to the French Embassy and formally requested for asylum but was refused. His escape was apparently planned in advance since representatives of the International Press, among them the Associated Press Manila bureau head were informed and arrived there on time for an interview. The foreign correspondents were given a prepared statement by Fr. Nacu, together with a biodata sheet. The signed statement reads in full:

"Today, I, Fr. Jose R. Nacu, have sought political asylum in France. I am disappointed that a country whose history reflects a triumphant fight for 'equality, liberty and fraternity' failed to give me refuge from persecution, I have been deprived of civil and political rights. No charges were ever brought against me despite the inquiries of my religious superiors, confreres, family and friends.

My escape from Ipil Detention Center in Fort Bonifacio is an act of defiance against the martial law administration. As a Filipino and a priest, I cannot, in conscience swallow violence and deception the present dictatorship brings to the Filipino people. The Filipino people will not remain oppressed forever. I remain united with them in active hope for freedom and justice in our land."

Before leaving the embassy grounds, he told Manila-based foreign correspondents that he was joining the anti-dictatorship forces underground.

XIV. OPPOSITION POLITICAL LEADERS

Marcos' jails are inhabited not only by student activists, workers, peasants, and socially conscious clergy; inside his jails are also ex-senators, ex-congressmen, and long standing political foes. Before martial law, there was an unprecedented high in the political opposition to the Marcos government. In Congress and in the Senate, the Marcos government was daily lambasted for graft and corruption. Accusations of government misspending and abuse of power were hurled at Marcos by members of the Liberal Party, the opposition political party. Even more surprising was the fact that even within his own party, the Nacionalista Party, Marcos was increasingly becoming isolated. Scandals like the bribing of Constitutional Convention delegates by Mrs. Marcos rocked the Marcos government. As a result, Marcos' popularity was at its lowest ebb during his term in office.

XV. SEN. BENIGNO AQUINO

Benigno S. Aquino, former senator from Tarlac Province and Secretary-General of the defunct Liberal Party, was one of the main political critics of President Marcos' policies in the pre-martial law days. He was also regarded as a major presidential candidate in the national elections that were to have been held in November, 1973. With the declaration of martial law, all elections were suspended.

Facts about arrest, charges and detention

Aquino, Jr. was arrested at the Manila Hilton on September 23, 1972, the day Philippine President Marcos declared martial law. He was placed under maximum security at Fort Bonifacio, Makati. No formal charges were made against him at the time although the government alleged that he had generally been involved with "subversive" activities. Nearly a year later on August 27, 1973, Aquino was formally arraigned on charges of murder, illegal possession of firearms, and subversion by a military tribunal. Aquino, in an unexpected move, refused to participate in the trial calling it "an unconscionable mockery". In his statement before the tribunals, Aquino said, "Some people suggest that I beg for mercy. But this I cannot in conscience do. I would rather die on my feet with honor than live on bended knees in shame."

The following day, President Marcos announced he would create a five-man committee to reinvestigate the charges against Aquino. According to Marcos, the committee was meant to demonstrate that everything is being done "to insure utmost fairness, impartiality and objectivity." However prominent, former jurists asked by Marcos to sit in the investigative body declined to participate. Former Senator Lorenzo M. Tanada, Aquino's lawyer, also declined to participate stating that the new agency "did not conform with the requirements of due process" because of existing agencies, specifically civilian courts, to which cases such as Aquino could be reversed.

Aquino filed a petition with the Philippine Supreme Court requesting an injunction against the military trial on grounds that he was being deprived of his constitutional right to a hearing in a civilian court. In the absence of a state of war, Aquino claimed that the military courts had no jurisdiction over civilians. Aquino also claimed that he did not have "a ghost of a chance" in a trial by a military court created by President Marcos who, he said, had already prejudged his guilt.

Conditions under detention

As of April, 1975, Aquino has spent 30 months in detention under maximum security of which 24 months was in solitary confinement. In the first eleven months of detention, Aquino was 45 pounds lighter than his 190 figure. Appearing pallid before the military tribunal, some newsmen almost did not recognize him.

Aquino along with former Senator Jose Diokno were at one time subjected to physical and mental torture at a dungeon-like structure at Fort Maysaysay in Central Luzon, where they were detained separately. Aquino has at various times been denied visitation rights by his family and access to counsel. On April 4, 1975, Aquino began a hunger strike in protest against the martial law government after the military court has ruled that he could not absent himself from the court proceedings. On April 8, the Philippine Supreme Court issued an order temporarily restraining the military commission from proceeding with the case. This was the first time since the imposition of martial law that a civilian court had restrained a military commission.

Aquino's plan to stage a hunger strike in protest of the government's charges against him were announced by his wife Mrs. Corazon Aquino in a press conference at their residence in Quezon City. According to Mrs. Aquino, the Senator specifically wants to take up with Marcos' four issues:

- 1) the trial of civilians before military tribunals for alleged offenses committed prior to the proclamation of martial law;
- 2) the lack of judicial independence;
- 3) the absence of a genuine free press; and
- 4) the repression and further continuation of martial law.

Aquino declared he would go on the hunger strike "not only for myself but also for the many other victims of today's oppression and injustices."

Perpetuation of witness testimony

The prosecution in the Aquino case filed a petition to "perpetuate the testimony" of their witnesses. The justification for this petition was that the lives of the witnesses against Aquino were allegedly in danger. The petition was granted without 1) Aquino knowing of its existence, and 2) without any opportunity to contest the petition. Further, the defendant was not given any opportunity to contest the testimony of these witnesses. The military commission in effect, has in its possession testimony and evidence, the validity of which cannot be questioned by Aquino in the current proceedings or in civilian court. Once the military commission has perpetuated the testimony of the witnesses, they will no longer be subject to recall in civilian court.

According to Aquino, the unseemingly haste in holding these proceedings has deprived me of all the basic guarantees of due process and fair play, basic guarantees enjoyed by every accused in criminal cases before civilian courts." According to another report from Manila, President Marcos will consider the advisability of transferring the case of Senator Aquino to a civil court as soon as the so-called "perpetuation" of testimony is finished.

XVI. SEN. JOSE DIOKNO

Jose W. Diokno, 52, former Nacionalista Senator from Batangas, resigned from the Nacionalista Party and became independent after the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus in August 1971. Diokno was chairman of the Movement of Concerned Citizens for Civil Liberties (MCCCL).

An outspoken critic of President Marcos' economic and social policies, Diokno is also a noted advocate of peasant rights and an eloquent speaker in popular demonstrations and rallies against government corruption.

Facts about arrest, charges and detention

Jose Diokno was arrested in the early morning hours of September 23, 1972 (within a few hours after martial law went into effect) and confined in an isolation cell under maximum security in a military camp outside Manila. No charges were filed against him. Mrs. Carmen Diokno, the senator's wife, immediately filed a petition for habeas corpus to the Philippine Supreme Court.

Eight months later, charges were still not filed against him and on June 23, 1973, Mrs. Diokno filed a supplemental petition and motion for her husband's immediate release. Diokno had also previously complained to the court about such matters as being denied visits by his family and access to counsel. Among the reasons cited by Diokno's lawyer for his release was his state of health. A letter from an American physician, Dr. Denton A. Cooley, stated that Diokno had an operation at the Texas Heart Institute the previous year and the doctor urged that he be allowed to return to the Institute for further evaluation of a

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severe case of arteriosclerosis affecting his blood circulation. Mrs. Diokno, in a letter describing her husband's solitary confinement, said he lost about 25 pounds and had acquired a yellowish pallor.

While in detention, Diokno has suffered from extremely poor health. He has been taken three times to a hospital in Manila for treatment, under the cover of darkness.

On August 14, 1973, a motion was filed to hear Diokno's Supplemental Petition and Motion for Immediate Release. The Philippine Supreme Court ignored this motion. On December 29, 1973, after more than 450 days of detention without being charged at all, Diokno withdrew his petition for *habeas corpus* from the Philippine Supreme Court.

Relatives and close friends of Diokno said his condition had deteriorated probably because of the harsh conditions in prison, especially when he and Senator Aquino were transferred from Fort Bonifacio (near Manila) to Fort Magsaysay in Laur, Nueva Ecija, where they were kept in dungeon-like cells with almost no ventilation.

Mrs. Diokno stated in an affidavit filed following a visit to her husband, "I almost failed to recognize him; he looked so much older than his age (52); he was so thin obviously because he had lost a lot of weight; he had worry lines all over his face and bags under his eyes; he looked choked and could not seem to utter a word ..

On September 11, 1974, Senator Jose W. Diokno was released from two years of detention by an act of "executive clemency" on President Marcos' 57th birthday. No charges were ever filed, nor was Diokno ever brought to trial during two years of imprisonment. Since his release, Diokno has remained active in the legal political opposition defending other political prisoners such as Fr. Ed de la Torre in military court proceedings. Diokno has also been active in protesting the inhuman conditions of detention fated by Nilo Tayag.

Easily, the most important political prisoner in the Philippines today is former Senator Aquino, Jr., the man who should have by now become President of his country - minus, of course, martial law; minus the "guns, goons and gold" of candidate Imelda Marcos, if elections had been held in November, 1973.

Two other prominent prisoners are still languishing inside the Marcos jails. Since their cases are related, I have chosen to treat them in one topical development. They are Eugenio Lopez, Jr. and Sergio Osmena III, both arrested in November, 1972. Lopez was the publisher of the Manila Chronicle and president of the largest radio-television network. His uncle, Fernando Lopez, was Vice President before martial law, and his father, Don Eugenio Lopez, Sr., who died in San Francisco on July 6, 1975, held the family's controlling interest in the nation's largest utility firm, the Manila Electric Company. Once a Marcos supporter, Lopez, Jr. had been editorially critical of Marcos prior to martial law. But not nearly consistent in such criticism as Joaquin "Chino" P. Roces, publisher of the Manila Times had been. Young Osmena is the son of the 1969 opposition candidate for President (now living in Los Angeles) and grandson of the first post-war President of the Philippines.

Compared to "Ninoy" Aquino, both young Lopez and Osmena were rather fortunate in the sense that their respective martial law in the Philippines; the justice of their cause had been given airing and accorded receptive ears by the

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policymakers and opinion makers in various capitals of the world, especially Washington, DC. because their parents abroad have had the means and wherewithal to underwrite the needed legwork. Aquino has been less than lucky in this sense; world opinion had rallied to save him from persecution only because the relatives and friends of the Philippines and the outraged journalists, government officials and friends in the United States and elsewhere of the No. 1 political prisoner in the Philippines have seen fit to voluntarily take up Ninoy's cause.

Marcos does not really give a damn about what the Filipinos in the Philippines think, say or do about his terrible march towards dictatorship. What rattles him, however, is when the world press and government leaders abroad publicize the evil things he has done, continues to do and plans on doing. Then, he really goes into tantrums, and engages rather haphazardly into a cosmetic program to hide the ugly face of his martial regime. And, as far as he is concerned, the actions and pronouncements of world leaders and newspapermen on the prominent political prisoners, Aquino, Lopez and Osmena, are matters that should be dealt with decisively with fabricated stories on the reasons for the continued detention of the political prisoners, reasons that tax credulity and make anyone despise him as an unmitigated liar.

The cases of Lopez and Osmena have been ably presented to U.S. government officials by the lawyer of the Lopezes. I have taken the liberty of drawing excerpts from the report made by the lawyer, Gerald N. Hill.

Lopez, Jr. and Osmena III, were arrested separately without warrant by Presidential security men on November 27, 1972, and imprisoned at Fort Bonifacio. Eugenio "Geny" Jr. is the eldest son of Eugenio Lopez, Sr., patriarch of the Lopez clan, who are the Rockefellers of the Philippines. Geny's uncle is Fernando Lopez, former Vice President of the Philippines and President Marcos' running mate in 1965 and 1969. Vice President Lopez lost his post when the Vice Presidency was eliminated. At the time of his arrest, Eugenio Lopez, Jr. was publisher of the Manila Chronicle, the Philippine's second-largest daily newspaper, and president of ABS-CBN, a chain of six television and 21 radio stations. For a year prior to the declaration of martial law, young Lopez, once a political supporter of Marcos, had become increasingly critical in the editorial pages of the Chronicle of the authoritarian steps taken by the Marcos regime. After his arrest the Chronicle was closed down and then its facilities turned over to a newspaper owned by a Marcos brother-in-law. The media network was seized by the military and handed to a company owned by a business associate of the President.

Osmena III's principal claim to fame was that he was his father's son, although he had been active in the opposition (Liberal) party. His grandfather was the first President of the Philippines and accompanied General Douglas MacArthur in the celebrated landing at Leyte in 1944.

On September 20, 1974, Marcos was interviewed by Edwin Newman, NBC correspondent, on the Today show. The following exchange took place:

"Newman: Mr. President, is it correct that there is still about 5,000 of your political opponents in prison?"

"Marcos: Of course, not. We have just released the last of the detention prisoners who are not facing criminal charges. If you will note, on my birthday — that was on September 11 this year — I issued a directive to release those

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against whom no charges have been filed formally in court although there were charges against them in the investigating bodies. These included the opposition senator, Senator Diokno, and some others were involved in assassination or coup d'état against the government.

On October 3, 1974 in an interview on the Today show by reporter Jim Hartz of Raul Manglapus, former Philippine Senator and Foreign Secretary, responded:

"Hartz: He (Marcos) said, too, that there were no political prisoners.

"Manglapus: Well, that, of course, certainly is not true. The fact remains that there are about 5,000 political prisoners now in the stockades in the Philippines. And this is not denied by the military authorities whenever they are interviewed by the Associated Press and other press agencies over there.

On November 7, 1974, the President's wife, Mrs. Imelda Romualdez Marcos, announced in Honolulu that "as of November 7, 1974, the Philippine government is extending amnesty to all Filipino citizens living abroad who may have committed political acts punishable under Philippine Laws." They would be allowed to return "without fear of arrest, prosecution or molestation." The offer made no mention of political detainees within the Philippines and was called a "farce" by several prominent exiles.

At least in partial response to the attention drawn to the plight of political prisoners by the "hunger strike" of Lopez, Jr. and Osmena III, on December 11, 1974, President Marcos announced via national Philippine television that he was ordering the release of 662 political prisoners. Several days later he added another 454 to the list of those to be released, for a total of 1,076. They were in three Marcos-designated categories: crimes against public order, common crimes and crimes covered by Presidential Decree No. 95. Each person released was required to swear allegiance to the government.

Lopez and Osmena were not on the list of those released despite the claim of a Filipino consular official in New York that they were.

The Lopez-Osmena Hunger Strike

For exactly two years from the time of their incarceration in November, 1972, Lopez, Jr. and Osmena III remained silent. No charges had been officially presented to them in that time.

The reasons for their continued silence were several. The fathers of both in the United States had been rumored to be fomenters of assassination attempts against President Marcos. In addition, both had members of their families still in the Philippines. They had good reason to believe they were being held as hostages to insure the silence of their fathers in regard to the martial law regime. The senior Lopez and Osmena, in fact, kept silent. Further, in the case of Lopez, his elderly father was under pressure to relinquish family interest in the media and controlling interest in Meralco Securities Corporation (MSC), the holding company for the nation's largest utility, Manila Electric Company.

It was also believed by the two prominent prisoners that eventually they would be released along with most political prisoners if President Marcos could develop a "face saving" means for ending their detention. They were visited by representatives of the President who encouraged this belief.

Finally, Lopez, Jr. decided he could remain silent no longer. He determined to begin a hunger strike "unto death" to protest not only his continued detention

but that of the many other political prisoners under martial law. His son, Eugenio III (an American citizen) telephoned his brother-in-law, businessman Steve Psinakis (also an American citizen) in San Francisco asking Psinakis to come to Manila on a matter of "life and death." On November 14, 1974 Psinakis and Lopez, Jr.'s wife, Conchita, visited the prisoner and were handed copies of his press statement. The guards seized Mrs. Lopez's copy and returned it only after making copies. Psinakis left by air for the United States and that afternoon Mrs. Lopez held an informal press conference announcing her husband's decision to begin his hunger strike on Monday, November 18, 1974.

The heart of the Lopez statement was as follows:

"I am going on this hunger strike to focus attention on the plight and suffering of thousands of detainees like me, who have languished in jail for months and years without even being informed of the charges against them. This is the only way open to me to obtain justice for all of us.

"I am innocent, but under the circumstances, I cannot expect a fair hearing either in the military tribunals or in civil courts. I will fast until I am released. If my plea for justice is not heeded, I am ready to die."

Lopez' mention of the courts is a reference to two salient facts: In relation to military courts, all rulings are subject to review and approval of President Marcos himself; in relation to the civil courts, Marcos has open-ended resignations of all judges in his hands. At the same time Lopez sent a personal letter (via Psinakis) to his parents.

The Lopez hunger strike began the morning of November 18, 1974. Sergio Osmena III (who, it should be noted, was not a close friend of Lopez' prior to imprisonment — their families had consistently been political opponents) decided to join Lopez and began his hunger strike at 5 p.m. of the same day. Osmena managed to smuggle out a more detailed statement of his reasons, which included the continued detention of political prisoners, such aspects of martial law as crimes by the military, the use of referenda to continue martial law, the absence of free speech and free press, and the "absence of independence" in the judiciary. He quoted the Philippine's greatest martyr, Jose Rizal: "There are no tyrants where there are no slaves." His declaration was dated November 15, 1974.

On November 20, the prison officials separated Lopez and Osmena and placed each in isolation. Their wives were not allowed to visit them. There followed a series of attempts to induce the two men to break their fast. On that day Osmena's sister, Minnie Osmena Cabarrus, was brought by the military to Osmena and she asked him to break his fast. He refused. On the 26th a Colonel Flaminiano visited each prisoner separately and urged each to open negotiations with President Marcos. He told Lopez for the first time that charges had been filed against him and told Osmena that his father was negotiating for his release (there is no evidence this was true.) He urged them to break their fast in order to allow the government to work out an "honorable exit" from its embarrassing predicament. Both refused.

On November 27, the Philippine Secretary of National Defense Juan Ponce Enrile visited Mrs. Lopez and Mrs. Osmena and indicated that terms for ending the hunger strike could be worked out so that the two men could be released in

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stages so that they would be completely free in a short time. The Secretary then allowed the two wives to visit their husbands for the first time.

On the same day Mrs. Lopez told the Secretary of Defense that her husband's demands included immediate release of many detainees (specifying many of the most prominent by name), his own release and the right to move freely, including a visit to his parents in the United States. The Secretary indicated that the release of detainees was agreeable, but that the release of Lopez and Osmena would have to be on a step-to-step basis. Mrs. Lopez asked that the second part of the agreement - relating directly to her husband - be put in writing, and this was done (Enrile letter to Lopez, dated November 28, 1974).

Later that day a meeting of Secretary Enrile with the wives of Lopez and Osmena, several military people and two attorneys for Lopez and Osmena, former Senators Lorenzo M. Tanada and Jose W. Diokno (who had been a detainee himself) was held.

The events at this meeting are described in a letter dated January 11, 1975 from the two attorneys to Secretary of Defense Enrile. There are agreements for release of many detainees, the non-pursuance of charges — whether or not any formally existed — against the two, and a series of steps toward full freedom by the end of January, 1975, was agreed upon. The Secretary also asked that the wives issue a press release upon the breaking of the fast if Lopez and Osmena agreed.

That night Lopez and Osmena were visited by their wives and presented with what appeared to be a nearly-complete victory. The only term which had not been fully met was for their own immediate release. They ended their hunger strike and the wives issued the following press release:

Our husbands have asked us to announce that on Thursday, November 28, 1974, at 7:00 p.m. they broke their fast because they believe that they have achieved their objective of focusing the attention of the government and the people on their plight and that of other detainees in a position like theirs.

They believe also that the government is sincere in taking the necessary steps to correct the problems that have been focused upon. They have been assured that the government has taken positive measures and they would like to afford the government an opportunity to continue to take the necessary steps to correct these problems.

It should be noted that the Marcos government was at that point under increasing pressure due to the hunger strike. Its diplomatic representatives were receiving persistent requests for information from American Congressmen. The strike was the subject of reports in the American and European press. On November 22, Catholic Archbishop Jaime Sin of Manila attacked various aspects of martial law, voicing the comment: "We cannot jail a man indefinitely and still call ourselves Christian." (Washington Post, November 23, 1974) Masses dedicated to Lopez and Osmena were held in several churches. In a nation 80 per cent Catholic this was particularly significant.

Lopez and Osmena, both weak but clear-headed, were transferred under guard to the Veterans Memorial Hospital, supposedly to regain their strength before being allowed at least partial parole to their homes. They are still there.

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In only one respect has the Marcos government even come close to keeping its word to Lopez and Osmena. Commencing December 11, the release of more than a thousand detainees began.

The government-controlled press (in a neatly orchestrated piece of counterpoint) published on December 1 not only the press releases of Mesdames Lopez, and Osmena, but a full-blown story of alleged charges against Lopez and Osmena. It claimed the two were deeply involved in an assassination plot against the President. The stories were stepped up the next day. Secretary Enrile assured the two prisoners this was just a face-saving "parting shot" by the government.

On December 4, 1974. President Marcos announced that Lopez and Osmena would be tried by a civil court as perpetrators of a common crime (i.e. attempted assassination), and would be allowed house arrest to prepare their defense.

On December 11, 1974, as part of a lengthy television address, President Marcos stated that Lopez and Osmena broke their hunger strike when presented with evidence against them and announced them guilty of abetting an assassination plot. At the same time he denied amnesty to Osmena's father, Senator Sergio Osmena, Jr. on the basis that he was the "mastermind" of the alleged plot to kill the President in the summer of 1972.

The same day the junior Lopez and Osmena issued a statement from the hospital accepting the challenge to stand trial on the following conditions:

1. Restoration of press freedom to allow uncensored trial coverage;
2. Restoration of the right to bail to allow freedom to prepare defense;
3. Make the tenure of all judges no longer subject to open-date resignations;
4. Restoration of writ of *habeas corpus*.

To date no trial has been set and the two prisoners have been denied the right to see their attorneys, Diokno and Tanada.

The response to inquiries to the Philippine government has drawn two responses: (1) that the two prisoners are clearly guilty, and (2) the two prisoners have been released under some form of house arrest to prepare their defense. Neither is true.

Charges Against Lopez and Osmena

The first time Lopez, Jr. and Osmena III were told there were formal charges against them was on the ninth day of their hunger strike. They were shown a document which states in effect that they were charged with attempted assassination of the President, and were told that the charges had been filed in August, 1973, more than a year previous.

In December, 1972, the Philippine government indicated to the press that assassination had been masterminded by the senior Lopez (then in San Francisco) and that the information had come to the President through a report by the American Federal Bureau of Investigation. This was given to a reporter for the Washington Star-News, and published widely in the United States in December, 1972. On March 28, 1973, attorney Gerald N. Hill of San Francisco wrote to Attorney General Richard M. Kleindienst on behalf of Lopez, Sr. asking

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if such a report actually existed. On April 13, 1973, L. Patrick Gray III, Acting Director of the FBI responded, stating that “the FBI has conducted no investigation concerning your client, Eugenio Lopez, Sr.”

President Marcos stated the charges against Lopez, Jr. and young Osmena in his television address, December 11, 1974, accusing them of financing six unsuccessful assassination attempts.

In addition, the Marcos government has released two lengthy statements reportedly detailing the evidence, published December 1, 1974. The first is claimed to be the written “confession” of Osmena III. In essence, it tends to implicate his father, then Mayor of Cebu, in the plot. It does not mention Eugenio Lopez, Jr. or any Lopez at all.

Osmena has called the statement a fraud. No signed copy is available. Nevertheless, President Marcos referred to a “confession” in his December 11 speech.

The “evidence” against Eugenio Lopez, Jr. was an alleged written statement of an unidentified “suspected participant” released to the press the same day. It depicts a ludicrous series of missed attempts on the President’s life perpetrated by the writer of the statement and a handful of confederates. He names the older Osmena as the mastermind and places Sergio Osmena III and Eugenio Lopez, Jr. together with Mayor Osmena on several occasions. It finally contends that Lopez, Jr. provided some expense money and recommended that they should get an American “hit man.” Lopez flatly denies he ever heard of these men or had any involvement.

This story is sketchy and disconnected. It falls apart on at least one point alone: it shows Lopez, Jr. and the elder Osmena, old political opponents and scarcely friends, working together and talking openly in front of strangers. Also fatal to the validity of the statements is the placement of the elder Osmena at the heart of the “conspiracy” in February, 1972, at a time when he was still disabled from a hand grenade explosion on August 21, 1971 (at a Liberal party rally) which nearly took his life. The government has revealed no corroboration for this narrative.

Right to Counsel Denied

The Philippine government has repeatedly responded to inquiries as to the condition of Lopez, Jr. and Osmena III that they are permitted home visits while preparing their defense.

The fact is that not only have they not been able to visit their homes, but have been denied the right to consult their counsels, Senators Tanada and Diokno, noted Philippine attorneys. Tanada and Diokno complained of this in their letter to Secretary of National Defense Enrile.

Further, the only information as to the charges allegedly filed in August, 1973, is a charge sheet shown to the two on the ninth day of their hunger strike. No evidence has been given them and no steps have been taken to move the matter toward trial.

Misinformation Given to American Congress and State Department

Several Senators and members of the House took a particular interest in the case as a result of the efforts of Steve and Presy Lopez Psinakis. In addition, Mayor Joseph L. Alioto, a friend of Eugenio Lopez, Sr., lodged an

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injury. A sampling of letters is attached as Exhibits Z through FF of those sent by Senators Alan Cranston, John V. Tunney, James Abourezk, Hubert H. Humphrey, Birch Bayh, Henry M. Jackson, J. Glenn Beall, Harrison A. Williams, Jr., Edward Gurney, Hugh Scott, Edward M. Kennedy, Mark Hatfield and Herman E. Talmadge, Representatives Phillip Burton and Don Edwards, and Mayor Alioto.

Philippine Secretary of Foreign Affairs replied to an inquiry by - Congressman Burton, in which he contends there is "incontestable" evidence and "admissions of guilt". The first is an opinion but the "admissions of guilt" is an outright untruth.

In his reply to Senator Gurney Philippine Ambassador Eduardo Z. Romualdez, a relative of Mrs. Marcos, states that President Marcos was inclined to grant the prisoners relief on the basis that a "Legal Study Group has recommended that the said persons are qualified for amnesty." The letter was dated December 6 and on December 11 Marcos announced that he would not. The Ambassador goes on to state that no commitment was made by government authorities in return for breaking their hunger strike. This is stated in the teeth of Defense Secretary Enrile's letter to Lopez on November 28.

The letter of Congressman Edwards to President Marcos dated December 10, 1974, drew no reply.

On the other hand, Senator Birch Bayh, in response to his persistent inquiry to the Philippine Embassy in Washington, received a personal visit from Ambassador Romualdez on December 3, 1974. Senator Bayh (see page S20548 of the proceedings of December 4, 1974) reported that the Ambassador indicated that President Marcos "over the coming weekend" would take steps to ameliorate the situation in regard to Lopez, Osmena and other political prisoners, without being "in the position of the United States telling them what to do." It is not without significance that this visit came during a debate on the bill to extend military assistance to foreign nations and specifically extend military assistance to foreign nations and specifically on the amendment to deny aid to nations with repressive regimes.

Senator Cranston followed Senator Bayh's remarks thusly: "I fully share the Senator's concern. If reforms do not occur in the Philippines, I will join with the Senator in an effort to end military aid to that government. Our aid should not be used to repress the Filipino people."

Queries directed to the State Department were usually answered by Linwood Holton, Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations, David C. Cuthell, Director, Office of Philippine Affairs, or Elmer C. Hulen, Deputy Director of that office. It must be assumed that direct statements of fact as to Philippine policy come to Mr. Holton, Mr. Cuthell or Mr. Hulen from Philippine officials.

In his reply to Congressman Burton Holton states: "We understand the Philippine government intends to bring their cases to a speedy resolution." That was as of November 23, 1974.

On December 3, 1974, Cuthell answered Mayor Alioto in an identical letter, the text of which was repeated in several responses.

On December 18, 1974, Holton replied to Senator Jackson adding the report that Lopez and Osmena "were apparently suspected by the Philippine government of involvement in a plot to assassinate President Marcos."

On December. 17, 1974, Holton replied to Senator Williams with the added

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report that Lopez and Osmena would have “privileges to visit their homes while they are preparing for their defense.” This allegation was contained in several State Department responses to members of Congress. As indicated elsewhere there are no home visit privileges and no opportunity to meet with attorneys to prepare a defense.

Holton, however, on December 19, 1974, wrote another letter to Senator Williams which details American concern for violations of human rights and noted that the Philippines has been “specifically apprised of the text and import of Section 32 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1973.”

Holton again wrote to Senator Williams on January 9, 1975 in effect admitting that he had been misled as to the right to prepare a defense and the anticipated speedy conclusion. He stated: “No date has yet been set for the trial and we understand that their lawyers have not recently been permitted to see them.” The word “recently” is misleading — their lawyers have never been allowed to meet with Lopez and Osmena.

On January 10, 1975, Congressman Edwards wrote to Ambassador Romualdez in the same tenor as his earlier letter to President Marcos. No answer has been forthcoming.

On January 9, 1975, Senator Abourezk received a response from the Philippine Embassy, which said Lopez would be tried in a civilian court and had been released to a hospital with a privilege to visit his home. The term “to visit” was misleading. By telephone, Defense Secretary Enrile offered the prisoners a 24-hour pass on December 17, 1974. This offer was passed up by the still-recuperating prisoners since they had been promised house arrest by December 22 as the second stage of their eventual freedom in January.

The Philippine government has not only misled the American Congress and State Department, but has disseminated false statements on this matter to the general public.

The false statement of the Philippine information office as to home visits has already been documented.

On December 24, 1974, a letter dated December 16, 1974 appeared in the New York Times signed by one A.D. del Rosario, Press and Information Officer, Consulate General of the Philippines. The language in regard to delay of trial is virtually identical to that of Secretary Romulo's telegram to Congressman Burton on November 25. Del Rosario added a new element, by claiming for the first time that there were “confessions” (plural) of the accused. Previously, the Philippine government had only claimed a confession by Osmena III. In addition, Del Rosario goes on to say:

“Despite the gravity of the charges against Lopez and Osmena III, President Marcos ordered their release under house arrest so that they could be with their respective families during the Christmas season. The two, who ended on the 11th day their hunger strike “to death,” were among the 1,076 detainees released by the Government last week under the President's policy of national reconciliation, solidarity and brotherhood announced last December 11, 1974.” There is not a single word of truth in that statement.

The Latest Marcos Terms

Marcos on January 24, 1975, sent word to former Vice President Fernando

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Lopez that he would like to see him the next morning, the 25th at 9:00 a.m. Fernando, accompanied by Oscar Lopez, younger brother of Eugenio Lopez, Jr. met with the President the next morning. It was a pleasant meeting in which Marcos offered to release Eugenio Lopez, Jr. with only one guard in front of his house. Furthermore, Chit Lopez would be allowed to visit her father-in-law in the United States. In return, the President wanted a letter signed by Lopez, Jr. and Fernando requesting the release of Eugenio Lopez, Jr.

A second meeting to iron out the details was scheduled for 9:00 a.m. the next day. Fernando Lopez, along with Oscar and Manuel Lopez (brothers of Eugenio Lopez, Jr.) came to the Presidential Palace the next day and were kept waiting for almost two hours. When the President appeared he presented Fernando Lopez with a prepared letter he wanted Fernando and Eugenio, Jr. to sign.

Fernando Lopez was tempted to sign the letter, but on close examination it did not include any terms or agreement as to release of Eugenio Lopez, Jr. Secondly, it implied an admission of some degree of guilt. Furthermore, it accepted the confiscation of Lopez properties. When shown the text, Eugenio Lopez, Jr. rejected it for these reasons. In addition, he objected to the unqualified endorsement of Marcos' "New Society" (martial law). The Lopezes did not object to the language of personal thanks to the President.

The depths of depravity into which the Marcos military regime has submerged itself can be fathomed by delving into the varied and varying political, economic, social and family circumstances of the persons ordered detained by Marcos. For they are persons in whom or on whose particular circumstance President Marcos and his daringly ambitious wife, Imelda, have specific selfish interests, either personally or in indirect representation of the lesser lights in the ruling clique.

Not every man or woman languishing, or now marked or may still be marked for incarceration, in any of the jails or concentration camps of the martial regime is a prisoner of conscience. There are any number of reasons and considerations for the detention, mostly without warrant and without charges, of thousands of Filipinos in the jails of Marcos. They are either political, economic, social or plain personal enemies of the members of the ruling clique. But there is one common denominator that, in view of Marcos, binds all the political prisoners he has jailed and/or continue to hold in jails; it is, that, together and acting in concert, they pose a threat to his establishment of an imperial dynasty in the Philippines. Thus, never again should they be able to resume their premartial rule roles of opponents of Marcos by reason of their political, economic, social, or family connections. That is why the crackdown by Marcos upon the imposition of martial law that was sweeping and brutal, if slowly done under the false facade of a smiling martial law.

Thus, it was in the case of the Lopezes. The original decision of the ruling duumvirate of Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos was simply to destroy the Lopezes as "king makers" and to obliterate from the public mind the unhappy memory that the ingrates Ferdinand and Imelda turned against their No. 1 political benefactor, Don Eugenio Lopez, Sr., after gaining wings on their own. Greed followed the desire to destroy, and at that stage, Marcos let loose his front men to acquire the Lopez assets; Kokoy Romualdez, of the Meralco and

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Chronicle printing plant, and Benedicto, of the vast radio-TV complex, known as the Broadcast Center, the radio-telecasting compound for the national stations of the Alto Broadcasting System, Chronicle Broadcasting Network and allied radio-TV stations.

Of course, the No. 1 political prisoner, Aquino, is in jail for no other reason than that he turned out, after the 1965 elections, to be the No. 1 effective and unyielding critic of Ferdinand and Imelda, but also because, as early as 1970, he was already being looked up to as the next President of the Philippines after December 30, 1975. The Filipino people very little realized then that Marcos had already set the stage for martial law by the seventh year of his reign — because, among others, he could not afford to suffer the consequences of being an ex-President in a free society like the Philippines.

There are people who will argue that Marcos could not be that vindictive; as a matter of fact, they would argue, and with some reason, that Marcos is a very forgiving man, so that the claim that he ordered the incarceration of politicians who had opposed him or criticized him at one time or another could not be the sole reason for the round-up. Of course, Marcos is not a forgiving man; he has an elephantine memory for what he called injustices committed against him by his foes and friends alike. But Marcos knows how to bend with the wind; when a typhoon blows, he would know how to give allowance for flexibility. Marcos is even willing to swallow crap, if it would suit his personal and political objectives - as he had so often done in the past and would possibly do so again the days to come. Witness my own case. On the occasion of my defection, I called him names and - insulted his family honor and exposed his ambitions and plans to establish an imperial dynasty in my country. He even tried to make a spy out of me. But that is not the so-called virtue of the man. It is political pragmatism; his own idea of personal and political accommodation to suit the necessities of the moment. It was Marcos' way of trickery and deceit in order that he can disarm, neutralize or throw off guard his opponents. The glaring example of this was when he smoked the peace pipe with Vice President Fernando Lopez and his late brother, Don Eugenio Lopez, shortly before the imposition of martial law in the Philippines. He assumed the posture of a man moving for national reconciliation. Marcos swallowed his pride and went to the Lopez citadel of power, there to eat humble pie. But now, everyone realizes that it was just a ruse, one of those steps taken by Marcos on the eve of the imposition of martial law in order to lull his political opponents into a false sense of security; to create publicly the impression that here was a "lameduck" President publicly admitting his position of weakness as arrayed against the vast power and might of "kingmaker" Ining Lopez. The fact that Imelda allowed Marcos to enter into a "reconciliation" with the Lopezes without even the sign of a whimper of protest should have sounded ominous to the Lopezes and the other political opponents of Marcos.*3

(*3. See Chapter on "The Other Villains" on the subject of "balato" which Marcos made out as a peace offering to Imelda.)

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It is just possible that they have not taken the warnings of another astute Ilocano lawmaker, Congressman Carmelo Z. Barbero.*4

(*4. As early as January, 1966. Congressman Barbero started warning his Liberal Party colleagues, including Sen. Aquino, that the bible of Marcos was neither the Douay version (Catholic) nor the King James version (Protestant), but "the book of Satan," so that it was important for the opposition party to study Marcos' own satanic record and infinite capacity for diabolical cunning to be able to defeat him in the 1969 elections.)

Marcos made a gesture towards defeated presidential candidate Osmena on the eve of martial law in much the same manner that he made peace with the Lopezes, creating the public impression at the time that he had forgiven Serging for the merciless attacks the Liberal candidate had hurled against Marcos during the heated 1969 election campaign. As in the case of the Lopezes, Marcos also cracked down on Serging. Unable to get the man himself, Marcos held as hostage the eldest son of Serging, Serio "Serge" Osmena III, for the sins Osmena had committed against Marcos.

This is the reason I have rejected, and will continue to reject, peace feelers from Marcos, which have been numerous and continue to be made even as I wind up the writing of the manuscript of this book. The man will exact his vengeance in his own sweet time on the unsuspecting enemy whom he had lulled into a false sense of security.

The key figure in all the concocted assassination charges against Geny Lopez and Serge Osmena is Eduardo Figueras. former Nacionalista mayoralty candidate in Manila and son of the late Secretary of Labor, Jose Figueras. Figueras, accused of having plotted with Serging Osmena, Eugenio Lopez, Jr. and Serge Osmena III. among others, the assassination of Marcos, bringing allegedly to Manila for this purpose a certain Larry Traetman, is one prisoner who is not even a common criminal nor a political detainee. I personally know that he has been tortured by the interrogators of Gen. Ver-Crisologo, the Commander of the Presidential Security Command. The torture had been sanctioned not only by Gen. Ver-Crisologo himself, but by both President and Mrs. Marcos on the personal plea of Mrs. Alita Rornualdez-Martel, sister of Mrs. Marcos. Even the incarceration of Eddie Figueras was instigated by the Martels, Rodolfo Martel, husband of Alita. and Antonio Martel, elder brother of Rodolfo. The facts are simple: Figueras and the Martels entered into several business transactions, among them the ownership and operation of ocean-going cargo ship, *S.S. DON JOSE FIGUERAS*, which Eddie Figueras had acquired from Japan under the Reparations Agreement. It was a financing arrangement which required the influence of people close to the Marcoses, and he brought the Martels into the deal. Sometime in 1969, the cargo vessel burned and sank about 500 miles from San Francisco. Somehow, Figueras was able to collect the insurance policy on the ship, and had the entire amount deposited in his name in a bank abroad, which proved to be his undoing - when martial law was proclaimed. But the Martels went after him, but he wouldn't cough up. The ruthless arms of the martial regime did the rest, and now Figueras tortured still into singing the tune that Marcos wants him to sing.

Not only Marcos and his wife, Imelda are perverting the powers of martial rule. Members of the armed forces, from the top to the lowest echelon, are

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using the guns of martial law either to extort money, exact vengeance on enemies, even up old scores and even serve their immoral desires.

I have seen complaints in the Study Room of the President lodged by priests and civic leaders protesting the behavior of the military in the provinces, but what struck me as the most depraved were the claimed abuses being committed on wives and daughters of political detainees. Going to bed with officers and soldiers is a price demanded of the wives and daughters for the privilege of visiting their husbands and/or fathers, respectively, or hastening their 'processing' preparatory to eventual release. The complaints mentioned the fact that persons were being arrested and detained because they either have attractive wives or daughters who have caught the fancy of the local Constabulary or army commanders, or that release of detainees are intentionally being delayed to allow the brutal and savage military men to soften up the object of their lusts. Sometime last year, an important political prisoner in the concentration camp operated near the Malacanang golf course suddenly enjoyed visiting privileges from his socialite sister. It turned out that the privilege was accorded him through the courtesy of Alfredo "Bejo" Romualdez, youngest brother of Mrs. Marcos and who holds the rank of commander in the Philippine Navy. Bejo was suspected of having gained a beachhead on the sister of the political prisoner and had made subsequent landings. It turned out that Navy commander Bejo merely secured the beachhead for his commander-in-chief; and saw to it that the conquered territory was ravished to the full satisfaction of the boss. Anyway, Bejo was amply rewarded later on with an award of the BASECO*5 to his private outfit. Thus, when the socialite kept herself absent for sometime from the reach of the Navy commander-brother of Mrs. Marcos, Bejo was forced to demand why the woman had not come back home. The woman answered: "Hoy, Bejo. I am no longer within the reach of your martial powers."

(*5. See Chapter on "The Reign of Greed.")

Perhaps it would require an entire book to chronicle the various evil ways by which the "arrest and detain" powers now suddenly available to Marcos and his gang has been perverted. However, this work will be terribly unfair to historians if I did not dwell briefly on the case of Joaquin "Chino" P. Roces, publisher of the Manila Times, Sen. Diokno (again), and Congressmen Roque S. Ablan, (Ilocos Norte) and Jose M. Alberto (N-Catanduanes). The circumstances of their arrest and detention vary, and we shall deal with them briefly.

The falling out between 'Chino' and Marcos came when in late 1969 the Manila Times publisher filed in a request that President Marcos give a "special guest" treatment to a personal friend, author Lin Yu Tang, who had planned on visiting Manila. Not finding it timely and advisable to entertain one who has been royally treated some time before by China's Chairman Mao Tse-Tung, Marcos brusquely rejected the Roces request and thus caused the publisher no little embarrassment with the Chinese author. Since that time, the *Manila Times* assumed a very critical stance against Marcos, encouraging news stories on expose of graft and corruption in high government offices, tracing them directly to the Study Room and the Music Room, where the President and the First Lady, respectively, receive their official callers and conduct official business, in Malacanang, and giving prominent play ups to stones that were

clearly not palatable to the presidential finer sensibilities. As stated in our earlier chapters, Marcos is not the kind of a man who would meet an enemy head-on. So he took the "poisoned darts and arrows" thrown his way patiently, if painfully; for he could bear pain, physical or otherwise, stoically, if he must. In May, 1972, when "Chino" was entertaining some friends on the occasion of his birthday anniversary, the President and the First Lady just barged into the Roces residence and behaved as if they have received the printed invitation sent out by Chino to friends earlier. Chino insists up to this day that he never sent the Marcoses an invitation to the birthday party. And behaving like the Spanish mestizo that he was, Chino completely ignored the Marcoses who contented themselves with laughing artificially at the corny jokes of columnist Jose L. Guevara. This double snub the Marcoses could not forget; Mrs. Marcos was fuming at the brazen insult dished out to them by the Roces clan. "*Lintik lang ang walang ganti,*" Marcos fumed. (There is a time to settle old scores). Such time came when martial law was proclaimed; the *Manila Times* publishing company, which published the *Manila Times*, a morning daily; the *Daily Mirror*, an afternoon daily, and the "*Taliba*," a Tagalog morning daily, were among the first to be sealed by Metrocom (Metropolitan Command, PC) troopers in the early dawn of September 23, 1972.

Senator Diokno was arrested by a team of Metrocom troopers also in the early dawn of September 23, 1972, at his residence along Roxas Boulevard in Paranaque, Rizal. His crime: Aside from conducting selective criticisms of the Marcos acts and policies, he had earlier compiled in collaboration with then Manila Mayor Arsenio H. Lacson documents which would prove that Marcos was the real murderer of Nalundasan. Diokno compiled the dossier while he was Secretary of Justice under President Macapagal (1962-1965) in preparation for Lacson's running as the Nacionalista presidential candidate against Marcos in the 1965 elections. Metrocom troopers who searched every nook and cranny of the Diokno residence were under specific instructions to look for this particular file of documents. When informed that the soldiers could not find the papers, Marcos ordered a search into the law offices of Diokno on Ermita and to burn down the law office, if the search should turn fruitless. The law offices of Diokno, which had some of the best law books in the Philippines, was razed by a fire of "undetermined origin" three days after the arrest and detention of the Batangas Senator whose father, Senator and later Justice Ramon Diokno had criticized his fellow Batangueno, Justice Jose P. Laurel, Sr., for acquitting Marcos on the Nalundasan murder charge.

The incarceration of Congressmen Ablan and Alberto was the joint handiwork of Mrs. Marcos and her favorite brother, Gov. Kokoy Romualdez. A few days after the proclamation of martial law, when President Marcos and his advisers were scanning the horizon to set up for public consumption examples of how the so-called "New Society" was dealing with friends and foes alike, Mrs. Marcos and Kokoy came up with the idea that some "men closely identified with the President should be placed in the military stockade." "These would prove our sincerity on the *pantay-pantay* (equal treatment for all) plank," chorused Imelda and Kokoy. Who did they have in mind? The president asked, as if to carry on the joke, with his two very private advisers. The name of Ablan, Jr. and Alberto came up. "We jail Ablan for those mischiefs he has committed in your name, and Alberto for being a terrorist in Catanduanes and for having cheated

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for us in the 1969 elections," intoned Mrs. Marcos. Of course, what was not articulated was that both Mrs. Marcos and Gov. Romualdez wanted to get even with Ablan's efforts to serve the personal and romantic needs of his benefactor. Young Ablan is even suspected of having been with a gang which manhandled Kokoy and left him for dead in Ilocos Norte in 1959.

For Alberto, however, there was a different score to settle. As chairman of the powerful House committee on appropriations, it was within his power to approve or veto requests for special appropriations in the general appropriations bill. He had steadfastly refused to approve funding with bloated outlays the special image-building projects of the First Lady, Mrs. Marcos considered his an affront. She bided her time, and the time came on September 24, 1972.

Accounts of mass arrests and torture, and abuse of families of political detainees have appeared in the world press. I have read most of them and find them to be substantially correct. The conditions in these concentration camps are generally filthy, although the detention camps known as "A", "B", "C", and "S" in the Greater Manila area are in Camp Aguinaldo, Camp Bonifacio in McKirfley, Camp Crame and the Sampaguita Rehabilitation Center in Muntinlupa, Rizal. I have examined and read two articles on political prisoners, and I find them accurate accounts of conditions in the Philippines. The first, entitled "Inside the Marcos Concentration Camps", written by Dr. John M. Swornley, Jr., professor of social ethics at the St. Paul School of Theology (United Methodist), Kansas City, Missouri, appeared in the *Christian Century*, issue of November 13, 1974; and the second, entitled "Marcos House: Chambers of Torture", was written under the pen name of Concepcion Aguila by one still residing in the Philippines and was first printed in the *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, issue of November-December, 1974.

The Association of Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines compiled the following list of prisoners subjected to torture and other forms of military atrocities while in detention:

1. Mr. Reynaldo Guillermo (address: Camp Holmes)-electric shock all over body; -beating; -tried to escape but was shot at (not hit).
2. Isabel del Pilar (wife of Reynaldo Guillermo); detained. Four months pregnant, and sick with amebiasis.
3. Alejandro Arellano (address: Taguig, Rizal)-electric shock and beating all over body.
4. Flora Corpus (wife of Alejandro Arrelano); detained. Two months pregnant
5. Charley Palma (address: Tatalon, Quezon City) -electric shock and beating; burned with lighted cigarettes.
6. Rosario Salvador (wife of Charley Palma); aged 20; detained
7. Victor Quinto (Baguio City) -electric shock torture and beating; burned with cigarette butts; truth serum administered.
8. Elita Ponce (wife of Victor Quinto); detained. Two months pregnant.
9. Pedrade Guzman, Jr., aged 25; - electric shock and beat-ing.
10. Virginia Atening (Catineng?), aged 22 (wife of Pedro de Guzman, Jr.);detained
11. Reynaldo Rodriguez, aged 23;- electric shock; beating; strangling (sinakal); burned with cigarette butts.
12. Ma. Cristina Verzola, age 20 (wife of Reynaldo Rodriguez);-beating; burned with cigarette butts; some sexual abuses.

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13. Julius Giron; - electric shock; burned with cigarette butts; was made to eat a big chunk of lead and bled from nose because of this; - also suffered ruptured ear drum and broken ribs.

14. Armando Teng; - electric torture and beating.

15. Arnulfo Resus

16. Ramon Casiplo

17. Santiago Alonzo; - electric shock and other physical torture.

18. Romeo Bayle; - electric shock and beating.

19. Francisco Vergara; - physical torture.

20. Agaton Topacio; - electric shock torture and beating.

21. Ramon Bayle

22. Reynaldo Ila - A worker arrested last December 11, was detained at Camp Crame and later transferred to Camp Olivas. He was badly beaten up which left him with bloodied eyes, cut eyebrows, possibly a busted eardrum and a broken rib. He is presently detained at the Z-2 headquarters, Camp Olivas, Pampanga.

23. Cenon Sembrano - An old man probably in his fifties. His foot was singed with a flat iron and now, is very much swollen and badly infected.

24. Butch Freneza - A detainee at Camp Olivas who was caught trying to escape. As a punishment, his head was banged against the wall. At present, he is confined at the National Mental Hospital.

25. Latest - Sixteen (16) detainees from Camp Olivas stated that from December 11 to 16, they were tortured and harassed in order that information may be extracted from them.

Men - They were either singed with the flat iron, given the electric shock treatment in the different parts of the body, others have broken ribs and hematomas because of being beaten up.

Women — The women were molested — were forced to strip, others even were touched in their genitals, and the others were mutilated (sinira ang sexual organs). One girl from Baguio, Ma. Cristina Rodriguez, was forced to strip by the interrogators and her genitals touched.

Although no specific names had been mentioned, there had been cases of the use of electric shock on the genital organs.

Other torture cases from other camps:

1. Fidel Agcaoili - He was arrested in Pangasinan last April. Experienced sitting on blocks of ice for hours, was given the water cure and was also given morphine injections to extract information from him. He is presently detained at 5th CSU, Crame with his wife.

2. Mila Garcia - Together with the other female detainees presently detained at 5th CSU, Crame. Experienced being forced to strip and beaten up during interrogation. They are taken in the middle of the night, brought to a dark room where they are forced to strip and beaten up, was found dead at 5th CSU with muriatic acid forced down her throat. She was apprehended in Pampanga late this year and was brutally tortured. Her case had been brought to the authorities but up to now, there has been no response nor any investigation for that matter.

Other constant methods of torture are:

- pointing the gun (nakakasa) while asking for information;
- "playing" (paghampas ng baril) with the gun (a .45 calibre) pointed to the head, chest, back, shoulders;
- Applying lighted cigarette butts on the skin;

- placing bullets in between the fingers and squeezing fingers together until the muscles and nerves are almost cut; etc.
- electric torture a being applied on fingers and toes, temple, abdomen, chest, and sexual organs (especially among the male)

Most of these detainees are between 20 and 30 years old. The youngest is 19, and the oldest is over 40 years of age. The question the detainees ask is; "To use such brutality. . . is that reforming them?"

Of late, Marcos had released prominent political prisoners and allowed a few dissenters who cannot organize armed opposition to even give statements to the foreign press for foreign consumption. Marcos has even gone to the extent of "tolerating" criticisms of his regime to be aired by some "cleared" Filipino leaders in the foreign press, but never in the domestic press.

In earlier days of the martial regime, prominent political opponents released from the military stockade were made to sign documents stating among others that they would not allow themselves to be interviewed by the foreign press.

Senator Diokno was among those who was released from the stockade subject to that condition.

Chapter XII

The Era of Thought Control

The night the dark shadows of totalitarianism swallowed the Philippines on September 22, 1972, the intellectual lights went out, along with the other "inalienable" rights of the Filipino people. President Marcos' military might choked hard at the throats of writers, editors and publishers, and the media facilities. The Philippines went into a deathly journalistic silence.

Throughout the country, but most especially in the Greater Manila area. Constabulary troopers sealed newspaper, radio and television facilities, and told staff members on the graveyard shift to "go home, martial law has been declared."

In simultaneous actions, teams of PC troops arrested leading journalists in Manila and other areas of the country. Those arrested in the Greater Manila area were confined either at Camp Crame or Fort Bonifacio. Provincial constabulary barracks served as jails for provincial journalists.

International cable and telephone facilities were closed, thereby effectively shutting down the operations of foreign news agencies, too.

Some raiding or arresting teams seemed kind of apologetic for the action they were doing. The general tenor of the authority they invoked in closing down the media facilities and in arresting journalists was that they were acting "on orders of the commander-in-chief." They would not show their written orders. However, they declared that they were acting in accordance with the O.B. (Order of Battle) issued to them.

It turned out that the Order of Battle against the media tribe was contained in two separate documents made public only at 7:20 p.m. on September 23,

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1972. These were General Order No. 2-A addressed to Secretary Enrile, and Letter of Instructions No. 1 issued by Marcos.

G.O. No. 2-A read in part:

"Pursuant to Proclamation No. 1081, dated September 21, 1982, and in my capacity as Commander-in-Chief of all the Armed Forces of the Philippines, I hereby order you as Secretary of National Defense to forthwith arrest or cause the arrest and take into your custody the individuals named in the attached lists for being participants or for having given aid and comfort in the conspiracy to seize political and state power in the country and to take over the government by force, the extent of which has now assumed the proportion of an actual state of war against our people and our legitimate government and in order to prevent them from further committing acts that are inimical or injurious to our people, the government and our national interest, and to hold said individuals until otherwise so ordered by me or by my duly designated representative. (Italics ours.)

"Likewise, I do hereby order you to arrest or cause the arrest and take into custody and to hold them until otherwise ordered released by me or by my duly designated representative:

"1. Such persons as may have committed crimes and offense in furtherance or on the occasion of or incident to or in connection with the crimes of insurrection or rebellion as defined in Articles 134 to 138 of the Revised Penal Code, and other crimes against public order as defined in Articles 146, 147, 148, 149, 151, 153, 154, 155, and 156 on the same Code xxx"

Letter of Instructions No. 1 was, on the other hand, addressed to both Secretary Enrile and Secretary of Public Information Tatad. It states:

"In view of the present national emergency which has been brought about by the activities of those who are actively engaged in a criminal conspiracy to seize political and state power in the Philippines and to take over the Government by force and violence the extent of which has now assumed the proportion of an actual war against our people and their legitimate Government, and pursuant to Proclamation No. 1081 dated September 21, 1972, and in my capacity as commander-in-chief of all the Armed Forces of the Philippines and in order to prevent the use of privately-owned newspapers, magazines, radio and television facilities and all other media of communications, for propaganda purposes against the government and its duly constituted authorities or for any purpose that tends to undermine the faith and confidence of the people in our Government and aggravate the present national emergency, you are hereby ordered forthwith to take over and control or cause the taking over and control of all such newspapers, magazines, radio and television facilities and all other media of communications, wherever they are, for the duration of the present national emergency, or until otherwise ordered by me or by my duly designated representative x x x".

The era of thought control was on in the Philippines. To dissent became a criminal offense. The freest press in Asia as we now fondly remember the pre-martial law days of newspapering in the Philippines is but a memory.

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A delegation from the Press Foundation of Asia established that:

"The Philippine Government's action against the mass media have no parallel in the whole of Asia. A complete shutdown of media has not been attempted in Park Chung Hee's Korea, Ayub Khan's Pakistan, Thanarat's Thailand, Sukarno's Indonesia, or Lee Kuan Yew's Singapore.

"The Philippines remains denied of all civil liberties, its freedom of all education, and the leaders of its mass media are in prison without trial.

"The Philippine mass media, once considered the freest in Asia, have been suppressed to the point of death; the most well known and established among them have no chance of reappearance and this country of 39 million people is being fed on only propaganda bulletins, which are financed and operated by President Marcos' own friends and subordinates." *1

(*1. T.G.S. George, "The Party's Over," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, November 18, 1972.)

The worst crackdown by any one-man rule in modern history became a badge of dishonor of the martial regime of President Marcos. Marcos did not take any chances. He ordered the closure of all newspapers, radio and television facilities and detained those newsmen who were unsympathetic to the Marcos administration.

The crackdown was conducted as if the mass media were belligerents in a full-pledged war which the savior of the Republic, Marcos, won with his brilliant generalship of the military establishment.

When the smoke of battle with the press cleared, the military regime accounted for "heavy losses" inflicted by the "heroic armed forces" on the "enemy" mass media, to wit:

1) Killed — over a dozen security guards at the "Iglesia ni Kristo" radio station.

2) Closure, in the Greater Manila area, of seven major English dailies, three Pilipino dailies, one English-Pilipino daily, eleven English weekly magazines, one Spanish daily, four Chinese dailies, three business publications, one news service, and seven television stations, and in the provinces, and 66 community newspapers.

3) Closure of 292 radio stations all over the country.

Except in one instance, there was no resistance at all to the efforts of the Constabulary troopers to padlock any media facility. The deployment of troops, therefore, to carry out the task of sealing the newspaper, radio and television facilities was really unnecessary. As a matter of fact, the entire exercise of martial law was absolutely unnecessary, if the objective were only to fight off the pockets of rebellion going on in the countryside.

Marcos sought to justify the harsh treatment of the Philippine media in a speech to military commanders convened in Malacanang for a briefing on the "achievements" of the New Society under the one-week old martial law. He said:

"The enemy uses the weapons of modern revolution, the media — newspapers, television, and radio — to promote anything that assaults and destroys the foundation of society. Therefore, the commander-in-chief must

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meet this threat not only with modern artillery, tanks, bullets, and rifles, but with the most sophisticated weapons of preventive operations, of even media.

"This is the rationale for the arrest of some in media who participated in subversion by allowing consciously or unconsciously the printing, publication, dissemination, and spreading of stories to undermine the system in which we live; strengthened the morale, or gave aid and comfort to the enemy." *2

(*2. Speech of President Marcos before military officers on September 27, 1972, at the Malacanang Reception Hall.)

He added that the journalists were picked up "not because they were critical of me" or because of "mere mischievousness or vengeance or vindictiveness" but because they "participated in a Communist conspiracy." He pronounced that "we got the goods on them." To date, however, no single journalist arrested during martial law has ever been charged before any tribunal, civil or military.

The broad charges were treated with skepticism anyway. As a matter of act, it is now of universal knowledge that martial law was resorted to by Marcos only for the purpose of perpetuating himself in power.

The one newspaper which never closed its doors was the *Daily Express*. Its sister facility, television channel 9, and allied radio stations of the Kanlaon Broadcasting System, also reopened the very day the media men were being rounded up by Marcos agents for incarceration. This fact automatically linked the tri-media facilities to the dictatorship. It was just as well. For although Ambassador Roberto S. Benedicto appears as the ostensible owner of the media complex, the truth is that it is owned by no less than President Marcos himself.

Before the end of the year 1972, a new newspaper, the *Times Journal*, was organized and published by a group headed by Gov. Benjamin "Kokoy" Romualdez. The former *Manila Daily Bulletin* was allowed to re-open under the new name of *Bulletin Today*.

Although these re-opened facilities tried to be news-giving establishments, they performed quite more often as a Marcos megaphone.

A freelance writer, Nicholas Tomalin, who visited Manila during the first few weeks of martial law wrote an article of the *Oui* magazine, entitled "The Brave New Philippines of Ferdinand Marcos". Of press conditions, he wrote:

"The only newspaper is a dismal pro-government Sheet called the *Daily Express*, which chronicles the movements noble saying of the head of state in the cringing valet's tone that marks the controlled press of totalitarian dictatorships throughout the world."

Investigators for the International Press Institute established that the surviving media were "virtually unreadable." "Press, radio and television are so pathetically emasculated that they make totalitarian Government organs like *Pravda*, *Izvestia* and *Radio Peking*, Franco's Party organs, or the mouthpieces of other dictatorships across the continents look comparatively red-bloodied.*3

(*3. Rohan, Rivet, "Anaemic Manila Press Makes Izvestia Look Red-Blooded," IPI Report, April, 1973.)

Under the conditions of the tightly-controlled media, the contents of Philippine newspapers may be likened to stones in a desert. It is really an intellectual desert that has developed in the Philippines. Right now, the most important criterion for a news story or magazine article is: Will it please or anger President Marcos, the First Lady, Defense Secretary Juan Ponce Enrile, Information Secretary Francisco S. Tatad or the officers of the military establishment? If the answer is in the affirmative, then the story becomes a "must," otherwise, the story will never see the light of print. The usual No. 1 criterion that a story must be informative or instructive has taken a second billing under the martial law norms of journalism in the Philippines.

As to the conditions of ownership, control and management of news media, including broadcast media, in the Philippines, I had occasion to write a brief article on the subject matter for the Philippine News in its issue of March 13-19, 1975, to wit:

ABUSE OF POWER AND CORRUPTION

With a stroke of the pen, President Marcos wrote a gory finis to the heyday of the "freest press" in Southeast Asia.

By the stroke of the very pen that imposed martial law in the Philippines on September 21, 1972, the one-man ruler paved the way for the dubious meteoric rise - from a slavish and lapping errand boy of Manila's elite political writers to a "nouveau riche" newspaper oligarch — of his brother-in-law, former Ambassador to the United States and now absentee Leyte Governor Benjamin 'Kokoy' Romualdez .

The entry into the Philippine media field of Kokoy, the favorite brother of the First Lady, Mrs. Imelda R. Marcos, was at once an indelible blot on the once shining shield of a martial regime that Marcos imposed ostensibly as an instrument, among others, of reform in a "sick" society.

Either by design or plain subsequent acquiescence on the part of President Marcos, Kokoy Romualdez forced his way into the country's media industry clearly with a corrupt and vindictive motive.

The sly insertion of Gov. Romualdez into the area of big time publishing, with his overnight ownership of a daily newspaper, the Times-Journal (which unashamedly copied the logo of the defunct Manila Times), spotlights the perversion of the instruments of power at once made available to one man upon the imposition of martial law in the Philippines.

It will be recalled that the blueprint for a proposed New Society that is at best an illusion now in the Philippines called for the mighty interplay of three major arms of an authoritarian government.

THREE MAJOR ARMS

These instruments of power are: 1) the military arm, to provide the coercive process to establish peace and order and reform society; 2) the economic and social arm, to improve the economic and social conditions of the people; and 3), the information and propaganda arm, to provide the needed circus (when economic hardships set in) and other functions to re-orient the Filipino mind.

All these have been perverted by Marcos and his gang. Known for their notoriety in behaving like they were leaders of a conquering army going after the "spoils of war", the more notorious members of the gang are, aside from

Gov. Romualdez, secretary of Defense Juan Ponce Enrile, Secretary of Information Francisco S. Tatad, Secretary of Agriculture Arturo R. Tanco, Jr., Secretary of Justice Vicente Abad Santos, Ambassador Roberto S. Benedicto and Presidential Assistant Juan C. Tuvera.

As a matter of fact, slips of paper have been passed around on several sessions of the Cabinet, to which I practically belonged as an "ex officio" member, that sets of "T's" plague the New Society, namely: 1) Tanco, Tatad and Tuvera; and 2) Tanco, typhoon and tungro (a rice disease).

Let I be accused of deviating from the subject of my column this week in much the same way that I have charged that Marcos has abandoned the original objectives of the "peaceful revolution" he launched on September 21, 1972, let me go back to the ways by which Marcos had, by his own design or by the manipulation of cronies and relatives, mostly in-laws, betrayed the New Society.

Although I intended to write extensively about the corruption that vitiated, and eventually wrecked, the noble and lofty objectives of the projected New Society in the Philippines, I will deal in this column and subsequent ones on the transformation of what once was the "freest press" in Asia into a so-called responsible media whose only claim to freedom now is its untrammled right to sing hosannas and praises to the President, his wife and his in-laws, and to print in full (for free) at all times the empty and high fallutin' speeches of Secretary Tatad.

ABUSE OF POWER

Lamentable as it is, the muzzling of the Philippine media under the harsh authoritarian rule of Marcos becomes all the more deplorable when one notes the abuse of power and corruption that accompanied the process of press control.

What renders it despicable is that the abuse of power and corruption resorted to in throwing Philippines press freedom to oblivion were crudely conducted with an abrasive posture of coercion - as if done to command everyone outside their circle to behold them as the only chosen few who have a monopoly of wisdom, patriotism and love of country. It becomes a martial law syndrome in tire worst form.

Consider as an early example the pettiness displayed by Presidential Assistant Tuvera and his wife, Kerima, who is the official biographer of the First Lady.

On learning that the Constabulary commander of the province of Negros Oriental had reopened some months after September 21, 1972, radio station DYRI, which was owned by Silliman University in Dumaguete City, Tuvera flared up, saying the military should never have allowed the station to go on the air again. He submitted a note to the President, stating that the Silliman station was staffed by subversives and should be closed down again. Marcos wrote the word "Approved" on Tuvera's note, and the husband of the First Lady's biographer gleefully transmitted the presidential directive to the PC command in Dumaguete City.

The PC commander dutifully closed down the radio station anew, but submitted a report disputing the Tuvera accusation. Brig. Cien. Fidel Ramos, Constabulary chief, also took up the cudgels for the Silliman radio station,

adding, in his communication to the President, that the station was actually being utilized by the PC to broadcast martial law materials and amnesty offers to the Communist rebels.

It fell on my lot to reopen radio station when I became chairman of the Media Advisory Council. But to preserve "good relations" with Tuvera, I advised the station manager who came to Manila all the way from Dumaguete City to plead for his station to pay a courtesy call on the diminutive presidential assistant.

I found out later from Presidential Executive Assistant Jacobo C. Clave that the Tuveras were thrown out of the Silliman University long before martial law for the same reason that they are detested up to this time by most Philippine journalists, i.e. behaving as if they alone had a monopoly of the writing ability. If Tuvera's crackdown on the Silliman radio station represented abuse of power guided by pettiness, the action of Information Secretary Tatad in refusing to authorize payment of printing bills for the "Know Your New Constitution" campaign in December, 1972, spotlights the corruption that has come to plague what is supposed to be a reformed Philippine Society.

ON TATAD

As propaganda chief, Tatad was put in charge of the information campaign on the new Constitution. One aspect of this called for the printing of millions of pesos worth of propaganda materials for nationwide distribution.

Tatad, who used to ride the bus during his brief career as a working newspaperman but now has a mansion at the exclusive Quezon City millionaires' enclave known as "La Vista" concentrated his efforts on the printing jobs, leaving the creative and news management aspects of the campaign to a group unofficially headed by me, in collaboration with long-time friend and loyal colleague, Vicente M. Tanedo. This group had to have guidance from Presidential Assistant Guillermo C. De Vega.

The reason behind the unusual interest of Tatad on the printing jobs surfaced later. Since the National Media Production Center could not handle the printing of all information materials, Tatad decided to farm out the jobs to private printers, after he had assessed such state financing institutions as the Philippine National Bank, the Development Bank of the Philippines, the Social Security System and the Government Service Insurance System for P500,000.00 each to help his department defray the printing expenses. Tatad found this job very juicy as he would later in various phases of the information campaign for the New Society. He withheld payment of printing bills, unless and until the 15 per cent commission he demanded was satisfied. In at least two cases, Tatad obtained kickbacks from Capitol Publishing Company and the Amity Printing Company in the amounts of P75,000.00 and P135,000.00, respectively. The original of the cashed checks with the signatures of the careless information secretary are now in the hands of the National Intelligence and Security Agency, which is headed by Gen. Fabian Ver, who is also the commander of the Presidential Security Command.

The truth of the matter is that, during the last two years or so, I, in collaboration with my colleagues in the Malacanang Press Corps, have been doing the dirty job of making propaganda for the regime, while Secretary Tatad continuously maintained his posture of arrogance in the enjoyment of the power and wherewithal of the DPI, a situation which led coffee shop wags to coin the

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phrase; *Na kay Tibo ang hirap, na kay Tatad ang sarap.* (Tibo does the dirty work, but Tatad enjoys everything.)

I advisely picked the Tuvera and Tatad cases to dramatize the abuse of power and corruption, that plagued the information and propaganda arm of the martial regime, the state instrumentality that also enforces press control.

The role that Gov. Romualdez and his front men, such as Antonio Ayala, Luis Tabuena, Edmundo "Baby" Ongsiako, et al, played and continue to play on the suppression of press freedom as well as the various facets of continuing media control in the Philippines necessarily require separate treatment.

When I testified before the Fraser committee on June 17, 1975, in Washington, D.C., I informed the congressional investigation on the status of press control under the martial regime in this wise in a memorandum I appended to my opening statement:

President Marcos anointed your humble committee witness as his media confidant and/or hatchet man for purposes which he could not entrust to his official Information Secretary.

1) In late March, 1973, the President alerted me to form a body or council which would take over from a military-civilian group the responsibility of licensing and policing private media in the Philippines. He officially created the new body, known as the Media Advisory Council, on May 11, 1973, under Presidential Decree No. 191. The creation of MAC and my designation as its chairman gave the final official sanction to my being the President's chief media censor and propagandist, with powers to dictate to all the media owners and/or workers what to publish and what not to publish.

No media establishment in the Philippines could operate without a permit or certificate of authority to operate signed by President Marcos and myself as MAC chairman.

2) Even before my appointment as MAC chairman, I had already started performing the task of Mr. Marcos' hatchet man for media and/or for the utilization of media in promoting the ends of Mr. Marcos himself, his front men and brothers-in-law.

3) On instructions of the President, I signed a permit that enabled his No. 1 front man, Roberto S. Benedicto, to take over the multi-million dollar radio-TV complex which used to be owned by business tycoon Eugenio Lopez, Sr. The son of this tycoon, Eugenio, Jr. is languishing in a military stockade, falsely accused of alleged participation in a plot to assassinate the President.

Benedicto has not paid a single cent for the use of the Lopez radio-TV complex. When some of the Lopez caretakers in Manila agitated for payment of rentals to the owners, they were arrested by the military and thrown to the stockade on planted evidence, accused of alleged subversion.

4) On instructions of the President, I also signed a permit allowing the front men of the President's brother-in-law to occupy the most modern newspaper printing plant in Asia, known as the "Chronicle Publishing Company," so they could start publishing a new daily newspaper, the Times-Journal. These people are way behind in their grudging payment of rentals, although they are raking a fortune in advertising revenues.

5) With the guidance of the President, I prepared a host of news stories

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beamed to specific sectors of the country, e.g. a) In early October, 1972, when the President got hold of a report that the Supreme Court might invalidate the martial law proclamation because of flaws in the factual basis of the proclamation, he instructed me to publish a series of stories on the massing “by the thousands” of New People’s Army rebels in the hills around Manila; b) In December, 1972, when the President sensed from the tenor of the campaign that the New Constitution would not win approval in a plebiscite, he instructed me to publish stories assailing the disruptive effects of the campaign; he subsequently cancelled the plebiscite; c) On Christmas Day, 1972, after receiving a report that the members of the Senate had met and decided on December 24, 1972, to convene in session on January 23, 1973, pursuant to the 1935 Constitution, Mr. Marcos instructed me to publish a series of news exposing ‘a scheme of the Senators to negate the gains of society under martial law. . .to investigate the acts of martial law and subpoena subsequently some of the dangerous political prisoners from the stockade’; d) In August, 1973, he instructed me to write a series of stories denouncing alleged stock manipulation by some officials of the Lepanto Consolidated Mining Company, a multi-million dollar firm which neither Mr. Marcos nor his front men had as yet succeeded in compelling to allow outside participation in their corporate structure, xxx

The internment of press freedom in the Philippines by a dictatorial regime cannot hold for a time. I am sure that Filipino journalists will follow the ways of their ancestors in breaking out of their temporary bondage.

The Filipino heritage of struggling for press freedom had a shining example during the early days of American Occupation of the Philippines. American authorities passed a strict Sedition Law to scare off the propagandists. However, the Filipinos continued writing articles and literary pieces which agitated for freedom and reforms.

For instance, in Cebu province, the American military authorities even sponsored the establishment of a newspaper, *El Nuevo Dia*, by Sergio Osmena, Sr., Rafael Palma and Jaime de Veyra. These three succeeded from time to time in attacking American colonization of the Philippines.

The most daring attack ever published was the *Aves de Rapina* (Birds of Prey). Published by the *El Renacimiento* in its October 30, 1908, issue, the piece charged Dean Worcester, the Secretary of the Interior, with taking advantage of his official position to enrich himself. Martin Ocampo and Teodoro Kalaw, publisher and editor, respectively, of the *El Renacimiento*, were both sued and convicted for libel.

Under martial law, the Filipino journalist lost his freedom once more as in the days of *Aves de Rapina*.

Before the imposition of martial law, there were no laws or decrees regulating the operation of the press. The Constitution guaranteed that “no law shall be passed abridging the freedom of the press.”

No government license or permit was required to publish a newspaper. He was merely accountable under the laws of libel and sedition. But he could not be arrested without a warrant.

When Marcos imposed martial law, he did not think the media was a field

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to be greeted with smiles. He took no chances. He would have none of the rays of his "smiling martial law" shine upon the journalists. He was so infuriated with some newspapermen and their lack of restraint in criticizing him.

The vengeance of Marcos came not only with the arrest of journalists and the closure of media establishments. He laid down his restrictions on those who would be allowed to engage in media once more.

Thus, the directive issued by the newly-created Department of Public Information (DPI Order No. 1) required all media to "print and broadcast accurate, objective, straight news reports of positive national value, consistent with the efforts of the government to meet the dangers and threats that occasioned the proclamation of martial law and the efforts to achieve a "new society." The news media were prohibited from carrying "any editorial opinion, commentary, comments or asides, or any kind of political, unauthorized, or objectionable advertising." The new regulations also expressly prohibited:

a. Materials that tend to incite or otherwise inflame people or individuals against the government or any of its duly constituted authorities.

b. Materials that undermine the people's faith and confidence in the government or any of its instrumentalities.

c. Materials that are seditious, not based on facts, or otherwise without definitely established and well-identified verifiable sources, or based on mere allegation or conjecture.

d. Materials that downgrade or jeopardize the military or the law enforcement authorities, their work and their operations.

e. Materials that abet, glorify, or sensationalize crime, disorder, lawlessness, violence.

f. Materials that destroy or tend to destroy public morals as well as morale.

g. Materials that foment opinions and activities contrary to law.

h. Materials that sow or generate fear, panic, confusion, ignorance and vulgarity among the people.

During the first few days of the martial regime, Marcos' media policy was erratic. However, he was sure of one thing: the government needs media to disseminate its propaganda. So the Marcos-owned *Daily Express* and radio-TV network, the Kanlaon Broadcasting System, which consisted of television Channel 9 and two radio stations, were allowed to operate less than 10 hours after they were closed down. The resumption of the operations of the tri-media was in accordance with Letter of Authority No. 1 signed by Marcos.

Marcos initially sounded out the *Manila Times* at about 3 p.m. on September 23, 1972, if it could re-publish on a temporary permit. Jose Luna Castro, executive editor of the *Manila Times* Publishing Company, told Tatad flatly that his paper would not resume publication on a temporary permit. Besides, he added, there would be no time to summon the editorial staff and employees of other departments to report for work that day. Castro was still angry over the closure of his newspaper and the arrest a few hours earlier of his publisher, Joaquin "Chino" P. Roces. The government offer to re-open the *Manila Times* was never renewed.

Two weeks later, the *Philippines Herald* was given a permit to operate,

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along with its sister radio-TV network, including Radio Mindanao Network and TV-Channel 13. Their permit was contained in Letter of Authority No. 2 which was issued following a conference between the President and Jose Soriano, president of the Soriano enterprises, which included the *Herald* tri-media. However, as the *Herald* presses were grinding out its first martial law edition, Metrocom troopers came rushing to the DMHM building on Muralla, in Intramuros, Manila, to close down the newspaper for the second time. Secretary Tatad explained that the shutdown was necessitated by the existence of a labor dispute within the publishing company. The radio-TV permits were not revoked.

The real story, however, is that Gov. Benjamin “Kokoy” Romualdez obtained a countermanning order from the President the same evening that the first martial law edition of the *Herald* was being put to bed. Kokoy at the time was finalizing plans to publish an entirely new newspaper. By late October, 1972, he had obtained Letter of Authority No. 3 from Marcos to publish the Times-Journal.

Kokoy Romualdez, the overnight publisher, initially had the *Times-Journal* printed for his front organization, the Philippine Journalists, Inc., by the *Daily Express*. The big deal was that the *Daily Express* would print the *Times-Journal* on a daily cash basis. He found the arrangement very inconvenient because another Romualdez, Enrique “Pocholo”, the *Daily Express* executive editor, would not allow uncle Kokoy Romualdez to default in his daily payments by more than six hours.

Kokoy finally eyed the most modern newspaper printing plant in all of Southeast Asia, that of the closed *Manila Chronicle*. There Kokoy did not have to pay daily through the nose. He arranged for the use by the *Times-Journal* of the entire *Chronicle* facilities, including the editorial offices and electronic typesetting and printing machines, and he did not have to worry about daily payments. He even conveniently forgot to pay the monthly rentals to the Benpress Corporation. At one time, I was urged by the 900 jobless *Manila Chronicle* staff writers and employees to remind Kokoy about his failure to pay his rentals. It was from, these rentals that the monthly allowance which Eugenio Lopez had decided to dole out to his displaced employees was being taken out. When I did, Kokoy snarled at me, and told me to stop representing the Lopez interests. I shot back that I was speaking for the thousands of media men rendered jobless by martial law.

All told, no less than 50,000 gainfully employed persons suddenly joined the legions of unemployed with the closure by Marcos of newspapers, radio and television stations.

Gerald N. Hill, a former journalism professor at the University of San Francisco who now practises as a full-time lawyer also in San Francisco, made a brief allusion to conditions of the press in the Philippines in making a full-length report on certain aspects of martial law in the Philippines. Here is his report, which I quote with approval:

Freedom of the press and media in the Philippines today (February, 1975) is nothing but a memory. Since September, 1972 — when President Ferdinand Marcos declared martial law — the Philippine press and media have been completely under the control of the President and his agents. Simultaneously

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with the martial law declaration, the President ordered the military to seize and close down all newspapers and broadcasting facilities with the exception of his own Daily Express, the pro-Marcos KBS station, and a handful of other publications supporting him. Publishers, editors and writers were arrested; they remain in prison today, xxx

Officially, censorship was imposed by two decrees two days after martial law was declared. The first decree proscribed news items detrimental to the government and set up the censorship machinery. The second decree covered all printing and provided that mass distribution of printed material required approval of a new Department of Public Information. The next day the government announced that six major daily newspapers were indefinitely suspended from the right to publish. The press control operation was under the control of one Francisco Tatad, who is still the number one press spokesman for the President.

The strongly anti-Marcos Friends of the Filipino People Washington Report for February, 1975, claims in the lead article that the news in the three daily newspapers now permitted to publish is virtually identical.

Dr. Lent has also published a study for the International Press Institute on the press situation in the Philippines. In the study, he depicts various facets of continuing press control: 1) disciplinary action to editors and writers who, even inadvertently, write contrary to the government lines; 2) the concentration of the press in the hands of Marcos' friends and relatives; and 3) the outright operation of broadcast media by the government. Lent also describes in detail the rise of the "underground press" published both in the Philippines and circulated from abroad.

Despite this overwhelming body of evidence from both impartial and partisan observers, President Marcos declared on the NBC "Today" show on September 20, 1974: "There is no censorship at present." His full statement is illustrative of his logic:

"Immediately after martial law was proclaimed on September 21, 1972, we had a censorship decree. I immediately, however, withdrew censorship as soon as possible. There was also a committee that controlled the media composed of the Secretary of Public Information, the Secretary of National Defense and some other members. I dismantled this committee and instead organized, rather directed, that the publishers and the owners and the directors of all the media — the newspapers, television stations and radio stations — organize themselves and that they control the media. That is the status of media as of now. It is not controlled by the government. It is, however, supervised by its own policemen — the publishers, the owners of radio and TV stations. There is no censorship at present."

What he did not say was that by the time the so-called committee was organized all publishers and media directors were his people.

Despite his denial of censorship, President Marcos found it necessary in anticipation of the next national "referendum" scheduled for February 27th, to issue certain "free debate" rules for the period February 7 through 21, 1975. The San Francisco-based *Philippine News*, in a story datelined Manila, describes these rules. The story quotes General Order No. 51 which limits

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printed materials to small handbills and posters two by three feet. Prohibited are billboards and audio-visual materials.

The fettered Philippine press has attracted increasing negative attention from journalists throughout the world. The International Press Institute has demanded the immediate release of publisher Lopez by resolution. Robert U. Brown in *Editor and Publisher*, January 25, 1975, cites the Lopez case and declared that "Freedom of the press has disappeared" in the Philippines. Critical editorials have appeared recently in the *Milwaukee Journal*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, the *Palo Alto Times*, the *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* and the *Chicago Tribune*.

Ever the methodical politician, Marcos took stock of the initial confusion concerning the control of media. He took more decisive steps thereafter. He insured the perpetual captivity of the entire word machine in the Philippines through ownership, censorship and licensing of media.

Marcos initially created a Department of Public information to take charge of media censorship and licensing. In less than 45 days of martial law, he yielded to military demands that the soldiers share with civil officials in media control. On November 2, 1972, the President created the Mass Media Council.*4 Less than six months later, the Mass Media Council was abolished and in its stead was created a Media Advisory Council.*5 MAC operated for 18 months. Marcos found it necessary to resort to another innovation. He disbanded the MAC and reallocated its functions to two separate bodies, the Print Media council and the Broadcast Media Council.*6

(*4. Presidential Decree No. 36, dated November 2, 1972.)

(*5. Presidential Decree No. 191, dated May 11, 1973.)

(*6. Presidential Decree No. 576, dated November 9, 1974.)

The day Marcos announced the imposition of martial law, he reorganized the Press Office under the Office of the President into a full-sized Cabinet Department, known as the DPI. This was done by virtue of Presidential Decree No. 1. Then under Letter of Implementation No.12, the President funded the DPI with a gargantuan outlay for propaganda and information to the tune of P91 million (roughly \$17 million). Marcos was to say later that he didn't realize that Information Secretary Tatad had made him sign such a huge budget "for nothing." Under the DPI bureaucratic scheme, the President sanctioned the creation of the Presidential Press Office, a Bureau of National and Foreign Information, a Bureau of Broadcast, a Bureau of Standards for Mass Media, a Bureau of Research, Evaluation and Special Operations, and several regulatory units. The DPI then became the major manufacturer of news, press releases, books, radio and television programs, and even a long-playing album, "No Shade But Light," which was a recording of excerpts of presidential speeches.

However, the proliferation of agencies under the DPI gave rise to rivalries and clashes between the civilian information office and the military's Office for Civil Relations. The OCR headed then and until now by permanent Colonel Noe S. Andaya, felt that, in matters of censorship, it was supreme over even the DPI.

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To clarify matters, President Marcos promulgated Presidential Decree No. 36 creating the Mass Media Council on November 2, 1972. The decree designated the Secretary of National Defense and the Secretary of Public Information as co-chairmen. The decree provided essentially that "no newspaper, magazine, periodical or publication of any kind, radio, television or telecommunications facility, station or network may so operate without obtaining from the Mass Media Council a certificate of authority to operate prior to actual operation. Such certificate of authority shall be duly signed by the President, and shall be in force for six months, renewable for another six months thereafter, unless otherwise terminated earlier."

Under this decree, the government could grant, deny or revoke a permit of any media facility. But instead of resolving a jurisdictional dispute between the DPI and the OCR, Presidential Decree No 36 merely served to formalize what has been going on since September 23, 1972.

President Executive Assistant Jacobo C. Clave discovered that PD No. 36 merely served to stress the obvious. It reasserted the arbitrary nature of a martial law regime. The decree did not provide for a procedure of hearing a violation and conviction therefore. He flared and glared at Tuvera for "embarrassing the President again by his ignorance." Tuvera, who is not a lawyer, drafted the decree.

So, hastily. Clave drafted a General Order for the signature of the President on November 9, 1972. Designated as General Order No. 12-C, it threw into the exclusive jurisdiction of military tribunals violations of Presidential Decree No. 36.

By mid-March, 1973, however, the feuding for jurisdiction over media between Secretaries Tatad and Enrile themselves have worsened. All of a sudden, the two Cabinet members and their minions wanted a piece of the action on the glamorous media control task of the martial regime. The feuding mired in intrigues the task of processing media applications for permits to reopen. It reached a point that whenever either Enrile or Tatad signed a permit ahead of the other, one of them would withhold the needed second signature. Media became more attractive to the censors and licensing agents when the show business, including the comely actresses of the stage and film, came under the classification of media. Tatad proved much more opportunistic than Enrile on the matter of venturing into the highly attractive show business. He set up a process in motion to get even the movie censorship field. It was at this point in time, when Presidential Assistant Guillermo C. De Vega made Information Secretary Tatad run practically naked from his sauna bath at the Manila Hilton to the office of De Vega in the Executive office at 2:30 p.m. one day. Not even a call from President Marcos could make Tatad move that fast. This time he had to. He knew what was in store for him. I also knew what was in store for him because I was in the office of De Vega when Tatad was "summoned" by the Presidential Assistant from the comfort of an early afternoon sauna bath-massage at the Hilton.

"Ambicioso itong si Tatad. (This Tatad is overly ambitious.) If I don't cut him down to size now, he may prove too ambitious to even covet the position of Sir (the President). Stay here, Tibo. Watch me chop him to pieces," De Vega stated coldly as we waited for Tatad.

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Tatad arrived with his bodyguards and his usual air of arrogance. Characteristically, he peeped through Gimo's door and made a Buddha-like sign of obeisance to Gimo. The presidential assistant spoke softly, telling Tatad to come in and close the door behind him. "Kit," he started, "if you want my job as chairman of the Board of Censors (for motion pictures), let us go together to the 'boss' (the President) and you tell him straight you want my job."

"*Watting ganyanan. boss. Ikaw naman, mainit kaagad ang ulo mo.*" (Let's discuss this, boss (referring to Gimo). Why do you have to lose your temper right?)" Tatad declared, with all the humility he could muster.

De Vega was sore. Upon his elevation to full-fledged Cabinet rank, Tatad decided that movie censorship would have to be brought under the jurisdiction of the new department of information. As a first step, he summoned Godofredo Camacho, executive secretary of the board of censors, to his office. Tatad told Camacho ex cathedra that censorship of the celluloid magic would be brought within the DPI jurisdiction. How would Dr. De Vega fit into this thing?" Camacho asked. "Tell him he will have to work under me. I am the new minister of propaganda. I am now the No. 2 man, next only to the President, in hierarchy of the martial law regime." Tatad was reported by Camacho to De Vega as having thus stated.

De Vega quoted Camacho's report to Tatad almost word for word. Tatad tried to stand his ground that movie censorship actually falls within the province of the information department. As long as he was the DPI chieftain, Tatad declared, he would have to do his duty.

Gimo then delivered the "coup de grace" on Tatad. He brought out a sheet of paper which bore the signature of President Marcos. It was Letter of Instructions No. 13 placing movie censorship under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Board of Censors for Motion Pictures.

Tatad was all of a sudden a chastened man. He told Gimo he did what he did because he wanted to preempt the military on the matter of exercising jurisdiction over the movie industry. "You know very well, my good doctor, that the military people are so heady these days that they would want to place all aspects of government under military jurisdiction."

De Vega said he didn't care whatever motivations Tatad had for trying to encroach into the movie field. Just lay off, Gimo counselled Tatad. De Vega reminded Tatad that he had not joined his fellow-presidential assistants, Clave and Tuvera, in organizing a Palace clique against the DPI secretary. If Tatad did not cease and desist in his attempt to poach into Gimo's territory, the clique could be made a triumvirate, De Vega warned. Tatad thanked Gimo profusely for having it out with him, instead of (Gimo) immediately teaming up with Clave and Tuvera. He pledged undying loyalty and devotion to Gimo.

Tatad proved his sincerity to De Vega by subsequently directing his special agents to rent a room at the Hotel Enrico along Padre Faura in Manila. The room was adjacent to De Vega's own suite. From the Tatad room, his special agents kept track of people coming in and out of De Vega's suite. Tatad wanted a dossier on Gimo.

The presidential assistant discovered the Tatad espionage later on.

That early the royal Palace of Ferdinand and Imelda had already acquired one of the distinct characteristics of royalty. The subalterns were clawing at, or

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axing, each other to protect and preserve powers previously granted by, or to win more such powers from, the ruling dumvirate. Media control did not escape the lengthening tentacles of Palace intrigues. Marcos was compelled by the in-fighting among his subordinates to improvise a different system of press gag. Palace intrigues thereby served as the midwife in the birth of a new censorship and licensing body, the Media Advisory Council, on May 11, 1973.

Thus, the Mass Media Council established by PD No. 36 was abolished and in its stead was created the Media Advisory Council. MAC membership consisted of representatives from sectoral media and headed by the president of the National Press Club. I happened to be the NPC President at the time. However, even if I had not been NPC president at the time, I still would have been named by President Marcos as MAC chief.

In late March, 1973, Marcos told me and Secretary De Vega that he would like to phase out the Mass Media Council. He had heard of the bickerings between Enrile and Tatad over the processing of applications for re-opening of newspapers and radio stations. Marcos also had been receiving streams of complaints on the corruption and abuse of power being committed by military men assigned to the Office for Civil Relations and Tatad's men under the Bureau of Standards for Mass Media. In the early days of the MMC, Enrile and Tatad agreed that the OCR would act as the executive arm of the council. They also agreed that the BSMM would be the technical adviser of the executive arm. In other words, everybody would get a piece of the action.

However, when Marcos decided finally on May 4, 1972, on the abolition of the MC, he could not very well admit failure of the earlier system of press control. To preserve his own neck, Marcos had to maintain an aura of infallibility. He had to keep up with his bogus omniscience. Nevertheless, he knew that press control, or any other control for that matter, hardly ever worked. His own experience with the Import Control Law, which he drafted in Congress when he was still a congressman, told him that it would work only to feed the hungry mouth of corruption. The Import Control Law had yielded millions of dollars for Marcos then.

As he prepared to gun down the military hold on press censorship, Marcos needed to move skillfully to avoid antagonizing Enrile and the defense establishment. He could very well afford to embarrass Tatad as he had done so often before. Enrile, however, was in a position too sensitive to be prematurely exposed to public ridicule. The stripping of power from Enrile would have to be done cautiously and with a rationale that Enrile himself would be happy to accept. It was not only the glamorous job of media licensing and censorship that is being taken out of Enrile's hands.

On the other hand, Marcos had to be mindful of avoiding any hint of a confession of failure in the matter of imposing media control. Every move, whether it be impelled by failure or the desire for further successes, must be squeezed of its utmost propaganda value.

To his credit, Marcos is a past master of the art of double-talk. He never hesitated to exalt in his mastery of the art. Marcos would not spare even people closest to him the punishment of a double-talk.

Thus, when he decided on May 4, 1972, to clip Enrile's wings, Marcos convened a Cabinet meeting for May 11. He instructed Presidential Executive Assistant Jacobo C. Clave to inform the Cabinet members that "measures

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towards normalization” would be taken up. This was his own way of stressing that martial law was an “abnormal situation.” It is an abnormality, however, by which Marcos wants to operate the New Society normally.

The Marcos “cover story” during the Cabinet meeting was that it was necessary that the regime move speedily towards normalization. He pointed out that the Supreme Court decision*⁷ declaring the effectivity of the New Constitution was a mandate for him to normalize certain state functions placed under restrictions by martial rule.

(*7. Javellana vs. Executive Secretary, et al, G.R. No. L-36142, March 31, 1973.)

Towards this end, Marcos told the Cabinet, he was taking media censorship out of the joint responsibility of Enrile and Tatad. “We will now ask the media people themselves to police themselves,” the President declared. “I will promulgate a de- cree creating a council of newspapermen, to be headed by the president of the National Press Club, to take over the functions of the Mass Media Council.

“You know that the international media, particularly the American media, have been mercilessly hammering at us for our alleged harsh treatment of the media in the country. I wish those people would understand that we were in a state of war. Now, however, we can probably placate them with this new move we are taking,” Marcos declared.

Enrile was taken aback. But this was no time to show resentment. Such an act would weaken his standing before the other members of the Cabinet. He had, since martial law, assumed a posture that he was the next in rank and power to the commander-in-chief. The bright and positive side in him prompted him to act cautiously.

“In the military establishment, sir,” Enrile started, “the word of the commander-in-chief is the law. We can only obey his orders, even if we get killed in the process.” Enrile could not hide the bitterness in his tone. However, he managed to smile most of the time.

Then, assuming an altogether different posture, Enrile complained that the defense establishment was really saddled with jobs that were better undertaken by the civil officials. He reminded the Cabinet meeting that the major task of the armed forces was to maintain peace and order and guard against the enemies of the Republic.

“Oh, yes, Johnny. I know that you have been overworking yourself. That is one of the reasons I think you should be relieved of some of your non-military duties,” Marcos intervened.

“As a matter of fact, in consonance with the decision to move towards normalization,” Marcos said, “we are also transferring the job of issuing travel permits to the civilian authorities.” He said the function of screening applications for travel permits would be given back to the Department of Foreign Affairs.

“I would like to express the appreciation of the defense establishment, sir, for taking these non-military functions off our shoulders. We did try very hard, however, to carry out these duties when they were assigned to us by the commander-in-chief upon the proclamation of martial law,” Enrile declared.

Marcos said he was signing a Letter of Instructions prepared by De Vega

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creating a new travel committee. He announced that Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs Manuel D. Collantes would serve as chairman, and Major General Fabian C. Ver as its co-chairman. De Vega himself was to be a member of the committee.

Upon the declaration of martial law, the function of issuing travel documents was taken over by Secretary Enrile without any specific instructions on the theory of residual powers vested in him as martial law implementor.

As a further move towards normalization, the President announced that he had decided to create a new Cabinet department, the Department of Tourism, to promote the country's industry.*⁸ As a sop to the military, President Marcos revealed that he had decided to create a National Defense College of the Philippines.*⁹ He said it would answer a felt need for an institution to provide continuing and intensive studies of the diversified problems relative to national defense and security.

(*⁸. Presidential Decree No. 189, dated May 11, 1973.)

(*⁹. Presidential Decree No. 190, dated May 11, 1973.)

The attempt of Marcos to cushion the impact of his blows against Enrile was frustrated by his own secretary of information. Tatad spoke up to state that his department wholeheartedly support the move towards normalization of press controls. He made the Cabinet members understand that the President had told him earlier about the planned changes on media regulation. As a matter of fact, he said he had drafted for the signature of the President a presidential decree creating the Media Advisory Council.

Marcos signed the Tatad-prepared decree right then and there. However, Marcos was visibly irked. Tatad had maneuvered well for himself though. He succeeded in avoiding at the moment any impression on the part of his colleagues in the Cabinet that the creation of MAC was directed against him. He really wanted to create the impression that shift in media control was confided to him in advance by the President. Conversely, Tatad wittingly or unwittingly isolated Enrile as the only victim of the day's massacre.

Tatad was never in on the presidential plan to create the MAC. However, I thought that, in the interest of "good relations," I should tell him about the decision to establish the MAC. On May 9, Tatad called up Clave and asked if he had drafted a decree creating the MAC. Clave told him that he and Secretary De Vega have agreed to assign me to draft the decree. In turn, Tatad asked me for a copy of my draft. He caused his legal advisers to alter my draft so that he would be empowered to serve as a vital conduit between the MAC and the President. Clave was actually taking his time during the May 11 Cabinet meeting before submitting the MAC decree which I drafted, for the signature of the President. Tatad beat Clave to it by submitting his adulterated draft for Marcos' signature.

Tatad was not to have his way on the mechanics of the media censorship. Eagle-eyed Secretary Clave took one look at the Tatad-prepared decree. He immediately gleaned that it was drafted with a selfish motive. In the first place, Clave did not approve of the way Tatad had isolated Enrile as the target of the massacre. Clave knew from the very start that it was Tatad's incompetence and arrogance that derailed what President Marcos had originally outlined as a

smooth-sailing government management of the media. Clave figured that it was Tatar's way of hitting back at the Ilocanos in the Cabinet of Marcos.

Clave confronted Tatar even before the Cabinet members could leave the State dining room. "Are you crazy?" Clave demanded to know. The presidential executive assistant declared within hearing distance of the President and Secretary Enrile that the Tatar draft of the MAC decree "would make a mockery" of the President's decision to take media regulation out of the hands of government. He explained that the Tatar draft provided that all media certificates of authority to operate shall be processed by the MAC and shall be submitted for final approval or disapproval by the President "through the Secretary of Public Information. This means, Clave explained, that you still want the information department to go over media certificates of authority to operate. There won't be any change at all in the procedure."

Then, whispering to the President, Clave declared: "Sir, this would look very bad to the military especially Johnny Enrile. It could be taken to mean that we did away with the military role in media regulation in order to give it exclusively to Tatar."

The President was quick to grasp the Clave counsel. He instructed Clave to type immediately a new draft of the MAC decree for his signature "before I take lunch."

Then, turning to Tatar without concealing his irritation, the President declared: "Next time you want me to sign a decree affecting your department, you course it first through the presidential assistants. I don't want you doing this thing again. I remember that you made me sign a decree giving you P91 million for your department. Why, that's too big a budget and you have nothing to show for it."

Tatar explained lamely that he thought that media regulation, like the rules for the grant of travel permits for foreign trips, would be taken away from the military and entrusted to civil authorities.

"Of course, not. Jake, make the draft of the decree read that media regulation will be exclusively handled by the MAC. Anyway, Tibo, who will be the chairman can consult me directly on MAC affairs," the President declared. "And don't forget to mention the official rationale for the draft in media regulation."

The "official rationale" was what the President would want the outside world to believe. He dictated his own ideas to Clave. He wanted it known that the move of the martial regime towards normalization was on account of the improvement of conditions in the country during the first eight months of the New Society. He pointed out that the mass media have shown willingness to institute a system of self-regulation and internal discipline within their ranks to the end that no part of media may ever again, consciously or unconsciously, engage or take part in any conspiracy against the Government."

Any crack in the thin fabric that delicately holds the fragile martial rule together must be heavily screened from public view. Certainly, the fact that MAC was a child of Palace intrigues and power struggle could not be allowed to filter outside the circle of the ruling clique.

However, the move towards "normalization" in the matter of media and travel regulation was actually a Cabinet level "coup" which de Vega set up about a week before May 4. The process actually started at a session of the

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Mass Media Council in the OCR building at Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City. Secretary Enrile was in a bad mood. He had just bawled out an OCR junior officer, Major Templo, for having surreptitiously paved the way for the grant of a number of MMC permits for various publications, including a weekly newspaper which he eventually tried to convert into a daily newspaper for the armed forces. Presently, he turned to Camacho, the secretary of the Board of Censors for Motion Pictures, whom De Vega had earlier named as liaison man between the movie censorship body and the MMC. Enrile demanded to know of Camacho why the BCMP had allowed the advertising of the movie, "The Godfather," for exhibition. He pointed out that there was so much violence and other features of the film which were contrary to the new mores and morals which the New Society seeks to develop. Camacho replied that it had been reviewed and allowed for exhibition by the BCMP.

Enrile shouted: "I don't care, if the picture or any other picture has been approved by the Board of Censors. In my capacity as defense secretary, I can order the military to prevent or stop the exhibition of any motion picture, regardless of whether it has been reviewed and approved by Gimo de Vega personally. I want to take a look, at that picture.

The defense boss issued a direct order to Colonel Andaya, the OCR chief, to demand of the BCMP that the movie, "The Godfather," be submitted for review by the DND secretary.

Camacho reported glumly to De Vega.

At the headquarters of the OCR itself, there was glee and the intoxicating smell of success. The Enrile posture on movie censors was the kind of stance which the officers of the OCR have been itching for. However, they could not invade the area of motion picture reviewing since they could not, at their level, risk a clash with De Vega. Now, they can intrude into the De Vega territory with the virtual pronouncement of a directive by Enrile.

I became concerned with Enrile's posture on film review, particularly as it might affect a benefit premiere showing of "The Godfather" to raise funds for the National Press Club of the Philippines. The Enrile outburst was reported to me by Estrella D. Alfon who happened to be at the OCR on the day the MMC was holding its weekly session. "It looks bad for Gimo, Tibo. Johnny was in a pugnacious mood," Alfon said. I rushed to Dr. De Vega and reported the incident to him. The presidential assistant told me not to worry. He had been apprised by Camacho about Enrile's threat.

"Let's find out whom the President would uphold, the Mam (Imelda) or Enrile," De Vega told me hesitating. By that time, De Vega had already prepared his battle plans. He knew exactly how the attack on Enrile would have to be made, and where the initial salvo would have to be launched.

In any in-fighting and power struggle among the ranking officials of the martial government, the best way to do battle would be to have the female half of the conjugal dictatorship on your side. De Vega was sure of that side of the ruling triumvirate.

De Vega opened up on Enrile with a casual report to the First Lady, Mrs. Marcos. Then, he moved in for the kill by stating that he may no longer be able to perform his job as BCMP chairman efficiently. He explained that Enrile and the military want to invade the movie censorship field by imposing themselves as the higher reviewing authority for films. Mrs. Marcos needed no further

explanations from De Vega. "Oo nga, talagarig sumisiba ang military ngayon. Bayaan mo at ako ang bahalang magsabi sa Sir mo." (Oh, yes, the military is getting to be too greedy. All right, let me tell your sir about this), Imelda told De Vega. The look of worry in De Vega's face disappeared. He knew very well that come that same night, the First Lady would certainly talk to the President about De Vega's troubles with Enrile in a demanding tone that would leave the President no choice but to crack down on his defense secretary. That was on May 2.

By May 4, De Vega got a buzz from the First Lady. She said that she had already "prepared the mind" of the President on De Vega's dispute with Enrile. De Vega then decided that it was time to bring up the matter of movie censorship officially with the President. Before the President had time to receive his first caller, De Vega came up to Marcos' desk at the Study Room. He told Marcos that he would like to resign his BCMP post because of the continuing intrusion of Enrile and the military in the field of movie censorship.

Yes, the President said, he has been told about De Vega's complaint. What does De Vega think of the over-eagerness of the military to take over movie censorship? The secretary declared that the unusual interest of the military in film censorship could only be likened to ants flocking to the location of sweet sugar.

The President admitted that he himself had received reports on graft and corruption involving the military. Is it possible that, even in the enforcement of media control, military officers are similarly motivated? De Vega answered the President in the affirmative.

Right then and there, Marcos decided to strip Enrile of the job of media regulation. "We should now make it appear that we are giving back to the newspapermen the job of self-regulation. We will assign Tibo Mijares to head the new press body," the President declared.

Acting further to placate a sulking pillar of his regime, the President then asked: "O, anopa, Gimo, ang nangyayari sa military?" (What else, Gimo, is happening in the military.) De Vega talked about the graft attending the issuance of passports and travel documents by the defense establishment. That, too, the President decided, would have to be taken out of Enrile's hands.

Other than a decision to take media and travel regulation out of Enrile's hands, the President would not do anything more serious. He left the question of graft and corruption unacted upon. His posture of looking the other way around when it came to misconduct involving the military was appalling. And yet, if a helpless civil official in no position to fight back committed misconduct akin to that which De Vega had accused the military of, Marcos would not hesitate to bring down the axe on the erring official.

Thus, as a result of Enrile's intemperate outburst and the ensuing power struggle, the Media Advisory Council came into being. The MAC was charged with "the duty of passing upon applications of mass media for permission to operate, so that no newspaper, magazine, periodical, or publication of any kind, radio, television and telecommunications facility, station or network may so operate without first obtaining a Certificate of Authority to Operate from the Media Advisory Council. But the CAO would not become valid and effective "until approved by the President of the Philippines," and would be effective for six months, "unless otherwise terminated earlier."

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During the lifetime of the MAC, every permit or certificate of authority to operate a mass media facility necessarily had to have my signature and that of President Marcos in order to become valid and effective. This meant that I don't sign any CAO without prior clearance from the President, and the President does not sign any CAO either if I don't show him myself that I have signed it.

The Media Advisory Council was not spared from intrigues either. This time Tatad and Enrile appointed themselves as guardians of the new council on the pretext that they wanted to help me run the press regulatory body. Tatad interfered in the choice of MAC regional coordinator for the Bicol region with station in Naga City. He didn't want me to appoint Salvador Dacer, his compadre and former pimp, to the Naga City post. Tatad viewed this as a declaration of war. I told him Dacer was a man of Gimco. He started sending reports to the President on alleged wrongdoings in the MAC. At about this time, too, he felt that I was threatening his perch at the DPI. He had good reasons to be suspicious of me. Marcos was relying more and more on me to implement the day-to-day propaganda program of the New Society.

For his part, Enrile kept sending his men or writing me notes telling me I should do this or do that respecting the conduct of media regulation. At one time, he threatened to exercise the powers of media regulation by virtue of his residual powers as defense secretary under a martial regime. The common line I took on this Enrile interference or threat was: I will clear what you want with the President.

As early as December, 1973,¹ began proposing to Marcos that "the MAC be abolished because it was being hamstrung by intrigues. However, Marcos tolerated the bad fix in which media regulation was mired by his own inaction. Obviously, he thought there would still be some uses for the MAC. This came about February, 1974 when Marcos found it necessary to order the MAC to investigate an American journalist, Arnold Zeitlin, bureau manager of the "Associated Press" in Manila

However, all of a sudden he called me, Secretary Tatad and *Bulletin* publisher Hans Menzi to a conference on October 15, 1974. He said the MAC would have to be abolished because the New Society has not convinced the world press that the media regulatory body was an independent entity. Marcos said he would like to reallocate the functions of the MAC to two separate bodies, one for print media and the other for the electronic media. He instructed the three of us to work out the new decree with Clave. By this time, however, neither Tatad nor Menzi was willing to work with Clave. Tatad had submitted at the earlier stage of the conference a 17-page letter of resignation as DPI secretary, confessing failure in his job allegedly on account of intrigues by "people around the President," not excluding possibly Mrs. Marcos herself who, at that time, wanted him out of the Cabinet. It fell on my lot to draft the new decree.

Clave suggested that I provide in the decree that MAC would organize the two new bodies and then bow out of existence thereafter. He said it could be a face-saving gesture for the MAC and its chairman, especially. I thanked him for his concern; for Clave and I have been very close during our newspapering days. I said I would have no time to do it anyway. I was leaving for the United States on another mission for Marcos.

The decree which I drafted provided for the abolition not only of the Media

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Advisory Council but also of the DPI's Bureau of Standard for Mass Media as authorized under Letter of Implementation No. 12. The BSMM was never discussed during the October 15, 1974, conference. However, I explained to Secretary Clave that the BSMM would have to be abolished, too, if the President was to make good his posture that there won't be anymore government censorship of the press. It was with a mood of vengeance that I included the abolition of the BSMM in the draft of the new decree. This office had always sought to exercise media control powers even after the creation of the MAC. It reached such a point when the few practising media men and media owners either complained about harassment by both the MAC and BSMM or tried to make the two agencies fight.

On November 9, 1974, Marcos signed and released Presidential Decree No. 576 abolishing both the MAC and the BSMM. The decree was exactly as I have drafted it. It decreed the creation of Print Media Council for all newspapers, magazines, periodicals, journals and publications, and a Broadcast Media Council for radio and television broadcasting.

The two new councils had exactly the same powers which MAC had with respect to their respective sectoral media. However, it no longer possessed the power, as MAC had, to open new media facilities. Although the two bodies are manned by journalists themselves, the President cannot shield the fact that media regulation is still being orchestrated from Malacanang Palace.

The timing of the promulgation of the new media decree was again done with an eye to harvesting some propaganda value. It was the eve of the departure of Mrs. Marcos for the United States to inaugurate the Philippine Center in New York. As part of the image build up, the new decree on media control relaxation was held out as another step towards normalization in Manila.

However, all pretenses that censorship had been abolished fell flat. At the height of the hunger strike of Senator Aquino in April, 1975, his family, in view of lopsided reporting about it, wrote identical letters to the three leading morning dailies for a paid insertion of Aquino's reasons. These had been embodied in a public document, being part of the record in a Supreme Court case. The editor of *Bulletin Today* replied "We will clear first with (the) military on the matter regarding security matters." The *Daily Express* answered that since "there are certain restrictions imposed on us x x x in this particular case, we felt that we are not free to accept the insertion." The *Times-Journal* did not even bother to reply.

This was followed by a request for another paid advertisement to announce the schedule of daily masses being offered to Mr. Aquino. The Daily k'xpress placed a notation "subject to approval of editors" and that the check in payment thereof "will be returned if the ad is disppproved for publication." The others ignored this second request.

The intensity of press controls under the martial regime has never been fully reported by the foreign press to the outside world. Those critical stories which have appeared sporadically in foreign periodicals barely scratch the surface on true conditions of mass media suppression in the Philippines.

The martial regime follows a double-standard of press regulation. There is

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a separate standard of treatment for the foreign press representatives, which is a pained tolerance, and another for the native newsmen. But even with relaxed controls favoring the foreign press, Filipino newsmen employed by the wire services and stringers for large foreign newspapers are still restrained by the fact that they and their families have to live under a martial regime. Only non-Filipino journalists either stationed in Manila and coming in as transients on special assignments have been able to write fearlessly about the true situation in the Philippines, including the Muslim rebellion in Mindanao and Sulu. As for Filipino journalists, they cannot write on any delicate affair without prior clearance from the MAC during my time and now from the DPI, or the military, or what have you. For instance, the native newsmen could write about the Muslim insurgency only when the President sees some use in publicizing it, as when he has to beam a story to the Supreme Court or to impress visiting American lawmakers that the fighting is going on, and that the Muslim rebels are fighting to plant the Communist flag in that southern portion of the Philippine archipelago.

But one thing both the foreign and native media men have to suffer is the ineptitude and laziness of Information Secretary Francisco S. Tatad.

Things seem to have improved since veteran newsman Amante Bigomia, a former Manila Daily Bulletin Malacanang reporter assumed the post of assistant press secretary in charge of the presidential press office. Bigomia had vowed before never to work for President Marcos, much less under Secretary Tatad given the circumstances prevailing before martial law.

On account of laziness or plain ineptitude of his information secretary, President Marcos has had to devise his own means of propaganda in order to achieve maximum impact on his personal achievements. Most of the time Marcos had succeeded, no thanks to Tatad.

There have been two glaring Marcos improvisation at propaganda. These involved the Muslim rebellion and the Huk dissidence.

On the Muslim "sortie." The President represented himself as having flown to Luuk, Jolo, where he "negotiated" with the group of Muslim rebel leader Maas Bawang who had earlier wiped out a company-sized PC patrol single-handedly for their "cooperation" with the government.

It was on the occasion of the reporting made by Arnold Zeitlin, manager of the *Associated Press* bureau of Manila, on the Maas Bawang surrender farce that Marcos got irritated. I doff my hat to Zeitlin for his resourcefulness in digging up the true facts. He reported superficially on facts known to me and just a few others, including former Congressman Antonio Raquiza, who were involved in the surrender "script." Zeitlin reported worldwide that the much-publicized meeting between the President and the Maas Bawang group never took place in any spot within the area of Jolo Island on the date officially reported by the Department of Public Information and released through the Manila newspapers. Marcos, who had been peeved by the previous "non-cooperative" posture of Zeitlin on other matters affecting the martial regime, could simply not stand Zeitlin's report daring to brand him a liar and cheap propaganda stuntman. So he directed me to investigate Zeitlin, and, with the assistance of Secretary of Foreign Affairs Carlos P. Romulo, to "brand him a Jewish journalist." Tatad himself was privy to the directive given to me by Marcos and

he told me that, to cushion the impact on Zeitlin, he would do a "little PR job" by notifying the AP bureau chief in advance of the impending investigation by the Media Advisory Council.

In his dispatches, which came out in the Pacific edition of the Stars and Stripes, Zeitlin categorically gave the lie to the publicity stunt that Marcos, the belatedly much-decorated hero of Bataan, Bessang Pass and all the other major battles of World War II,*10 dared saunter into "enemy territory" that was Jolo sought out Maas Bawang and his band of rebels in the forbidding caves of the Luuk jungle district (an area - which the conquering armies of Spain, the United States and Japan never succeeded in penetrating) and, with a show of sincerity and goodwill," convinced Maas Bawang and company to abandon their jungle hideaways and cooperate with him in pacifying troubled Muslim Mindanao. However, the AP bureau chief did not dig deeper for his story. Perhaps he felt that it was beyond the requirements of his profession to go beyond the assertion that the much-acclaimed "sortie" of Marcos into forbidden territory never really took place.

Photos of the alleged "meeting in Luuk" meeting (pronounced as "mating")*11 were released to the press, with appropriate captions praising even expressing concern over — the "daring and reckless quest for peace and reconciliation" by the great New Society President. The presidential sortie into forbidden rebel territory was glowingly described as another concrete display by the President of his unrelenting concern to unify the diverse elements of the country.

(*10. See Chapter on "Too Late the Hero.")

(*11. See Chapter X on how military briefings and other meetings outside the Palace are generally suspected by the First Lady as expensive ruses to provide the President with playtime and playgirls.)

The Maas Bawang surrender is a classic example of just how far the President would go to exploit media to suit his purposes. At the time, President Marcos needed so badly a gimmick to turn the tide of the Muslim rebellion in southern Philippines where the public armed forces were taking a beating. News accounts moved out by the foreign news services and published by the world press — and naturally relayed back to Manila "for the President's eyes only" — told of the military successes of the Moro Bangsa Army, the fighting arm of the Moro National Liberation Front which wants complete autonomy for the Mindanao-Palawan-Sulu region. The impression created was that Marcos could only terrorize with his martial law rule the submissive people of Luzon and the Visayas, but not the warrior-bred, fiercely-independent Muslims of Mindanao. So, over the objections of Secretary of Defense Juan Ponce Enrile and the ranking armed forces generals, Marcos authorized former Congressman Raquiza, a long-time aspirant for the post of defense secretary, to contact Maas Bawang, a friend of Raquiza in days gone by. Raquiza made only one request to Maas Bawang: for him and his followers to talk to the President in Malacanang and "any place" that the President might designate and have pictures of such conferences taken by the official Palace photographer. The considerations were big. They ran into over a hundred thousand pesos (P416,000.00). plus the prospects of living luxuriously in a

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plush hotel (Hotel Filipinas) in Manila complete with wine, women and song - prospects which Marcos authorized Raquiza to transform into reality, all at the expense of the groaning Filipino taxpayers, and perhaps, the poor American taxpayers, too. With an agreement arrived at, Raquiza took Maas Bawang to Manila. President Marcos met the rag-tag rebels at Fort Bonifacio, where he arrived on board the presidential helicopter — part of U.S. arms aid to Marcos - and proceeded to a site previously cleared by security men near the Malacanang golf course where he posed for the Palace photographers shaking hands and talking to Maas Bawang and party near some rocks and big trees. The area was supposed to be the jungle of Luuk. Later, with the President dressed this time in elegant Pilipino barong, Maas Bawang and company were herded to the presidential study room at Malacanang, officially received by the President; there, Maas Bawang and followers were given one brand new Armalite rifle each "to bring back to Jolo and fight the 'mised' rebels opposing government forces." *12

(*12. The gun, especially a rifle, is a most priceless possession to a Muslim. A Muslim Filipino will part with his four wives with less violence than he would with a gun.)

Military officers had on a number of occasions protested the "coddling" by the President of the Muslim rebels. They claimed that Maas Bawang was a bandit and not even part of the nationalistic Muslim rebels in the South. Among the more vocal of the protesters was Commodore Gil Fernandez, commander of the so-called Sulu Sea Frontier command who had seen hundreds of men in his command - army, Constabulary, navy, marines - die in the hands of the Muslim rebels. He thought that feasting Maas Bawang and his group was a betrayal of the memory of the hundreds of soldiers who had died fighting the secessionist Muslim rebels. Marcos relieved Fernandez of his command and gave him a desk job in the Philippine Navy headquarters in Manila. A few months later, Maas Bawang and members of his own family were killed in an "ambush" allegedly staged by the Muslim rebels whom he had abandoned. However, some military officers in the Jolo area lost no time in gloating that they had evened up old scores with Maas Bawang. President Marcos did not even bother to order an investigation. Obviously, he thought the liquidation of Maas Bawang was a good solution to the problem that he was having with the "surrenderee" who had been bombarding him with requests for appointments of this or that judge or this or that man to a position for the Mindanao government, and some other obviously unreasonable and unconscionable demands. The question that was being asked was, if the troopers in Jolo were gloating over the "ambush" of Maas Bawang, and family, who authorized the liquidation?

Another "brave sortie" of Ferdinand E. Marcos that was undertaken for no other purpose than to stage a publicity stunt at a time when the Dictator felt that the front pages of the controlled newspapers were publishing nothing but the speeches of Secretaries Enrile and Tatad, Generals Espino and Ramos, and expensive but inutile impact projects of the First lady. It involved a supposed rendezvous Marcos had with Benjamin Sanguyo, alias Commander Pusa, one of the few remaining "commanders" of the thinning ranks of Moscow-oriented

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Huk-balahap robels *13, in Central Luzon. In this "rendezvous,"- Marcos was supposed to have sought out Sanguyo "somewhere in Central Luzon," entered into a night long dialogue with him, and finally convinced the hot-headed Stalinist Huk commander to "cooperate" with the President in restoring peace and order in Central Luzon.

(*13. Commander Pusa was the man who shot up with an Armalite rifle a United States marine corps "Jolly Green Giant" helicopter which was flying out of Clark Air Force Base to ferry goods and supplies to marooned farmers at the height of the calamitous floods of July-August, 1972, in Luzon. Pusa has never been charged in court for the offense.)

The truth is that Commander Pusa was contacted first by 'emissaries of former Congressman Eduardo Cojuangco, of Tarlac province, and his protege, Col. Romeo Gatan, chief of the Rizal province constabulary command who occupied a lesser post in Tarlac province before the advent of martial law, and "induced" into meeting the President. Then, with Pusa properly frisked forbidden weapons, he was brought to the Malacanang Park, where the President plays golf, and some additional holes and pelota, for the "meeting somewhere in Central Luzon" with the great President of the New Society.*14. This again was exploited in the news media as another daring and monumental feat of President Marcos. At this time of writing, Commander Pusa is still enjoying the luxurious living in Manila and its entertainment spots, courtesy of the Filipino taxpayers.

(*14. Gen. Ver flatly told the President that his intelligence training simply told him that Commander Pusa could not be left alone with the President. The movement of Pusa's eyes, Ver said, shows that he is up to "something no good.")

However, I would not be surprised at all, if one day, the controlled Manila newspapers would publish a report that Commander Pusa was "assassinated" by the "Sparrow Units" of the New People's Army. Before I left the Philippines on October 21, 1974, for my fateful trip to the United States, I have heard reports relayed to the President that Commander Pusa had been denounced by Metrocom troopers for his abuses along the nightclub strip on Roxas Boulevard. I even heard President Marcos telling Major General Fabian Crisologo-Ver to warn Congressman Cojuangco that his prized "Huk protege" should be cautioned a bit on his impulsiveness.

News management and manipulation is a forte of Marcos; it was and still is an important part of the fakery and duplicity that marks his political career of perfidy in the stage of Philippine history. As early as when he was still a congressman, I recall, he would walk up to the press gallery of the House of Representatives and ask the newsmen: *Ano kayang story ang mapakulo natin para mapa-headline tayo bukas?* (What story might we concoct so that we can land the headlines of the newspapers tomorrow?). When he was Senate President, and his hold on the No. 1 Senate position became increasingly precarious in view of the manipulations of then President Diosdado Macapagal and the late Finance Secretary Rufino G. Hechanova, Marcos would call me by telephone in the office or in my humble house in Project 6 Quezon City and feed me and through me, the other reporters covering the Senate beat,

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with stories on alleged "conspiracies" being arranged by some Nacionalista senators with the Liberals to oust him as Senate President. His objective was to expose the NP conspirators, without naming them, and thereby discourage them with the expose from going through with their plans to help the Macapagal Liberals oust him from the premier Senate post. This was with the full utilization of media. As it was then, so it is now — and with greater ease on the part of Marcos because he controls media in the Philippines by the coercive powers of his martial regime and by his virtual ownership, personally and through in-laws and cronies, of all media establishments in the country.

The continuing efforts of the martial regime to smash the New People's Army rebellion throughout the country is an interesting case study in media control. Although clashes between the AFP (Armed Forces of the Philippines) and the NPA (Communist New People's Army) occur daily in the countryside, stories are given publicity only when the AFP either scores a victory or when President Marcos finds the needs to remind the Supreme Court and some visiting foreigners that there is "an absolute necessity to maintain martial law" because the Communist rebellion still constitutes a clear and present danger to the security of the country.

Marcos found the need to reassert the martial rule over media when he instructed me in July, 1974, to order the Philippine newspapers not to give any publicity to the raid conducted by the Metrocom at the Jesuit Novitiate in Novaliches. The embargo was lifted, however, three days later when copies of the Pacific Stars and Stripes, and subsequent xerox copies, were circulated widely in Manila, giving the story on the raid conducted by Metrocom troopers armed to the teeth on a place whose only occupants were foreign priests and nuns in meditation. The version that the Manila newspapers and other media outlets was allowed to publicize made it appear that the raid was conducted with the "consent and assistance" of the Bishop of Manila, and that subversive elements were captured in the raid. Archbishop Jaime Sin protested not only the raid, which was conducted in a most irregular manner, but also the lopsided martial law government news version that the raid was "assisted" by the officers of the Catholic hierarchy. For Archbishop Sin and other ranking Catholic leaders of the Philippines, the Novaliches raid was the "casus belli" they apparently were waiting for to start their active protest against the "climate of fear and terror" that martial law has instilled among the flock.

The signs of growing restiveness among the clergy came just a few days after the news agencies reported the arrest by Jewish security forces of the Greek Catholic Archbishop of Jerusalem for alleged smuggling of arms to Palestine guerillas operating inside Israel. The Manila newspapers gave the story of the Greek Catholic Archbishop's arrest the usual downplay in their foreign news sections on the inside pages. When the Filipino clergy's restiveness over the Novaliches raid began to gather strength and following, what with the prayer vigil being led by Archbishop Sin himself "for the restoration of civil liberties," Marcos — as usual unable to find any creative production by Secretary Tatad — himself ordered that the news story on the arrest of the Greek archbishop be given wide and prominent publicity "in the front pages" of the newspapers and over the radio and television stations.

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The message of Dictator Marcos came loud and clear: If Sin did not shut up, the same fate could befall him. But the good archbishop was not to be intimidated as he took on a more active and determined leadership of the protest movement against martial law's repressive rule in the Philippines.

And then, just a few days after the prayer vigil organized by Archbishop Sin at the Manila Cathedral, a passenger bus (JD Transit) was "bombed" as it made a stop a near the defunct Congress building on Padre Burgos Street. In keeping with the original guidelines, newspaper editors called MAC and the DPI for guidance on how they should treat the story. The advice given was that they should ignore it, as if nothing had happened. Only three men died in that incident, caused by a hand grenade apparently left inside the bus with a timing device. However, the following day, General Ver, Chief of the Presidential Security Command and the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency, angrily called up Tatad to inquire why he ordered the suppression of the bus bombing incident. Not only that, the good general demanded that Tatad direct the newspapers to publish the full details of the bombing incident. Since Narciso Marquez, Jr., chief of the presidential press office at the time, could not get the full story from the Metrocom and the Manila Police Department, he was obliged to get the full story, complete with pictures of the bombed bus, from the office of General Ver itself. Ver had the full story, too.

I easily gleaned the objective of the Ver order to publicize the story, which was to beam a message to certain sectors of society that the relaxation of restrictions under martial rule as demanded by the activist clergy, could lead anew to anarchy as had happened inside the JD bus - an anarchy which I am certain was the handiwork of agents of General Ver. Ver was the main instrumentality of Marcos in organizing all those terrible daylight bombings and riots before martial law in Manila, the state of anarchy Marcos badly needed to justify the imposition of martial law in the Philippines.

The story of the Philippine media involves not only suppression or concoction of news stories, arrests of media men critical of Marcos or plain display of an insatiable appetite for more worldly possessions. Under martial rule, media is also being utilized to exact vengeance on the enemies of the President, his wife, Imelda, and brother-in-law, Kokoy Romualdez. Let us look at the plight of Ernesto del Rosario, former editor-in-chief of the Manila Chronicle, and Jose Luna Castro; former managing editor of the Manila Times, both good writers, during their time. They were hired by Kokoy Romualdez as editorial consultants of the Times-Journal for quite different reasons. Kokoy wanted to pay a debt of gratitude or show appreciation for the "honest broker" role played by Del Rosario in effecting a "reconciliation" between President Marcos and the rampaging Lopez brothers a few months before martial law was proclaimed.*15

(*15. Perhaps, it is an ingredient of his staying in power, but Marcos is the kind of man who would not hesitate to eat crap to attain his goals. It was in his interest that he lull the Lopezes and all his opponents into a false sense of security while he was preparing to impose martial law. So, he entered into a reconciliation with the Lopezes in May, 1972.)

On the other hand, Castro was hired to serve the vindictive objectives of Kokoy. Although Joe Luna was a sponsor in the baptisms of one of Kokoy's sons in 1962, this relationship, and important one in a Catholic country like the

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Philippines, did not deter Kokoy from carrying out his plans. He wanted Castro to be his slave, because he had long wanted to get even with the former Manila Times editor for the arrogance and persecutory behavior the editor had shown Kokoy when he has had to go around in 1965, begging the biggest daily newspaper in Manila to use the press statements of Ferdinand Marcos. Kokoy had that axe to grind against Joe Luna, who was a Pampangueno and an out-and-out Macapagal sympathizer in the 1965 election campaign.

To get even with Joe Luna, Kokoy had the Manila Times editor recruited into the Times-Journal in November, 1972, as resident editorial consultant, as distinguished from Del Rosario's position as a non-resident editorial consultant. Since he joined the TJ, Joe Luna has had to suffer the insults of Kokoy every morning, and has had to bear and grin it when Kokoy would lecture to him on how the journalism profession should be practiced.

As a further insult. Kokoy repeatedly vetoed attempts of Joe Luna to bring in his brother-in-law, Crispulo Icban, Jr., into the TJ. "Hire anybody, except your brother-in-law!" Kokoy would shout to Joe Luna.

It was in their role as resident and non-resident editorial consultants that Joe Luna and Ernie del Rosario became the unhappy victims of a presidential order for their "dismissal" from the TJ.

It came about when the Saudi Arabian government, the biggest oil supplier of the Philippines, protested the publication by the TJ of a series of wire-service articles on the escapades of rich Arab kings and sheiks.

Later on, Kokoy, who was — as usual indulging in his transcontinental love affairs — was apprised in New York about the presidential order affecting the editorial staff of his newspaper. He subsequently communicated with De Vega who, in turn, instructed me, to get in touch with Joe Luna Castro and Ernie Del Rosario to "reassure" them that "they would be taken care of;" they would still get their pay from the TJ. But Joe Luna considered himself virtually under house arrest. He would not venture outside his house because he was under instructions not to talk to anybody about his "dismissal."

Now, how would the Arabs react if they found out that the "firing" of the two editorial consultants was just a "palabras?"

As a matter of fact, Joe Luna Castro is back in harness for the TJ. He was even brought to San Francisco in the middle of March to set up the Western edition of the *Filipino Reporter*. Rosario "Nena" Olivares, the ostensible publisher of the TJ, assisted Joe Luna in setting up house for the *Filipino Reporter's* Western edition at 611 Post Street in San Francisco. The FR's Western edition was set precisely, according to Alconcel, to serve as a general propaganda vehicle for the Marcos administration, and more specifically, to counteract the damaging propaganda setback for the Manila martial regime of my defection and subsequent decision to write a column for the widest circulation Filipino-owned news weekly, the Philippine News, the largest circulated Filipino newspaper in the United States.

Champions of the New Society, of which I somehow was one for quite a while, have often argued that the loss of civil liberties, especially freedom of speech and of the press, was a necessary price Filipinos must pay for peace and order, and social and economic progress. General Carlos P. Romulo has even taken the lead in disparaging the relevance of liberal democracy to

fundamental Philippine problems.*¹⁶

(*16. Speech of Secretary of Foreign Affairs Carlos P. Romulo before the Commonwealth Club of California on May 24, 1973.)

After almost four years, however, the New Society is praised only by its chief architects and beneficiaries. And only the controlled Philippine media swallows that line. As a matter of fact, Philippine media have virtually nothing but praise for the Marcos martial regime and the wealth and beauty of Imelda Marcos. On such occasions as his or her birthday, or anniversary of the martial regime or of their wedding, the praise for Ferdinand and Imelda becomes almost hero worship.

Verily, the curtailment of press freedom will go on in the Philippines. Marcos does not intend to give back freedom of the press to the journalists. However, innovations will be resorted to as demanded by the circumstances to avoid the appearance of government control of media. This will be so, because the martial regime is more concerned with strengthening its powers than implementing basic reforms.

The so-called emancipation of the press under Presidential Decree No. 576 is illusory and at best misleading. Marcos cannot convince me that censorship has been abolished. I know how he operates. He operated media control personally through me while I was chairman of the Media Advisory Council. In any case, whether prior censorship has been abolished or not, post-publication censorship has not ceased. This is done through the licensing power. The Sword of Damocles that hangs over the head of Philippine mass media is the reason for the timidity of media men under the martial regime.

The antagonistic attitude of the military towards the mass media was developed by Marcos himself. Marcos successfully convinced the military that most mass media people were Communist sympathizers. This was the reason for the wholesale closings and arbitrary arrests of publishers and journalists known to be hostile to Marcos as martial law was imposed. The army assumed an attitude that the mass media were directly responsible for the growing discontent of the past years. Marcos beefed up this posture by placing the initial job of censorship in the hands of the military.

As the first media censors of the dictatorship, the military remained sensitive to any adverse publicity against the defense establishment or the ruling duumvirate in Malacanang.

With the mass media reduced to docility, people naturally found outlets for saying things. They resorted to rumors. Rumor-mongering then became a major source of trouble, for the martial law administrators. Marcos signed a decree declaring rumor-mongering a crime triable by military tribunals.

Rumors and the spreading of rumors were not only banned, but were decreed subversive, ipso facto. Major General Fidel Ramos, chief of the Philippine Constabulary, declared that: "Rumor-mongers and those who thrive on fishing out false information inimical to the public welfare or that would tend to make the people unduly worried or jittery will be arrested and detained." In this instance, the rumors alleged that the constabulary was conducting house-

to-house night-time searches in various "zones" around Manila, a practice reminiscent of the Japanese Occupation. Subsequently, the rumors were confirmed, but not in the Philippine news media. In another instance, Baldomero Olivera, a veteran newspaperman and founder of the Philippine News Service, was arrested and detained for two months for delivering some offhand, humorous comments about President and Mrs. Marcos. He was charged but never tried for "spreading rumors." Olivera actually resorted to "humor-mongering."

One of the worst cases of rumor-mongering that I have had to handle involved the publication of a parody of "Prometheus Unbound" in the Focus-Philippines weekly news-magazine. It was a poem of 22 lines. The first letter every line read "MARCOS DIKTADOR HITLER TUTA" downward. The piece was obviously intentionally written for the Focus-Philippines to embarrass its owners, Presidential Assistant Tavera and his wife, Kerima. The news-magazine was already in circulation two days before the planted poem was "discovered." Of course, it was not a "discovery" at all. The clever author(s) really made sure that the *Focus-Philippines* edition containing the parody was already in circulation before calls were made to students at the University of Santo Tomas, then to the MAC, DPI, OCR, and Focus offices to "protest" the publication of "a slur against the President." The "rumor" spread like wildfire. In this particular case, all the President's men coordinated their efforts to retrieve all copies of the Focus magazine. Only about 100 copies could be recovered. It was the best-selling edition of the Focus magazine.

On his own, Secretary Tatad fired off a memorandum to the President suggesting that the Focus magazine be closed down. Tatad likewise called me up and suggested that I recommend to the President that the magazine's certificate of authority to operate be revoked. When I took up the matter with Marcos, he vetoed my proposal to close down Focus magazine. However, he directed me to "post censors in every mass media office." From now on, he said, we will be strict again. It was evident that the thick hide of the dictator has been pricked.

Focus magazine was actually given a permit by the defunct Mass Media Council in November, 1972, to operate as a semi-government organ. Of course, Tavera had made sure earlier that Marcos gave prior approval to the magazine project. It was Marcos' approval that was taken to mean by the MMC as a directive to approve the publication of *Focus*. Later, however, Tavera changed his mind and had his wife, Kerima, publish the *Focus* as a private undertaking, taking in commercial advertising. But Tavera refused to change his mind about the printing of *Focus* for free by the National Media Production Center.

There was no justification for Focus, other than the greed of the Taveras to make use of government printing facilities for private ends, to masquerade as a government organ. The martial regime already has its own official mass media agencies which are supported with government fund through the Department of Public Information and the NMPC. A plethora of newspapers, magazines and broadcasting stations outwardly owned by government agencies compete with "private" media in dishing out propaganda to the general public. The DPT's Bureau of National and Foreign Information publishes such periodicals as *The Republic and Philippine Prospect*. The National Media Production Center regularly issues *Philippines Today*,

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Government Report and Philippine News. Tuvera edits *Government Report* for the NMPC.

There is one government television channel (TV4) and half a dozen radio stations operated by the Philippine Broadcasting Service, a unit of the DPI's Bureau of Broadcast, and one station operated by the Voice of the Philippines, a unit of the NMPC.

In the United States, the two major propaganda organs of the martial regime are the *Filipino Reporter* and the *Manila Journal*. The *Filipino Reporter* was originally New York-based and started out by former Manila Times military reporter Libertito Pelayo as an independent organ. However, economic necessity compelled him to sell out his Western edition to the martial regime. Both the *Filipino Reporter* and the *Manila-Journal* are directly controlled as to financing and editorial content by Gov. Benjamin "Kokoy" Romualdez. Funds for these two organs are raised most of the time by Kokoy from President Marcos' contingent fund and from the Department of Public Information. The *Manila-Journal*, which, like the FR, is mailed free to former balikbayans in the United States, is printed in the Philippines in the printing facilities of the defunct *Manila Chronicle* and airlifted free of charge every week to San Francisco.

From time to time, subsidies are dished out by Kokoy to various Filipino publications in the United States. The Philippine Mail in Salinas and the *Bataan News* in Sacramento, California, are among the part-time organs of propaganda of the dictatorship in the Philippines.

To their credit, the independent *Philippine News*, published by Alex Esclamado in the West Coast; the *Philippine Times*, published by Edwin Olivera in the mid-west; and the monthly *Ningas Cogon*, published by Loida Nicolas-Lewis in the East Coast, have rejected overtures that they receive funding from the martial law regime.

There are other radical news-sheets published in the United States which the long arm of Marcos' operatives in the U.S. have not dared attempt to buy out. Among them are *Silayan*, monthly of the National Committee for Restoration of Civil Liberties in the Philippines; *Tambuli*, of Chicago, a four-page newsletter of the Union of Democratic Filipinos; *Pahayag*, of Honolulu, a 12-page mimeographed monthly of a group of concerned Filipinos and Americans; *Philippine Information Bulletin*, bi-monthly of Cambridge, Mass.; *Ang Katipunan*, of Oakland; *Bangon*, of Ann Arbor, Michigan; *Makibaka*, Connecticut periodical of the NCRCLP; and *Tanikala*, New York bi-monthly of the National Association of Filipinos in the U.S.

A radical underground press continues to flourish back home in the Philippines, while the official and anointed "private" media pamper the Marcos dictatorship. Declared illegal by the dictatorial regime, progressive groups have become even more prolific and viotriolic in the secret newspapers, newsletters and leaflets condemning Marcos as being dictatorial, pointing out the future of martial law programs and calling for nationwide resistance.

The most open of the anti-martial law newssheets came out originally under the logo of "Various Reports," a mimeograph newssheet published by the Association of Major Religious Superiors. When I was chairman of the MAC, I chose not to interfere in the affairs of the major religious superiors, as I found their product most interesting and informative. However, when Brig. Gen. Hans Menzi, the former presidential aide, assumed the chairmanship of the newly-

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established Print Media Council, he ordered the AMRSP to "cease publication immediately" because "Various Reports" did not have a permit from Menzi's council. The AMRSP bowed to Menzi's demands, but came out with a similar product, under the logo this time of "Sign of the Times." The new product was no different from the original one. The AMRSP served notice it would not under any circumstance capitulate to Menzi's demands.

The following have appeared off and on as underground publications since the advent of martial law: *Bangon, The Report, The Rebel, Pandayan, Ang Taong Bayan, Bagong Moog ng Maynila, Ka-Ingat Kayo, Taliba ng Bayan, (Herald of the Country), Ulos (Spear), Citizen and Tinig ng Masa, Liberation, Pilipinas. Dare to Struggle, Dare to Win, People's Courier and Clenched Fist.*

These periodicals, as well as chain letters and xeroxed copies of banned materials, travel national and international networks as their readers take seriously the request in the logo-types, "pass this newsletter on to a friend after reading." In the Philippines, the papers are distributed in markets, on campuses and even door to door, despite the threat of at least six months imprisonment for possession of them.

Today, media ownership is more concentrated than before martial law. To mention a few; *The Daily Express, Evening Express, Pilipino Express, Express-week magazine* as well as *TV Channels 4 and 9* together with more than a dozen radio stations of the Kanlaon Broadcasting System (KBS) are controlled by Ambassador Roberto S. Benedicto and Enrique P. Romualdez, the First Lady's cousin. An affiliate, *TV Channel 2* of the Barangay Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), operates from the same KBS center.

The ownership structure of *TV Channel 13* is nebulous but *TV Channel 7* is controlled by Gualberto Duavit, a former presidential aide.

Bulletin Today and its sister publications, *Lidayway, Bannawag, and Bisaya*, are owned by General Menzi, a one-time senior Presidential aide-de-camp.

Times-Journal and its other periodicals are owned by Governor Benjamin Romualdez, the First Lady's brother.

Even Kerima Polotan Tuvera, the First Lady's official biographer, has her own string of mass media establishments in addition to *Focus-Philippines*. Kerima owns the *Orient News*, a Chinese-English daily, for circulation in the Chinese community, and the *Evening Post*, an afternoon daily.

The present ownership of mass media facilities in the Philippines leads to one more official rationale (because there are several) for the harsh treatment of journalists and publishers upon the declaration of martial law. Marcos had said that it was necessary to dismantle the oligarchic structure of the old society media and to create a government-supervised new society media. He claimed that the old society press was too sick to heal. He said it was beyond reform and had to be replaced completely. Well, it was completely replaced by his cronies Roberto S. Benedicto, Gilberto Duavit, Kokoy and the Tuveras. These groups have constituted themselves into neo-oligarchic publishers.

If the media industry under the dictatorial regime in the Philippines is in a mess, the lot of the practising journalist is worse. Although there have been assurances against future arbitrary arrest, any journalist is still exposed to the danger of being arrested on some grounds entirely unrelated to his professional

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undertaking. Filipino newsmen have not forgotten that those journalists who were picked up in the dead of night when martial law was imposed, were arrested allegedly for "being participants or for having given aid and comfort in the conspiracy to seize political and state power in the country and to take over the government by force." Yet, not one of them was ever charged with such an offense. The government has had to release them provisionally.

No wonder, the International Press Institute, at its convention in Zurich in May, 1975, unanimously withdrew the recognition accorded the Philippine National Committee on the ground that a free press does not exist in the Philippines.

The Institute waited for three years before taking such drastic action, hoping year after year that the press situation in the country would improve. It deferred action on the Philippine case at its Jerusalem General Assembly in June of 1973 and again at the Kyoto General Assembly in May of 1974. In 1975, it was constrained to suspend the Philippine Committee. Juan Quijano reported that the IPI came to the conclusion that its hope that the situation of the Philippine press would improve has become evanescent.

For martial law is antithetical to a free press - it cannot coexist and it has not co-existed in the Philippines for the past four years. Like all other freedoms which are our birthright under the Constitution, it can never be truly restored so long as martial law continues.

Four former presidents of the National Press Club are on the forefront of the struggle for restoration of democracy in the Philippines. They are Antonio Zumel, who is out there in some dark hideaway in the suburbs of Manila, grinding out the underground press; Eddie Monteclaro, who is on self-imposed exile in Chicago where he works as copy editor for the *Sun Times*; Amando Doronilla, who chose to settle down in Australia and work for the *Sydney Herald* after being given a travel permit in late 1975; and I, in my humble way, in the West Coast.

The four of us are ranged against a friend, Teodoro F. Valencia, who has tried very hard to be a Marcos defender in hopes, perhaps, of succeeding me in having that vital direct access to the President. He has not gained any success, I understand, despite the fact that he has become the chairman of the Broadcast Media Council.

Valencia, like any other practising media man in the Philippines, is still subject to censorship as originally ordained by Marcos when he imposed martial law.

The fact that censorship is still a bludgeon held by Dictator Marcos over the heads of media men in the Philippines is indicative of his own sense of instability. Censorship, an ancient sage once said, is always a symptom of a frightened leader.

Chapter XIII

American Tax Dollar Abets R.P. Repression

The nascent imperial dynasty in a country for which the United States had spent billions of hard-earned tax dollars for training in a democratic self-government will continue to nag the conscience of America.

Martial rule by Marcos in the Philippines continues, and can only continue, because of the direct and indirect support that the United States government - as distinguished from the more sensible American people who contribute their hard-earned money in taxes paid to Uncle Sam's coffers - extends to the Marcos - military dictatorship. And so, for as long as there is martial law in the Philippines, with its continuing repression of dissent and of the press, torture of political prisoners, and reallocation of the country's resources to a few families, so long must the conscience of America be tortured.

The sad and unfortunate fact is that not only were the billions of dollars and 46 years of investment to make the Philippines a show window of American democracy in Asia wasted, but that millions more of dollars are still being wasted by the United States government on the dictatorial martial regime of Marcos. For, verily, a refined Watergate scandal in the Philippines continues to foist itself upon the hapless Filipinos, deriving strength and vital support from the fact that hard-earned American tax dollars are propping up the martial regime in Manila.

While the United States assistance to the Philippines, started as early as 1946 to the newly-independent democratic Republic and still being continued in increased amounts to the Marcos dictatorship, is not really much in terms of dollars and compared to assistance extended to other countries around the globe, the fact that it is given at all, with the undeniable implication that its grant is a direct support of the repressive martial regime, is what really counts; it serves as a stabilizing factor to the authoritarian regime, while it deters any massive opposition that could compel Marcos to restore democracy in the Philippines.

It is heartening to note though that the United States Congress has started a review of the foreign assistance program of Uncle Sam. As a result of exhaustive investigations conducted by its Committee on International Relations, the full House of Representatives voted in mid-September, 1974, to tack on to the \$2.87-billion foreign aid bill a provision that no economic aid be provided "to the government of any country which engages in a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights, including torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment, prolonged detention without charges, or other flagrant denials of the right to life, liberty and the security of a person." Although the Philippines was not mentioned by name, it was very evident that the Marcos regime's repressive character was very much in the mind of the members of the House who voted 144 to 155 in favor of the provision as introduced by Rep. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa). The Subcommittee on International Organizations of the House International Relations Committee held extensive hearings on suppression of

human rights under the Marcos military regime last June.

The U.S. Senate tacked on to its own version of the Foreign Aid bill more stringent restrictions that would deny U.S. aid to countries practising the internment of political prisoners.

But this terrible blow to Marcos' face by both chambers of the U.S. Congress may not have its desired effects at the moment. Marcos is a very shrewd man.

He believes that his newly-established alliance with Mao Tse Tung elevates him to a position of strength in bargaining for better terms on the Philippines-United States defense arrangements. Mr. Marcos realizes that the U.S. government, whether it likes it or not, is in no position to "de-stabilize" his martial regime, at least not until after the American presidential elections of 1976.

Mr. Marcos has taken cognizance, however, of the new portentous wind blowing in the U.S. Congress concerning the reexamination of U.S. aid policy towards the Philippines. It was precisely in anticipation of this reexamination task by this congressional committee, that Mr. Marcos started beaming messages all over that he himself wants such a reexamination of all Philippine treaties with the United States. He had hoped that, since he himself had already called for the restudy, the U.S. Congress would no longer do that. At the same time, Mr. Marcos started preparing the minds of the Filipino people to the possibility of a cutback or complete denial of U.S. aid to the Philippines. His gambit is to claim later, if aid be really cut or denied, that he himself had asked for such action from the U.S. government because aid was being given under terms so iniquitous and derogatory to the self-respect and dignity of a free country as the Philippines is. Marcos is a master of the strategy of preemptive strike.

The regime's propaganda line was to the effect that the American assistance to the Philippines is not really much, only about \$100 million a year. The line now being mouthed by Manila's press under the baton of President Marcos himself, is that the \$100 million U.S. aid is less than FIVE (%) per cent of the country's export income, and could easily be made up for by resources available to the Philippines, if finally cut off. In any case, so the propaganda line goes, the major portion of U.S. aid goes anyway to salaries and maintenance of U.S. personnel administering the aid; that U.S. aid personnel are in turn given access to high councils of government. with opportunities to spy, meddle and spread gossips and rumors disruptive of the aims of the authoritarian regime.

In my testimony before the Fraser committee, I also raised the following points respecting the misuse of U.S. aid to the Philippines:

XI. DICTATORSHIP ENTRENCHED BY U.S. AID

Aside from plundering an entire nation, the conjugal dictatorship is also misappropriating United States military and other assistance to get itself entrenched in power and for its personal glorification.

As a matter of fact, the continuing grant of U.S. military and economic assistance to the Philippine government is underscored boldly by the martial regime as an unmistakable show of support and endorsement by Uncle Sam for the authoritarian regime. Not only is American aid misrepresented to show American support for the dictatorship, but the financial and material aid that pour in from the U.S. are actually misused directly or indirectly by the regime.

1) American-made weapons and ammunition, given as assistance or sold on credit or paid for U.S. financial aid, are used by the regime of President Marcos to maintain a large standing army whose main function is to insure the stability of his rule by repressing political opponents and business rivals.

2) A greater portion of U.S. military assistance is supposed to be allocated for counterinsurgency projects. But they actually go to the maintenance of the Presidential Security Command, now the most powerful command in the country's armed establishment, and the Philippine Constabulary. Both commands are Mr. Marcos' main armed forces units of repression; they maintain the military stockades where thousands of political prisoners are held without charges, without trial. The Presidential Security Command provides the manpower recruits for the national secret police which Mr. Marcos caused his chief security man, Major General Fabian Ver, to organize by virtue of a decree, entitled the "Internal Security Act."

3) In the field of economic assistance, agricultural and infrastructure projects funded with U.S. aid are awarded to contractors with whom President Marcos or his front men are tied up. In road construction, for instance, the big projects are awarded to the Construction and Development Corporation of the Philippines, a multi-million peso contracting firm where the front man of Mr. Marcos is a Mr. Rodolfo Cuenca.

4) In health, education and cultural fields, which are funded in parts of U.S. aid program, only projects that improve the image of the dictatorship in the eyes of the people get priorities.

5) In the purchase of medicines by the Department of Health, part of which is funded with U.S. aid, the greater bulk of the purchase order, about 60 percent, goes to the United Drug Company, the biggest pharmaceutical firm in the country which is owned by the front man of the President in the drug business, a Mr. Joselito Campos.

6) A glaring example of the misuse of US aid is the case of the Hercules C-130 cargo plane given by the USAF to the Philippine Air Force. Hardly had it been turned over, when the provincial resthouse of the Marcoses in Barrio Olot, Tolosa, Leyte province, was burned down by disgruntled barrio folks. Among those who set the sprawling resthouse afire were people who were practically evicted from their small lots which surround the Olot resthouse; their properties were forcibly purchased from them so the vacation compound could be expanded. The compound was burned down in late May. Since the birthday celebration of the First Lady (on July 2, 1974) was just a month away, the resthouse had to be reconstructed at all cost; Mrs. Marcos has already invited her international jetset friends, headed by Mrs Christina Ford. So, construction materials, (e.g. cement, hollow blocks, and lumber, etc.) were airlifted from Manila to Tacloban City, which was the nearest airport to Barrio Olot, by

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Philippine Air Force planes, mainly the C-130 Hercules plane, in order to complete construction of the destroyed area on time for the birthday bash.

The same Hercules plane ferries the numerous security men who go with the First Lady on her trips abroad. The same plane was used to ferry numerous billboards and printed materials extolling the virtues of the conjugal leadership for the inauguration of the Philippine Center in New York last November (1974).

7) The female half of the conjugal dictatorship is responsible for the failure of most foreigners, especially top officials, to detect the dictatorial nature of the regime. It was her decision that, whenever U. S. government officials and newspapermen come to Manila, the uniformed sentry guards at the Malacanang barricades should be removed, barricades and all; only when they leave are these signs of martial rule restored again.

The National Coordinating Committee of the Anti-Martial Law (Philippines) Movement came out recently with a very-well researched paper, entitled, "The Logistics of Repression," which was actually a report on the volume, forms, and functions of the U.S. military assistance to the martial regime of Marcos. It was published initially in the Philippines Information Bulletin, Vol. III, Nos. 2 and 3. July 1975. I am reproducing the report hereunder with approval, but I have taken the liberty of editing it in some portions.

General Considerations. Ever since the imposition of martial law in the Philippines in September 1972, American policymakers have suffered from an inability to clarify exactly what a stance of "non-interference" in the internal matters of the Philippines means in practical terms. Thus the contingent of the Department of Defense during the Congressional hearings on the 1974 military assistance proposal could apparently find no contradiction in claiming that while the U.S. government viewed the installation of martial law regimes in Korea and the Philippines as constituting "internal domestic changes undertaken by a sovereign nation," *1 it was nevertheless actively providing the Philippines martial law regime with military assistance "designed to provide mobility, firepower, and communications — the three basic elements required to combat insurgency forces." *2

(*1. U.S. Congress, House Appropriations Committee, Hearings Foreign Assistance and Related Agencies Appropriations for FY 1974 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1973), p. 1377.

*2. Ibid., p. 1334.)

But whatever might be the ambiguities of administration policy at the rhetorical level, at the behavioral level, it is quite clear that the United States is intimately involved in propping up the Marcos martial law regime. Distinctions between support for an abstract "central government" engaged in "nation-building" *3 and support for the concrete power-group that manages that government become quite meaningless at the practical level when the latter utilizes an American-equipped and American-trained army and police to abolish civil liberties, destroy the opponents, and wage an extremely destructive war against national minorities seeking redress of their legitimate grievances. Such

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rhetorical distinctions in fact begin to sound insincere and suspicious when the levels of military assistance increase — and increase sharply, as we shall document with the advent of the dictatorial regime from the levels of aid to the previous democratic state. *3

*3. See the conceptualization of military aid objectives by Admiral Ray Peet, *ibid.*, p. 1978.*)

Under conditions of martial law, providing military aid for the purpose of assisting the Marcos government crush “insurgency” has become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Contrary to its proclaimed intentions of restoring law and order, the martial law regime, with its reliance on repression and its familiar tactic of branding all dissenters — Christian, Muslim, or nationalist — as “Maoist” or “Maoist-inspired” has actually generated the widespread expansion of armed, organized opposition inasmuch as this remains the only effective means of civil dissent possible. Government by armed repression has not created the desired Kissingerian goals of “order” and “stability” but merely radicalized the methods and goals of most opposition groups.

Whatever might have been the case prior to martial law, it is quite clear that “insurgency”— with its connotations of small-scale and uncoordinated brushfire acts against “public order” which lack widespread popular support — has become an inappropriate term for the armed resistance to martial law carried out by the Muslims in the southern Philippines and the New People’s Army in the north. The Muslim resistance can be fitted into the conceptual straitjacket of “insurgency” only with great difficulty. As a recent New York Times news analysis notes, “. . .” for the sake of perspective, it is worth bearing in mind that with an estimated 16,000 men under arms, it is roughly twice as large as the biggest Communist movement going (in Southeast Asia), that of Thailand.*4

(*4. New York Times, May 11, 1975.*)

It now practically covers the whole of central and southern Mindanao as well as the Sulu Archipelago, and as numerous eyewitness journalistic accounts have consistently confirmed, enjoys widespread popular support. “Insurgency” has also become an inappropriate description for the anti-martial law activities of the New People’s Army. The Marcos government itself admitted in early 1974 that the NPA “had expanded its activities to areas in the Visayan Islands and Mindanao” *5 from its pre-martial law base areas in northern and southern Luzon. (*5. New York Times, January 13, 1974.)

The island of Samar, which lies next door to Leyte, the provincial bailiwick of Mrs. Imelda Romualdez Marcos, has become, according to the Far Eastern Economic Review, one of the NPA’s expansion areas. *6 The number of NPA regulars, according to the estimates of the Philippine Army, which has traditionally belittled the size of the insurgent group, has increased since martial law to 2,266 *7 with a support-population numbering many thousands more.

(*6. Bernard Wideman, “A new front for the insurgents,” Far Eastern Economic Review, July 15, 1974.

7. New York Times, January 13, 1974.)

Given these considerations, it is difficult to avoid the judgement that U.S. military aid to Marcos — like U.S. military intervention in Cambodia in 1970 — must bear a special responsibility for generating widespread civil disorder and accelerating the development of civil war, as opposed to merely insurgent, situations in many parts of the Philippines.

Pre-Martial Law and Post-Martial Law Levels of Official Military Aid

While the policy rhetoric of the administration with respect to the Marcos regime has been filled with ambiguities and contradictions, there is no ambiguity about the sharp increases of the levels of aid to the Marcos regime after martial law:

Military Assistance Program (MAP). Since 1946 grant aid under the Military Assistance Program has made up the biggest component of the military aid package to the Philippines. MAP grants to the Philippines were erratically declining in the period before martial law but began to experience a steady upsurge after martial law. MAP aid in the three years after martial law came to \$7.8 million more than the total for the three years before martial law, as shown in the consolidated military aid table on page 5.

Foreign Military Sales Credits (FMS). Prior to martial law the Philippines had no access to credits extended by the U.S. government for the purchase of arms and military equipment under the Foreign Military Sales program. "FMS credit," according to the Defense Department, "is the bridge leading allied and friendly countries from dependence on MAP grant aid to that state of self-sufficiency in which they can purchase for cash the military equipment and services they require." *8.

(*8. Department of Defense, Foreign Military Sales and Military Assistance Facts (Washington: Dept. of Defense, 1974), p.4.)*

The "basic policy" regarding the pace of transition, Vice Admiral Ray Peet asserted during his congressional testimony on May 31, 1973, is "to phase out the grant aid (MAP) as fast as we can in any country and convert to FMS sales."*9

(* 9. House Appropriations Committee, op. cit. p. 993.)*

However, whatever might be the case with other American client-states, the policy enunciated by Admiral Peet has not been applied to the Philippines. \$8.6 million in FMS credit were extended in 1974 and \$7 million in 1975, but instead of being balanced, by cuts in the MAP component, as the "basic policy" would lead us to expect, they were in fact accompanied by an increase of \$5 million in MAP aid in 1975.

Excess Defense Articles. Turning to the third major component of military assistance, the transfer of "excess defense articles," we find an even more noticeable pattern of increase after martial law. Whereas in the three years before martial law only \$7.2 million worth of excess-military equipment was transferred to the Philippines, in the three years after martial law (FY 1973, 1974, 1975) transfer amounted to \$21.8 million. The sharp increase in the

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value of excess defense articles delivered may be interpreted as the successful outcome of Mr. Marcos' campaign to gain access to surplus military equipment in Vietnam. As he declared in an interview with the New York Times in early 1973, after the conclusion of the Paris Peace Agreements, "We would understand a shortage during the Vietnam War. But we certainly would like access now to what has been declared surplus materials."^{*10}

(*10. New York Times, April 13, 1973.)*

In 1973, "the largest single equipment transfers in years" took place, according to a Washington Post correspondent, with the "United States . . . turning over 16 'surplus' C-123 military transport planes and four C-47 transports."^{*11}

(*11. The Washington Post, June 6, 1973.)*

In 1974, excess defense material turned over to the Philippine? amounted to \$10.7 million above the 1973 figure. In this regard, it is significant that in June 1974 Admiral Noel Gayler, then commander-in-chief of the U.S. Pacific Forces, whose office controlled the disposition of Vietnam surplus materials, was awarded the Philippine Legion of Honor, being specifically cited for "Exceptionally meritorious and distinguished service rendered to the Republic of the Philip- pines ... to enhance the development and modernization of the Armed Forces of the Philippines by accelerating the delivery of critical equipment and supplies . . ." ^{*12}

(*12. Cited in Robert Wenkman, *The Great Pacific Rip-Off* (Chicago: Follett Publishing Company, 1974), p.134. Underscoring ours.)*

Ship Transfers. Like the value of excess defense articles, that of ship transfers, the fourth major component of the military aid package, experienced a sharp increase after martial law: whereas the value of naval vessels transferred to the Philippine Navy and Coast Guard came to \$1.8 million in 1972, in 1973 it came to \$22.8 million. It is significant that although only about \$4 million worth of naval vessels were originally programmed for transfer in FY 1973 during the congressional hearings of June 1972, ^{*13}

(*13. U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee, *Hearings, Foreign Assistance and Related Programs Appropriations, FY 1973* (Washington, D.C: Govt Printing Office, 1972), p. 1062.)

the final value of ships transferred during that fiscal year came to almost six times that figure and represented what was perhaps the most expensive yearly transfer of naval vessels in the postwar history of American military assistance to the Philippines. The unforeseen increase in naval material assistance was most probably triggered by the need to support the Marcos regime s campaign to suppress the Muslim resistance to martial law which erupted in the Sulu Archipelago and Southern Mindanao in late 1972 — a campaign which has relied heavily on naval supply operations, naval interdiction of rebel movements, and the launching of marine-type offensive operations.

Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG). Military assistance in the form of the Joint U.S. Military Advisory Group (JUSMAGP) was valued at \$1.7 million in 1975, up from \$1.4 million in 1972. The number of American military and civilian advisors was equal to that prior to martial law - 49 to 50 military men and nine civilians. ^{*14}

(* 14. See House Appropriations Committee, op. cit., p. 980.)*

Stability in this case was in fact a gain, especially in view of the regional cutback in MAAG strength stemming in part from congressional pressure: MAAG personnel in the East Asia-Pacific region were reduced by about 28% between 1972 and 1974.*¹⁵ JUSMAGP has in fact been one of the better staffed military advisory missions in the world. In 1974 it was the 10th largest in size of 47 country missions, being larger than any country mission in Latin America and Europe and bigger than the teams in, among other U.S. allies, Japan, Indonesia, Australia, and Pakistan.* ¹⁶

(*¹⁵. *Ibid*)

(*¹⁶. *Ibid.*)

Officer Training. The only component of the military aid package to decline relative to pre-martial law levels was officer training. Whereas \$1.1 million in MAP funds was earmarked for the training of 453 Filipino officers in 1972, \$899 thousand was allocated for 400 officers in 1973 and \$631 thousand for 292 officers in 1974. The post-martial law cutbacks had little practical significance, however, inasmuch as the Philippines has traditionally had an extremely swollen annual contingent in the MAP training program for foreign officers. Between 1950 and 1973, a total of 14,745 Filipino officers were trained under MAP, making the Philippines the eighth largest contributor of 72 foreign countries involved in the program.*¹⁷

(* ¹⁷. Department of Defense, op. cit. p.11.*)

Indeed, even with the reduction of Filipino trainees in 1973 and 1974, the Philippine contingent trained during these two years was the sixth largest of 47 participating national contingents — outstripping even such traditional MAP-training program stalwarts as Taiwan, Turkey, Greece, and Japan.

Conclusions. Comparing the levels of total U.S. military assistance in the three years after martial law, we see an increase of about 100% in the latter period, from \$60.2 million in FY 1970-72 to \$118.8 million in 1973-75. The increase in military aid was particularly sharp in 1973, the first year of martial law: total aid for that year (\$45.3 million) more than doubled the 1972 figure (\$18.5 million). It is interesting to point out in this connection that although only \$28.5 million in total military aid for FY 1973 was originally proposed by the Defense Department during the congressional hearings in June 1972,* ¹⁸

(*¹⁸. Senate Appropriationd Cpmmittee, op. cit., p.1050)

the final figure was some 60% greater. Increases of such a scale are not casually decreed, and the motivation behind the additional aid in this case was quite clearly the need to support the military effort to impose the Marcos regime's declaration of martial law on September 22, 1972.

Cross-National Comparison of Aid Levels in FY 1973 and FY 1974

In a cross-national comparison of levels of U.S. military assistance the significance of the latter for the Marcos regime becomes even sharper. In FY 1973 and FY 1974 the total amount of military aid to the Philippines was: — the twelfth largest of 66 national allocations and contained the eight largest allocation for MAP aid (the major component of the assistance package) — larger than the total allocation for Africa

— larger than any allocation for a Western European country, including that for Spain

— larger than the allocation for Brazil, the largest recipient in Latin America, and larger than the combined totals of aid for the "southern cone" countries, Uruguay, Argentina, and Chile

--- In East Asia and the Pacific, larger than the allocations for Japan and Indonesia, and greater than the combined allocation for Japan, Malaysia, Pakistan, India, and Sri Lanka.

Clearly, then the United States government has, in matters of military assistance, granted the Philippines an extremely favorable treatment, contrary to the Marcos government's propaganda claims - aimed specifically at the U.S. Congress - that the United States has treated it as some sort of "poor cousin."

U.S. Military Assistance and Counter-Insurgency

American defense officials have at times been quite candid about the purposes of military aid. The stated objective of propping up the "external-defense" capability of the Philippines against the "Red Chinese threat" which was so frequently cited in the 1960s has given way in the seventies to rhetoric about improving the "internal-defense" capability of the Philippine Armed Forces. Thus Admiral Thomas Moorer, then chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, stated quite frankly during the congressional hearings on the 1974 military assistance proposal that:

The security assistance material program . . . are designed to provide mobility, firepower, and communications - the three basic elements required to combat insurgency forces. We are providing helicopters and transport aircraft, machine guns, recoilless rifles, and other weapons, together with long-range communications equipment. *19

(*19. House Appropriations Committee, op. cit. p1280.*)

An examination of the types of technical assistance and weaponry reaching the Philippine Armed Forces during the last three years would more than bear out Admiral Moorer's assertion.

JUSMAGP and the formation of Battalion Combat Teams. The Battalion Combat Team (BCT) is the basic Philippine military counterinsurgency force. Composed of about 600 men, the BCT grew out of the anti-Huk campaign of the early fifties with American advisory, and operational assistance.*20

(*20. For the close operational role of U.S. military officials in the anti-Huk campaign, see Edward Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars* (New York Harper and Row, 1972), passim.

Unlike MAAG's in most other countries, the role of JUSMAGP in the Philippines has not been limited to being a liaison for weapons aid. After martial law the advisory and operational role of JUSMAGP in the formation of BCT's appears to have intensified. As Senator Strom Thurmond reported to the Senate Armed Services Committee on February 22, 1975, after a tour of U.S. military facilities in the Asia/Pacific area, "The mission of JUSMAGP is to assist the Philippines Armed Forces in attaining the capability to maintain internal security . . . During recent years the primary effort of JUSMAGP has been to assist the Philippine

Army in increasing the number of combat battalions." *21 In this connection the Philippine Army more than doubled in size, from 16,000 men in 1972 to 35,000 men in 1974. *22 JUSMAGP assistance in this "beefing up" process has, according to international press reports, *23 included visits to and observation of battlefield areas in Mindanao, the seat of armed Muslim resistance to martial law.

Weaponry and Counterinsurgency. The more important weapons and weapons-systems delivered to the Philippines after the imposition of martial law which have been monitored by the press and various military-surveillance agencies, have been especially suited for counterinsurgency activities.

M-16s and high-powered recoilless rifles are, of course, the basic weapons of U.S.-trained counterinsurgency forces. In 1973 the Philippine Army received at least 13,770 new rifles as part of U.S. military assistance * 24 - enough to equip 33 new combat battalions. These were sent to the Philippines as part of the FMS program or as commercial sales.*25 Also funneled to the Marcos regime were Vietnam-proven M-79 grenade launchers and M-60 machine guns.*26 Since 1974 the Defense Department has been aiding the Marcos regime setup, with FMS credits and in cooperation with Colt Industries, an \$8 million M-16 factory in the Philippines patterned after arms- "co-production" arrangements in South Korea and Singapore.*27

(*21. Senator Strom Thurmond, *Asia/Pacific: Policy and Forces: Report to the Committee on Armed Services*) Washington, D.C.: Govt Printing Office, 1975), p. 40. _

*22. Institute of Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance, 1973-74, and 1973-75* (London: Institute of Strategic Studies, 1973 and 1974).

*23. *Sunday Times* (London), April 15, 1973.

*24. Department of State, "Military Assistance to the Government of the Philippines," (xeroxed material submitted to the Subcommittee on International Relations, House Foreign Affairs Committee) June 1975 (hereafter cited as Department of State, "Military Assistance. . .").

*25. Department of State, "Selected U.S. Military and Police Exports, 1974" (xerox).

*26. *New York Times*, April 2, 1973.

*27. U.S. Congress, House Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Hearings, Fiscal 1975 Foreign Assistance Request* (Washington: Govt. Printing Office, 1974), p. 354.

Arms self-sufficiency is supposed to be the goal of this "co-production" venture, but its most likely effect may instead be of the traditional allocation for small arms in the military aid package for use in the acquisition of more sophisticated and heavy weapons-systems.

Vietnam-type fragmentation bombs and napalm have persistently been reported by reliable sources as being in use in the fighting against guerrillas. *Le Monde* correspondent Patrice de Beer asserted that such bombs were used in combat against the New People's Army in the Jones area of Isabela province in April 1973.*28 These allegations must be seen as especially serious when they come from officials of Philippine government or officers of the Philippine army. In February 1973 a Filipino consul in Hawaii publicly admitted the use of napalm against "insurgents." *29 " According to an "Associated Press" report from Manila on February 1, 1975:

(*28. *Le Monde*, April 13, 1973; on the use of fragmentation bombs in Mindanao, see Brian Phelan, "Spectre of Jihad," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, May 13, 1973, p. 29.

*29. Ben Kerkvliet, "Statement for the Friends of the Filipino People," in House Committee on Foreign Affairs, *op. cit.*, p. 775.)

Col. Rudolfo Caniaso, commander of the 32nd Infantry Battalion in Pigcawayan, North Cotabato Province, and Esteban Doruelo, former Pigcawayan mayor and head of the town's home defense unit, had said that they watched from a spotter helicopter January 22 as Air Force jets dropped napalm on buildings suspected of being rebel warehouses near Tumbao. Colonel Caniaso also said that during another air strike, his troops 500 yards from the target area felt the heat of the bombs. *30

Proceeding to the heavy weapons systems supplied by the United States under the MAP program, we find that whereas only 38 units of the 13 major weapons types were furnished the Marcos regime in the three years before martial law, 134 units were provided in the three years after martial law. *31 These weapons systems are particularly suited for counter-guerrilla warfare.

"Huey" helicopters, critical components of the helicopter-based anti-guerrilla warfare developed by the U.S. in Vietnam have been among the choice weapons grants to the Philippines. From FY 1973 to FY 1975, 27 helicopters were transferred to the Philippine Armed Forces. *32

The M-113 APC (armed personnel carrier) has been described by the standard reference on weapons system as among the "most successful vehicles" in U.S. army service, having "proved especially valuable in the special circumstances of the Vietnam War." *33 In FY 1973, 20 of these vehicles reached the Philippine Army. *34

U.S.-supplied C-47 transport planes converted into gunships were observed in operation during the campaign against Muslim resistance groups in Jolo in early 1974. *35

(*30. New York Times, February 2, 1975.

*31. Department of State, "Military Assistance. .

*32. Department of State, "Military Assistance. .

*33. Jane's Weapons Systems 1972-73 (London: Jane's Yearbooks, 1972), p. 278.

*34. Department of State, "Military Assistance. .

35. New York Times, February 22, 1974.)

The U.S. has since provided the Marcos regime with transport aircraft which are not only more suitable for the efforts to supply troops fighting in Mindanao, some 500 miles south of Manila, but also more easily convertible than the C-47 into close-support armed aircraft for counter-insurgency operations. 16 surplus C-123 planes were transferred to the Philippines Armed Forces in 1973. *36 (* 36. *Washington Post*, June 6, 1973*)

Asked why such a quantity of C-123's was earmarked for the Philippines, the Defense Department spokesman replied, quite lamely, that "One need only to look at a map of the Philippines to see the need for air and sea transport." *37

(*37. House Appropriations Committee, op. cit., p. 1154. These aircraft were erroneously referred to as C-119's.)

The real reasons, we suggest!, had more to do with the massive operations that had to be mounted to supply the Philippine Army in the southern Philippines, where Muslim opposition to martial law had escalated to large-scale resistance by mid-1973. Moreover, the uses of large cargo craft in anti-guerrilla warfare, where no enemy air opposition exists, have not been limited to transport. The

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use of modern transport planes in Vietnam "for interdiction and suppression of enemy ground attack has proved very effective," according to the standard reference on military aircraft.*38 "Such gunships have the advantage of long endurance and an ability to carry a large load of ammunition needed to locate and attack enemy material and personnel." *39

An \$8 million military loan from the Export-Import Bank enabled the Marcos government to acquire four C-130 Hercules troop transports in 1973,*40 "The U.S. and other countries," a Lockheed ad asserts, "buy Hercules because it can do a lot of things other planes can't". Indeed the value of the C-130 does not lie only in its transport uses but also in its easy convertibility into a "close support" aircraft for counterinsurgent operations. Introduced to service in Vietnam in 1970 the armed version of the Hercules can be equipped with "four. . . multi-barrel cannons and 7.62 mm. Mini-guns . . . searchlights and sensors, including forward-looking infra-red target acquisition equipment and direct-view image intensification sights." *41

Like cargo aircraft, the T-28D training plane has also been found to be a convenient anti-guerilla weapon. It was regularly employed for air strikes against the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia. In FY 1975, 16 of these planes were transferred to the Philippine Armed Forces. *42.

*38. Jane's All the World's Aircraft, 1971 (London: Jane's Yearbooks, 1971), p. 303.

*39. Ibid.

*40. Stockholm Peace Research Institute. Arms Trade Register, (Stockholm: SIPRI, 1975), p. 18.

*41. Jane's All the World's Aircraft, 1973-74 (London: Jane's Yearbooks, 1973), p. 361.

*42. Department of State, "Military Assistance. . .".

Transfers of air and sea craft which are suitable for amphibious warfare became very salient in fiscal years 1973-75. Eight in-shore patrol craft, 13 landing craft, four amphibious troop carriers, 12 LARC-5 reached the Philippine Armed Forces during this period. Such craft are particularly suitable for naval counter-insurgent operations against the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia. In FY 1975, 16 of these planes were transferred to the Philippine Armed Forces.*43

Recently, the U.S. Navy was reported by Aviation Week and Space Technology to have plans to invite the Marcos government to acquire unspecified numbers of OV-10 aircraft.*44

(*43. Department of State, "Military Assistance..

*44. Aviation Week and Space Technology, Nov. 18, 1974, p. 11.)

The OV-10 is a light ground-support plane, suitable for attacks "on guerilla groups and other lightly armed forces." *45 It carries four M-60 7.62 mm. machine guns plus up to 3,100 lbs. of napalm and rockets, and is currently in service "in counter insurgent missions in Thailand." *46

(*45. Friends of the Filipino People (FFP) Washington Report, Vol. 1, No. 4, p. 6 (summary of description of airplane in Air Force Magazine, May 1974, pp. 116-117.

*46. Ibid.

Congressionally-Unauthorized Aid to the Marcos Government

In its April 1973 report to the Congress on U.S. military assistance to the Philippines, the General Accounting Office repeatedly complained of the various methods "by which military assistance to the Philippines has been augmented without Congressional approval or authority." *47 While the GAO study covered the patterns of U.S. military assistance from 1964 to 1971, instances of "extra-official** aid have continued during the martial law period.

Use of U.S. Base Facilities. That military assistance has been augmented without Congressional approval or authority with the use of U.S. base facilities for the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) military and other operations before martial law was documented in the 1969 hearings on security agreements with the Philippines, in spite of the weak qualification of DOD spokesmen that participation in Philippine counterinsurgency operations was not a "general policy" of U.S. forces stationed in the Philippines. *48 This section will focus on post-martial law instances of base support.

During the hearings on the 1975 military assistance proposal, a spokesman for the State Department admitted that Filipino pilots were partly trained to fly C-123K aircraft by a U.S. Air Force mobile training team at Clark Air Force Base from October to December 1973.*49 These cargo craft, incidentally, are now being used in supply operations in the Marcos regime's military campaign against the Muslims in the southern Philippines.

(*47. General Accounting Office, *Military Assistance and Commitments in the Philippines* (Washington, D.C.: GAO, 1973), p. 25.

*48. U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee, *Hearings, U.S. Security Agreements and Commitments Abroad* (Washington, D.C.: Govt. Printing Office, 1971), p. 355.

*49. See statement of Linwood Holton, State Department liaison with Congress, included in U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations, *Hearings, Foreign Assistance and Related Programs Appropriations, FY1975* (Washington, D.C.: Govt Printing Office, 1973), p. 497.)

In November 1972, two months after the declaration of martial law, an investigating team of the staff of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee noted that:

... a squadron of Philippine F-5's has been located at Clark for some months. Base officials told us that they were pleased to have the opportunity to assist the Filipinos. They did not seem concerned about the problems which could arise as a result of the use of a U.S. base for counter-insurgency operations. Officials in Washington were unable to say whether the F-5's have already been used for such purposes or whether they would be in the future. *50

(*50. U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee Staff, *Korea and the Philippines* (Washington, D.C.: Govt. Printing Office, 1973) p.40.)

The observation and suspicions of the Senate investigating team evokes several comments. First, the Philippines has only one squadron of F-5's, which means that in late 1972 the whole modern fighter component of the Philippine Air Force (PAF) - most other fighters being obsolete F-36*s — was stationed at Clark.*51

(*51. Institute of Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 1973-74* (London: Institute of Strategic Studies, 1973).

Second, in late 1972 and early 1973 the Marcos government mounted air and ground offensives against the strongholds of the New People's Army in the Cagayan Valley — Isabela Area of Northern Luzon.*52 The NPA consistently reported that F-5's operating out of Clark conducted bombing raids against them during that period.

It must be noted that the Cagayan-Isabela strongholds of the NPA are about 250 miles north of Nichols Air Base near Manila, which is the main operational air base of the PAF. Clark, on the other hand, is less than 200 miles away. The distance difference of 100 miles is an extremely meaningful one for an essentially short-range fighter like the F-5, which, fully armed, has a combat radius of only 215 miles.*53 The only other Philippine Air Force base in Luzon is the small Floridablanca Air Base south of Clark. Floridablanca is mainly a training facility and lacks the support-capacity for maintaining F-5*s, much less maintain them for full-scale long range air strikes. Given these considerations, the probability that the air strikes against the NPA in Isabela were mounted from Clark is rather high.

Joint Combat Exercises. Another way the martial law regime has received aid unauthorized by Congress is through joint military exercises conducted under the U.S.-Philippine Mutual Defense Treaty. Not only do Filipino forces receive free military training in such exercises with American Pacific forces, but the bulk, if not all, of the operational costs of these maneuvers are paid for by the U.S. Thus among the reasons cited for the award of the Philippine Legion of Honor to General Louis H. Wilson, commander in chief of the U.S. Fleet Marine Force/Pacific in March 1974 was his role in sponsoring joint exercises "with the Filipino marines without cost to the Philippine government to keep the marines abreast of developments in amphibian warfare." *54 South East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) exercises led and principally financed by U.S. forces represent another conduit of extra-official military assistance to the Philippines. The latest large scale SEATO exercises involving American and Philippine forces was "Sea Fox", a two-week series of sea war games which was reported to have taken place in Manila Bay and Subic Bay between February 27 and March 13, 1975. *55

(*52. For a description of one of these campaigns in late 1972, which included strategic relocation of peasants, see Henry Kamm, "Philippine government uprooting thousands," *New York Times*, October 20, 1972.

*53. *Jane's All The World's Aircraft 1971* (London: Jane's Yearbooks, 1971).

*54. Kerkvliet, op. cit.

*55. Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), Feb. 14, 1975)

Civic Action. One of the most publicized forms of extra-official military aid to the Marcos regime has been the "civic-action" activities conducted by U.S. Army Special Forces ("Green Beret") units in the Philippines. "Civic action" is essentially a euphemism for ideological-support activities for counterinsurgent military operations - its character being exposed by the fact that it is carried out by military personnel rather than by civilian professionals. "Winning hearts and minds" through military civic action has traditionally been undertaken by U.S.

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base personnel in areas adjoining the bases,*56 to which the "Communist insurgency," according to a Defense Department spokesman in the 1973 congressional hearings, "represents a . . . direct threat." *57 Since 1970 U.S. civic-action projects began to acquire a more coordinated character and a nationwide scope. Before 1970 the formal policy on the use of U.S. personnel in the Philippines was enunciated by James Wilson, deputy chief of mission of the U.S. Embassy in Manila during the congressional hearings on the United States' base and security arrangements with the Philippines in 1969: "It is a well-established policy that U.S. military personnel are not authorized to participate in AFP operations of any kind." *58 This "well-established" policy was reversed with the arrival of Special Forces teams from Okinawa who went to work "on a co-equal, integrated basis with the Armed Forces of the Philippines counterpart (civic-action) team." *59 From October 1970 to May 1974 civic action activities embraced twelve provinces and had direct and indirect effects on some three million Filipinos. *60

According to a State Department statement regarding the Special Forces' area of operations, "As a general policy the presence of current insurgent/dissident activities or a recent history of such activities in the exercise area automatically eliminates the area from further consideration" for civic action activities.*61 An examination of the provinces where Special Forces have been deployed since the beginning of martial law reveals that the general policy was more the exception than the rule: four of the six provinces where Green Berets were assigned were clearly either insurgent areas or had a history of chronic insurgency.

- Zamboanga Province has been the scene of sporadic guerrilla activity since 1969, and this escalated into large-scale armed resistance immediately after martial law was declared in September 1972, the period when the Green Berets were there.
- Bataan and Zambales have been expansion areas for NPA firefights being recorded there before and after martial law. The most recent proof of the "high insurgency" potential of the area two servicemen were killed in a mysterious encounter with guerrillas or the outskirts of the Subic Naval Base.
- Capiz, where Special Forces units were assigned in April-May 1973, has witnessed NPA activities since the imposition of martial law. AFP intelligence reported NPA "sightings" in the Madya-as Mountain Range. *62
In January 1974 the army admitted NPA footholds throughout the island of Panay, where Capiz is located.*63

(*56. U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee, op. cit., p. 355.

*57. House Appropriations Committee, op. cit.

*58. U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee, op. cit.

*59. Holton, op. cit. p. 491.

*60. Ibid.

*61. Ibid.)

*62. News from Free Philippines (BMP), Series No. 5, May 16, 1973.

*63. New York Times, January 13, 1973.

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And if we are to believe an informant of The Manchester Guardian correspondent in the Philippines, encounters between government troops and insurgents broke out in several towns in Capiz-Tapaz, Calino, and Lambunao — in the weeks following the departure of the Special Forces. *64 Samar where the Green Berets were present in March-May 1974, was in fact taking on the character of an expansion area at that very period. According to a report by the Far Eastern Economic Review, the NPA engaged the Constabulary in a firefight in the town of Calbiga on May 20, 1974 — barely 15 days after the Green Berets supposedly terminated their activities on the island. The maturity of NPA organization in the area was indicated by the report: "On Samar the NPA works by approaching farmers and offering instructions on better farming methods, improving irrigation and giving medical advice. Later, discussions are held on the rising cost of living and the growing inequalities of Philippine society. At the time of the ambush, these methods had been so successful that six barrios (in Calbiga) were completely organized, while two others were so committed that every man, woman, and child left with the NPA, instead of government forces." *65 Philippine military intelligence must surely have had an inkling of activity of such maturity before the Green Berets came to the island.

(*64. Robert Whyment, "Whitewash on the Green Berets," The Manchester Guardian, September 11, 1973.

*65. Wideman, op. cit.)

It is therefore difficult not to conclude that the provincial assignments of the Special Forces were related to the presence of relatively high degrees of insurgency in a province. One Special Forces officer indeed "acknowledged that this work could be useful in winning over tribal groups," according to a New York Times report. *66 The orientation toward this goal was highlighted by two things: First, as a Le Monde report revealed, the Special Forces' repertoire contained techniques for the "eradication of superstition" and "identification customs and traditions" *67 — the same methods, we might add, which the Special Forces applied to the Montagnard minorities in the Vietnamese Central Highlands. Second, the pro-government bias of the Special Forces was at the practical level, quite explicit inasmuch as the Green Berets and their AFP counterparts operated on an "integrated" basis, dispelling any notion that the former constituted a "neutral" force.

Other Extra-Official Military Aid. The GAO 1972 report also complained of such unofficial forms of military aid as the sending of special military advisory missions to the Philippines to assist Philippine Armed Forces units in such activities as weather control and communications, noting that the appropriations for these operations were not included under the congressionally approved assistance to the Philippines. *68

*66. James Sterba, "U.S. cautious on Marcos' arms appeals," New York Times, April 2, 1973.

*67. Patrice de Beer, "The Philippines: Will the archipelago become another Vietnam?" Le Monde, April 13, 1973.

*68. GAO, op. cit., pp. 23-24.

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After martial law such forms of aid have apparently continued. A State Department spokesman revealed, for instance, that 16 U.S. Army communications technicians have been "in and out of Cefcu City to assist the Armed Forces of the Philippines in constructing a troposcatter radio installation on Mount Luay," an activity which is supposed to last until October 1975. *69 The GAO's concern with such unofficial forms of aid is understandable - and not merely from an accounting perspective. Though seemingly harmless and "scientific," such activities undertaken by U.S. and Philippine military personnel often serve less edifying purposes. To cite merely one example, U.S. Air Force crews and technical personnel from the Naval Weapons Center in China Lake, California, undertook "cloud-seeding" projects in the Philippines in 1969, ostensibly for humanitarian, "anti-drought" purposes. The Naval Weapons Center, it was later revealed in the secret Congressional testimony on "Weather Modification" in March 1974, was involved from 1966 to 1972 in developing and applying effective rain-making techniques for the creation of adverse climate conditions along the Ho Chi Minh Trail in Laos. *70 Given the questionable objective of their mentors, it is difficult to fathom exactly what a Naval Weapons Center representative meant when he asserted during the hearings that ". . . it appears that the Filipinos will continue to make wise use of the capability (for cloud-seeding) as it is needed." *71

*69. Holton, op. cit., pp. 497-498.

*70. U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Oceans and International Environment, Hearings, Weather Modification (Washington, D.C.: Govt. Printing Office, 1974), pp. 46, 91.

*71. Ibid.

Selected Aspects of the Employment of U.S. Military Aid by the Martial Law Regime.

Inefficient and Wasteful Use of Military Aid. The most important conclusion of the GAO study on military assistance to the Philippines in 1972 was the extremely inefficient utilization of MAP-provided equipment by the Philippine Armed Forces. ". . . major equipment items have been deadlined," asserted the report "for maintenance or parts for extensive periods without prompt and effective followup by command and logistics personnel." *72 Fifty percent of the 67,000 line items stocked at the Philippine Armed Forces Supply Center were non-active stock, as were 23% of the 70,000 line items at the Philippine Naval Supply Center. *73

(*72. GAO, op. cit.)

(*73. Ibid., p.33)

In spite of these findings the Defense Department sharply escalated the level of aid to the Marcos regime in 1973, especially in the areas of excess defense articles and ship transfers. The inefficient use of U.S.-provided military equipment — and thus the waste of American taxpayers' money - has continued during the martial law period and, in the conditions of armed civil strife, acquired new but familiar forms. The wasteful application of military resources by the Philippine military must, however, be seen not as a local phenomenon but as one which is intimately connected with the training in military strategy and tactics it has received from the United States military

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which has specialized in devising methods to shore up allied dictatorships through principally military solutions and without regard for questions of popular legitimacy and popular justice. The American effort in Vietnam will surely rank as one of the most wasteful applications of men, equipment, and firepower in military history. And the South Vietnamese Army (ARVN) which took over the U.S. whose efforts failed, not because it could not fight as well as the U.S. Army, but because it took to heart the American military antidote to guerrilla war: a "capital-intensive" campaign based on mobility provided by sophisticated but expensive vehicles and the excessive and indiscriminate employment of firepower. Even Pentagon analysts now admit that "waste" was one of the most important habits acquired by the ARVN from the American military machine.*74

(*74. See the articles by Drew Middleton and others on the military aspects of the debacle in Vietnam appearing in the New York Times, March and April 1975.)

The performance of the Philippine Army bears comparison with the ARVN and the U.S. Army in Vietnam. Foreign correspondents continually confirm the excessive and indiscriminate use of firepower by the Philippine Army. In Cotabato Province, one of the main battle areas, "townsfolk and villagers," according to a March 27, 1973 *New York Times* report, "say that the ponderous use of equipment that the army already has is killing civilians and destroying their homes." On June 6, 1973, a *Washington Post* correspondent reported that in the island of Basilan, off Zamboanga Province, "residents complain that the army uses destructive artillery, mortars, bombing, and offshore shelling rather than face the enemy on the ground." The old, historic town of Maimbung was, "according to military and civilian travellers. . . now virtually destroyed. A government leaflet drop tells rebels to surrender because what you see now is only a game for children compared to battles yet to come." The most widely publicized case of military "overkill" was the levelling of the city of Jolo, the historic center of Philippine Muslim culture and former seat of the Sulu Sultanate, in February 1974. While as the Muslim resistance fighters who attacked the city partly in response to the military "wasting" of towns like Maimbung "the army response - artillery, two boats and naval shelling - apparently surprised the rebels who had prepared for hand to hand combat." *75 The massive naval shelling, most witnesses agreed, severely damaged both the Muslim mosque and the Catholic cathedral and was principally responsible for the fires that gutted the whole city. *76 Evoking a parallel with the destruction of Hue in 1968, one correspondent concluded that the "government helped destroy a town in order to save it" *77

(*75. "Battle ruins Moslem town in the Philippines," *The Washington Post*, March 3, 1974.

*76. See "Sulu Situationer", February 18, 1974, released by a prominent regional news agency based in Manila and written by a correspondent with long experience in Sulu. This piece is probably the most extensive report on the battle of Jolo. Available to selected congressmen on request.

*77. "Battle ruins ..." *Washington Post*, March 3, 1974.)

The indiscriminate use of firepower is not only morally reprehensible but also deepens communal bitterness, making a political solution to the war in the

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Philippine South — the only solution possible in a war against popularly supported guerrillas — increasingly difficult to achieve. If the Muslims could still afford in early 1973 such exercises in magnanimity as releasing captured soldiers after simply lecturing them on the need to overthrow Mr. Marcos, ^{*78}

the leveling of their villages and historic cities has understandably led some of them to such excesses as cutting off the heads of their enemies. The indiscriminate use of sophisticated weapon has also made the link between the user and supplier more evident to many civilians. One correspondent filed the following report:

Americans continue to enjoy widespread popularity in the Philippines ... But in Mindanao, as the fighting continues, there are sometimes other sentiments ... One well-educated Christian villager who had evacuated to Zamboanga, for example, complained about drunken, brawling soldiers in his village, and said, "Why do you give guns to people who carry on like that." ^{*79}

(*78. James Sterba, "Filipino army fights frustrating war," New York Times, March 27, 1973.

*79. Sterba, "U.S. cautious ...," New York Times, April 2, 1973.)

U.S. weaponry, military overkill, the widespread, unruly behavior of occupation troops from the northern Philippines "who do not even start to understand Muslim dialects" ^{*80} — these are some of the ingredients of a familiar brew, and they point to a familiardenouement. There are additional ingredients.

The "Fort Benning" Mentality.

Officer training has been a traditional component of military assistance to the Philippines. As noted earlier, since 1950 the Philippines has been the eighth largest contributor of 72 participants in the MAP training program. The result has been the socialization of a whole generation of Filipino officers into a military frame of mind — one might label it the "Fort Benning mentality" — that the way to deal with popularly supported guerrilla movements is by military terror. With their reliance on overwhelming conventional force and meaningless quantitative measurements -of battlefield "progress" like "body counts," ^{*81} Filipino officers have paralleled their American counterparts in Vietnam. Mr. Marcos and his high command have continually proclaimed victory over the Muslim resistance since early 1973, only to see the movement spread to the whole of central and southern Mindanao. A typical Westmorelandean figure is General Tranquilino Paranis, army commander for northeastern Luzon - the prime NPA insurgency area - in 1973. Paranis claimed in October 1973 that "he would require only 60 days to "sanitize" the mountains of Isabela in a big-scale military operation." ^{*82}

(*80. Bernard Wideman, "Where peace is a foreign word," Far Eastern Economic Review, May 9, 1975, p. 24.

*81. Sterba, op. cit.

*82. Kamm, op. cit.)

This conventional thinking, based mainly on an appreciation of the quantitative aspects of firepower and a disregard for questions of popular legitimacy, only increased support for the guerrillas. He repeated the classical Diemist tactic of

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"strategic relocation," forcibly evacuating 20,000 people from 100 to 200 villages in Isabela Province in a brute effort to separate the guerrilla "fish" from, the peasant "water". Since 1973 the NPA resistance has spread from Isabela to surrounding areas like Quezon Province, Mountain Province, parts of the Ilocos region, and Nueva Vizcaya.

Military Corruption. One aspect of military corruption has a direct bearing on U.S. military assistance: the sale of arms to guerrillas. In spite of their having to acquire new guns and equipment from the Asian smuggling market - in response to the escalation of U.S. military aid to the Philippine Army - the Muslim rebels still appear to get many of their military supplies from the Philippine Army, either through capture or purchase from un-scrupulous military sources. Informants in Mindanao report that rebel acquisition of arms from military suppliers is quite common. A Time correspondent recorded an instance of this when he visited a Muslim guerrilla group on Basilan Island in early 1973:

I asked how Ambihal's men obtained their weapons and whether they were being helped by any foreigners. "You are the first foreigner we have seen," Ambihal (the group leader) replied. He had bought his own rifle, he added, from someone connected with the Philippine Army. It has cost him 3,000 pesos (\$450), the equivalent of more than two years' wages. *83

While the sale of U.S.-provided weapons to the other side has apparently not yet reached the scale of the trade in Cambodia before the fall of the Lon Nol government, it is likely to increase with the piling up of excess weaponry as the levels of U.S. military assistance to the Philippine Armed Forces increase. Such corruption indicates the character of the regime that the U.S. is supporting.

Arming of Bandit Groups. One final aspect of the employment of U.S. military assistance is the fact that some of it is utilized to arm what are euphemistically termed "Barrio Self-Defense Units" (BSDU) or "Local Self-Defense Forces" (LSDF). The real character of these paramilitary groups is indicated by a report carried by the *Far Eastern Economic Review*:

The LSDF seems likely to heighten the war rather than lessen it. As Col. R.B. Gutang (head of the Home Defense Brigade in Cotabato) concedes, it is "very difficult" for the army to control these units, which consist largely of Christian fanatics (the infamous Ila-gas who took the law into their own hands in 1970 to settle land disputes with Muslims), who are trigger happy and eager to avenge friends or relatives. Already there have been accusations of indiscriminate killing of Muslims by the LSDF and of burning of mosques and Muslim villages. *84

(*83. "The rebels: 'I learned it from the movies,'" Time, April 16, 1973, p. 32.

*84. Phelan, op. cit.)

The uncontrollable character of these groups was rightly conceded by the officer. On June 4, 1973 a Washington Post correspondent reported the "arrest"

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in Zamboanga of "five armed Christians . . . carrying, among other things a severed human ear." Recently, a report carried in the Far Eastern Economic Review claimed that,

In the Basilan town of Lamitan, the Muslim population is particularly fearful of a Christian vigilante group called the Mundo Escuro (Black World). Muslims blame this group for numerous kidnappings, killings, and mutilations. Yet a commanding officer of anearby battalion claims that the Mundo Escuro is a law-abiding group whose members often aid his troops in operations. *85

Christian fanatics are apparently not the only recruits to paramilitary forces. Reliable sources from the Dadiangas area of Cotabato Province has consistently claimed that a group of convicted criminals known as the "Lost Command" operates in the vicinity. This group is reportedly composed of men whose prison or death sentences have been set aside in exchange for their taking up arms as a commando group against Muslim guerrillas. Being under the direct operational control of the Office of the President this group is said to have contributed to the deterioration of peace and order in the area, where three groups are now competing for control: "Trie Muslim resistance, the Philippine Army, and the "Lost Command." *86

It is important to emphasize this aspect of the use of military assistance: part of it goes toward arming local fanatics and bandit groups. And it is also relevant to note that Mr. Marcos is depending on the very outlaw groups he had vowed to suppress in his declaration of martial law.

Police and Para-Military Assistance.

In hearings before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in 1969. James Wilson. Jr.. admitted that the AID Public Safety Program which had been in existence for about a decade, had "some bearing on counter-insurgency." Wilson revealed that the AID program had "assisted in improving Police/Philippine Constabulary/National Bureau of Investigation communications networks in several provinces, including some which have experienced some dissident activity." *87

The person who was most instrumcittal in setting up the Philippine program was Frank Walton, a key AID police official who later went from the Philippines to set up a similar program in Vietnam and is currently involved in "modernizing" police forces in Iran, where police methods of dealing with dissenters have achieved a special notoriety. From 1961 to 1973. Public Safety Program allocations for the Philippines came to some \$6 million. Much of the funding and most of the organizational activity in the Philippine program took place during Marcos constitutional tenure (1966-1972) and the first year of martial law (1973). Whereas between 1961 and 1968 only \$1.9 million were allocated for the program, some \$3.9 million were spent from 1969 to 1973. indicating as one report put it, "a perturbed U.S. reaction to a sudden change in Philippine internal conditions." *88

(*85. Wideman, op. cit.

*86. Names of sources available to selected congressmen on request.

*87. U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee, op. cit., pp. 354-355.

*88. National Committee for the Restoration of Civil Liberties in the Philippines, "Report to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Martial Law in the Philippines and U.S. Relations with the Marcos Regime" (mimeo.: 1973), p. 34.

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It will be recalled That after the 1969 presidiorial elections, which were universally considered to be the most corrupt in Philippine history, student demonstrations against official graft and American influence, peasant marches for land reform, and workers' actions against mounting inflation became generalized phenomena.

It was during Marcos' constitutional tenure that the Office of the President and the AID office of Public Safety (OPS) set up the National Police Commission, which began the work of organizationally integrating some 1,000 police forces. AID police assistance also made possible a coordinated internal records system and 35 police communications networks, ^{*89} and established 10 regional training centers which imparted the most advanced techniques of riot control, paramilitary operations, intelligence, and communications to 23,902 police officers between December 1969 and April 1973.^{*90} During the same period a total of 284 Filipino police officials were trained at the International Police Academy (IPA) in Washington. In this connection, it is significant to note that 35 Filipinos — the largest group ever — were graduated from the IPA in 1973, the first year of martial law, in contrast to an annual average of 15 previously.^{*91}

In the light of these facts, there can be no doubt that the AID Public Safety Program makes a critical contribution in forging the police apparatus with which Marcos so efficiently imposed martial law on September 22, 1972. More recently, the program, asserted one academic specialist in Philippine affairs at the University of Hawaii can take credit for such post-martial law achievements as

... the ID card system now under way; the unrest of over 12,000 persons held in new "detention centers"; and 1,500 modernized police departments in which many policemen have the latest American riot guns, walkie-talkies, and patrol car computer consoles.^{*92}

(*89. Kerkvliet, op. cit., p. 773.

*90. House Appropriations Committee, Hearings, Foreign Assistance and Related Agencies Appropriations for 1975, Part Two (Washington: Govt. Printing Office, 1974), p. 285.

*91. International Police Academy, Yearbook (1969,1970,1972,1973) (Washington: International Police Academy).

*92. Kerkvliet, op. cit.

Large quantities of new police equipment apparently were transferred to the Philippines after martial law, in 1973. Angeles City, near Clark Air Base, was one major recipient of such AID communication and patrol car shipments, ^{*93} Davao City in the south, which has been threatened by Muslim rebel activity was another important recipient. In November 1973 a police parade was especially staged to show off new AID-donated patrol cars, an event which some townsfolk cynically dubbed "the U.S. AID parade." ^{*94}

Equipment transfer appears, however, to be among the less "vital" contributions of the Office of Public Safety. In the light of the sinister record of the Vietnamese activities of the OPS,^{*95}

(*93. *Ibid.*

*94. Rev. Paul Wilson, clergyman detained by Philippine government in 1974 and congressional witness on June 5, 1975; personal communication.

*95. AID-OPS and AID-CORDS were intimately involved in the CIA-directed pacification effort "Operation Phoenix", which carried out the liquidation of some 40,000 Vietnamese.

and the suspicions which have led Congress to phase out the program, the Philippine public safety project can most probably also take credit for helping to institutionalize the most advanced techniques of information and confession - extraction from political suspects, like the now common use of electric shock, subtle psychological torture, and selective beating - methods remarkably similar to those employed in Brazil, Korea, Vietnam, Iran, and Uruguay, all of which have received significant amounts of OPS assistance and training.

Narcotics Control. The termination of the public safety program owing to well-placed congressional concern over the training of the police forces of repressive regimes, has not ended all police assistance to the Philippines. The State Department continues to provide equipment and training for "international narcotics control." From FY 1972 to the end of FY 1975 the Philippines received some \$1.1 million worth of narcotics-control assistance.

In 1975, of 25 countries participating in the program", the Philippines received the seventh largest allocation of funds, outstripping even such "hard core" drug sources as Turkey, Afghanistan, Cambodia, South Vietnam, Central America, Paraguay, and Panama.*96 All this is curious. The Philippines has never been a significant drug-production or drug-consumption country. The narcotics control assistance in the Philippines was started, according to an AID spokesperson, on the mere suspicion that the country could become a "major drug route." *97 This expectation, he admitted, had not materialized but narcotics assistance will continue into FY 1976 at probably the same level of funding as in FY 1975.

The problem with police training in narcotics control is that the skills acquired in it can easily be transferred to the surveillance and apprehension of political dissenters. Police techniques have universal applications that transcend agent specializations, and the fact that part of the narcotics program's training course is integrated into the AID Public Safety Program's instructional schedule at the International Police Academy*98 is indicative of this. A concrete instance of the manner narcotics control skills have been translated into the surveillance and apprehension of suspected political dissenters occurred in April 1973, when the Anti-Narcotics Unit of the Philippine Constabulary (CANU) - a major recipient of equipment and training for the International Narcotics Control Program — raided the house of Liliosa Hilao, a suspected radical, and tortured her to death. The behavior of the Constabulary narcotics agents was so brutal that even Secretary of Defense Juan Ponce Enrile felt obliged to dissociate himself from them.*99

(*96. U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee, op. cit., p. 342.

*97. Interview with David Christenson, Asst. Desk Officer for the Philippines, AID, March 7, 1975.

*98. U.S. Congress, House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Hearings, Fiscal Year 1975 Foreign Assistance Request (Washington: Govt. Printing Office, 1974), p. 183. According to Senator Inouye of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, "In the past the public safety program has been justified in part because of its contribution to the narcotics program" (Senate Appropriations Committee, op. cit., p. 387).

*99. Liberation (Philippines), June 21, 1973, p. 4; see also "A document of suspected death by torture," Ningas Cogon (New York), August 1973, p. 26.)

The CIA. According to Jon Marks, former member of the intelligence community and co-author of *The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence*, the Philippines is currently the regional headquarters of CIA communications in Southeast Asia. The threat of CIA para-military interference in Philippine politics is especially critical at this point because of two facts of major significance.

The first is that the current ambassador, William Sullivan, is no honorific figure like his predecessor Henry Byroade or Shirley Temple Black. Mr. Sullivan, it must be remembered, was formerly the U.S. Ambassador to Laos where he set up and coordinated the three-pronged counter-insurgency program of secret bombing, CIA efforts to form the famous Armeo Clandestine of Meo-tribesmen, and "rural development" by the AID.*100 We would therefore expect the tie-ups between the Ambassador's office, and the CIA to be closer in the Philippines than in most other countries, and there are indeed indications that Sullivan has been busy reassembling his battle-hardened Laotian staff. The current Philippine desk officer at the Pentagon, for instance, served with Sullivan in Laos and will soon be joining him as a "political officer" of the Embassy.*101

The second fact of critical relevance is that the CIA local-support network has traditionally been more established and influential in the Philippines than in most other countries. A number of people connected with the Lansdale-Magsaysay counter-insurgency effort in the early fifties have since risen to national political and cultural prominence. Among them are such figures as ex-senator Manuel Manahan, ex-congressman Oscar Arellano, and Jose Crisol.*102

This support network will now be augmented by the return, following the American debacle in Indochina, of hundreds, if not thousands, of Filipinos who served in CIA-connected counter-insurgency support activities there. It has been estimated that as many as 10,000 such jobs were filled by Filipinos' familiarity with the English language and American managerial techniques made them choice recruits for these support-activities.*103

(*100. See Anthony Lewis, "Another Senate test." *New York Times*, July 9, 1973.

*101. Severina Rivera, "Congressional record," *FFP Washington Report*, April 1975, p. 5.

*102. The names of many of these figures can be found in Lansdale, and *The Pentagon Papers* (New York: Bantam Books, 1971), pp. 135-136.

*103. Ngo Vinh Long (Vietnam Resource Center, Cambridge), personal communication.

Many of these jobs were with well-known CIA-backed or CIA-financed operations such as "Operation Brotherhood" in Laos, Eastern Construction in Vietnam, and Air America; the DOD-dependent Internationa] Volunteer Services.*104

(*104. For information on Operation Brotherhood-CIA links and Eastern Construction-CIA tieups, see *The Pentagon Papers*, op. cit. Filipino pilots are favorite Air America recruits and Filipino social workers were recruited into IVS. Recent reports on the U.S. evacuation of Indochina revealed Filipino evacuees employed by the paramilitary contract firm, Vinnel.

The reputation of Filipinos as counter-revolutionary cadres and mercenaries throughout Indochina was recently brought home in a CBS interview last April with a young Vietnamese who stated that his primary reason for seeking refuge in the United States was his fear that the PRC forces could

mistake him for a Filipino and "execute" him. More recently, Laotian students demonstrated against and isolated Filipino-staffed "Operation Brotherhood" teams.*105 The training in CIA-connected counter-insurgent support activities of these Filipinos might be considered a form of "paramilitary aid" to the Philippines especially in view of the fact that most of them have been returning home, where they would form a ready - and restless - pool of experienced paramilitary cadres on which the CIA could easily draw for whatever local adventures it might seek to launch.

Security-Relevant Economic Assistance

The experience in Indochina shows that security-relevant aid may come in many guises. Three large-scale programs of the Agency for International Development in the Philippines deserve special comment in this regard: the AID-assisted "regional development" Scheme in the Bicol River Basin in Luzon; the AID "provincial development" project and the "rural irrigation and roads" project.

The Bicol regional development scheme is described, in the typical, sanitized language of the Agency for International Development, as a "test area of the planning of multi-faceted development programs and the implementing of projects (primarily in agriculture) designed to raise farm output and improve economic and social conditions for the small farmer.*106 AID entered the Bicol River Basin Project in 1971 and activities were gradually intensified. In FY 1975, according to an AID spokesperson, AID funding of the project came to between \$380,000 and \$460,000.*107

*105. New York Times, May 17, 1975.

*106. U.S. Congress, House Appropriations Committee, op. cit., p. 1226.

*107. Interview with Christenson.

All this would in fact sound harmless were it not for the fact that Bicol has, since 1970, become the second major expansion area of the New People's Army, next to the group's stronghold in the Isabela-Cagayan Valley area of Northern Luzon. The most heavily 'infected' area - to use the pathological imagery of counter-insurgency parlance - is Sorsogon Province, which one frustrated Constabulary officer complained to a Manchester Guardian correspondent, ". . . is better guerilla country than Isabela. . . mountains, good cover, bad roads where there are any at all, and above all, an abundance of food." *108

While rural Sorsogon has been practically wrested from the army - which lost a counter-insurgency task force general in the area when his helicopter was shot down in July 1973 - guerilla activity has also increased in the areas more immediately affected by the River Basin Program. Constabulary - NPA firefight began to be recorded in several barrios of Camarines Sur by August 1973,*109 and an underground town and urban movement began to become especially active, also by late 1973 in Naga City, the capital of Camarines Sur, and Legaspi City and Daraga town in neighboring Albay Province.*110

(*109. Liberation, October 10, 1973.

*110. Ibid.)

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This correlation is quite clear: AID's emphasis on Bicol increased as NPA insurgent activity in the area escalated. The project will receive higher priority in FY 1976 when it will be complemented by a \$10 million rural road-building program, which will include the rehabilitation of 200 feeder roads in isolated areas, many of which are in NPA-infested Sorsogon.*111

The purpose of this supposedly humanitarian venture becomes quite evident: it is to preempt the NPA of a rural mass base in the area by offering as a substitute for agrarian revolution a development package upgrading the productive efficiency of existent agricultural property systems with palliative measures for small farmers and tenants, instead of genuinely redistributing land, and by making the physical infrastructure of the area inhospitable to guerilla activity through "road modernization."

The political, counterinsurgent character of the program becomes even sharper, when we note that in 1974 AID contracted the services of the social science research team of a well-known anthropologist with wide experience in the area, clear anti-left opinions, and distinct pro-martial law views to do a large-scale survey to tap peasant responses to various aspects of rural existence. Frank Lynch and the Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC) of the Ateneo de Manila University were eminently qualified to undertake the task: the IPC came into its own as a research outfit when it received some \$500,000 from the Office of Naval Research (DOD) - a sum which was funneled through Perm State University - to do a multi-disciplinary study on the "impact of modernization" in the Philippines from 1966 to 1970, a project which touched on many "internal-security" — relevant aspects of Filipino social, political, and economic life.*112

The use of the behavioral sciences for counterinsurgency purposes is, of course, familiar, and the activities of certain political scientists in Vietnam and anthropologists in Thailand in the late sixties have been the bestknown instances of this.*113

Provincial Development Assistance Project. In FY 1973 a new AID project, funded to the tune of \$4 million was introduced in the Philippines, this time with the ostensible aim of "modernizing" provincial and local governments. "The Philippines," an FY 1975 AID funding request puts it, in justifying the project, "requires a substantially augmented administrative capability at the central government, provincial, and local levels to handle expanded development programs in the rural areas.*114 The project involved the assignment of American "rural-development" experts to Filipino governors,*115 and was projected to ultimately cover "almost one-half of the sixty-eight Philippine provinces."*116

(*111. Interview with Christenson.

*112. See Institute of Philippine Culture, *Modernization: Its Impact in the Philippines*, Nos. 14 (Manila: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1966-1970). For details on the funding of this project, see one of the authors of this report, who served as publications director of IPC from 1967 to 1969.)

(*113. In the Philippines, another clearly "internal-security" related study was the investigation done by RAND's Harvey Averch, which was financed by AID and, according to Congressman Wolff of the Foreign Affairs Committee, by the USAF. Published under the title of *The Matrix of Public Policy in the Philippines* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), this study was specifically aimed to find out the "optimum" combination of variables to keep the Philippines a stable country friendly to the United States. Consult one of the authors of this report who has a copy of the classified abstract of the study.)

(*114. House Appropriations Committee, op. cit., p. 1226.

(*115. Interview with Christenson; also Szulc, op. cit. + (*116. House Appropriations C'ttee, op. cit.)

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The project. Tad Szulc notes, has been "patterned in fact after the Vietnamese CORDS (Civilian Operations and Revolutionary Development Support) operations conducted jointly by the CIA, AID, and the Defense Department as the principal 'pacification' effort." *117 More ominously, it has been headed and staffed by former AID-CORDS Vietnam hands. In 1973 it was led by Thomas Rose, formerly AID'S public administration chief in Saigon, and Richard Kriegel, former CORDS provincial adviser in Bindinh province in Military Region II.*118 Using the methodology provided by John Marks in his seminal article on the ways to identify CIA agents,*119 we think it very likely that one of these individuals was with the CIA in the fifties and may have acted since then under AID cover - a rather common arrangement, according to an AID witness during the FY 1974 congressional hearings on foreign assistance. *120 As early as 1973, at least eight ex-CORDS specialists were monitored by Szulc as being assigned to several areas of Southern Mindanao, including war-torn Cotabato Province, and selected areas of Central Luzon.*121 The program has since been integrated into the larger regional development scheme in the NPA-threatened Bicol area.*122

(*117. Szulc, op. cit.

*118. Ibid.

*119. See John Marks, "How tospota spook," Washington Monthly, September 1974.

*120. House Foreign Affairs Committee, op. cit.

*121. Szulc, op. cit.

*122. Interview with Christenson.

Edward Morris, an American lawyer who made extensive travels in the rural areas of the Philippines after martial law, asserted during his congressional testimony on June, 5, 1975, that part of AID's rural development assistance is being channeled toward the training of rural police forces. If this is true - and we think it likely to be true - then the most logical conduit for this sort of assistance would be the provincial administration development project. Given its sudden launching in 1973, its suspicious objectives, and the links of its personnel with CORDS, there is a strong possibility that the provincial development program is covertly taking the place of the congressionally-abolished Public Safety Program.

The AID effort has been coordinated with the Provincial Development Assistance Program of the Office of the President, as the AID 1975 funding request admits.*123

(*123. House Appropriations Committee, op. cit.)

Interestingly enough, it has been partly through this agency that Mr. Marcos extended and solidified his hold over provincial and municipal government units prior to restructuring them in accordance with his model of "constitutional authoritarianism." It will be recalled that last February, voters were forced to legitimize this fait accompli during Mr. Marcos' controlled referendum by "giving" Marcos the power to appoint all provincial and municipal officials.

Rural Roads Program. Bad roads have often been cited as one of the reasons for the poor results of the AFP's counter-guerrilla efforts. In FY 1975

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about \$15 million were allocated by AID to support the Philippine government roadbuilding efforts, with significant portions of the aid coming in the form of Vietnam surplus equipment. Ten provinces received priority - Laguna, Nueva Ecija, Tarlac, Albay, Camarines Sur, Capiz, Leyte, Cebu, Misamis Oriental, and Cotabato.*124

It is significant that four of these provinces were war zones or high-insurgency areas: Cotabato, Capiz, Albay, and Camarines Sur. In FY 1976 some \$10 million, according to an AID spokesperson, are to be requested for the high-priority Bicol Roads Project, which is to be integrated with the Bicol Regional Development Project discussed above. As noted earlier, 220 "feeder roads" in isolated areas of the region are to be "rehabilitated," including several in Sorsogon Province, the NPA's stronghold in the Bicol area, where the AFP's concern for the poor quality of roads is well-known.*125 In this case, the functional connection between road-building and counterinsurgency is not difficult to discern.

(*124. Interview with Christenson.)

(*125. Whymant, op. cit.)

Food for Peace. The Food for Peace program (P.L. 480) has been aptly described as providing "funds for war" on account of the practice of U.S. client regimes directly or indirectly using the proceeds from food sales (under Title I of P. L. 480) for military or military-related projects. In fiscal years 1973-75, the United States gave the Philippines \$26.4 million as credits under Title I, *126 thus allowing the Marcos regime to allocate more of its budgetary resources for the purchase of armaments — activities which now consume the major portion of the government budget.

There are indications that even direct food donations under Title II of P.L. 480 are being diverted from their announced objectives and used to feed the Philippine Army. On March 27, 1973, a New York Times reporter observed Philippine troops in the Cotabato area unloading "crates of supplies, some adorned with the red, white and blue, handshaking label of the U.S. Agency for International Development . . ." which administers P.L. 480.*127

The "Beaver Affairs." Let us conclude this discussion of militarily-relevant forms of U.S. economic aid by taking up what we might call the "Beaver Affair," for this incident is illustrative of the more subtle - and convoluted - relationships between AID and the Philippine military hierarchy. In 1973 the Philippines obtained 120 DMC-2 Beavers for "development purposes." *128

(*126. AID, FY 1976 Submission to Congress, Summary, Washington, D.C.: AID, May 1975, p. 83; Department of State, op. cit., (see note 24).

*127. James Sterba, "Philippine Army fights frustrating war," New York Times, March 27, 1973.

*128. SIPRI, op. cit.

*129. Washington Post, October 6, 1973.

"Purchased for the cost of shipping" from the U.S. military surplus stockpile in Vietnam, several of these planes were later observed being fitted out with machine guns, a fact which reportedly drew the protest of the AID office in Manila when it was drawn to the latter's attention.*129 The incident appeared to have all the makings of an act, and AID's protest in this case seemed more

pro forma than anything else. Being one of the most dependable general utility aircraft, the Beaver was widely utilized in Vietnam for a wide variety of supportive military functions, from detecting guerrilla movements to carrying out light machinegun attacks. The purchase of such large numbers of proven and insurgent aircraft by a government engaged in a major guerrilla was ought to have made the surplus-disposal authorities - were they serious about restricting its use - suspicious from the start and led them to more carefully investigate the Philippine government's request. With the confirmation by foreign correspondents of the predictable military utilization of the aircraft, the AID office had, in short, no other alternative but to protest, but this should not obscure what was initially a "complicity through deliberate passivity" on its part. There is no assurance that the planes have not been covertly returned to combat duty. An AID spokesperson asserted that they are currently being utilized to make aerial photographs of the land reform area in Nueva Ecija province.*130 This is a curious activity for such a large number of aircraft; it would mean one plane for every barrio. The fact that Nueva Vizcaya, where NPA activity has been reported, borders Nueva Ecija, and Isabela, the prime NPA stronghold, is less than a hundred miles away, might perhaps shed more light on the "aerial photographic" functions of these aircraft.

(*130. Interview with Christenson.)

Chapter XIV

International Protection Racket

The conjugal dictatorship of Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos is locked in a tight conspiratorial embrace with big business corporations from the United States and Japan for the further economic exploitation of the Philippines. They are engaged in a mutual protection racket.

The martial regime insures for big business from the United States an excellent investment climate in the Philippines. In turn, American multinationals help Marcos lobby with official Washington, . D.C. for continued American economic and political support for the conjugal dictatorship.

On the other hand, the post-war Japanese zaibatsus (conglomerates) - also in exchange for placing them practically on the same footing with big American business in the Philippines — flash continuing signals to their MITI (Ministry of International Trade and Industry) that Marcos deserves more dollar loans from Tokyo.

The brave talk in the New Society is that the conjugal dictatorship now has the big American and Japanese business by their balls. Marcos, it is arrogantly held out, has it in his power to withdraw all the concessions he has granted the foreign investors.

And yet, the victims of the international conspiracy are not just the Filipino people whose economic nationalism has been betrayed by Marcos to open them to wanton exploitation by the multinationals-. The groaning American and Japanese taxpayers are victims no less of this protection racket invented by

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Marcos. They underwrite the multi-million dollar assistance and/or loan programs of their respective governments to the conjugal dictatorship of Ferdinand and Imelda.

Other giant companies from Western Europe and Oceania have also come in to engage in manufacturing or in the exploitation of the Philippines' natural resources. Undoubtedly, they, too, were attracted by the inducements offered by the martial regime: cheap labor, frozen wages, impotent unions, no strikes or demonstrations, no embarrassing investigations, tax holidays, relaxation of visa requirements, incentives for corporate repatriation and profit remittance.

The strongest and most appalling conspiracy of the martial regime on the exploitation of the Filipino people is with the American multinational. The scheme is actually a continuation, a perpetuation of a colonial economic relationship between the Philippines and the United States - a relationship that had in the past prevented meaningful economic planning, diversification and industrialization.

Undoubtedly, it is a great sell-out. The martial regime is bartering away the national patrimony to the giant multinationals from the United States and elsewhere in exchange for continuing international recognition of the conjugal dictatorship. In the case of the United States, the license that the American multinationals obtain from the martial regime is exchanged with the continuation of the U.S. foreign assistance program to the dictatorship. The bulk of the aid, in turn, is utilized by the fear machine of the dictatorship for oppression and repression in the Philippines.*1

(*1. Refer to chapter on "U.S. Aid Misused, Abets Dictatorship.")

The tragic part of the conspiracy between the multinationals and Marcos is that the former fell into a well-laid trap of the latter. Marcos himself contrived the crises and established the other factors that drove the big American business and other international merchants in the Philippines to embrace the declaration of martial law. And now that the multinationals are seemingly irretrievably mired in the quicksand of the conjugal dictatorship, they still would want to continue the conspiracy with Marcos in order to protect their investments.

The breakdown of law and order and the violence that possessed the peaceful demonstrations of the awake studentry and peasantry in the late 60s and early 70s were instigated by the special operations units of Marcos which have succeeded in infiltrating the ranks of the activists. Economic nationalism assumed a vehement anti-American tone, also at the instance of Marcos. The two Supreme Court decisions (the Quasha and Luzon Stevedoring cases) which boosted economic nationalism were handed down on cases initiated by the Solicitor General (now Associate Justice of the Supreme Court Antonio P. Barredo). Marcos directed Barredo to file those cases. Marcos also plugged vigorously for the approval by Congress of an Investment Incentives Act that would adopt the principles and objectives of economic nationalism.

When Marcos proclaimed martial law, Marcos told the international business community that his dictatorship would provide the needed peace and order and protection from the weapons of economic nationalism given out by the Supreme Court and Congress to the Filipino people.

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The set-play employed by Mafia-minded Marcos was not different from the "watch-your-car" racket flourishing in the side streets of Manila. When a street urchin says, "Watch your car, Mister?" what he means is that the car owner must pay him something so that he will not slash car tires or damage any part of the car while the driver is away. The kid, however, does not guarantee that the car will not be stolen while parked.

An interesting article written by a Filipino national Proculo Rodriguez, Jr., who now resides in Silver Spring, Maryland, sheds light on the exploitation of under-developed countries by multinationals. Excerpts from the article follows:²

(*2. Philippine Times, Feb. 1-15, 1976, page 18. The article is entitled, "Under-development Worsened by the Multinational Firms."

AN ARTICLE, entitled "Why Companies Do Business Abroad" - prepared by the editors of the Reader's Digest and presented by the Business Roundtable as an advertisement — appeared in the November, 1975 issue of Reader's Digest.

Numerous charges have been leveled against U.S. multinationals to the effect that chronic under-development throughout the Third World is the direct result of multinational corporation policies. This controversial issue has generated so many study-surveys (See the UN Report on the Impact of Multinational Corporation on Development and on International Relations, 1974), that it is highly improbable the editors, of the Reader's Digest could be unaware of this fact.

At this juncture, it is best to present a composite definition of a multinational corporation also known as transnational enterprises. A multinational corporation is a company, having production and marketing facilities in many countries, either on its own or in partnership with host-country corporations, enjoying worldwide access to capital, depending on foreign income, and being managed with a worldwide point of view. (See David Ewing, Multinationals on Trial, Harvard Business Review).

It must be noted that some of the most serious and persistent criticism of U.S. multinationals have come from Third World countries. These criticisms relate to the sheer size of these companies and their consequent powerful social and political impact in the Third World nations in which they operate. For example, the sales of Exxon, AT & T, General Motors, Ford Motor, Sears Roebuck, and General Electric are larger annually than the gross national products of the Philippines, Turkey, Korea or Thailand. U.S. investments in such countries as the Philippines, Mexico, Venezuela, and Brazil account for the bulk of those countries' foreign investments and foreign exchange earnings. (Quoting from "An Examination of Multinational Corporations, March, 1973, Corporation Information Center Brief, N.Y.)

Furthermore, the profits that multinationals derive from poor countries are almost incredible. United Nations figures show that in 1970, they repatriated \$2.4 billion from Asia but only invested \$200 million. In 1968, they repatriated \$2.9 billion from Latin America but invested only \$900 million. In 1971, they

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repatriated \$996 million from Africa but invested only \$270 million. And in most instances, these multinationals do not generate their own capital.

Unwittingly, therefore, the article-advertisement of the Business Roundtable itself lent credence to the charges leveled against U.S. multinationals, by providing its own figures, to the effect that American companies operating abroad “returned home royalties and foreign earnings of \$21.4 billion — three times the outflow for new foreign investments.”

Contrary to the assertions made in the said article, it has been claimed that operations of these transnational enterprises has in fact not only stunted the economic growth of some countries, but actually such countries are worse off than before. According to the 1971 Economic Survey of Asia and the Far East, “In the first development decade of the 1960s it is apparent that large sectors of Third World populations, based on income distribution, family expenditure and dietary surveys, experienced no real improvement in their standard of living, and even became worse off.”

The best illustration of the rapacious conduct of some U.S. multinationals would be their operations in the Philippines which has a long history of trade and investment relations with the United States.

The Philippines became a colony of the United States after the U.S. victory in the Spanish-American War of 1898. What followed was typical colonial relationship between the U.S. and the Philippines, wherein the U.S. dominated Philippine trade. The Philippines exported agricultural products to the United States, and imported manufactured goods that their underdeveloped industry could not produce. This colonial free trade policy is said to have had a lasting detrimental effect on the economy of the Philippines.

The Philippines achieved commonwealth status in 1935, and was granted independence in 1946. However, the Philippines continued to be economically dependent on the United States, as the U.S. perpetuated a structure of underdevelopment. This situation was aggravated by the so-called Philippine Trade Act of 1946 which, in return for U.S. economic assistance after the Philippines was devastated in the second World War, provided for the exemption of American citizens and companies from the constitutional restriction limiting the exploitation of the Philippine natural resources to Filipinos, known as the “Parity Rights” amendment.

Presently, current U.S. investments in the Philippines are valued at \$2 billion or even as high as \$3 billion. Whatever the actual figure, U.S. investment in the Philippines is greater than that in any other Southeast Asian country. While investment in the Philippines represents only 1 percent of the total book value of U.S. direct investment worldwide, it also represents 80 per cent of all foreign investments in the Philippines. Thus, U.S. investment is crucial to the Philippine economy as it is currently structured.

U.S. multinationals now dominate in all major Philippine industries — automotives, petroleum, rubber, timber, mining, sugar, banking and finance, agribusiness, and even accounting and advertising services. The evidence suggests that rather than promoting economic development by applying capital, technology and managerial know-how, multinational corporations actually fostered underdevelopment in the Philippines.

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A report prepared by the Corporate Information Center of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., entitled *The Philippines: American Corporations, Martial Law and Under-development* (1973) has presented the following summarized conclusions:

1. Statistics show that in the Philippines from 1966 to 1971, income levels for the bottom 20 per cent have actually declined, from 4.5 per cent to 3.6 per cent, while the upper 20 per cent holds 54 per cent of the wealth. Unemployment and underemployment continue to rise as well.

2. The largely capital-intensive orientation of multinational corporations, their penetration of foreign countries through local acquisition of would-be nationally owned competitors, and their ability to hide profits from taxation and to inflate prices represent some of the ways by which the development and living conditions in the developing countries are ultimately shaped by the impact of multinationals.

3. The increasing control foreign banks exercise on the local currency deposit favors their multi-national industrial counterparts at the expense of loans to local industry. A study conducted by the National Economic Council of the Philippines between 1956 and 1965 on 108 of the largest U.S. firms in the Philippines showed that 84 per cent of their financing was done through local currency loans. Profits remitted to foreign beneficiaries were 300 per cent greater than capital invested by these companies.

Two case studies were made in the fruit manufacturing industry in the Philippines which is virtually a monopoly of two American multinationals, the Del Monte Corporation and the Dole Philippines, a subsidiary of Castle & Cooke. These case studies (see CIC Report, pp. 36-43) are fascinating for they reveal how these two multinationals were getting 200 per cent a year return on their respective per capita (equity) on land not owned by them but owned by the Filipino people.

It must be admitted, however, that in the case of American control of banking and financing in the Philippines, this has been largely due, in recent years, to the strange policies of the Marcos martial law regime which seems to favor foreign investments — a strange development for a country that ostensibly desires to assume control of its economy. (Marcos converted this American-style democratic nation to a dictatorial one when he declared martial law on Sept. 21, 1972).

With this brief evaluation of U.S. investments in the Philippines, the wider issue of multinational corporations and their implications particularly in reference to Third World development becomes apparent. The question of whether multinational corporations embody hope for economic development or, on the contrary perpetuates a structure of underdevelopment, becomes the paramount issue. Certainly, this crucial issue cannot be brushed aside by a few propaganda lines in the heretofore sacrosanct *Reader's Digest*.

In conclusion, let me quote the words of Felix Greene, in his book, *The Enemy* (London, 1970) as quoted by Jovito Salonga in his lecture at the University of the Philippines, Sept. 20, 1974, to wit:

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"The truth is that investment by foreign capitalist corporations has always accomplished precisely the opposite of what the theory claims. Whatever short-term local stimulation of business and rise in employment and wages might initially take place, the long-term consequences are invariably that more wealth is taken out of the underdeveloped country by the foreign corporation than they invested in it. This is the whole point of such investments. The foreign investments do not diminish the disparity in the rate of development between the advanced and underdeveloped countries but aggravate and increase it. . . They are pumps designed to suck up the country's wealth and transfer it abroad."

The Rodriguez article easily points out the indubitable fact that multinationals operating in a poor country invariably tend to control its economy. They ruin or buy out local enterprises unable to compete with them, borrow working capital from local banks and financing institutions, transfer obsolete or overpriced technology, engage in transfer pricing and in the massive outflows of foreign exchange, corrupt the local ruling elite through all sorts of devices and pressures, expose the native population to consumption patterns suitable only to affluent societies, and aggravate a poor country's dependence on foreign technology, foreign investments, foreign markets, foreign credits, and imported styles and products. Instead of helping develop a poor country, the evidence shows that most of them actually prolong its under-development.

And yet, it is a never ending source of pride for Marcos to be able to announce through the controlled media that new foreign loan commitments have been obtained, that a multinational company has been convinced to make Manila its regional headquarters, that another foreign group has decided to make an investment in the Philippines, that more hotels and tourist resorts are being built, and that strikes are no longer possible.

With the open-door policy of Marcos, foreigners have now assumed a quantitatively commanding role in the national economy. Filipino capital has been dispossessed of its economic birthright. Verily, the development program of Marcos is being pursued at the expense of the country and the overwhelming majority of the Filipino people and at the sacrifice of economic sovereignty.

Marcos threw the country's investment field wide open to foreign capital and multinational corporations by offering attractive tax and foreign exchange incentives, and an even more attractive labor situation. Marcos offered the country's large pool of unemployed and underemployed labor, ban on labor strikes and an unalterable ceiling on workers' wages and salaries.

While offering the attractive investment incentives, Marcos dictated to the Constitutional Convention a martial law constitution that:

- 1) Reversed the Supreme Court decisions in the Quasha and Luzon Stevedoring cases, and
- 2) Gave the dictator power to disregard all restrictive laws on foreign investments in concluding treaties and executive agreements. *3

(*3. 1973 Constitution, Art. XIV, Sec. 15.)

Not content with providing for favors in the martial law Constitution to foreign investors, Marcos himself executed acts further calculated to strengthen

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his conspiracy with foreign investors. In a series of decrees, which can happen only in a dictatorship, Marcos:

1) Unilaterally extended the Parity Rights for one year, from July 4, 1974, to July 3, 1975.

2) Approved during the period of such extension schemes by which U.S. firms divested themselves of title, but otherwise retained the beneficial use and control, of land acquired during parity.

3) Ratified the Philippines-Japan Treaty of Amity, Commerce and Navigation. The treaty ratifying Senate of the Philippines sat down on the treaty for 12 years, refusing to ratify it on account of fears that the accord would open the country to Japanese economic exploitation.

4) Relaxed Filipinization laws on the retail trade, the rice and corn industry, the inter-island shipping industry, and the banking system.

Now, everybody.... Now, everybody knows that Marcos is a master of the politics of quid pro quo. He provides overwhelming investment incentives for American multinationals to enable them to reap enormous profits with minimum investments while exploiting the natural and manpower resources of the Filipinos. In exchange, the U.S. transnational enterprises report back to their mother companies in continental America that they are enjoying a bonanza under the martial regime of Marcos. The implication of the "good behavior rating" of the martial law regime is that the mother companies should see to it that Marcos is not destabilized — as yet.

Thus, with the lobbying of the multinationals with official Washington, D.C., Marcos is assured of continuing American foreign assistance that will show that he is supported still by the U.S. government and that the martial law government continues to earn dollars from abroad.

Fortunately, the multinationals do not control the United States Congress where a new wind has started blowing. A great number of U.S. lawmakers have started taking a long hard look at political repression and oppression in the Philippines. Animated by the spirit that made America great, they still believe in that worn-out principle that freedom is indivisible, that an attack on freedom anywhere — as in the Philippines — is an attack on freedom everywhere. Thus, the latest foreign aid bill passed by Congress included a proviso that assistance might be withheld from any country practising the internment of political prisoners.

There ought to be great consternation in the U.S. Congress as well as among the multinationals which are coddling Marcos, as it were, when they discover the devious designs resorted to by Marcos in winning the support of American business for his declaration of martial law.

It was Marcos himself who instigated the violent demonstrations against American firms and "the imperialist Americans" during those riotous days before martial law. It was Marcos who ordered his Solicitor General to file the suit, entitled *Republic vs. Quasha* which sought the nullification of sales of private lands to U.S. citizens after 1945. Marcos likewise directed his Solicitor General to take a vigorous stand in favor of nationalism in the case of *Luzon Stevedoring vs. Anti-Dummy Board*, which resulted in a Supreme Court ruling banning foreign directors in corporations engaged in Filipinized industries.

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Marcos played on the nationalist sentiments of a majority of the Supreme Court justices to wring out from the justices decisions dripping with nationalistic undertones. Then, he let loose his paid propagandists to write subtly that the wave of nationalism in the Philippines was taking on a rabid anti-American orientation.

On the day Marcos was to declare martial law, he told American Ambassador Henry Byroade that he was under compulsion to resort to the emergency measure on account of, among others, the growing wave of anti-Americanism fanned by the nationalistic decisions of the Supreme Court on the Quasha and Luzon Stevedoring cases.

The 1973 report prepared by the Corporate Information Center of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. had this to say on American corporations and martial law:*4

(*4. "The Philippine American Corporations, Martial Law, and Underdevelopment.")

The declaration of martial law carried with it changes that have been of particular advantage to American corporations in the Philippines. In some cases these advantages have been indirect; others have been more deliberate. (*Italics ours*)

Very soon after the declaration of martial law, Presides Marcos began a continuing process of reassuring American business people that their interests were safe and that there would be no moves like expropriation under his administration.

One important advantage American businesses have received under martial law is the silencing of anti-American Filipino nationalism. In the years before martial law, American companies had been the object of a growing number of verbal and physical confrontations. Some of these were the result of a general trend toward "widespread corruption and lawlessness ranging from extortion to piracy." while others were specifically anti-American movements. In recent interviews, various company spokesmen cited incidents that had taken place during this time ranging from bombings to demonstrations that, they reported, created an atmosphere of uncertainty and fear about company operations. Through the workings of a controlled press, the prohibition of all forms of protest demonstrations, and the crackdown on lawlessness and crime under martial law, American corporations have enjoyed a respite from such confrontations.

A similar advantage under martial law for American companies is the disbanding of the Congress. The economic anti-Americanism expressed there in recent years also had been a cause for uncertainty. Now disbanded, the Congress can play no part in determining economic policy.

President Marcos' direct assurances to American companies were formalized in sections of the new Constitution drafted under martial law. All the anti-American nationalist proposals of earlier constitutional drafts were omitted. Regarding the critical question of land rights, President Marcos had stated immediately after the declaration of martial law that he would clarify the meaning of the Supreme Court Quasha decision. He has, in effect, negated the ruling that American corporations do not have vested rights to the lands they own after parity ends in 1974. The new Constitution formalized the negation of the decision in recognizing that the land had been acquired legally and keeps

open the possibility that U.S. corporations will be able to continue to own the land after July 3, 1974.

The new Constitution also includes two other areas that were of concern to American companies. Despite the provision that companies in the area of public utilities must be 60 percent Filipino by July 3, 1974, the new Constitution includes an escape clause. It states that "any provision of the article notwithstanding, the state may enter into international treaties or agreements as the national welfare and interest may require," The Constitution also negates another nationalist Supreme Court decision, the Luzon Stevedoring case; the Court had determined that foreign nationals could not sit on the board of directors of a public utility even though they held equity in it. The new Constitution ignores this and simply asserts that "representation of foreign capital in the governing body of such public utility may be allowed only in proportion to the extent of its equity."

The general specific efforts to reassure the American business community reflect perhaps a close relationship between President Marcos and American business people. Various theories can be expounded to explain this relationship: Marcos desperately needs the support of American corporations and will have to satisfy their interests to stay in power; or, Marcos knows he has American corporations caught and he can threaten loss of land or privileges if they do not support his decisions. It is difficult to substantiate either theory. But it is evident that there is a close cooperation, or at least understanding, between Marcos and American business interests. They have not been and, it is safe to say, they will not be working at cross purposes. "The businessmen are confident that Mr. Marcos is hostile to the strong trend of Filipino economic nationalism, essentially anti-American in character." (Henry Kamm, "Philippines President Held Friendly to U.S. Business," *New York Times*, November 13, 1972, p. 62). There are also more concrete ties between U.S. business and Marcos. Some U.S. companies are strongly identified with Marcos. "Companies such as Hawaii's Castle and Cooke and Gulf Oil have important allies of Marcos on the boards of their Philippine subsidiaries. And Ford Motor Company plans to build a stamping plant in a recently created foreign trade zone at Bataan. . . . Reportedly, Marcos and his friends own most of the land in the trade zone." ("Philippines: A Government that Needs U.S. Business," *Business Week*, November 4, 1972, p. 42).

One American businessman explained that Marcos needs the cooperation of all within the economic sphere. American investments represent a major part of that sphere and without their cooperation many of Marcos' economic programs could not go through. "Of great importance to the Philippine Government at this point is the confidence of the New York financial and corporate community. As of January 31, 1972, the Philippine external debt amounted to \$2.1 billion. The United States holds approximately 45 per cent of this debt. . . . (Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, "Korea and the Philippines: November 1972, Staff Report, February 18, 1973, p. 35) Another source phrased it this way: "Marcos is asking the companies to lobby for substantial U.S. government aid and favorable treatment for Philippine exports. More important, Marcos hopes that if he continues to treat U.S. business right, U.S. bankers will continue to treat him right." ("Philippines: A Government that Needs U.S. Business," *Business Week*, November 4, 1972,

p. 42)

There is no clear evidence on the issue of actual collusion of American corporations with the declaration of martial law. There have been numerous allegations, however, that American business was really behind the declaration. Representatives of the American corporate community deny any involvement. The role of American corporations just after the declaration is also open to debate. Again, allegations of secret cooperation between Marcos and American business have been made. There seems to be at least some substance to these allegations in that an American business representative stated during an interview that two officers of the American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines conferred with President Marcos within days after the declaration on the cooperative role American corporations were to play under martial law. An American Chamber of Commerce representative vehemently denied this charge, stating that the organization had had no meetings with the President. He also stated that such political actions are not condoned by American multinational corporations. x x x

American and other foreign investments in the Philippines since martial law can be categorized into four basic groups: investments by new operations planned before martial law and implemented since; investments by new operations planned and implemented since the declaration; expansion of existing operations planned before martial law and implemented since; and expansions planned and implemented since the declaration. The major American investments fit into several of these categories.

A significant case of new American investment as a direct result of martial law is a joint venture in an investment banking involving two large American interests. Chase Manhattan Bank and the American International Reinsurance Company (AIRCO) have joined with a Filipino group in creating the new Philippine-American Investment Corporation. Each American company will hold a 20 per cent interest. ("Stake in the Philippines," U.S. News and World Report, December 4, 1972, p. 71) The initial paid-in capital of the venture is P1 million but will be raised to P10 million after approval by the Board of Investments, with the authorized capital at P50 million. The investment by the two American companies was precipitated by the martial law situation. "MR. Greenberg, AIRCO chairman, just back from Manila and talks with President Ferdinand E. Marcos, says he is 'far more optimistic' about the investment climate than he was a few months ago. The businessman finds Mr. Marcos 'addressing himself realistically' to his nation's problems, rather than urging a nationalistic line." ("Stake in the Philippines.")

Another investment by U.S. companies that was a direct result of martial law proclamation is in oil exploration. The Chevron Oil Company and the Texaco Corporation joined two local Philippine companies, Abstract Mining and Industrial Corporation and Astro Minerals and Oil Corporation, in a joint venture to explore for oil. The venture was made possible by Marcos' decree opening oil exploration to foreign corporations by allowing service contracts with the government. The two U.S. companies will invest \$8 million to explore through their international branches. Chevron Overseas Petroleum and Texaco International Petroleum. The approved venture will explore an area in the Sulu Sea area of 1.2 million hectares (adjacent to Shell and Exxon concessions). Under the terms of the government agreement, the government will receive 60

per cent of all production and the tax-free 40 per cent will be divided so that each American corporation receives 32.5 per cent and each local company 7.5 per cent, x x x

"The symbiotic relationship between the martial regime of Marcos and the American multinationals are very real indeed. Marcos has given and continues to give giant foreign investors, particularly American multinationals, a stake in the stability of his martial regime. The foreign investors are supposed to act as sentinels for the regime against any move to destabilize Marcos by either domestic or foreign elements. In exchange, Marcos is bargaining away the national patrimony. In the light of the commanding role of foreign capital in the Philippines, the Filipinos are being steered irreversibly by the dictator towards the de-nationalization of the national patrimony and near total dependence on foreign capital for their livelihood.

Chapter XV

Spineless Judiciary Legitimizes A Pretender

The existence and operation of the Supreme Court and other adjuncts of the judiciary is the best argument against martial law in the Philippines. Unfortunately, however, it is the judiciary itself, notably the Supreme Court, which sustains them unwelcome life of, and cloaks with legitimacy, the conjugal dictatorship of Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos.

Upon the other hand, Marcos can no longer legally style himself as "the President of the Philippines.*" His constitutional term in office expired a long time ago - on December 30, 1973. Neither can Marcos claim to be President under the so-called "new Constitution." The Filipino people never validly ratified this new Constitution. The Supreme Court itself said so.*1

(*1. Javellana vs. Executive Secretary, et al, G.R. Nos. L-36142, L-36164, L-36165, L-36236 and 36283.)

Marcos is a usurper. He is at best a "de facto" ruler who holds power in a tragic demonstration of a slogan coined by Marcos' new idol, Chairman Mao Tse-Tung of China, that "power flows from the barrel of a gun." In a collective sense, Marcos' gun consists of the terrifying guns of martial law.

Marcos, the man on horseback, and a supine and spineless Supreme Court that has no logical reason for being under a martial regime are engaged in a treasonous conspiracy to deprive the Filipino people indefinitely of their civil liberties. Marcos and the Supreme Court have struck up a "you scratch my back, I scratch your back" relationship. The Marcos-Supreme Court "modus vivendi" may be akin to the relationship between a killer-kidnapper and his wretched hostage who has become cooperative in telling the neighbors what a swell and legit guy his captor is just because the kidnapper had promised not to harm him while waiting for the ransom money.

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Now, it is a principle of government that where the courts of justice fail to function on account of a breakdown of law and order, martial law may be declared. Conversely, where the courts are able to function freely and independently, there cannot be any further justification for the operation of a government under martial law.

When Marcos declared martial law, he "ordered" the judiciary "to continue to function." It was a very astute move; Although he had made it plain that he was assuming all powers of government, there was a benevolent Mr. Marcos allowing the Supreme Court "to continue to function." But he didn't leave any room for doubt that the Supreme Court should derive its authority, not from the Constitution, but from the "order" of the dictator.

Marcos also let it be understood that he needs, and would allow the functioning of, the Supreme Court only for the purpose of vesting the martial law regime with a cloak of legitimacy. Any pretense, therefore, that the Supreme Court is an independent tribunal falls flat. The high tribunal shamelessly exists today for only one main function, i.e. to cloak the conjugal dictatorship and its every decree, act or decision with legality. Since September 1972, the Supreme Court has never ruled against the martial regime.

If the Supreme Court should ever muster enough courage and sense of patriotism and over-rule Marcos on anything, without the dictator's consent, then as surely as night follows day, Marcos would abolish the high court the next day.

The behavior of the Supreme Court under the martial law backed dictatorship is reprehensible, but not so surprising. It was captured and turned into a political instrument by the men of Marcos as early as 1971.*2 Thus, as early as October, 1971, the Philippine Supreme Court started desecrating the spirit of the U.S. Miranda ruling and delivered by December 1971, the civil liberties of the Filipino people to President Marcos.*3

(*2. See Chapter on 'Infrastructure of Martial Law.)

(*3. Ibid; case of Lansang vs. Garcia, G.R. No. L-33965, December 11, 1971.)

The Supreme Court decision on the infamous case of Lansang vs. Garcia was a complete over-turning of its libertarian-philosophy as spelled out in the case of People vs. Hernandez, 99 Phil. 515. Promulgated in the early 50s, the Hernandez decision earned for the Supreme Court the accolade of an entire nation, and the sobriquet as the "last bulwark of the civil liberties" of the Filipino people. The decision pronounced that individual liberty is "too basic, too transcendental and vital in a republican state, like ours, to be denied upon mere general principles and abstract considerations of public safety."

Today, the Supreme Court would scream "rebellion, continue martial law" on a mere citation by Marcos of the most trivial episodes of disorder in the Philippines. I stated the following when I testified before the Fraser committee on June 17, 1975, by way of answer to a question propounded by Congressman Fraser:*4

(*4. Page 306, printed copy of transcript of hearings held by the House Sub-committee on International Organizations on "Human Rights in South Korea and the Philippines: Implications for U.S. Policy.")

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"May I add, Mr. Chairman, in connection with the decisions promulgated by the Supreme Court, the President can even claim that a white paper is black and the Supreme Court will decide it is black, even though it is white (Laughter), x x x"

Perhaps, like any collaborator brought before a people's court upon the end of an enemy occupation, members of the Supreme Court will excuse themselves before the bar of history by claiming that they were reduced to submission and timidity by Marcos on account of violence, intimidation and threats used against them.

The subjugation of the Supreme Court by Marcos was slow and methodical as were his approaches to other aspects of his preparations for the imposition of martial law. First, it was the membership which he captured. Months before September, 1972, all but two of the members of the high tribunal were personal nominees and appointees of Marcos.

Then, he put his "fifth columnist" phalanx to severe tests. Initially, it was the suspension of the privilege of the writ of *habeas corpus*. The court upheld Marcos on the celebrated case of *Lansang vs. Garcia*. Next came the nationalistic decisions on the cases of *Quasha vs. Republic and Luzon Stevedoring vs. Anti-Dummy Board* which Marcos also sought of the Supreme Court.*5 (*5. See Chapter on "Infrastructure of Martial Law".)

When Marcos seized power on September 1972, he did not abolish the Supreme Court as he did with Congress. After all, the great majority of the justices were the President's men.

Marcos made no bones about the source of power of the Supreme Court. Under General Order No. 1, he declared that he "shall govern the nation and direct the operation of the entire government, including all its agencies and instrumentalities. (Italics ours) Then Marcos issued an "order" through General Order No. 3 to the Judiciary to "continue to function in accordance with its present organization and personnel, and (shall) try and decide in accordance with existing laws all criminal and civil cases, except" those challenging his dictatorial powers.

The areas declared by Marcos as taboo for judicial inquiry were:

1. Those involving the validity, legality or constitutionality of Proclamation No. 1081, dated September 21, 1972 (the martial law proclamation), or of any decree, order or acts issued, promulgated or performed by me or by my duly designated representative pursuant thereto.

2. Those involving the validity, legality or constitutionality of any rules, orders or acts issued, promulgated or performed by public servants pursuant to decrees, orders, rules and regulations issued and promulgated by me or by my duly designated representative pursuant to Proclamation No. 1081.

Within a week from the declaration of martial law, Marcos demanded the submission of the "resignation from office not later than October 15, 1972" of "all officers of the national government whose appointments are vested in the President." *6

(*6. Letter of Instructions No. 11, dated September 29, 1972.)

As they were specifically excepted from the demanding tone of LOI No. 11, the Chief Justice and Associate Justices of the Supreme Court thought they were going to be spared the Sword of Damocles by the President. However, when Marcos dictated the provisions of the "new Constitution" to the Constitutional convention he saw to it that the threat of dismissal covered the members of the high court, the new Constitution provided that justices of the Supreme Court may only "continue in office until they reach the age of 70 years unless sooner replaced" by the President.

The consequences of the series of "judicial reforms" initiated by Marcos since the advent of martial law left no doubt that all judges, from the highest to the lowest, work under threat of dismissal at any time, Marcos can replace any judge any time he is disposed to do so, and in fact, has repeatedly done so. Veteran judges of long service have been dismissed through curt notices of acceptance of their compulsory resignations. Judges have been summarily booted out, their names, careers and reputation ruined and their future shattered, without being heard in their defense, even without being told what were the charges against them.*7

(*7. Section 9 and 10, Article XVII (Transitory Provisions) of the martial law Constitution.

The *Philippine News*, issue for the week of March 5 to 12, 1975, published the following piece which I wrote on the administration of justice under martial law:

MARCOS IS THE LAW

Backed by an oppressive martial law, President Marcos has transformed the Philippine judiciary into a submissive adjunct of the executive for the purpose of assuring the Oriental dictator's claimed infallibility.

Thus, anybody who might dare oppose Marcos or challenge the constitutionality of his acts or the weight of evidence of charges filed or caused to be filed against his enemies might as well abandon all hopes of succeeding in this stage of judicial development in the Philippines.

By his imposition of martial law on Sept 21, 1972, Marcos created a climate of fear so pervasive in the country. Then, in a series of decrees and orders, he gave all sectors no choice but to do his bidding.

The fearsome power of martial rule was dramatically demonstrated by Marcos in the firing squad execution of opium dealer Lim Seng on Jan. 9, 1973.

While it is true that Lim's execution was demanded by the people, the only public blood-letting thus far resorted to by the martial regime was calculated more to make all sectors aware that the dictator would not hesitate to press the trigger—when necessary.

The dire message of this two-pronged "propaganda of the deed" resorted to by Marcos in the Lim execution was not lost to the Supreme Court of the Philippines.

The high court lost no time in choosing the side of Marcos in selectively deciding some of the "urgent" cases brought against the dictator.

Of course, Marcos set out his own infallibility - insofar as forces within the Philippines were concerned — when he imposed martial law.

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A major prop to such claim infallibility was spelled out by Marcos on the day he proclaimed martial law when he issued General Order No. 3, providing among others:

"I do hereby further order that the Judiciary shall continue to function in accordance with its present organization and personnel, and shall try and decide in accordance with existing laws all criminal and civil cases, except the following:

"1. Those involving the validity, legality or constitutionality of any decree, order or acts issued, promulgated or performed by me or by my duly designated representative pursuant to Proclamation No. 1081, dated Sept. 21, 1972. xx x"

Aside from promulgating General Order No. 3, Marcos resorted to other significant ways, either subtle or crude, in subjugating the Supreme Court and the other inferior courts of the land, to wit:

1) By beaming messages to the Supreme Court, when the occasion demanded, that a judicial rebuff would compel him to dismantle the existing martial law apparatus and pave the establishment of military junta-ruled revolutionary government.

2) By issuing Letter of Instructions No. 11, by which the President required all presidential appointees, including judges, but excluding members of the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeals, to submit their resignations, thereby making them serve at the absolute pleasure of the President.

3) By taking the official position, through his Solicitor General, in cases pending before the Supreme Court that the imposition of martial law automatically suspended the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus, thereby making such posture a virtual order to the high court.

4) By demonstrating his capacity for abrogating at will the normal procedural and substantive function of the courts when he promulgated Presidential Decree No. 385, dated January 31, 1974.

5) By carefully screening new appointees to the Supreme Court who are approaching the age of 65, the retirement age, and increasing the salaries of justices, but making them feel by example that the P300,000.00 lump sum retirement pay of a Supreme Court justice could be had "only for good behavior."

With coercive process of martial law at work, plus some carrots held out by Marcos, the development or transformation of the Philippine judiciary could not but go a long way after September 21, 1972.

But it seems that he had other objectives. Marcos succeeded in setting up a peculiar type of compartmentalized justice in the country. There is now one judicial yardstick for Marcos and his acts; a different standard for that nebulous group of people tagged as the "enemies" of Marcos, and, therefore of the state; and the real impartial justice for the rest of the country.

In accordance with the yardstick fashioned out by Marcos for the Supreme Court and inferior courts to follow, the President has been, and must always be, adjudged as infallible, some sort of a demi-god, whose utterances and acts are to be held, as a matter of course, as constitutional and valid, if ever and whenever challenged by anyone who would be willing to indulge in a legal exercise in futility.

Corollary to this, the "enemies" of Marcos and the state don't stand a ghost of a chance of ever getting a fair trial or an impartial verdict before any tribunal, civil or military, where they might be held — when the dictator feels like making a public demonstration that those who are languishing in dirty and unkempt military stockades are really facing charges.

However, let it not be said that there is no justice in the Philippines. Of course, there is still. And this is dispensed by all courts, in criminal and civil (not non-political) cases, only in cases where the president, or his cronies or in-laws have no political or pecuniary interest. It is only in this area of judicial undertaking that the courts can dispense justice "without fear or favor."

As stated earlier, the major reason for the shameless docility and fawning servility of the members of the judiciary, especially the Supreme Court, to the President on matters affecting the martial law regime is the climate of fear and coercion so successfully created by Marcos.

The fact that a judge can be dismissed from the service for any fancied cause or no reason at all by simply accepting his resignation as submitted in accordance with the requirements of Letter of Instruction Nos. 11 is an ingredient of such climate of fear.

Retired Supreme Court Justice Jose B. L. Reyes, who now heads the Integrated Bar of the Philippines, found an occasion to protest that the resignations were being held by the President, by his inaction on them, as a virtual "Sword of Damocles" over their heads.

In a letter to Marcos dated Nov. 21, 1973, JBL pointed out that even under the new Constitution, acceptance of resignations had to be exercised within a reasonable and definite period of time "and under the 1935 Constitution any judicial reorganization had to be completed within one year."

The retired justice drove home his point this way:

"The indefinite uncertainty as to the actual tenure of judges undermines the independence of the judiciary, which is one of the cornerstones of due process and the main guarantee that the people's liberties and rights will be protected."

Failing to get a reply from either Malacanang or the Department of Justice, a frustrated JBL directed his plea, one year later (Nov. 21, 1974) to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, calling the latter's attention to the insecurity of judicial tenure. He suggested that the chief justice might have better luck with Marcos in curing the problem. In the meantime, the President had exercised his claimed power of arbitrary removal of judges.

In September, 1974, all 81 Catholic bishops in the Philippines wrote the President a letter, asking, among others, that Marcos put an end to the tenuous situation of judges. Quoting the 1973 year-end report of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines, the letter of the bishops wrote:

"x x x the judges have all become casuals. They can be removed at anytime, and what is worse, they don't even have to know they have been removed. All the President has to do is appoint a successor."

One of the means which the President has found most effective to bend the will of the Supreme Court to his liking is the scheme of his calculated leaks on his plans for the high court should he ever be rebuffed by the judiciary.

Every time the high court would be called upon to decide a suit against the President or the regime, he would mount a forum to warn the justices that an assertion of judicial independence would result in the loss of their jobs.

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The message is usually beamed in this wise: If the President did not draw the support of all sectors, he might be compelled to dismantle the existing apparatus of martial law and give way to the inevitable establishment of a revolutionary government run by a military junta. (Aside: there goes the Supreme Court.)

Apologists of the President will probably make capital of the fact, that despite the provisions of General Order No. 3, the martial regime has shown a healthy respect for the Supreme Court by submitting to its jurisdiction in all cases brought before it.

How true, how true. But equally true is the fact that those messages about the organization of a revolutionary government have been beamed a number of times to the high court.

Any lawyer worth his salt would readily admit that the suspension, of the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus is a crude limitation upon the judicial function and the process. The Philippine Supreme Court has not overturned the official position of the martial regime on the automatic suspension of the "writ" by the imposition of martial law.

The "queer" behavior of the Supreme Court finds dramatic demonstration in the case of former Senator Benigno S. Aquino, Jr., held in the stockade since the night of Sept. 22, 1972.

Because the Marcos administration wanted to convince world opinion that it had a case against "Ninoy" Aquino, charges of illegal possession of firearms and subversion on three counts were filed, and scheduled for public trial, before a military court in August, 1973.

Aquino went to the Supreme Court to challenge the jurisdiction of the military tribunal. The prosecution asked for a delay in the military court proceedings, and putting on a show of magnanimity, Marcos ordered the military to suspend all trials.

The Supreme Court has yet to rule on the Aquino suit.

And yet, the high court is capable of "remarkably rapid decision making on a matter of great import — to Marcos.

On January 21, prisoners Aquino, Eugenio Lopez, Jr. and Sergio Osmena III, together with five Catholic bishops and five others, filed a petition for prohibition to stop the referendum scheduled for Feb. 27, 1975. The Solicitor General filed his brief on Jan. 28, and a seven-hour oral argument was heard on Jan. 30. The next day the court, quite naturally, denied the petition.

That Marcos, the methodical politician then and dictator now, has systematically eroded the Philippine judiciary to a point of doing his will and thus upholding his infallibility is beyond contest.

However, the moral and economic requirements of the members of the Supreme Court also count a lot for the degradation which has hit the administration of justice in the Philippines.

This can best be understood when we take into account the fact that members of the Supreme Court receive annually (thanks to a presidential decree) the handsome salary of P60,000.00.

Then consider the factor that most of them are due for retirement at age 65 within the next two years or so. Retirement should bring them a lump sum of about P300,000.00 in addition to monthly pension equivalent to their salaries.

These are indeed handsome considerations for the justices to fall on each other's face to prove good behavior.

Retired Justice Calixto O. Zaldivar proved good behavior during his term, but he suffered a little delay in the processing of his retirement papers when he committed the slight indiscretion of making snide remarks on martial law during a testimonial given in his honor by the Integrated Bar of the Philippines. Poor old man Zaldivar, he must have almost died when he suffered those delays in the processing of the papers that eventually yielded him the P300,000.00 retirement lump sum pay.

On June 17, 1975, I submitted a memorandum to the Fraser committee, embodying among other things factual allegations in support of my contention that Marcos holds power illegally in the Philippines today. My report stated:

VIII. UNCONSTITUTIONAL CONSTITUTION

The New Constitution, on which President Marcos anchors the legality of his holding on to the presidency after Dec. 30, 1973, and of his decrees, orders, and acts, was not validly ratified by the Filipino people.

1) Mr. Marcos issued on Jan. 17, 1973, a presidential proclamation (No. 1102) in which he declared that he considered the "overwhelming vote" of the people in the Jan. 1-15 referendum in favor of the new Constitution a "ratification" of the said Charter. There is nothing in the Constitution (1935 or 1973) which provides for a referendum of the kind called by President Marcos. The constitution provides for a plebiscite — not a referendum — for its ratification.

2) Assuming that a referendum vote would have been a valid vote of ratification of the New Constitution, there could not have been such valid vote because there was no real referendum held on Jan. 10 to 15, 1973.

3) The figures cited in Proclamation No. 1102 — 14,976,561 in favor and 743,869 against "approval" of the Constitution — as well as the figures on the other questions fielded in the referendum were manufactured by a group headed by the President's favorite brother-in-law, Gov. Benjamin Romualdez. I was a member of that group.

4) The original three-man Commission on Elections was brought initially into the group, but it was excluded by Gov. Romualdez on the second day when the Commission members would not sanction what they called a "farce". This is the reason the chairman and one other "uncooperative" commissioner of the Elections Commission — Jaime N. Ferrer and Lino Patajo, respectively — were eased out of the poll body in April, 1973.

5) As early as Jan. 11, 1973, or on the second day of the referendum when it became clear that the Commission on Elections would have no part in the conduct or results of the referendum, the group manufacturing the results had the voting figures readied for submission to the President. Secretary of Local Government Jose Rono was tasked by Gov. Romualdez to handle the preparation of the official report to the President.

6) Having heard instructions from President Marcos on the various questions which he wanted to address to the referendum, I knew exactly what he wanted us to report back to him as "the vote" of the people.

7) Having been previously held out by the President as the only private media man with ready access to him and to whom he confides some of his plans, I was assigned by the referendum committee to take charge of the orchestration of media. In this project, I functioned over and above, and to the exclusion of, the official Information Secretary, with the open and official backing of the three top presidential assistants.

8) I prepared the advance stories announcing the holding of the referendum and dished out copies to the other newsmen covering the presidential beat.

9) In the afternoon of every referendum day, we held briefings for the local and foreign press, during which they were handed copies of the original story I had prepared for publication in my own paper, the Daily Express. The other newsmen got their figures on the "votes" turned in for the day from my own news copy.

10) On one occasion, we tried to utilize the Secretary of Information to conduct the briefings, but he just did not prove knowledgeable about what we wanted to deliver to the foreign newsmen that he was rudely shoved aside by Gov. Romualdez from his own chair in the office of information secretary and told to yield the briefing to Secretary Rono.

Marcos has made much of his alleged "submission" to the supremacy of the Supreme Court. In his second book, he made a barefaced claim that "Our martial law is unique in that it is based on the supremacy of the civilian authority over the military and on complete submission to the decision of the Supreme Court." (Italics ours).^{*8}

(*8. Page 121, "Notes on the New Society," by Ferdinand E. Marcos.)

The dictator has repeatedly protested that the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of his proclamation (No. 1102) declaring the ratification of the martial law Constitution. He has said this was the ruling in the case of *Javellana vs. Executive Secretary*.

Note, however, the conditions under which Marcos submitted to the challenge as presented in the case of *Javellana vs. Executive Secretary*. "Inasmuch as the issues in turn raised the question of legitimacy of the entire Government and also *to meet the insistent suggestion that, in the event of an adverse opinion, I proclaim a revolutionary government*, I decided to submit to the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court xxx." (Italics ours).^{*9} (*9. Page 123, *Ibid.*)

The implication was very clear. If the Supreme Court did not uphold Marcos, he would organize a revolutionary government. Necessarily, he would abolish the Supreme Court and, perhaps place its members in military stockade on a charge that they took part in government.

The threat to organize a revolutionary government was actually a threat to formalize what is already a matter of fact. The Supreme Court and other adjuncts of the judiciary are complete captives of Marcos and the military.

The lone woman member of the martial law Supreme Court, Associate Justice Cecilia Munoz-Palma, could not help but allude to the prostrate figure of justice in a well-applauded speech on Law Day, which coincided with the third anniversary observance of martial law last September 19, 1975. The lady justice called the judges and the members of the Philippine bar to "muster the

will, the boldness, the resources, and the perseverance to work collectively and decisively for the maintenance of an independent judiciary." She cited the case of a city judge who had served in the judiciary for 22 years, and was recommended to the Supreme Court by the Integrated Bar for promotion as Judge of the Court of First Instance. His "resignation" was "accepted" by the President. All that the poor, defenseless judge asked was that he be informed of the cause of his separation from the service. Apparently, not even this request was heeded.

Under martial law, the jurisdiction of civil courts has shrunk, while the military courts have proliferated. The cherished freedoms from unreasonable search and seizure, and from arbitrary arrests and detention have disappeared overnight. The right to bail, the right to a preliminary investigation and the right to remain silent and to have counsel have all been consigned to the dark ages.

Civil courts can no longer entertain cases involving crimes against national security and the law of nations, or the fundamental laws of the State, those against public order, or involving usurpation of authority, rank or title, the improper use of names, uniforms and insignia, and those committed by public officers and enlisted men of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, those involving crimes relative to insurrection, sedition, rebellion or subversion¹⁰ and other crimes covered by general orders that from time to time are promulgated.

Marcos started creating military tribunals on September 27, 1972.¹¹ He introduced certain innovations by decreeing that military courts may either be military commissions or provost courts.¹²

(*10. General Order No. 12-A, dated October 2, 1972.)

(*11. General Order No. 8, dated September 27, 1972.)

(*12. General Order No. 12, dated September 30, 1972.)

There are about 20 military commissions and 40 provost courts now operative.

These courts have been clothed with jurisdiction, exclusive over certain crimes. General Order No. 49 dated October 4, 1974, is the latest re-definition of the jurisdiction of these military courts vis-a-vis the civil courts.

Presidential Decree No. 39 dated November 7, 1972, prescribes rules governing the creation, composition, jurisdiction, procedure and other matters relevant to military tribunals. Under this decree, a military commission shall be composed of not less than five members (in practice, seven members compose a military commission, with a quorum of five to try cases). All the members are required to be military men. Its jurisdiction covers offenses where the range of punishment imposed is confinement for at least six (6) years and one (1) day, or fine of not less than P2,000.00. All other cases are referred to a provost court which is composed of only one (1) member called the Provost Court Officer who must also be a member of the military.

Freedom from unreasonable search and seizure as enshrined in the 1935 Constitution disappeared with the proclamation of martial law. The pervasive exercise of power descended upon the media of communications. Letter of Instructions No. 1 ordered the immediate seizure and control of all the media of communications. Printing machines were padlocked, and so were radio and television facilities and equipment.

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Industrial establishments, such as the Iligan Integrated Steel Mills, Inc., were also seized — all in the name of national defense.

Meantime, rigorous searches of residential places and commercial premises were conducted in the course of a witchhunting holiday.

In the days before martial law, the determination of the existence of probable cause that would justify the issuance of a warrant of arrest was a purely judicial function. The warrant which could be issued only upon order of a judge who must, however, determine beforehand the existence of a probable cause therefore by following the constitutionally prescribed mode of examination. An arrest undertaken without the proper warrant, except under a few specific instances, would be unreasonable and illegal.

In every case, however, the person arrested must be delivered to the proper judicial authorities without unnecessary delay and within certain fixed periods of time, depending on the gravity of the offense for which the person had been arrested. The necessary complaint must be filed before the competent court. Otherwise, the continuous detention of the person arrested would be unlawful for being arbitrary.

Under the martial law regime, Mr. Marcos himself ordered the arrest and detention of particular individuals on the ground of national security. Many of these persons languished under detention for months — even years — without any charges or complaints being filed against them. Senator Jose W. Diokno was recently released after more than two years of detention, without a charge having been filed against him. Others, less lucky, are still detained, also without charges.

The military has been granted blanket authority to arrest and detain persons violating provisions of the Revised Penal Code.*¹³

(*13. General Order No. 2 and subsequent amendments.)

The persons arrested were to be detained — as in fact they were detained — and were not to be released “until otherwise ordered released by me (i.e., Mr. Marcos) or by my duly designated representative.”

Meanwhile, military soldiers rounded up at night all the male residents of particularly chosen communities, lined them up undressed beneath glaring spotlights, and arrested whomsoever suited their fancy (especially if he bore tattoo marks on his body). Allegedly, the purpose was to “clean” the community of lawless elements. Anybody with the courage enough to protest was arrested.

During the good “old Society” the right of the accused to post bail, unless he is charged with a capital offense and the evidence of guilt is strong, to secure his release pending criminal prosecution, has always been recognized by the civil courts.

Under the martial law regime, however, if one is charged before a military court, he cannot post bail to secure his temporary release. For while the Chief of Staff has been given the authority to promulgate rules and regulations governing the release on bail of persons accused before military courts, such rules and regulations have never been drawn up. In effect, a person accused before a military tribunal does not enjoy any right to bail.

The martial law regime has introduced an innovation in the conduct of preliminary investigations for the commission of crimes.

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Whereas before, a respondent in a criminal case enjoyed the right to be present at the investigation, to confront the complainant and his witnesses, and to crossexamine the said witnesses, these rights have been eliminated by decree.*14

(*14. Presidential Decree No. 77 dated December 6, 1972.)

Under the said decree, mere affidavits presented by a complainant charging a person with the commission of an offense would be sufficient basis for a finding by the investigating officer of the existence of a prima facie case. The person against whom the charges are levelled need not be present in order that the preliminary investigation can proceed. Neither is it necessary that said respondent be represented by counsel.

The 1973 Constitution provides in its Article IV, Section 20, that: "x x x Any person under investigation for the commission of an offense shall have the right to remain silent and to counsel, and to be informed of such right. No force, violence, threat, intimidation, or any other means which vitiates the free will shall be used against him. Any confession obtained in violation of this section shall be inadmissible in evidence." This provision is not found in the 1935 Constitution.

The effective implementation of the above-quoted provision still has to be seen. The employment of force and violence by the police authorities in extorting a confession or admission from a person arrested and detained for some crime is of such common knowledge that it need not be recounted here. The military, on the other hand, are not to be outdone. If the police can employ the "water cure", the military can do them one better. In fact, they have made efficacious use of electricity - coursing the hot, tingling current not only on the forefingers of the detained suspect, but also through his naked body, testicles, or rectum, while he stands with his bare feet on wet cement.

A Joint Circular dated July 11, 1974, of the Department of Justice and National Defense prescribed rules and regulations in the conduct of criminal investigations with a view toward implementing the aforequoted constitutional provision. The said circular makes it mandatory for the person being investigated to be informed of his right to remain silent, that any statement he makes therein could be used against him as evidence, and that he has a right to the presence of counsel.

This circular, however, is a toothless measure. For one thing, it is being ignored. For another thing, while it allows the presence of counsel if so requested by the suspect being investigated, "the one conducting investigation on custodial interrogation is authorized to exclude a counsel who impedes or shows an obvious inclination to impede the administration of justice x x x."

The circular is dead silent, however, as to what act would constitute "impeding the administration of justice" so as to justify the exclusion of counsel. Indeed, what the circular seems to have granted on one hand, it has taken away with the other.

At most, the circular is an implicit admission of the atrocities being committed by both civilian and military authorities in the conduct of criminal investigations.

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Marcos has not hesitated to resort to indirect bribery in his passion to keep the judiciary his puppet in preventing or stopping any attempt to question the legitimacy of his dictatorship. Sometime in November, 1973, he obtained reports from his hirelings that the Liberal Party provincial chapters would file simultaneous suits questioning the constitutionality of Marcos' continued stay in the presidency beyond December 30, 1973, in every appropriate Court of First Instance. The dictator hastily announced (through me) that he was standardizing the annual salaries of CFI judges to P40,000.00. He eventually signed a Presidential Decree (No. 363) to that effect on January 3, 1974. Legality. . .

Martial law was a form of Marcos' vengeance on his political foes. Marcos has always suffered from inferiority complex placed side by side with Senators Lorenzo M. Tanada, Gil J. Puyat, Arturo Tolentino, Jovito R. Salonga, Anibrosio Padilla, Benigno S. Aquino, Jr., and Jose W. Diokno. He had not won any argument against any or all of these people except to float his booming oratorical voice. His inferiority complex when ranged against these stalwarts challenged him, however, to turn his weakness into a spurious strength that drew upon force, the force of martial law. I am sure Marcos still recoils in his sleep as he recalls the humiliations he has suffered in the hands of these stalwarts, for they have long ago discovered his deceitful and under-handed ways in handling the affairs of state.

Marcos will never live down the stigma with which the uncowed legal minds of the Philippines have marked him with even as he enjoys the fruits of powers in Malacanang with his spurious strength. The Filipino people will record for posterity — and hand it down to their generations after them - the fact that one man ruled the Philippines in a dark period of its history as a homegrown tyrant, and shared such powers with a meddling woman with her own ambitions and timetable of power take-over. The records of the Marcos perfidy are preserved rather precariously in the archives of the Supreme Court. However, there is really a need to perpetuate them now, lest they be subjected to some incendiary acts by the minions of Marcos. Those records deal squarely with the legality of Marcos' presidency.

I specifically refer to a petition for prohibition (G.R. No. L-40004) to stop the holding of the third Philippine referendum on February 27, 1975. In the petition, the challenge to the legality of Marcos' tenure was raised in the nature of quo warranto suit (which was bound to fail, as it did fail) as a collateral issue. Former Senator Lorenzo M. Tanada, along with his lawyer-sons, Renato E. Tanada and Wigberto E. Tanada, appeared as counsel for petitioners Benigno S. Aquino, Jr., Trinidad Herrera, Bishop Francisco Claver, S.J., Bishop Antonio Nepomuceno, Bishop Jesus Varela, Bishop Felix Zafra, Bishop Teotimo Pacis, Eugenio Lopez, Jr., Sergio Osmena III, Antonio Araneta, Antonio Miranda, Raul Gonzales, Joker Arroyo and Emilio de Peralta. The issue raised was the very constitutionality of Marcos' presidency.

Humbly as a lawyer, with a greater grasp of the infrastructuring done by Marcos for his martial regime, I concur with the position taken by the brave petitioners in the case. And yet, I feel I would be remiss in my duty if I did not record here the doubts I entertained over the filing of the petition. I had already defected in the United States when the petition was filed with the Supreme Court. From 10,000 miles, I could see that Marcos himself welcomed the new

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suit as something like an action to quiet (his) title or remove a cloud on the legitimacy of his stay in Malacanang. The Supreme Court was his captive after all. I have no reason, however, to doubt the sense of patriotism that goaded Tanada to file the petition.

I reproduce hereunder pertinent portions of the petition to become part of this work, with certain corrections, and pass them on to history for judgment.

The thrust of the Tanada petition is that Marcos is 1) no longer President under the 1935 Constitution; 2) not President nor Prime Minister, interim or otherwise, under the 1973 Constitution; 3) not the "incumbent" President referred to in the transitory provisions of the 1973 Constitution! and 4) that, even if he were President under the above three items, his transitory powers under the 1973 Constitution have lapsed.

Under the 1935 Constitution, President Marcos ceased to be President on December 30, 1973 –

President Ferdinand E. Marcos was elected to his first term in November, 1965, and that term ended on December 30, 1969 (Art. VI, Sec. 4, 1935 Constitution). He was elected for a second term in November, 1969, and that term ended on March 31, 1973 when this Court, in the Ratification Cases, ruled that the 1973 Constitution may be considered in force and effect. Furthermore, even if the 1935 Constitution were still in force, his term of office would have ended on December 30, 1973 without holdover (Art. VII, Sec. 4, 1935 Constitution).

Therefore, the continuance in office by President Marcos, after December 30, 1973, as President of the Philippines, is clearly and absolutely illegal under the 1935 Constitution; and he cannot now exercise the power and prerogatives of President under said Constitution.

President Marcos not elected to presidency or any other office after December 30, 1973 -

Nor is President Marcos the President or Prime Minister, interim or otherwise, under the 1973 Constitution, because only the national assembly may elect the President and the Prime Minister, and President Marcos has never convened the Assembly.

Since President Marcos ceased to be President under the 1935 Constitution, he cannot lawfully exercise the powers of any public office under either Constitution.

President Marcos not the "Incumbent President" under transitory provisions —

It cannot be validly contended that, despite the above facts, President Marcos can still exercise the powers of the President under the 1935 Constitution and of President and Prime Minister under the 1973 Constitution by virtue of Section 3(1) of the Transitory Provisions of the 1973 Constitution, which reads as follows:

"SEC. 3. (1) The incumbent President of the Philippines shall initially convene the interim National Assembly and shall preside over its sessions until

the interim Speaker shall have been elected. He shall continue to exercise his powers and prerogatives under the nineteen hundred and thirty-five Constitution and the powers vested in the President and the Prime Minister under this Constitution until he calls upon the interim National Assembly to elect the interim President and the interim Prime Minister, who shall then exercise their respective powers vested by this Constitution."

This is so because the phrase "incumbent President" used in this and in other transitory provisions refers to whoever was lawfully President of the Philippines — not on November 30, 1972 when the Convention adopted the Draft of the 1973 Constitution — but on whatever date the people ratified the 1973 Constitution in a plebiscite called for the purpose (Sec. 16, Art. XVII, 1973 Constitution). President Marcos was lawful President on November 30, 1972. But he is not now - and cannot now be - lawful President upon ratification of the 1973 Constitution because said Constitution has not yet been submitted to the people for ratification in a plebiscite called for that purpose, and, as six (6) Justices out of the ten (10) then constituting the Court have ruled, said Constitution has not been validly ratified: —

"On the second question of validity of the ratification. Justices Makalintal, Zaldivar, Castro, Fernando, Teehankee and myself (Chief Justice Concepcion), or six (6) members of the Court also hold that the Constitution proposed by the 1971 Constitutional Convention was not validly ratified in accordance with Article XV, Section 1 of the 1935 Constitution, which provides only one way for ratification, i.e., 'in an election or plebiscite held in accordance with law and participated in only by qualified and duly registered voters.* M Resolution in Jose Javellana vs. The Executive Secretary, et al. G.R. No. L-36142 and other four ratification cases, G.R. Nos. L-36164, L-36165, L-36236 & L-36283; 50 SCRA 30, 138-139; words in parenthesis supplied.)

It is only "being considered in force and effect" —

"ACCORDINGLY, by virtue of the majority of six (6) votes of Justices Makalintal, Castro, Barredo, Makasiar, Antonio and Esguerra with the four (4) dissenting votes of the Chief Justice and Justices Zaldivar, Fernando and Teehankee, all the aforementioned cases are hereby dismissed. This being the vote of the majority, there is no further judicial obstacle to the new Constitution being considered in force and effect. " *Id.*, at p. 141; italics ours.)

Since the phrase "incumbent President" refers to the lawful President on whatever date the 1973 Constitution might be ratified by the people in a plebiscite called for that purpose, since the said Constitution has never been so ratified; and since President Marcos ceased to be the lawful President on December 30, 1973, he is not now and cannot be the "incumbent President" mentioned in the transitory provisions of the 1973 Constitution.

Therefore, President Marcos cannot lawfully exercise any powers and prerogatives conferred on the "incumbent President" by the said Constitution.

Powers under Transitory Provisions have lapsed —

But let us assume that the decision of this Court in the Ratification Cases is equivalent to a ratification of the 1973 Constitution, so that President Marcos is the "incumbent President" referred to in said Constitution. Can he exercise now the powers and prerogatives conferred upon him by the transitory provisions of that constitution?

Petitioners submit that he cannot, because the clear intent and meaning of the transitory provisions is that the powers and prerogatives it confers upon the "incumbent President" lapse unless exercised as soon as possible after the effectivity of the Constitution or at the very latest, before the end of the term for which he has been elected as President under the 1935 Constitution. *And, for President Marcos, that term ended long ago.*

This is crystal clear from the very character and language of the transitory provisions, from the nature of the principal changes in the structure of government that the 1973 Constitution introduces, and from the disastrous consequences that would result from a contrary interpretation.

Transitory Provisions fleeting by nature —

It is the very nature of transitory provisions that they be "of a passing nature", "temporary, fleeting or ephemeral", "not enduring or permanent" (Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language. 1966 ed., p. 1547). This being so, the powers conferred by transitory provisions cannot be exercised indefinitely; they must end after some time; and that time must be short or fleeting. Therefore, they must be exercised as soon as possible; if not, they lapse.

To hold otherwise is to make such transitory powers permanent, exercisable during the lifetime of the "incumbent President". This is not and could not be the intent of the 1973 Constitution, surely, no one can seriously contend that the Convention or the people intended to make President Marcos the "incumbent President" for life, an "incumbent President" who could, moreover, during his lifetime rule by himself alone, and by his sole decisions determine the destiny of more than 40 million Filipinos.

Yet that would be the result if the transitory provisions were interpreted to mean that simply because he was the "incumbent President" when the 1973 Constitution was considered in force and effect, President Marcos may continue to exercise all the transitory powers under said Constitution indefinitely or for as long as he wants to do so. And that could be during his entire lifetime.

We must never forget that both the 1935 and 1973 constitutions were ordained and promulgated to secure for all Filipinos of today and tomorrow "the blessings of democracy" and a regime of justice (and) liberty. (Preambles, 1935 and 1973 Constitutions). Every clause of the 1973 Constitution must therefore be so interpreted as to achieve these ideals and aspirations. There is only one interpretation of Section 3 (1) of the transitory provisions that would be consistent with these aspirations. And that interpretation is that the transitory powers of the "incumbent President" lapse if not exercised as soon as possible after the effectivity of the 1973 Constitution or at most only during the term for which the people had elected him President.

Intent clear from language of 1973 Constitution -

The language of the 1973 Constitution manifests this indubitable intention. Sections 1 and 3 of the Transitory Provisions, viewed in the light of other sections, clearly show it.

Before conferring transitory powers upon the "incumbent President" in Section 3 (1) of the transitory provisions, the 1973 Constitution provides that "there shall be an *interim* National Assembly which shall exist immediately upon . . . ratification" (Sec. 1, Art. XVII); that the members of the interim Assembly "may take their oath of office. . . and qualify . . . after . . . ratification of the Constitution" (Sec. 2 Art. XVII); and that the "incumbent President. . . shall initially convene the interim National Assembly" (Sec. 3 (1) Art. XVII). It is only after these provisions that transitory powers are conferred upon the "incumbent President", which powers he shall "continue to exercise. . . until he calls upon the interim National Assembly to elect the interim President and the interim Prime Minister".

What are these transitory powers? When do they begin? When shall they end?

The answer is plain: the transitory powers consist of the powers of the President under the 1935 Constitution. These powers obviously existed before the 1973 Constitution took effect. To obviate the possibility of their being considered terminated upon the ratification of the 1973 Constitution, the latter provides that the incumbent President "shall continue to exercise" them.

The transitory powers also consist, second, of the powers of the President and the Prime Minister under the 1973 Constitution. These powers did not exist before the new Constitution took effect. Hence the phrase "continue to exercise" cannot apply to these powers. But these powers did come into existence upon the effectivity of the 1973 Constitution.

Can these powers be exercised from that date? No, because insofar as these powers differ from the powers of the President under the 1935 Constitution, they require the existence of the interim National Assembly before the "incumbent President" can exercise them.

For example. Art. VII, Sec. 6 of the 1973 Constitution gives the President the power, among others, to address or dissolve the National Assembly. Unless the interim National Assembly has first been convened, the incumbent President obviously cannot exercise these powers, for there is no one he can address and nothing he can dissolve.

Similarly, Art. IX, Sec. 5 of the 1973 Constitution empowers the Prime Minister to "appoint the Deputy Prime Minister from among the Members of the National Assembly". Until the interim National Assembly has been convened and its Members have qualified, the incumbent President obviously cannot exercise this power, for there is no one he can appoint.

The same holds true with respect to the other powers of the President and the Prime Minister under the 1973 Constitution, except for the power granted by Art. XIV, Sec. 15 of the 1973 Constitution.

Therefore, the second group of transitory powers cannot be exercised until the interim Assembly has been convened. That is why the grant of transitory powers is preceded, in Section 3 (1), by the directive to convene the interim Assembly, which, according to Section 1, shall "exist immediately."

When do the transitory powers of the "incumbent President" end?

If the Assembly is convened, all transitory powers come to an end when the interim President and interim Prime Minister are elected, because upon their election, they will exercise the powers only of their respective offices as vested in the 1973 Constitution (Sees. 3 (1) and 4, Art. XVII). But if the interim Assembly is not convened, then, as abovestated, the second kind of transitory powers, by their very nature, cannot be exercised at all, and the first kind - the powers of the President under the 1935 Constitution - will end when he fails to comply with his constitutional duty to convene the interim Assembly as soon as possible after the effectivity of the 1973 Constitution on March 31, 1973 or, at the latest, on December 30, 1973 when his term as President under the 1935 Constitution would end.

Raison d'Etire of 1973 Constitution would be frustrated —

To hold otherwise is to hold that the 1973 Constitution intended, first, - to allow President Marcos, by his sole act, to extend his term of office indefinitely; and second - which is worse - to allow him to frustrate indefinitely the implementation of the major change that is the *raison d'etre* of the 1973 Constitution: the implantation of a parliamentary form of government in this land.

Putting it bluntly, to hold that President Marcos could exercise transitory powers beyond his term under the 1935 Constitution is to hold that both the Convention and the people intended that, between the Presidential democracy of the 1935 Constitution and the Parliamentary democracy of the 1973 Constitution, our nation would have to go through a transitional period of Presidential dictatorship that could last throughout President Marcos' lifetime. Such an intention, so clearly contrary to both Section 26 of Art. VI of the 1935 Constitution and Section 15 of Art. VIII of the 1973 Constitution, and so clearly violative of the values of freedom and democracy that every Filipino treasures, is nothing less than absurd.

Disastrous consequences of contrary interpretation —

Other pernicious consequences would result from the interpretation that President Marcos may continue to exercise transitory powers indefinitely, even long after December 30, 1973. Some of these consequences, indeed, are already upon us.

Constitutional officers guilty of treason or corruption can not be impeached or removed —

One is that constitutional officers become immune to impeachment and removal even if they commit the most heinous crimes.

In addition to the primary duty to enact measures for the orderly transition from the presidential to the parliamentary system and the reorganization of the government, and to its general powers of legislation, the interim National Assembly may exercise the powers of impeachment (Art. XIII Sec. 3), ratification of treaties (Art. VIII, Sec. 14, par. (1), creation of the special court to

be known as Sandiganbayan and the office of Ombudsman to be known as Tanodbayan (Art. XIII, Sec. 6)

The "incumbent President" cannot exercise these powers. Even if he could exercise all the powers of the President under the 1935 Constitution and those of the President and Prime Minister under the 1935 Constitution and those of the President and Prime Minister under the 1973 Constitution, he cannot exercise the powers of impeachment or ratification of treaties or creation of the Sandiganbayan and the office of Ombudsman to be known as Tanodbayan without the interim National Assembly; and there is no Assembly interim or otherwise.

Unless there is a body that can exercise these powers, the consequence is that Justices of the Supreme Court of Appeals, members of the Civil Service Commission, of the Commission on Elections and of the Commission on Audit - even if caught in the act of treason, bribery, or graft and corruption - cannot be impeached or removed. Surely, the Convention and the people could not have intended that such a state of affairs should last indefinitely.

On the contrary, the 1973 Constitution directs immediate action. This is evident from the provision of the Constitution which requires the interim National Assembly to "give priority to measures for the eradication of graft and corruption" (Art. XVII, Sec. 5).

The only conclusion that flows from all these is that there can be no indefinite stay in convening the interim National Assembly. The "incumbent President" must convene it as soon as possible after the effectivity of the 1973 Constitution, and at the latest during his term as President. If he fails to do so, as he has, he loses all transitory powers.

No independent Judiciary: No security of tenure for Civil Service —

Another disastrous consequence, one already upon us, that results from the claim to exercise transitory powers indefinitely is that our inferior courts have lost their independence and our civil service its security of tenure.

Sections 9 and 10 of the transitory provisions empower the "incumbent President" to remove all who, at the effectivity of the new Constitution, were members of the Judiciary and of the civil service, by simply appointing their successors. If it be held that this transitory power may be exercised without first convening the National Assembly, and even after December 30, 1973, the effect would be that all Judges and Justices holding office on the date of the effectivity of the 1973 Constitution, and who have not been reappointed, can be removed at will and without cause, even before they reach the age of 70 years, and this situation can last as long as President Marcos wants it to. In the pungent language of the President of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines, "our judges have become casuals."

The same holds true of the civil service.

This state of affairs is so contrary to the ideal of an independent judiciary and civil service, based upon security of tenure, that is inconceivable that the Convention and the people could have intended it to continue beyond December 30, 1973.

No orderly succession to Head of State -

Both nature and law abhor a vacuum. That is the reason for transitory provisions. The framers of the 1973 Constitution knew that, upon its effectivity, the office of the Vice-President under the 1935 Constitution would be automatically abolished. Therefore, they knew that, if anything happened to the "incumbent President" before he convened the interim Assembly, there would be a vacuum in the most vital of all offices under the 1973 Constitution, the Office of Head of State, made doubly vital by the existence of martial rule. Their experience and their knowledge of human nature also taught them that, since the vacuum had not been filled by law, it would, in all probability, be filled by force with all its bloody consequences.

Certainly, it could not have been the intention of the Convention and of the people that such a dangerous situation would continue for long. Rather, their intent was - and the tenor of the transitory provisions shows it — that the "incumbent President" should convene the interim National Assembly as soon as possible so that this vacuum could be filled and the danger of sanguinary internecine conflict thereby averted.

This reinforces the conclusion that the incumbent President should exercise his transitory powers immediately or at the most before December 30, 1973. If he fails to do so, his transitory powers expire.

What is President Marcos today?—

President Marcos is definitely not President under the 1935 Constitution because his term of office as such President has expired.

He is not President nor Prime Minister, interim or otherwise under the 1935 Constitution because he has not been elected to either office.

He is not the "incumbent President" referred to in the transitory provisions of the 1973 Constitution because the provisions refer to whoever might be President when the said Constitution is ratified, and since, according to this Court, the said Constitution has not been validly ratified (*Javellana vs. The Executive Secretary*, 50 SCRA 30, 138-139), and since President Marcos' term of office as President expired on December 30, 1973, he is not now and cannot now be the "incumbent President".

Finally, even assuming that President Marcos is the "incumbent President" referred to in the transitory provisions, he cannot now exercise any of the transitory powers conferred upon him by the said Constitution because all such powers lapsed when he did not perform his constitutional duty to convene the interim National Assembly "immediately" after the 1973 Constitution had taken effect, or at the latest, when the term to which he had been elected by the people ended on December 30, 1973.

What, therefore, is President Marcos today? What powers of government can he exercise?

These questions answer themselves.

ASSUMING FOR PURPOSES OF ARGUMENT ALONE THAT PRESIDENT MARCOS MAY STILL HOLD OFFICE AS PRESIDENT DESPITE THE EXPIRATION OF HIS TERM UNDER THE 1935 CONSTITUTION, HE DOES NOT HAVE ANY LAWFUL AUTHORITY TO PROMULGATE LAWS OR

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ORDERS WITH THE EFFECT OF LAWS EITHER UNDER THE 1935 OR THE 1973 CONSTITUTION AND, THEREFORE, HAS NO AUTHORITY TO CALL THE REFERENDUM.

Both under the 1935 Constitution and the 1973 Constitution the legislative power is lodged in the legislature:

"Section 1. The legislative power shall be vested in a Congress of the Philippines, which shall consist of a Senate and a House of Representatives." (Art. VI, Sec. 1, 1935 Constitution).

* * * * *

"Section 1. The legislative power shall be vested in a National Assembly." (Art. VIII, Sec. 1973 Constitution).

President Marcos cannot exercise legislative powers —

As a private citizen, President Marcos does not possess legislative power or any other powers of government. Even as "incumbent President", his transitory powers - assuming they have not lapsed - are purely executive powers.

As incumbent President, he has the powers of the President under the 1935 Constitution; but that Constitution did not confer any legislative powers on the President. He also has the powers of President and Prime Minister under the 1973 Constitution; but the latter confers no legislative powers either on the President or Prime Minister. Congress did not grant him any emergency powers under Section 26, Art. VI of the 1935 Constitution, although it could have done so because it was in session when he declared martial law. The National Assembly has not granted him any emergency powers either under Section 15 of Art. VII of the 1973 Constitution, and it could not have done so because he has never convened it. So, as "incumbent President" under Section 3 (1) of the Transitory Provisions, President Marcos has no legislative powers at all.

Martial Law does not give President Marcos legislative powers -

It cannot validly be considered that the declaration of martial law on September 21, 1972 gave President Marcos any legislative powers.

Martial law gives no powers to the President (III Willoughby 592), and as the Constitution is the Basic Law, in times of crises more than in times of normalcy, the national emergency merely affords the basis or reason for the exercise of a living power already existing or enjoyed (Wilson v. Reed, 243 US 332): it does not create power, nor increase granted power or remove or diminish the restrictions imposed upon power granted or reserved (Home Building & Loan Assoc. v. Blaisdell, 290 US 398).

Section 3 (2) of the Transitory Provisions confirms this. If the proclamations, decrees, orders and other acts done under martial law prior to the effectivity of the 1973 Constitution had had the force of law, there was no need to make them "part of the law of the land" as Section 3 (2) of the Transitory Provisions does. And if martial law automatically granted President Marcos

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legislative powers, then there was no need to confer upon him the power to "modify, revoke or supersede" his orders, proclamations, decrees, etc.

Any doubt about whether President Marcos does or does not have legislative powers under martial rule is dispelled by Section 7 of the Transitory Provisions. For, under this section, all laws existing at the time of the effectivity of the 1973 Constitution continue in force insofar as not inconsistent with said Constitution, and only the regular Assembly - not President Marcos - can amend, modify or repeal them.

Assuming President Marcos has legislative powers, these do not include calling a Referendum —

Even if we assume that martial law grants legislative powers to President Marcos - a proposition we do not concede - he may not perform any legislative act that the legislature itself could not do.

Calling a referendum is essentially a legislative act, which can be performed only in the manner and for the purpose prescribed in the Constitution.

"Referendum is the right reserved by the Constitution to the people of a state or local subdivision thereof to have submitted for their approval or rejection any act, or part of any act, item, section, or part of any bill, passed by the legislature, and which, in most cases, would without action on the part of the electors become a law" (82 C.J.S.193).

"There can be no valid referendum of any enacted law except pursuant to constitutional authority. By the referendum the people are a coordinate branch of the legislative body, with coextensive power." (82 C.J.S. 197).

There are grave doubts, too, over the constitutionality of Marcos' invoking of the "commander-in-chief" provision of the Constitution as authority for declaring martial law.

If Marcos' own rhetorical development of the "causes" for his declaration of martial law were to be followed, then he could not legally invoke the "commander-in-chief" provision to impose martial law. In the final "whereas" of Proclamation No. 1081, Marcos declared: "x x x the rebellion and armed action undertaken by these lawless elements of the communist and other armed aggregations organized to overthrow the Republic of the Philippines by armed violence and force have assumed the magnitude of an actual state of war against our people and the Republic of the Philippines." (Italics supplied). If such had been the case, then the constitutional thing for Marcos to have done was to ask Congress to declare war by two-thirds votes of both chambers voting separately. And, with Congress having declared war, Marcos would have had to carry out the instructions of Congress on the conduct of the war as the "commander-in-chief" of all the armed forces.*¹⁵

(*¹⁵. Raoul Berger's "Executive Privilege: A Constitutional Myth" is very enlightening on this subject.)

The question is whether or not the President, as commander-in-chief "waging war" without congressional authority, can rule by decree, suppress or disband one branch of government, as he did with the bicameral Philippine Congress, while allowing other agencies to function, like the Supreme Court —

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which he needs only to anoint his regime with legitimacy. Then, if the courts are open and can administer justice, as Marcos claims they do, is there a real and actual emergency for which martial law has to be maintained? Marcos must realize the incongruity of his position. At the moment, he can rule by the law of the gun. Before the bar of history, he would be a faceless litigant.

The Martial Law Constitution was approved by the Constitutional Convention on November 30, 1972, under pressure from the guns of martial law. The delegates did not have any other choice. However, the handful of courageous hearts who dared vote against the Marcos-dictated Constitution voiced the hope that the Martial Law Constitution would be rejected by the people during a plebiscite to be called to either ratify or reject the new charter draft. President Marcos did in fact schedule a plebiscite on the new Constitution for January 5, 1973, and proclaimed a period of "free and untrammelled" debate during the campaign for ratification or rejection of the New Constitution.*16 Marcos soon discovered though that the new Charter which would "legalize" his martial law regime did not stand a ghost of a chance of adoption in a free plebiscite. He immediately cancelled the scheduled plebiscite, and instead called for a national referendum on various "burning issues" of national import.*17

(*16. Presidential Decree No. 73, dated December 1, 1972, and Presidential Decree No. 82, dated December 18, 1972.)

(*17. Presidential Decree No. 86, dated December 31, 1972. Two other decrees, PD Nos. 86-A and 86-B, bearing on the submission of the martial law Constitution to a referendum have been withheld from general circulation.)

In efforts to falsify the records for history, Marcos later wrote:

"There was, however, another question regarding my swift action on the Constitution, and I can understand how this must have bothered the legal "constructionists" among us. On 30 November 1972,¹ I called a plebiscite after the Constitutional Convention had approved the new Constitution; this plebiscite was set for 5 January 1973. But on December 23, 1972, I suspended the plebiscite upon the petition of some parties, including jurists, who pointed out that a longer period was necessary to prepare the citizenry and thoroughly inform them about the Constitution. And yet right after I had suspended the plebiscite, I immediately organized the barangays and called for a show of hands regarding the new Constitution on 10 to 15 January this year. Why this sudden decision on my part?

"I know that some old society politicians thought it was their 'eloquent' and 'brilliant' opposition which precipitated my action. This was understandable, for they could not have imagined that the truth was that martial law had peculiar ramifications in the Muslim areas, which were one of the sources of a three-pronged rebellion and conspiracy that included the communist rebels, the rightist conspirators and the Muslim secessionist, xxx

"The only possible maneuver dictated by the national interest was to meet this incipient 'splinter state' with a government and a republic duly supported by the great majority of the people, especially the Muslim citizenry, operating under a Constitution of their own making and already ratified so as to be enforceable by the government."*18 (*18. "Notes on the New Society", pp. 125-129.)

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Again, Marcos was not being candid about things. The truth was that the danger he foresaw was directed at him personally. It was a decision arrived at by members of the Philippine Senate to convene Congress in regular session on the fourth Monday of January in 1973. This was a decision forged during a caucus of sectors presided over by Senate President Gil J. Puyat on December 24, 1972. The senators also forged an accord with their colleagues from the House of Representatives that they would work against the ratification of the martial law Constitution. They realized that it would only legalize the dictatorship of Marcos.

In his mad desire to head off a congressional session, Marcos cancelled the plebiscite on the new Constitution. Forthwith, he convened the baranggays for a show of hands on the new charter. He figured that he must have a new Constitution that would enable him to stop Congress from convening. That was the reason for the indecent haste with which he proclaimed on January-17, 1973, the "ratification" of the Constitution by the baranggays. Congress was scheduled to meet on January 22, 1973.

There was one other compelling motive for Marcos to abolish Congress. He knew that members of Congress were rallying behind senate President Puyat to make him a "constitutional President" upon the expiration of the constitutional term of Marcos by December 30, 1973. Still very fresh in the memory of both Marcos and the members of Congress was the theory developed by imprisoned Senator Diokno in a privileged speech in the Senate, entitled "A Throne of Bayonets." In that speech, delivered about mid-July, 1972, Diokno declared that Marcos might declare martial law in order to stay in office beyond December 30, 1973.

Neither a genuine cause like social anarchy or foreign invasion nor a gratuitous declaration of martial law "would give President Marcos the right to remain as head of state under our Constitution," Diokno said. Not President Marcos, but the Senate President, whoever he may then be, is the only one who would have the right to act as President beginning noon December 30, 1973. No amount of manipulation of the law will enable President Marcos to remain in office legally after that date. Only naked force could achieve it.

"Some laws," according to Diokno, "provide that a public officer continues in office 'until his successor shall have been elected and qualified.' But with respect to the President, Article VII, Section 4 of the Constitution is explicit: his term 'shall end at noon on the thirtieth day of December', four years after his election and the term of his successor 'shall begin from such time.' Our Constitution does not permit the President to hold over."

"In the case of President Marcos," Diokno went on, "the prohibition against his holding over after December 30, 1973, is even more stringent.

"Art VII, Section 5 of our Constitution is clear 'No person shall serve as President for more than eight consecutive years'. He cannot interrupt this period by 'voluntary renunciation of the office for any length of time.'

"By noon of December 30, 1973, President Marcos will have served as President for eight years. He cannot — constitutionally — serve one minute more."

The case of President Quezon further clarifies this point. His eight-year tenure expired at the most exigent time of the war against Japan. "To enable him to continue to serve as President" the American government in a joint

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resolution of Congress suspended “the provisions of our Constitution concerning the Presidency, thus extending President Quezon’s term,” Diokno pointed out. At that time, the Philippines was a commonwealth and its Constitution was subordinate to the American government.

“Today,” Diokno maintained, “no one can suspend our Constitution, not even constitutionally, not even by martial law.” He added that under Section 10 of the Election Code of 1971, it is not the President but only the Commission on Elections, subject to the approval of the Supreme Court, who can suspend an election.”

Furthermore, Diokno continued, even if Marcos were to pack the Commission on Elections and the Supreme Court with his lackeys and the elections were suspended in 1973, not he but the Senate President alone could legally occupy the office and discharge the duties of chief executive until one properly elected and qualified to do so.

Diokno rejected the most common notion that martial law would make the Philippines fall helplessly into the hands of a usurper-dictator. If martial law were declared and noon December 30, 1973, had passed, the armed forces of the Philippines would have to see to it that Marcos vacated the presidency and the Senate President occupied the position until a successor had been elected and qualified.

The thesis developed by Diokno gained so much popular adherence that Marcos had to make sure that the Batangas senator was kept in a military stockade while he maneuvered to legitimize his illegal presidency. He waited until the ruling of the Supreme Court on the case of Javellana vs. Executive Secretary became final before he released Diokno from a military jail.

Marcos provided the naked force, as Diokno had feared, by declaring martial law, extorting a Palace-drafted Constitution from the Constitutional Convention and then whimsically declaring it to have been ratified in a farcical referendum.

I immediately gleaned the motive of the President when he decided to call a referendum. He actually spelled out his plans in a conference which I attended, along with Gov. Benjamin Romualdez, Secretary of Local Government Jose Rono, and Presidential Assistant Guillermo C. De Vega. He wanted, he said, a vehicle for the “approval” of the New Constitution by the Filipino people without having to go through the dangerous mechanics of a plebiscite. Thus, he scheduled a referendum among the Citizens’ Assemblies in more than 35,000 barrios and barangay districts all over the country from Jan. 10 to 15, 1973. Six questions were addressed to the barangay voters, although actually only two of them were of vital importance at the time for President Marcos. These two questions were:

- 1) Do you approve of the New Constitution?
- 2) Do you want a plebiscite to be called to ratify the new Constitution?

As proclaimed officially on Jan. 17, 1973, by President Marcos, who never batted an eyelash while reading Proclamation No. 1102, the two questions were “answered” by the barangay voters in the following manner

- 1) Yes - 14,976,561; No - 743,852; Abstention - 829,991
- 2) Yes — 1,322,434; No — 14,298,814; Abstention — 909,173

The orchestration of the “ratification” of the martial law Constitution did not

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by any means end with the issuance of Proclamation No. 1102. The "final arbiter" of all justiciable questions was called in to put its stamp of legality on Marcos ratification of the charter through the case of *Javellana vs. Executive Secretary*.

"Today, you are my judges. Tomorrow, history will judge you."

This was the final statement of imprisoned Sen. Benigno S. Aquino Jr. on March 31, 1975, before a military commission before he went on a hunger strike to dramatize his challenge to the jurisdiction of the military kangaroo court convened to "perpetuate" testimonies of prosecution witnesses on charges concocted by President Marcos against the Tarlac senator.

But the reminder might as well have been addressed to the honorable members of the Supreme Court. One cannot expect any of the members of the Supreme Court to vote or rule against President Marcos these days. The truth is that most Supreme Court justices would stumble over each other's faces to please the great Mr. Marcos. For one thing, they are scared for their lives; another, they are all about to retire, and they cannot afford to jeopardize a retirement pay of five-years' lump sum by a lousy vote that might displease Marcos.

The Supreme Court of the Philippines exists today for only one main function, namely, to maintain the legitimacy of the military regime of Marcos. Marcos very well realizes that his regime has to have a facade of legitimacy, otherwise he would lose the support of his own military backers and the international community. Marcos has thus far succeeded in misleading his own military backers and some world leaders into a belief that he rules by the consent of the governed.

Marcos not only holds the members of the Supreme Court by their balls, but he also makes sure that they do not ad-lib accidentally. He insures the good behavior of the members of the high court by having decisions on cases vitally important to the personal and political interests of Marcos drafted in Malacanang. Whenever the martial regime is challenged in a court suit, a draft decision is first prepared by Undersecretary of Justice Efren Plana and Ronaldo B. Zamora, of the Malacanang legal office. It is then sent to the office of De Vega to furnish members of the Supreme Court, especially Justices Antonio P. Barredo, Claudio Teehankee, Estanislao A. Fernandez, Felix Makasiar and Fred Ruiz Castro. With some slight modifications, the Malacanang draft of the decision eventually becomes the basis of the majority Supreme Court decision. Such was the case in the constitutional challenges filed against martial law itself, and in the challenge to the ratification by Marcos of the 1973 Constitution. In most instances, when one reads those "majority decisions", he cannot but come to a conclusion that they were not majority decisions at all. Apparently bearing in mind the warning of Aquino about the judgment of history, most justices, although "concurring in the results" of the majority decision, pen their own Concurring dissenting opinions, a reading of which would lead any sane man to demand to know why they did not vote against the majority decision. It is clear that while they want to save their neck from the chopping block of Marcos, they also want to perpetuate into the records an escape clause (the separate opinion) for the judgment of history.

I may be blaming the Supreme Court unjustly for the cloak of legitimacy that the martial regime enjoys. But the Supreme Court's "priority" of things leads one to suspect the tight-rope walking it is trying to attempt under the martial regime. The case of Aquino et al vs. Enrile, et al, G.R. No. L-35546 was filed as early as October, 1972. The suit was a petition for, habeas corpus and was therefore of the highest individual privilege. It was decided adversely against the petitioners only last September 17, 1974. And yet, when a suit (Javellana vs. Executive Secretary) was brought to challenge the validity of the ratification of the new martial law Constitution, the Supreme Court took less than two months to decide it. The decision was promulgated on March 31, 1973, and it became the major basis for the dismissal of a privileged suit filed five months earlier.

With the cloak of legitimacy stripped off the martial regime of Marcos, it now becomes appropriate to sound a note of warning that the illegal ruler of the Philippines does not speak for the government and people of the Philippines; foreign governments should therefore be wary about swallowing Marcos' so-called solemn commitments to foreign nations. They should be wary about concluding treaties and agreements which might be disowned by a legitimate Philippine government that could come into being any moment now.

Chapter XVI

Plans in Perpetuity

During the 1965 election campaign of Marcos to oust then incumbent President Diosdado P. Macapagal from Malacanang, the heckling slogan devised for the Palace occupant was "*Lis dyan. . . nakakahiya.*" (Get out. . . shame on you!) Now, the unexpressed motto of Marcos and the ruling clique is: "*Patayin mo muna ako.*" (You will have to kill me first before I yield.)

Marcos will not yield the dictatorship, the seat of power, alive. Someone, or a power mightier than the combined strength of Marcos and the guns of martial law will have to evict the man out of Malacanang.

Senator Jovito R. Salonga, one of the victims of the Plaza Miranda bombing, voiced his own suspicions about Marcos' presidential plans in perpetuity more than a month before the Miranda grenade-bombing.

Maniwala kayo, hindi bababa 'yan sa Malakanyang. (You better believe it, he [Marcos] will not leave Malacanang). I know he will not relinquish the presidency, and I have a few guesses on what he might just do," Salonga prophetically told a group of Liberal senatorial candidates. His group then was the POSS team, which stands for the first letters of the last names of senatorial candidates Salipada K. Pendatun, John H. Osmena, Salonga, and Melanio T. Singson. Salonga forewarned his Colleagues about his suspicions on Marcos possibly resorting to political trickery or gimmickry to perpetuate himself in power when he observes that they were being over-confident over the results of the pre-election poll surveys showing that the Liberals would sweep the 1971 mid-term elections, and therefore, the 1973 elections. At the time, the Liberals were already speaking in terms of Marcos becoming a "lameduck" President.

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They were acting no less cockily than the leaders of Julio Nahindasan 36 years earlier. Little did they realize that Marcos would pull a bigger Nalundasan murder one, year later with the liquidation of democracy in the Philippines.

If Salonga had suspicions then about Marcos not willing to "give up the presidency upon the expiration of his term by December 30, 1973, there are more overwhelming proofs now that Marcos will not give up his dictatorship - until his death do them part.

The stark reality is that Marcos is prepared to rule for the duration of his natural life on earth in the manner that Spain's Franco did - unless certain fortuitous events intervene. Marcos intends to achieve his life-time dictatorship by plundering the country economically and politically. Marcos would continue to crack down on political dissent, maintain a weakened opposition and muzzle the press, by the use of an expanded military establishment.

Since September 21, 1972, the so-called New Society has gone nowhere but down; there has been no unstinted investment in the establishment of a quality society, Marcos having betrayed from the start the objectives of his own democratic revolution. Along the course of the New Society now yawns the pit of a planned moral, political and economic bankruptcy in the Philippines.

This is part of the grand design of Marcos to perpetuate himself, his wife, Imelda, and/or son, Ferdinand, Jr., in power. This was planned by Marcos from the very start. Marcos, the methodical politician, does not act on impulses. Everything is well-planned in advance or things are done in accordance with set play patterns. The advance planning could take a minute or a week or months.

The execution of the plan for the "legalization" of the indefinite martial law regime of Marcos is, even as an evil handiwork, a novelty to be admired by political historians. The plan culminated in the promulgation of Proclamation No. 1102 by which Marcos declared the "ratification" of the martial law Constitution and in the "binabae" *1 decision of the Supreme Court upholding the validity of the proclamation.

(*1. This a stronger Tagalog term for an hermaphrodite.)

The meat of the plan was devised by Marcos is collaboration with Presidential Assistant De Vega, who holds a doctorate degree in political science from the University of Hyderabad. The scheme was to have enticed the members of the Constitutional Convention as well as the spineless among the "suspended" Congress into cooperating with Marcos in legitimizing his stay in power beyond the end of his constitutional second four-year term on December 30, 1973.

The scheme as devised was enshrined in the now notorious Article XVII known as the Transitory Provisions, of the New Constitution which provided for the creation of an interim National Assembly. The ostensible function of the interim assembly was to prepare the country for an orderly shift from the presidential to the parliamentary form of government. There was hardly any opposition to the Transitory Provisions. Delegates had been previously cowed into submission by the President with the mass arrest of some "radical" Convention delegates, such as Jose Mari Velez, Enrique Voltaire Garcia III, Napoleon Rama, Francisco "Soc" Rodrigo, I;nesto Rondon, Jose Nollodo, Jose Calderon, Teopisto Guingona and Sedfrey Ordenez. Others were

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sufficiently tamed with bribes of money and promises, like appointments to the new offices to be created under the new Constitution.

Two other delegates hostile to Marcos, Aquilino Pimentel, Jr., of Misamis Oriental, and Manuel Martinez, of Masbate, were arrested after January 17, 1973, and detained without charges. Their only known crime was that they campaigned vehemently in December, 1972, for the rejection of the Martial Law Constitution. Pimentel and Martinez were among those who voted against the draft of the new Constitution.

The pertinent provisions of Article XVII follow:

Section 1. There shall be an interim National Assembly which shall exist immediately upon the ratification of this Constitution and shall continue until the members of the regular National Assembly shall have been elected and shall have assumed office following an election called for the purpose by the interim National Assembly. Except as otherwise provided in this Constitution, the interim National Assembly shall have the same powers and its Members shall have the same functions, responsibilities, rights, privileges, and disqualifications as the regular National Assembly and the Members thereof.

Sec. 2. The Members of the interim National Assembly shall be the incumbent President and Vice-President of the Philippines, those v/ho served as President of the nineteen hundred and seventy-one Constitutional Convention, those Members of the Senate and the House of Representatives who shall express in writing to the Commission on Elections within thirty days after the ratification of this Constitution their option to serve therein, and those Delegates to the nineteen hundred and seventy-one Constitutional Convention who have opted to serve therein by voting affirmatively for this Article. They may take their oath of office before any officer authorized to administer oath and qualify thereto, after the ratification of this Constitution.

Sec. 3 (1) The incumbent President of the Philippines shall initially convene the interim National Assembly and shall preside over its sessions until the interim Speaker shall have been elected. He shall continue to exercise his powers and prerogatives under the nineteen hundred and thirty-five Constitution and the powers vested in the President and the Prime Minister under this Constitution until he calls upon the interim National Assembly to elect the interim President and the interim Prime Minister, who shall then exercise their respective powers vested by this Constitution.

(2) All proclamations, orders, decrees, instructions, and acts promulgated, issued, or done by the incumbent President shall be part of the law of the land, and shall remain valid, legal, binding, and effective even after lifting of martial law or the ratification of this Constitution, unless modified, revoked, or superseded by sub-sequent proclamations, orders, decrees, instructions, or other acts of the incumbent President, or unless expressly and explicitly modified or repealed by the regular National Assembly.

Sec. 4. The interim Prime Minister and his Cabinet shall exercise all the powers and functions, and discharge the responsibilities of the regular Prime Minister and his Cabinet, and shall be subject to the same disqualifications

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provided in this Constitution.

Sec. 5. The interim National Assembly shall give priority to measures for the orderly transition from the presidential to the parliamentary system, the reorganization of the Government, the eradication of graft and corruption, the effective maintenance of peace and order, the implementation of declared agrarian reforms, the standardization of compensation of government employees, and such other measures as shall bridge the gap between the rich and the poor.

Sec. 6 The interim National Assembly shall reapportion the Assembly seats in accordance with Section two, Article Eight of this Constitution.

So, when the New Constitution was finally enacted by the Convention on November 30, 1972, the delegates (who were actually mostly the losers to congressmen, senators, city mayors and governors in the 1969 and 1971 elections), prepared to campaign vigorously for the ratification of this handiwork. Marcos had told them he was all set to call the plebiscite on the new Charter.

More than anybody else, Marcos and the military were particularly interested in the approval of the New Constitution. It was a new charter that, despite oversights that usually mark such hasty and devilish execution of plots, was satisfactory to them for the moment. Firstly, it legitimized the martial law proclamations, decrees, general orders and letters of instructions.

However, the senators and congressmen, still sulking over the closure of Congress, were not as keen as their would-be fellow Assemblymen from the Convention on the ratification of the New Constitution. As a matter of fact, they started the campaign that it was plain lack of "delicadeza" on the part of the Convention delegates to have inserted themselves into the proposed *interim* National Assembly without going thru an election contest. But the delegates unashamedly, not entirely without logic, pointed out that they were sovereign over the congressmen because they were elected by the people with more sovereign powers to do whatever they want with the country, whether to turn it into a dictatorship, a republic or what not, or even abolish the Philippines as a nation. They said they could even have excluded the incumbent members of Congress if they had wanted to.

In almost all the polls conducted during the last days of December, 1972, the overwhelming sentiment was for the rejection of the New Constitution. The clarity and import of the message could not be missed. Rejection of the new Constitution would have meant rejection of martial law itself. On December 27, I orchestrated the controlled media in "exposing" a so-called "plot" of a number of senators to exercise legislative functions and thereby "grab the legislative powers belonging to the President." They had been called to the Palace on December 20, 1973 and some of them expressed the thought that, as the President had decided to postpone the plebiscite, Congress should perhaps be convened on January 22, 1973, in keeping with the 1935 Constitution. With the use of his spies, Marcos discovered that the senators had convened in caucus at the invitation of Senate President Gil J. Puyat on December 24, 1972, and decided to convene Congress to session to lay down the law on the holding of

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a plebiscite on the new Constitution. Marcos didn't like this. The President called me on Christmas day by phone and directed me to orchestrate stories for the newspapers in which he appealed to the "conspirators" to desist from provoking a constitutional crisis "which may result in the exercise by me of authority which I have not exercised."

On New Year's Eve, the Palace announced the creation of Citizens* Assemblies, otherwise known as barangays, purportedly for purposes of "loose consultation" with the people on important public issues. On January 7, 1973, the President announced the "indefinite postponement" of the plebiscite. Because the people were "backsliding", the full severity of martial law was reimposed. Public debates and discussions on the New Constitution were prohibited.

Then, on January 10, 1973, - 5 days before the original date of the plebiscite that had been "postponed indefinitely" - the Citizens' Assemblies were hastily convened for a day-to-day consultation up to the 15th of that month. They were supposed to vote with raised hands on a set of questions drafted by the Palace: "Do you like the New Society?" "Do you like the reforms under martial law?" "Do you like Congress again to hold sessions?" "Do you like the way President Marcos is running the affairs of the government?" "Do you approve of the New Constitution?"

The suggested answers - in favor of martial law, the New Constitution, and the President, and against Congress, against the interim Assembly and against the idea of popular elections for at least 7 years, (7 being the favorite number of the First Family) — were given to the participants. These participants admittedly included ex-convicts, illiterates, and - as may be seen in the pictures published by the controlled press - children of tender age. From January 11 to January 16, the suggested answers came out in the media as "the demands of the people."

On January 16, just one day after the close of the barangay consultations, the Kokoy vote factory group announced in the Daily Express and other papers that 88% of the barangays all over the country had already turned in "certified results" - an instant miracle that added insult to the injury committed against the Commission on Elections (COMELEC), the constitutional agency in charge of all plebiscites, whose intervention was ruled out.

In all previous national elections and plebiscites, it took the Comelec about a month to come out with the over-all results from all over the islands. But the Department of Local Governments - a new creation of the President under his martial law powers - was undoubtedly "more efficient."

The next day, that is, on January 17, 1973, the President, amidst great fanfare, proclaimed before a hurriedly-assembled crowd at the Palace that more than 95% of the people in the barangays had "overwhelmingly ratified" the new Constitution. Even the number of votes, certified by a certain Mr. Francisco Cruz, the "President" of the National Federation of Citizens' Assemblies, seemed convincing: 14,976,561 in favor, and only 743,869 against.

So fast and foul was the whole exercise that many people could hardly believe what they read in the newspapers. Those who thought they could still rely on what the President said, asked one question that could not be

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answered: "What happened to the plebiscite that the President himself postponed?"

The foreign press reported what it saw and called it a farce and a mockery. A good number of Filipinos, until then in favor of the imposition of martial law, felt deceived and offended. Many did not know that there were barangay meetings supposed to be going on in all kinds of places.

Not even the Supreme Court, most of whose members are appointees of the President, could say that the New Constitution had been ratified by the people, as the one-man ruler had announced. By a 6-4 vote, they held that the proposed Constitution was "not validly ratified" in accordance with the prevailing Constitution. Nevertheless, they approved a last-minute insertion (which provoked many conflicting interpretations) that there was no more "judicial obstacle" to its being considered in force and effect." As pointed out by Chief Justice Concepcion, who penned the Court's Resolution:

The point is that, such of the Barrio Assemblies as were held, took place without the intervention of the Commission on Elections, and without complying with the provisions of the Election Code . . . What is more, they were held under the supervision of the very officers and agencies of the Executive Department who sought to be excluded therefrom by Article X of the 1935 Constitution. Worse still, said officers and agencies . . . would be favored thereby, owing to the practically indefinite extension of their respective terms of office, in consequence of the Transitory Provisions found in the Proposed Constitution, without any elections therefor. And the procedure therein mostly followed is such that there is no reasonable means of checking the accuracy of the results. . . . This is another violation of the Constitution which can hardly be sanctioned. . . such violation renders null and void the contested proceedings or alleged plebiscite in the Citizens' Assemblies. . .

"The record shows that Mr. Cruz (the one who certified the results) was not even a member of a barrio council since 1972. so that he could not possibly have been a member on January 17, 1973, of a municipal association of presidents of barrio or ward citizens' assemblies, much less of a provincial, city or National Association or Federation of Presidents of any such provincial or city associations. . . .

"Indeed, I cannot, in good conscience, declare that the proposed Constitution has been approved or adopted by the people in the citizens' assemblies all over the Philippines, when it is, to my mind, a matter of judicial knowledge that there have been no such citizens' assemblies in many parts of the Philippines

Probably more than any incident, it was the scandalous "plebiscite" and the shameless "ratification" of the New Constitution that convinced many informed Filipinos that martial law was nothing more than a device to stay in power. All things else — morality, legality, public welfare, and common decency - were to be subordinated to the politics of power retention.

Not long after the Supreme Court's decision, the independent-minded members of the Comelec were booted out, and the President's partisans came in to take charge of the referendum which the President said would be held every year. The referendum results - one was held in July, 1974, another in

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February, 1975 — based on loaded, suggestive questions regarding the continuation of martial law, and the indefinite stay of the one-man ruler, were quickly hailed by the controlled media as an overwhelming mandate (90% being the usual percentage) in favor of a regime so unsure of its legitimacy that the people have to be required, on pain of being jailed, to go to the polls periodically and declare their love for it.

Why was there no provision on succession in the Malacanang-dictated Constitution? There was one in the original draft prepared by Presidential Assistant De Vega and Delegate Gilberto Duavit. As a matter of fact, it was a carbon copy of the 1935 Constitution's provision on succession. However, Marcos himself instructed Dr. De Vega to cut out the provision on succession. He pointed out that then Vice President Fernando Lopez would necessarily be the successor-in-waiting, or that a designated successor waiting on the wings could always "plot my death."

On this point, Marcos double-crossed the military officers whom he had been titillating one by one as his possible successor. Even the statement he had agreed with the military that his successor would be a civilian official is a farce.

With the enforcement of the New Constitution, all the legal successors of the President - in case of the latter's death, removal, disability, or resignation had been systematically eliminated. Having thrown them out and, in addition, imprisoned or discredited all potential rivals for the Presidency, the martial law authorities, sensing mounting dissatisfaction, brazenly floated the question - "But who is the alternative to Mr. Marcos?" In any case, their impudence backfired, for if the New Society has no known procedure for the orderly transfer of power, there can be no basis for the repeated claim that it has achieved political and social stability. The President himself, realizing that foreign observers and investors, local businessmen and the general public, were disturbed by the lack of the element of predictability in the governance of public affairs, answered the question in a memorable speech that raised more intriguing questions and cast serious doubts on the planning and rationale of martial law and on the quality of discipline in the New Society. Speaking from the Palace on the first anniversary of the New Constitution on January 17, 1974, he declared:

"I must now reveal to you that before I proclaimed martial law; all those who advised me agreed that I should provide for the procedure by which a successor would be chosen the moment anything happens to disqualify me. This has been done by virtue of a decree which I have kept in order that it may not sow intrigue, discord and disunity among our people. If anything had happened to me, or if anything happens to me, that decree would be immediately in force. . . ."

Even his own associates and subordinates noticed the slip. From the time the President declared martial law in September, 1972 up to January 17, 1973, when he declared, on the basis of the false certification of Mr. Cruz, that the New Constitution had been "overwhelmingly ratified" by the people, the 1935 Constitution and the law on succession (Rep. Act. No. 818) provided who his successor should be. But his revelation clearly admits that before martial law

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was proclaimed, the planners of martial law had already agreed to purge all the legal successors of the Presidency. Only the one-man ruler can select his successor and his succession must be kept secret; otherwise, "intrigue, discord, and disunity" may prevail among the people.

What about the power of the National Assembly, now that the New Constitution is in effect, to elect the successor to the Prime Minister by a majority vote of all its members? Such a power does not exist. The one-man rule? has decreed, allegedly with the support of the barangays, that there shall be no Assembly. The nation is still in a long, indefinite period of transition, and the Palace-drafted transitory provisions have consigned most of the other provisions of the New Constitution to the limbo! One Supreme Court justice held that the New Constitution is "in a state of anaesthesia".

In any event, the secret decree only stirred up all sorts of speculation as to who the successor or successors could be. The First Lady? A ranking general or cabinet member, perhaps? A committee or a junta? No one really knows. A decree that is secret can always be changed, depending on circumstances. And if the dictator is no longer around, who will enforce the decree? Or will the Philippines become just another banana republic, moving from one strong man to another?

When Marcos called the referendum of July 10, to 15, 1975, he assured the skeptical Convention delegates expecting to seat as full-pledged members of the interim National Assembly that he would submit the Constitution for ratification. He assured them that the interim assembly would be convened by him.

However, less than 24 hours before the first day of the referendum, the referendum group headed by Kokoy Romualdez and which included myself as member, got the final six questions which were to be addressed to the referendum. One of them was a question on whether the assembly should be convened.

The final tabulation that we made — out of nothing — is as follows:

1. Do you approve of the Citizens' Assembly as a way of popular government to decide issues affecting our people?
(Yes — 15, 290, 639 No — 462,852)
2. Do you approve of the New Constitution?
(Yes — 14, 976,561 No — 743,869)
3. Do you want a plebiscite to be called to ratify the new Constitution?
(Yes — 1, 322, 434 No — 14,298,814)
4. Do you want to hold elections in November, 1973, as provided for in the 1935 Constitution?
(Yes — 1, 206, 721 No — 14,431,957)
5. If the elections in 1973 will not be held, when do you want the next elections to be called?
(Over 7 years - 2,016,711
7 years - 8,513,167
6 years - 2,264,668
5 years - 1,388,555
4 years - 809,991
3 years - 528,973
2 years - 446,321)

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1 year - 380,200
0 year - 181,835)

With 95 percent “voting” against the convening of the interim National Assembly, and remarks having been dutifully reported by the controlled media that the convening of the assembly would be a throwback to the days of political elitism and that the people want the barangays to be the lawmaking body in place of the National Assembly, Marcos conveniently bowed to the predetermined “will of the people” and called a “Katipunan ng mga Barangay” conference (People’s Congress) at the Maharlika Hall on January 17, 1973. Invited to the conference were representatives from labor, youth, etc. and Senate President Gil J. Puyat, Speaker Cornelio T. Villareal and Chief Justice Roberto S. Concepcion.

As the Convention delegates slowly tried to visualize their forlorn dreams, most of them wryly remarked: “*Talagang magaling manakit ng tao itong si Macoy. Nang-once na, nang-uto pa.*” (This man Marcos really knows how to hurt people. He first treated us like small children then double crossed us.) Of course, the major reasons for the non-calling of the interim National Assembly was Marcos’ decision to rule alone and thereby perpetuate himself in power.

But other than officially declaring that it is the desire of the people as indicated by them in their overwhelming vote during the referendum that the INA not be convened, Marcos has not stated the other major valid reason for not convening the interim National Assembly.

If he ever convenes the interim National Assembly, he would create a Frankenstein monster that could have more disastrous effects for the country than martial law itself. He may never again be able to have his way; for he will have to contend with a truly unwieldy assembly that could be blackmailing him every moment of his tortured dictatorship.

Imagine an assembly with 24 senators, 102 congressmen and 320 Con-Con delegates as members! Its duty would be to provide the mechanics for an orderly transition from the presidential to the parliamentary form of government. And one such infrastructure would be the organization of the regular National Assembly which, as understood by all those in the Con-Con, would be composed of one assemblyman from each of the assembly districts. Now, the number of assembly districts could be not less than 120 nor more than 160 as this has been understood in the defunct, lamented Seventh Congress which called the Constitutional Convention into being. In the re-districting of the country alone, there would be endless disagreements among the more than 400 interim National Assembly members. We should bear in mind that all the 400 are ambitious men who, just like Marcos, certainly would not want to give up any position of privilege and power. They would all be jockeying for position — and for advantage, if they have to go through an election. They would most likely bear in mind that elections are too expensive; elections have reduced politicians to penury. They might just come to the conclusion that they might just as well co-exist with their political enemies in the interim National Assembly instead of doing combat with each other once more in a regular election.

So, the interim assembly can turn out to be a Frankenstein monster. The

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members will never vote against themselves; they will never vote to dissolve the interim National Assembly. And since the new Constitution does not prescribe a specific period for the existence of the interim National Assembly, it could go on and on. Marcos would have to abolish it the way he sidelined the bicameral Congress of pre-martial law days.

The expenses that the interim assembly would incur by its operation could be staggering; that is money which could be utilized for the expensive foreign trips and jet-set parties of Imelda Romualdez-Marcos.

Quite naturally, Marcos is not the kind of a man who would admit that the above-cited reason is one of the compelling arguments against the convening of the interim National Assembly. The demi-god cannot afford to commit mistakes; much less can a demi-god afford to make an admission that he had committed a mistake.

In the military ruling clique that shares powers with Dictator Marcos in some ways, there is an Inner Seven and an Outer Eleven.

Whenever the situation in the Philippines develops to such a point as to call for flexing of muscles, the President calls the Inner Seven, plus four more, to complete the so-called Outer Eleven so that messages could be beamed to various sectors that the military ruling clique is united.

The fact that the military commanders have been accorded the awesome power and privilege of sharing the loot of an authoritarian government renders the present situation in the Philippines a hopeless one. The military won't ever let go of the power and privilege that once were an exclusive preserve of politicians and policemen.

Thus, when Executive Secretary Alejandro D. Melchor proposed a "purge" of undesirables in the government, including the military, to dramatize the third anniversary of martial law, he himself got purged in the process.

Marcos was unable to do anything when ranking military commanders led by Secretary of Defense Juan Ponce Enrile, submitted their resignation en masse following the Melchor-proddcd September 21, 1975 announcement of Marcos that the next target of the purge would be the defense establishment. It was a case of making Marcos choose between Melchor and the military. Marcos chose Melchor for decapitation.

Melchor, an Annapolis graduate, proposed the purge of the military in an honest and sincere desire to cleanse government. He had received reports of wide-ranging corruption among the military officers in almost every aspect of national life where they could collect "tong".

The "tong" for everything has quadrupled, not on account of inflation but because the military demands a higher price. They who have the more powerful guns wield greater powers of coercion.

Before the advent of martial law, the nightclubs and restaurants could reverberate to sickening calls, like "What will you have, Mr. Senator or Mr. Congressman?" while the beauty and mahjong parlors had "Mrs. Senator or Mrs. Congressman"* for their big patroness. This time, waitresses, waiters and/or host-esses in restaurants and nightclubs are usually heard addressing their customers as "general", "coloneP. "major", "captain", while the beauty and mahjong suites have for most of their patrons "Mrs. General", "Mrs. Colonel", "Mrs. Major", or "Mrs. Captain."

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As in every aspect of human endeavor where the spoils or the loot must be shared or divided, the military occupiers of the country have had their ups and downs. At the South Harbor, a shoot-out between elements of the Metrocom and the Coast Guard armed with heavy weapons almost erupted over division of the spoils.

Marcos always humors the military by persistently claiming that there is a September 21 movement.

By doing so, he retains the loyalty of the soldiers who are loyal to the generals (whom Marcos likes to flatter as belonging to the September 21 movement). There is really no such thing as a September 21 movement, although the psy-war people of the armed forces continuously identify themselves as belonging to the September 21 movement.

Sometimes some of the generals whom Marcos constantly flatters with mention of their membership in the September 21 movement are as disgusted as anybody because Marcos seems to move too slowly in acting on their proposals. This is one reason the generals just act on their own in taking care of their future economic security.

The September 21 movement exists only in the imagination of Dictator Marcos. It is a gimmick to make the sidelined politicians feel that they have no chance of staging a comeback onto the political arena because the Dictator has the full backing of the military.

By claiming that there is a September 21 movement, Marcos humors the military officers into believing that they are his advisers. If only they would know that they have so little value in the scheme of things designed by Marcos, then they would probably mutiny against the usurper commander-in-chief of the armed forces. Marcos himself suspects that every project presented to him by every general or colonel is calculated to serve the selfish personal motives of the proponent.

Marcos does not really love his generals. He monitors their movement every inch of the way. On many an occasion, I have heard the President give direct orders to Gen. Ver to take steps to downgrade Major Gen. Fidel Ramos, the PC chief, because he was becoming too popular in the newspapers. In this project of downgrading generals, Marcos receives the willing assistance of the First Lady who distrusts all the Ilocano generals in the armed forces because she believes they serve as the procurers of women for President Marcos.

While Marcos makes sure that the military won't get to be swell-headed and think about taking over his job, the dictator distributes once in a while a few crumbs that he and Imelda, in-laws and cronies are otherwise unable to chew for themselves.

This particular pie is named "Mission CONUS, or mission to Continental United States," consisting of trips to the United States and subsequently around the world for favored AFP officers or those officers whose "dangerous" inclinations against the dictatorship merit for themselves an exile abroad.

Foreign junkets were usually a private preserve of the members of the defunct Congress. Now that the military officers are helping Marcos make the laws and enforce them under a dictatorial rule, they somehow have been allowed to share in those restful and profitable trips abroad.

It is about time the generals wake up and realize that they are only being used and fooled by President Marcos as he had done with other sectors of

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Philippine society in his mad rush to the presidency and to dictatorship.

One argument heavily exploited is that it is more economical to run the country under martial law than under a parliament of duly elected representatives of the people.

But look at how the salaries of military personnel have been doubled, while civil servants got only as little as 10 percent increase. Then, when the President felt he had to cajole the Court of First Instance judges or make the world believe that the New Society has a strong and independent judiciary, he increased their salaries.

When the domino effect on succeeding aspects of expenditures for martial law are considered, like the referendum, the cost could even be more staggering.

Crime solution is not only both expensive and inefficient, it is in a mess. It is expensive for so many people because suspects are rounded up in mass and thrown to the stockade. This was particularly true in the early days of martial law and on to the second year.

Then, due to the lack of publicity in the commission of crimes and possible description of suspects, people are unable to assist in detection work, or cannot give tips to the law enforcers.

As far as crime solution is concerned, the people are "terra incognita".

The military cannot expect voluntary cooperation from the police forces in maintaining peace and order because there is widespread resentment by the policemen against martial law for many reasons.

One of the selfish reasons is that the Constabulary has replaced the policeman as tong collectors.

Even in going after actresses and hostesses, the military has priority.

The only known action that Dictator Marcos has taken on erring military officers involved those of Brigadier Generals Alfred M. Montoya and Tagumpay Nanadiego.

Montoya was relieved of his Metrocom command right after the near-encounter between Metrocom armored car-borne troopers and the gunboat-borne marines from the Philippine Coast Guard at the South Harbor.

There were, of course, other compelling reasons for his relief.

In the process of relieving Montoya, the President was compelled to retire Brig. Gen. Efigenio Navarro, second military area commander whose son had, even before martial law, joined the New People's Army elements operating in the Bicol area.

On the other hand, Nanadiego was retired because some of his legal assistants in the AFP Judge Advocate General's Office were denounced by cronies of the President with having allegedly pried into the "hidden wealth" of certain rich friends of Mrs. Marcos who have already filed their application for tax amnesty under Presidential Decree No. 23.

Nanadiego was replaced by Court of Appeals Justice Guillermo Santos as JAGO head. In appointing an outsider to replace Nanadiego, Marcos again evaded the problem of having to displease any of the factions at the military establishment. A good number of DND leaders had their own recommendees for the JAGO post.

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Nanadiego is the only officer of general rank to have been taken out for alleged misconduct in the exercise of martial powers. All other generals have been allowed by the Dictator to overstay in their posts.

And this is one reason the colonels and the majors and captains are chafing. They feel that their own retirement days would come without their having been able to earn their stars because there are so many overstaying generals.

The military is actually both a source of strength — about the only one right now — and a pain in the neck for Marcos.

Marcos has thus far been able to adroitly manipulate the military. For his own purposes, he has not opted for an elite professional military that would stick to the honor code and present him with a threat of a coup d'état. In fact, he has kept the military tied down to a non-win war a la Vietnam in Muslim Mindanao.

One of the devices concocted by Marcos in thwarting too much encroachments by the military into the realm of civil government is the organization of the so-called Sangguniang Bayan or Legislative Advisory Council. This scheme called for the abolition of the positions of vice governor and vice mayors, and of board members and municipal councils in the local governments. The displaced officials were then constituted into the so-called local Legislative Advisory Councils without pay. This cushioned the bitterness of the displaced officials and at the same time effectively prevented the majors and captains in the armed forces who were girding to become either governors, vice-governors, mayors, vice mayors, board members or councilors from pursuing their political aspirations.

Marcos evolved the SB or LAC scheme when he first got hold of reports that the AFP majors and captains have been instructed by their military commands to start taking up public administration courses preparatory to taking over the local government positions when the term of elective officials expire by December 31, 1975. Marcos certainly did not want the military meddling in purely civilian functions, although he initially held out to the military high hopes that the AFP officers would participate in civil government.

I used to discuss with Marcos during his spare time the matter of the generals becoming powerful, abusive and corrupt; that military commanders in the provinces were behaving like feudal despots and this mentality is filtering to their children. The situation, as I viewed it was similar to the pre-martial law days when the children of politicians behaved as spoiled young punks. However, in those days, there was a safety valve: regular elections during which there was a chance to throw the bums out.

Marcos, in turn, would tell me that he has the military in tow. He has been able to divide and rule the military. Marcos has kept a dossier on every ranking military commander, and he lets them know — as the occasion demands — that he is in possession of those dossiers. Sometimes, Marcos uses Enrile, Tatad, or De Vega to beam messages to the military.

However, Marcos has no intention of acting decisively to stamp out abuses and corruption by the military. He has even banned publication of news items on disciplinary actions taken against military personnel by their own military

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courts. He wants the military shielded from the glare of publicity.

Falsifications, forgeries and bribery and/or blackmail are standard weapons in the arsenal of Marcos. They are used for both defensive and offensive purposes. Marcos realizes that, in spite of his having won some big battles, the entire war of his career would be decided by the verdict of history. Thus, he would stop at nothing to insure the favorable verdict of history. He would even falsify historical records to obtain the much-sought nod of history.

For instance, the unpublished presidential decree on perpetuation of testimony was promulgated days after the first attempt to bring former Senator Benigno S. Aquino, Jr. to trial in August, 1973, but it was ante-dated to make it appear that it was promulgated before that date. One would notice that decrees issued by President Marcos do not have consecutive numbering, the reason being that, every so often, Marcos issues decrees which must be antedated.

Even the unused Letter of Sequestration covering the confiscation of the facilities of the Lopez-owned radio-television complex and the Chronicle printing establishment was antedated to make it appear that it was issued during the first few days of the imposition of martial law.

The truth, however, is that the Letter of Sequestration was drafted only after the burning of the Kanlaon Broadcasting System building on Roxas Boulevard, and at a time when Alfredo Montelibano, the authorized representative of Don Eugenio Lopez on negotiations for the sale of the ABS-CBN complex, was imposing certain difficult conditions for the lease of the compound to the representatives of Ambassador Roberto S. Benedicto, the front man of the President in the media field as well as in the sugar business, financing and contracts with Japanese companies.

Ante-dating documents is a common practice in the Palace. Even the martial law proclamation (No. 1081) was ante-dated to Sept. 21, 1972, although its typing was actually finished on Sept. 23, at about 4 p.m.

Marcos is a past grandmaster at historical falsifications. And it is a small wonder he has chosen to do a similar job on the 1971 Constitution — to suit his criminal and selfish purposes. There are many more falsified provisions of the New Constitution — done under the direction of Dictator Marcos himself, as there are numerous areas of the so-called minutes of the Constitutional Convention which were blatantly doctored, all to suit future contemplated actions of the President, like the creation of the National Intelligence and Security Agency as part of the decree enacting an Internal Security Act. By that decree, Marcos formalized his being the dictator of the country as he enumerated therein the acts or utterances that are punishable, setting up the secret police under Gen. Ver, and enumerating acts which, even if martial law were lifted, would still be punishable by military tribunals.

The ante-dating of Proclamation No. 1081 had a pivotal objective — for historical purposes.

It was dated Sept. 21, 1972, to show to future historians that the President really did not abolish Congress by his imposition of martial law, but that it was the New Constitution that disbanded the bicameral legislature under the 1935 Constitution.

Writings have already been made to show that Congress was even allowed to function, meet on Saturday, Sept. 23, two days after Marcos signed

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Proclamation No. 1081, or one day after he had ordered its implementation.

The Constitutional Convention journal was falsified so thoroughly by Marcos. The grave falsifications were committed on the alleged discussions on the power of a President to call a referendum and on the very powers of the President (or Prime Minister.)

Those who were represented as having talked on these powers, but actually did not, were Delegates Arturo Pacificador, Godofredo Ramos, Roseller T. Lim, Antonio Tupaz, Estanislao A. Fernandez, Arturo Barbero, Gilberto Duavit and Luninding Pangandaman.

The falsified portions of the Constitutional Convention journal were then cited as “authority” by Solicitor General Estelito Mendoza when he argued for the government before the Supreme Court on the case of Javellana vs. Executive Secretary. So thorough was the falsification that the journal even showed “speeches” justifying the creating of a national secret police, the NISA. A delegate was even represented as having delivered a speech — during an alleged debate on the Transitory Provisions — that the new Constitution may be submitted to either a referendum or a plebiscite and that the President would be under no constitutional obligation to convene the interim National Assembly.

There is widespread criticism of the unseemly haste with which the President implemented the New Constitution as it benefited him, but put off implementing the provisions benefitting others, i.e. the calling of the interim National Assembly, filling up of other offices like the Commission on Audit, the Budget Commission, the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeals, or the Civil Service Commission.

Of course, Dictator Marcos justified the immediate effectivity he made of the New Constitution as it affected his becoming a dictator by citing the “existing emergency” for which he imposed martial law.

Whatever rationalizing he does, the shabby treatment he gave democracy in the Philippines will remain an indelible blot on his already blemished record.

If Marcos wanted to be fair, he could have set the effectivity of the New Constitution to Dec. 31, 1974, and thus pave the way for an election. But he was really scared of elections. He had never won an election fairly in his life. In an election which was fairly conducted, his father lost, but he deprived the victor of the enjoyment of the fruits of victory by gunning him down, according to the findings of former Court of First Instance Judge Roman Cruz. He dreaded elections.

The 1935 Constitution was more subtly implemented by Quezon. It was made effective Dec. 30, 1935, but provided for elections on Sept. 18, 1935. It cut short the term of office of those elected in 1934 to the National Assembly, including Julio Nalundasan (who defeated Mariano Marcos, father of now Dictator Ferdinand Marcos, in 1934).

Marcos had made a mockery of many things, one of them being the referendum. He infers his right to call a referendum from Republic Act No 3590 which suggested the calling of Citizens’ Assemblies, and which he further “strengthened” by his issuance of Presidential Decree No. 86, the original decree on referendum.

Senator Lorenzo M. Tanada is right. There is no constitutional authority for the holding of a referendum without congressional sanction (as in a plebiscite

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on a specified subject), much less was there any legal authority for the holding of a referendum of Jan. 10-15 (1973) which Marcos deemed to have ratified the Malacanang-dictated Constitution.

The existence of the taxation provision on properties of religious educational institutions was one of the reasons the New Constitution was pulled out of a scheduled plebiscite on Jan. 15, 1973

Marcos found out that the religious groups, led by the Catholic church leaders, were out to defeat the New Constitution. The New Constitution could have been voted down by the people for that reason.

Another ground for its defeat would have been the Transitory provision which would allow the Con-Con delegates to sit as members of the interim National Assembly, a situation so unpalatable to their political superiors, namely senators and congressmen. The Convention delegates, it should be stated, were the political rejects in the Old Society. And to insert themselves as lawmakers in the interim National Assembly was something the tried and tested politicians would not accept.

There were other valid reasons for rejecting the New Constitution. No. 1 was the Transitory Provision which made a mockery of the entire democratic processes. Another was the lack of a provision on succession.

Catholic leaders are now fighting, if divided, because they had had to move to wring out concessions from Marcos on the non-implementation of a provision of the New Constitution on taxation of properties used for profit, like those for schools and hospitals.

Archbishop Santos had struck a "modus vivendi" with Marcos on the non-implementation of the provision. As a matter of fact, a Letter of Instructions (unpublished) was issued by the President instructing the Secretary of Education not to enforce the provision

However, upon the death of Archbishop Santos and the ascendancy of Archbishop Jaime Sin, the situation was altered. Sin would not compromise with Marcos; he felt that the duty of the church to fight for the civil liberties of the people, and for social change was something which cannot be bartered away. Sin eventually sided with the minority bishops, a group of five, who initiated the struggle for civil liberties. Eventually, the entire Church leadership joined as one. Of course, some moderates, like Archbishop Julio Rosales and Bishop Mariano Gaviola, urged caution, stating that there was no sense in going into a confrontation with the military government of Marcos.

Presidential Decree No. 2 declared the entire country as a land reform area — it was meant to get the mass of farmers immediately behind the martial law government. No details were spelled out, but since this was a vital measure to draw the endorsement of the farmers of the martial law proclamation, PD No. 2 was announced hand in hand with the issuance of Proclamation No. 1081. The land reform decree promised a lot of things to the farmers, the hope that they would soon be able to seize the big sugar, coconut, rice and corn lands where they and their forbears have toiled endlessly for years. However, the massing farmers were stopped by the military on orders of President Marcos.

It was understandable that the President would issue the stop order. He didn't want trouble this early coming from the landowners for he feared them. Up to now, Marcos still lives still in mortal fear that all the groups might band

together and gang up on him. Marcos had always warned his advisers that the martial regime was not secure in its position.

"I wish you people who are behaving arrogantly would realize that we have not yet stabilized the situation," Marcos snorted once to a group of assistants. "At anytime, we can have trouble . . . and all that e have worked for can blow up into nothingness . . . then our heads will be on the block." Presidential Decree No. 27, signed on Oct 27, 1972, during a ceremony attended by herded farmers from Bulacan and nearby areas, declared the emancipation of the tenant-farmers from his "bondage" to the soil. This was authored by Secretary Arturo R. Tanco, Jr.

The decree declared that tenant farmers in rice and com lands are automatically owners of the lands they are tilling at the time of the issuance of the decree. Sugar lands were excluded because the Dictator clearly did not want a clash with the sugar barons.

Later, Marcos issued Letter of Instructions to the Department of Agrarian Reform and other offices concerned to the effect that only lands over 100 hectares are covered by PD No. 27 — the first letdown for the farmers. Later another LOI was issued, placing rice and com lands with areas of 50 hectares ot over under the coverage of the land reform decree. This was when Marcos realized that there are actually very few tenants who would be benefited by the first LOI.

But the big problem that has come up is how the new landowner-tillers are going to get financing.

Most landholdings are those of 20-3-hectare areas. These are owned by absentee landlords, i.e. teachers, soldiers, employees who have three to four children and are reserving these either for their children and for themselves to attend to personally when they finally leave their current employment and into retirement.

A lot of trouble has cropped up on this area of land reform; more troubles are building up.

Besides, when Marcos proclaimed the alleged emancipation of the tenant-farmer from the landlord, his objective was not really to help the farmers. His main goal was to prevent a threat from ever being put up by the big landowners to his regime. Land reform was programmed in order that the big landowners could be uprooted from their "sanctuaries" outside Manila where they could scheme against Marcos. They could finance small pockets of rebellion. Now, with the landowners dispossessed, and receiving only small payments for their lands, they are effectively prevented from underwriting any protest or dissent against the Marcos regime. They are kept in the cities where Marcos maintains a pervasive climate of fear greater than those in the rural areas.

The project to uproot the landlords from their rural sanctuaries is tied up to another project: the modernization of tax collection through computerization of the assets and liabilities of everybody. The sinister motive is for Marcos to know who are his rich potential enemies. Then through the power to destroy — taxation — he could disable those who are outside his clique.

The ruthlessness of Marcos is part of his staying power. This evil quality in the man has goaded the dictator to make use of any strategem to achieve his objectives. Marcos did not hesitate to push the country to the brink of bankruptcy to win a reelection against Senator Sergio Osmena, Jr., in 1969. He

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did not hesitate to declare martial law when it became apparent that he would be unable to extend his stay in Malacanang beyond December 30, 1973, through a constitutional amendment.

And, having wielded the guns of martial law, Marcos' one major concern turned to cloaking his dictatorship with legitimacy. He could not content himself with the string of Supreme Court decisions "upholding" his dictatorship for he himself realized that he had extorted those decisions. Marcos extorted statements from certain national leaders either by cajolery, threats and intimidation, promises of political favors or assurances that they would be spared from harassment by the minions of the dictatorship. Marcos calls it "favor for a favor."

However, Marcos miserably failed to extort endorsements for his regime from national leaders who really count. Among those who have brusquely turned down Marcos' plea for public endorsement of the dictatorship were Senate President Gil J. Puyat, Speaker Jose B. Laurel, Jr. and the entire Laurel clan, including Senator Salvador H. Laurel, Senators Jose W. Diokno, Jovito R. Salonga, Ramon V. Mitra, Jr., Gerardo A. Roxas, Arturo M. Tolentino, Ambrosio S. Padilla and Eva Estrada Kalaw, and former Senator Lorenzo M. Tanada.

Marcos seems to have succeeded, however, in extorting a statement of support from his own bitter rival for the presidency in 1969, Osmena, Jr. It seems that Osmena wrote from Los Angeles Congressman Donald Fraser, chairman of the House subcommittee on international organizations, a letter endorsing continued U.S. military and economic assistance to the Philippines. The letter, dated July 9, 1975, was sent by Osmena following representations made in behalf of Marcos by Former Ambassador Amelito R. Mutuc and former Supreme Court Justice Estanislao A. Fernandez. Although Osmena denies that his letter of July 9 to Fraser was a "favor for a favor," his daughter-in-law, Marilita (wife of imprisoned Sergio Osmena III) and son, Sergei, and a daughter, were allowed by the Marcos dictatorship to leave for the United States on July 17, 1975, so that Sergei IV could undergo intensive medical care in the United States.

Marcos' controlled media in the Philippines and in the United States blared out in their front pages in glaring headlines the contents of the Osmena letter to Fraser.

Now, the point is that Osmena, Jr., son of a former Philippine President and the man who ran for the Presidency against Marcos in the 1969 elections, has the least reason to support the Marcos regime through the letter he had sent to Congressman Fraser. The elder Osmena has been accused by Marcos of the worst possible crimes, including alleged assassination plots. His son, Osmena III, has been a "hostage" of Marcos for the last three years, accused also of alleged conspiracy in the assassination plot. The son and daughter of Sergio's elder daughter, Minnie, have still not been given any permit by Marcos to join their mother in the United States. Perhaps, another "favor" will be extorted by Marcos of Sergio before his two grandchildren, Paulo Osmena-Jacinto, age 10, and Stephanie Osmena-Jacinto, age 8, can be permitted to join their mother.

Marcos' holding of Minnie's children as hostage even touched the hardened sensibilities of the dean of students, Archie C. Epps III, of Harvard College in Cambridge, Massachusetts, that the man was compelled to write the

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dictator a letter on November 20, 1975, interceding for the release of Minnie's children. He wrote:

"I wish to call to your attention the fate of two young children being held in the Philippines against their will and separated from their mother. I urge their release as the only humanitarian action possible in the situation. I know that as a parent you understand the state of fear and unhappiness they suffer... I know that the Philippines is under a state of emergency declared by the government but such concerns should not be placed above the welfare of defenseless, innocent children. I cannot imagine, frankly, why they have been held for such a long while... I continue to hope that the Philippines, which has a special place in my heart, will represent the highest standards of decency and humanity in the community of nations ... I think, Mr. President, that the retention of these children can only reflect poorly on the Philippines, xxx"

If Professor Epps III was very diplomatic, the wife of Serging, Lourdes, did not chose to mince words as she asked the conjugal dictators in Malacanang in a letter of July 16, 1975, to allow the two Minnie children to join their mother in the United States. She wrote in her own handwriting:

"Dear Imelda & Ferdinand,

"I know I should not be pestering you with my pleadings but it concerns an 8 year and 10 year old children, Paolo & Stephanie Jacinto.

"In your holding them as hostage and not allowing them to leave the country to join their parents is a punishment that no one at that age could withstand & endure. It is mental anguish. Do you think your own flesh and blood could endure such separation & anguish & its fragile minds not snap at that ager

"At 6 yesterday morning my grandchild Stephanie called me long distance collect begging me to help them come & I had to tell her that it is President Marcos who is against it.

"Why do you hate us so much that even our children, an 8 & 10 year old, are being punished for something that nobody knows whose fault except for some malicious tongues and insinuation?

"In what way did these children harm you & yours?

"I have never pleaded for my son even though I know deep down in my heart that he is innocent of the charges against him. It is ironic that of all my children he had the most admiration & respect for you & now you are the cause of his suffering.

"And I do not believe that dirty linen should be washed in public that we Filipino instead should try to love and understand one another & not breed an atmosphere of contempt and hate.

"I have been silent all these past three years but for you to hold an 8 & 10 year old as hostage is too much for a 61 year old woman to bear and endure in silence — they are innocent. I beg you, please do not punish them. Allow them to be with their parents whom at such a tender age they need so badly —

"Sincerely,

"LOURDES OSMENA"

One can understand the suffering that the elder Osmenas (Serging and Primitivo Mijares

Lourdes) must continuously endure on account of the incarceration of Serge III and the holding of the two Minnie children as Marcos' hostages.

Of course, it underscores the ruthless, nay the heartless make-up of the conjugal dictatorship.

However, it is precisely the heartless nature of Marcos that the public perceives which gives Ferdinand and Imelda the utmost satisfaction of their inhuman exercise on the lives of the Osmenas. Both Ferdinand and Imelda realize that their dictatorship can only be perpetuated through force and with the support of the military. Now, when known opponents, like Serging, whose legions of Cebuano supporters in the United States and in the Philippines are waiting for his signal to revolt against Marcos, are compelled to support (instead of attack) Marcos, it becomes obvious that Marcos' power and strength acquire the false quality of impregnability. Who would think of opposing Marcos when even his known worst enemies have succumbed to the pressures and agreed to express public support for him?

Marcos would make use of any stratagem; he did not hesitate to spend and bankrupt the country to win a reelection; he did not hesitate to declare martial law; he would not hesitate to use helpless women and children.

President Marcos conceded that, upon the proclamation of martial law, as a place Filipinos want to visit, the Philippines ranks somewhere between the dentist's office and Muntinglupa.

Such thoughts inspired him to give his country its jaunty new paint and cosmetics job, with "balikbayan", various beauty contests and other forms of circuses for the entertainment of foreigners and natives as well.

The *Philippine News* published in late July a piece by Renato Yuson and I would like to reproduce it here with approval:

Part XLI The Marcos Coliseum

There's a big hunt for the Great Entertainment. Financed, managed, encouraged and pushed by Pres. Ferdinand E. Marcos, this drive is to leave no stone unturned for that Show-of-all-Shows, that Circus-of-all-Circuses. New Society agents are combing every nook and cranny of amusement capitals of the world. They are everywhere, from the ballet schools of Russia to the karate dojos of Okinawa and Japan, from the concert halls of Manhattan to the basketball courts of the Bronx. Every manner of entertainment is being scrutinized, studied, listed and catalogued for possible import to the Philippines.

Money is no consideration. The New Society is ready to throw everything - not just greenbacks and facilities and manpower - into the deal. Who cares if the Filipino people are starving? They will have circuses to keep them amused. Marcos is master of the tricks of a successful dictatorship: keep the natives on a steady diet of entertainment opium. It's the same recipe Nero used to keep the citizens of Rome pacified.

Of course, we cannot have slaves and lions and gladiators nowadays. But the New Society is trying its best to present their moral equivalent. Ali-Frazier III. Fisher-Karpov Match. Miss Universe Contest. Ad Nauseam. The idea is to nurture the basest instincts of the masses for sadism, fun, identification and

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grandeur — while the new oligarchs secretly manipulate the reins of power and wealth.

President Marcos knows the weaknesses of the Filipino. And he exploits them with all the resources at his command. He knows many of the people are dissatisfied with his regime, but he provides regular smorgasbord of outlandish fun that there is an illusion of contentment and peace. Even as the people suffer and starve. It's a varied fare of course - from sex (beauty contests and fashion shows and bomba movies) to art (Van Cliburn) to sports (basketball and karate).

It was in pursuit of the improbable fun that an old fraternity brother from the college of law came to New York the other day. I was asleep when he rang me up.

"Brod," he screamed into the phone, "this is Alex Antonio. Are you asleep?"

"Not anymore." I answered, as I barely managed to make out the time on the table clock (2:15 a.m.)

"Look, brod, I just arrived from Colorado and I have no money to take a taxi from Kennedy. Can you fetch me?"

I still do not know why I assented, for I had to drag myself to the bathroom and wash the cobwebs off my brain. Soon, I was taking the empty Belt Parkway to the airport. It occurred to me that I had not even asked Alex what he was doing in town.

Alex had a blackeye, scratches on his face, a torn jacket.

Without waiting for me to ask, he explained: "It's a long story hut to make it short, I bumped into a police raid somewhere while inquiring into some show for the New Society."

Later, nursing a gin and tonic at my apartment, he revealed that he worked as an assistant in the Game and Amusement Board in the Philippines. But while watching a game in the midwest, he had to elbow and kick his way out of the barn (losing his wallet in the process) when the police swooped down in their squad cars. The game? Dogfights.

"So, what's the idea?" I asked.

"Well, we're starting to run out of really good ideas. Our boss is getting impatient with all those leggy contests and basketball stars. He wants something really extraordinary, something that could be scheduled on a regular basis. Something out of Nero's Rome. So, it occurred to me to look into dogfights which are, together with football and boxing and hockey, the closest approximation of the Roman coliseum," he confessed.

"And what entertainment do you expect to see in New York?" I asked, honestly dubious about the possibilities of fun in the Big Apple. "I really don't know, but I understand there's always something to see in the Empire State," he said, as he winked mischievously.

"I am not too sure, brod," I said, "unless you are interested in importing a few of the denizens of 42nd Street, of which you have too many already working in hotels and being hospitable to foreign investors and tourists."

"No, what I am really interested in is the ambience of the place, the spirit of America at work, as it were," he remarked, leaving me more mystified. "What I mean is that you do have a way of keeping people entertained here, I'd like to know the technique — the medium is the message, you know."

With that bit of McLuhanism, he winked again and gave me a hearty and vigorous slap on the back.

In a nutshell, what he wanted to do was "feel" New York City. How do people stay satisfied, uncomplaining? What is there in the Big Apple which makes life seem so meaningful, even if the people spend most time chasing their tails?

"There's something about the culture that breeds a kind of hero that loves adventure and thrill or exults in danger, a kind of mentality out of Hemingway - you know, the Big Safari or the Bull Fight. Americans are fed this daily diet of disaster that is almost sexual. It is in the consumption of this staple of adventure that many Americans find the meaning of existence, however empty and hollow it may be," Alex pontificated, and for a while I noticed that impish grin that seemed to savor every word. "This is the psyche I want to study and experience."

Indeed I got his point quite readily. I had lived in the eastern seaboard for the last five years and had seen a continuous program of entertainment, usually based on adventure and competition, from season to season. At the moment, it is Peter Benchley's *Jaws*; sometime back, it was *Towering Inferno*; further back, it was . . . And how about the Mayaguez incident and the Vietnam experience? Always, there was the quest for kicks, the desperate escape from boredom. "Let's have some action," is a common expression, a signal to gird the loins, to initiate some fun. American culture is based on a cosmic high noon, the confrontation of two views or personalities or man with nature. Social relevance is not necessary as long as there is an air of tension and danger, of what Hemingway called "grace under pressure". It's in reality a constant escape from the Self through action. It's primitive jungle in modern setting.

For once, Alex made sense to me, but what puzzled me was his desire to implant this primitive aspect of western culture in the Philippines. "It's simple., brod," he said, "the Philippines is a dictatorship. The people need an outlet for their dissatisfaction, or else their discontent will explode. At any rate, they must be entertained and amused."

He called the phenomenon "coliseum syndrome" - that outlook which considers life in general as a kind of sport, a big game. The New Society, he said, aims to cultivate and encourage this coliseum mentality to give the Filipinos a feeling of participation and worth. "So, where do you propose to begin to have a picture of this Hemingway psyche?" I inquired.

"Well, I think I should begin with the summer games. Baseball, you know, and soccer. Perhaps, we can also visit a few game and recreation areas like *Great Adventure and Jungle Habitat*," he replied.

"But brod," I interjected, "I thought you wanted some thrills, some hijinks?"

"Let's start with the more routinary fun," he said. "After all, I've had enough of the dogfights which turned out to be more dangerous to the spectators than to the protagonists."

Looking at the telltale marks of his misadventure in the midwest, I agreed and said, "Sure, you should settle down to the more homely entertainment like reading mysteries and watching TV instead of prowling into dens of iniquities all over town."

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With that remark, I put Berlioz' *Requiem* on the turntable and settled to an hour or two of escape from disaster and adventure. My adrenalin glands certainly deserved a rest.

Like any man with pretensions of grandeur, Marcos wants to be made to laugh, too.

Minister Mariano Ruiz, who was Malacanang protocol officer following the retirement of Badong Zamora, had the patience to wait for his appointment as Appointments Secretary in lieu of Secretary Venancio Duque who was appointed one of the elections commissioners.

Ruiz now not only attempts to be appointments secretary. He also performs the job of protocol officer, and court jester. At times, he even usurps the functions of Clave, De Vega and Tuvera.

He is already having a feud with most of the military aides of the President.

One of the best jokes he entertains the President with is a tall tale about Elizabeth Day allegedly suing Secretary Romulo for assault with a "dead weapon".

The rebellion in Mindanao is going to be Mr. Marcos' unending excuse for continuing martial law throughout the country. He cited it as one of the grounds for martial law in Proclamation No. 1081.

But he will not admit that the rebellion broke out anew upon the imposition of martial law. The Muslim Filipinos just can't live without their guns. When the military started telling them their guns would be collected, the Muslims started to rebel.

Secretary of National Defense Enrile declared in a speech in July 1975 at the National Defense College, that "the nation still faces the same threats as it did since the imposition of martial law." One reading the speech of the Defense Secretary must begin to wonder what happened to all the alleged contrasts between the Old and the New Society. Consider his language:

"We still face the spectre of *internal subversion* amidst the present economic crisis, adopting a united front strategy with a decentralized leadership.

There is the threat of *domestic criminality*, aggravated by an *incipient erosion of moral values* in our society.

We are still plagued by corruption and abuses among some sectors of the public service.

We have the secessionist movement in the South, which, coupled with the economic crisis, constitutes the main problem of internal stability that we are contending with today." (*Bulletin Today*, July 12, 1975).

Significantly, Marcos himself, in a speech delivered during the third anniversary celebration of martial law held last September 19, 1975, even went further. He openly admitted the danger that the New Society "is giving birth to a *new Government elite*, who resurrect in our midst the privileges we fought in the past, *who employ the powers of high office for their personal enrichment . . . There are new sores that are clearly emerging. . . There has arisen massive opportunities for graft and corruption, the misuse of influence*, opportunities which are now being exploited within the government service . . . I raise my voice in alarm today *for we are in fact a nation divided against itself* — divided between urban and rural, rich and poor, privileged and underprivileged. Among some of the poor, there is still the nagging fear that they have again been left

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behind, and that *we have liquidated an oligarchy only to set up a new oligarchy* . . . the dramatic gains of the past three years have ironically intensified *natural appetites for finery and show, for lavish parties, flashy cars, mansions, big homes, expensive travel and other counter-productive activities.*” The next day, (September 20, 1975) the Daily Express and Times Journal, announced that soon after the anniversary speech of the President, the First Lady enplaned for New York “to deliver a Philippine statement on the establishment of a new economic order” before the U.N. General Assembly, “and make proposals” in behalf of the Philippine government, concerning the “moral and human dimensions of international relations.” The controlled mass media extolled the anniversary announcement by the President of a sweeping reorganization of government. Three cabinet members, quite old, had retired; three had resigned. One undersecretary, ten other ranking officials — including the heads of the revenue and customs offices — had been relieved or had resigned; more undesirable officials were supposed to have been fired. Some officials whose resignations were accepted, were undoubtedly notorious; others apparently innocent were not given a chance to defend themselves or even confront their accusers. The one-man ruler is the supreme judge. There can be no redress, no appeal. Knowledgeable people became increasingly skeptical as they noticed that the bigtime operators at the very seat of power — including close relatives, cronies, business associates, and trusted subordinates — had been spared once again. Were they included when the President said: “Against these enemies of the Republic, I now commit myself to do battle?”

Marcos has been anything but candid to his people. That has been his forte all along; he would say one thing, and yet. . .

In an interview with newsmen, as reported by the *United Press International*, he was quoted as having said: “If they answer ‘no’, we will immediately dismantle the present administration and move into a parliamentary form of government.” He was talking about the referendum scheduled for Feb. 27, 1975, in which one of the vaguely-worded questions was whether the people favor the continuation of martial law.

Marcos’ answer as quoted by the UPI was not an honest answer. He would never allow the people to vote “no” to martial law; neither would he dismantle martial law, if the people were really given the freedom to say “no” to his dictatorship. Even his answer that the country will move into a parliamentary form of government was equally dishonest. Why? Because he would have to follow the provisions of the New Constitution and convene the interim National Assembly which is charged by the new charter with the task of ushering the country into the parliamentary form of government.

In the same interview, he was asked whether he did not feel it necessary to reconvene Congress on an interim basis so that important foreign policy decisions could be ratified. He answered: “I had hoped that I could but the (world economic) crisis intervened.”

Another bare-faced lie. But he is not one who would be nailed down without answering any question.

For, if there had been no world economic crisis, which martial law could not possibly remedy, he probably would have answered that the Muslims are still in rebellion in Mindanao or that a small band of NPAs magnified by Marcos himself into several armed hundreds, are still roaming the hills of Palanan

in Isabela.

One of the long-range plans of Marcos is to suffer or tolerate within certain limits the anti-Marcos political activities of the "old society" politicians, while countering their every move with his own controlled propaganda machine. His gambit is to outlive most of them, or hasten the demise of most of them. He knows that the upcoming generation may no longer have any memories about constitutional democracy, but only a forced liking for his constitutional authoritarianism.

And, in order to swing the youth to his side, Marcos has ordered the organization of secret training camps for youth corps in the Visayas and Mindanao, and parts of Northern Luzon. He has not dared organize this in the more sophisticated areas of the Tagalog regions of Central and Southern Luzon. The training camps, operating under the guise of National Youth Service, will turn out what would be the New Society equivalent of Hitler's youth corps.

It is not only the youth that Marcos' various ruses of survival will work on. Every aspect of life in the Philippines will be subjected to continuing barrage of oppression, coupled with propaganda, in order to insure Marcos' perpetuation in power.

Chapter XVII

Whither Marcos?

It will be a very long time before there can be a final perspective on the martial regime in the Philippines, and indeed on Ferdinand E. Marcos. Surely, that perspective has been greatly accelerated by the behavior of Ferdinand himself, his extravagant and jet-setting wife, Imelda, his in-laws and cronies, and select rapacious armed forces officers.

In spite of the evidently tightening noose of circumstances pointing to an adverse historical verdict on his regime, Marcos will seek to maneuver around in the vain hope that history would deal with him kindly. To be sure, his misdeeds are many.

The Office of the President of any country is one of the most vulnerably public positions in the world.

Society is so contrived that it is virtually impossible to combine power, position and privacy - or even celebrity and privacy. Those willing to court fame, or assume leadership, are by those very terms forced to relinquish seclusion. What one takes in the way of glory or influence, one must pay for in constant exposure to public scrutiny. No one in the ambit of fame is exempt from the inexorable equation.

Hardly anyone disputed the wisdom of the imposition of martial law, since they did not hold the martial guns anyway, and it was held out as temporary, to be lifted just as soon as rebellion is ended and certain reforms are effected.

But what started out as a reform movement has grown into an ill-disguised plot to perpetuate Dictator Marcos and his ilk in power, backed by their rapacity

and unbridled appetite for economic and political gains. And that became evident during the second six months of the martial regime. Kokoy and the military officers are still eyeing other lucrative aspects after devouring the Lopez properties.

My greater fear is that the irreversible mechanism set into motion by the imposition of martial law will in the long run bring a far greater curse on the nation and all its citizens. The turmoil that is certain to follow upon his overthrow, by death, resignation or other means, will be unimaginable and too dreadful to comprehend.

Dictator Marcos has made no provisions for succession in the Constitution which he extorted from the Constitutional Convention. He will have to answer to history for the dire fate that awaits his nation.

Martial law has not solved the problem of law and order. Although the crime rate improved markedly at the start of martial law, it is now back to near pre-martial law levels. Crimes against property have increased and will continue to increase as the economic situation worsens. Violence against persons by civilians, is less; but its decline had been made up for by abuses committed by the military, through unreasonable searches and seizures; indiscriminate arrests, indefinite detentions, and frequent torture of political prisoners; repression of some minorities like the Kalingas and Bontocs; and reprisals against unarmed Muslims.

Martial law has not eliminated corruption in government. In fact, it has not even meaningfully reduced it. Abuses of power and privilege by old politicians are gone; but their place has been taken over by new mandarins who, unlike the former, are not accountable to the people.

Nor has martial law re-structured our society. If at all, the gap between poor and rich has widened because, as the paper on the economy shows, martial law has not solved the problem of unemployment; and the runaway inflation that afflicts us, brought about more by the inflationary policies of the martial law regime than by world economic conditions, has battered the poor much more than it has hurt the rich.

The impairment of the right to free self-organization, the elimination of the right to strike, and the policy of keeping wages low, have stripped labor of any defense against both inflation and management abuses; while the slow pace of land reform, the weaknesses of supporting services for tenants, the increase in costs, and the absence of any program for tenants on coconut and sugar lands — and more important — for landless peasants, who far outnumber tenants — all these factors have negated any meaningful gains for our rural population.

The government's own statistics show that, despite its claim to greater efficiency and swifter action because of martial law, it is no more capable of pushing land reform now than it was before martial law.

But as they say, when difficult times hit upon the unfortunate lives of men and people: "This too shall pass away." But when? When will the illusion that a repressive regime, bent on perpetuating itself in power, come to an ignominious end? When will the extravaganza of manipulation end in order that we can return to a life on a human scale of freedom and dignity?

How long will Marcos last? How long will the Filipinos tolerate his oppressive rule? When is the inevitable day of reckoning? Those who go by

numerology say Marcos will last until 1981, citing the number of the martial law proclamation, which is 1081. He will be a dictator for 10 years, or 10 years from 1972, which is 1981. The figure 'MOST could also be read as 1 and 9 or 19, and then 81, which gives the numerologists 1981. How Marcos will go after 10 years in a manner that could either be peaceful or terrible for him.

Economic hardships will contribute to his downfall because all economic forecasts indicate that there will be greater economic difficulties in the late 70s.

People will continue to groan under heavy taxation which he must resort to, to support the heavy spending for the maintenance of a huge standing army.

The economic condition of the country may hold the key to a proper understanding of the future. It will shape the thinking and the conduct of those in authority, as well as of those who have a vital stake in the Philippine situation.

The present economic crisis is the main pre-occupation of the martial law administration and its experts. They know - and it is a conviction which many share — that it can mean their undoing. It has been said that the peasant would rather be fed than be free. He may not appreciate the disappearance of civil liberties, but he knows the meaning of hunger. The indicators and symptoms point to one conclusion - the New Society is sorely pressed. The soaring rate of inflation — which has impoverished the masses and eroded the income of laborers and employees the high cost of living, the mounting figures of unemployment, the number of industries that have hit rockbottom, the unending procession of Filipinos who want to leave the country on any pretext, the lack of confidence in the repeated assurances of high public officials, and the vocal resentment of businessmen from whom contributions and donations have been exacted - all these and more show now that the euphoria of the first year of martial law has evaporated. The New Society is in a mess.

Since the economic ills of the nation are deeply rooted in the very nature and character of our colonial economy, the situation will continue to deteriorate. The economic policy of the New Society, which is export-oriented and gives the red-carpet treatment to foreign investors, thereby increasing and perpetuating alien domination of our economy, has only served to aggravate the crisis.

Unless the world market for Philippine exports registers an immediate turn for the better, the balance of payments and trade deficit problems will create many difficulties. The mid-year Report of the Philippine-American Investments Corporation (PAIC) predicts a trade imbalance of between \$850 and \$950 million in 1974. Higher prices for major imports, on which local industries are heavily dependent, will raise the import bill. Oil imports, now valued at \$700 million a year, will further weaken the dollar reserve position. Policy-makers and local businessmen are seriously concerned about the effects of continuing increase in OPEC crude oil price. The Government is evidently pinning its hopes on hitting oil, but so far none in commercial quantities has been located. Oil from sources other than the Middle East, such as from Mainland China, cannot be processed as yet by Philippine refineries.

Consequently, there will be a tremendous pressure on Government to increase taxes and adopt drastic economic measures, which it knows will be unpopular. In the meantime, it will rely on loans from international credit institutions. Servicing and liquidating these loans will be a tough problem in the years to come.

In the Greater Manila Area, many laid-off workers have joined the ranks of the unemployed. In several places in Luzon, a number of medium mining industries have already suspended operations. In Western Visayas, the depressed world market and the inability of the Government to meet the legitimate expectations of the sugar producers have aroused much resentment. During the world market boom, they pointed out, the Government - through a subsidiary of the Philippine National Bank - controlled the exports and pocketed the profits. They feel that the Government should now absorb the heavy losses. In Eastern Visayas, the slump in copra has affected the entire region, particularly the depressed areas of Samar and Leyte. The Mindanao situation is pathetic. The timber and plywood industries have been crippled, operations have been stopped, and thousands of laborers and employes have been thrown out of work. On the other hand, the Muslim secessionist movement has created incalculable dislocation, misery, and bitterness. Christians in the Muslim areas are resentful over what they see as Government bias in favor of Muslim "rebels" who have now joined the Administration. But the genuine Muslim rebels and their leaders continue to be hostile towards the Government. Trapped between the effects of recession and the Muslim insurgency, countless people have been in a quandary. Many Christian families have decided to migrate to various places in Visayas and Luzon. Only the agricultural industries (pineapple and banana) in Bukidnon, Cotabato, and Davao del Norte are doing very well. Laborers and farm workers are asking for their rightful share in the huge profits of the giant multinational firms, but their voices are feeble and they have lost their bargaining strength under martial law.

In the Greater Manila Area - always the most critical area in times of upheaval prices of basic commodities have gone up beyond the reach of the ordinary Filipino. According to official figures, about 1/3 of Manila's population consists of squatters and slum-dwellers.

As the economic crisis looms, there will be an understandable tendency on the part of the Administration to be more repressive. The one-man ruler is under tremendous pressure from the military to clamp down on all "subversives" and "disturbers of the public peace."

Increasing repression by the military and more misery for the masses may well be the crucial mix in an irreversible crisis.

With the steady deterioration of the situation, more and more Filipinos will be confronted by the classic dilemma: resistance with all its hazards, or acquiescence with its prejudicial consequences to the whole nation.

The students, the educated unemployed, and the intellectuals who have seen through the whole scheme since martial law was proclaimed, will be among the first to resolve the dilemma, along with the most aggrieved elements of society. They will probably resolve it by facing all the risks of redemptive effort.

The Church, as usual, will be divided. The progressive elements will be articulate but the conservatives, most of whom are subservient, will have the votes in any showdown.

The business community will remain cowed and acquiescent, however resentful some of its members may be. Profits derived from a "stable" social and political order, and this is what is important to them. To the typical

businessman, the old dictum of Goethe applies: if he has to make a choice between disorder and injustice, he would choose injustice.

By and large, the military cannot be expected to give up the power they now enjoy. They have received tremendous material benefits and they see their Commander -in-Chief as the source of their power and privileges. Discipline, their own brand of loyalty, regional and personal considerations will weigh heavily on the senior officers. How the junior officers and enlisted men will react to a crisis that can no longer be reversed and which will affect their own families and relations, is anybody's guess.

The explosive Muslim situation will continue to plague the authorities, despite the apparent breakdown of the rebellion in some places. The basic problems have not been resolved. They may have been exacerbated by the coddling of the "balikbayan" rebels and the appointment of new officials who are not accepted by the Muslim community.

The NPA is a source of endless headaches to the military establishment. It had the ideology, the organization, and the willingness to fight against all odds. Unless a third alternative is presented to the people, the country may well be polarized between an army-supported dictatorship and a Maoist-inspired movement.

When I appeared before the Fraser committee on June 17, 1975, I stressed the following pertinent points on the prospects for the future of the totalitarian regime:

XIII. MY FINAL POINT OF ORDER

In addition to the aforesaid and other known evils of an authoritarian regime, I would like to stress that the betrayal of the high expectations of the Filipino people for a reformed society under an authoritarian regime and the dangerous flirtation being carried on by Mr. Marcos with the Communist colossus in the Asian mainland should find direct relevance to the present task of the honorable committee.

It has been argued before (including by myself), and with justification, that, in developing countries where the resources are limited and the demands on these resources by the population are so great, a firm authoritarian regime would best be equipped to bring about and maintain a program of development with the resources allocated on the basis of priorities.

Likewise, foreign investors have also found out that, in their relations with the host country, it was always easier to deal with "strong man" governments. And so it was with the American investors in the Philippines. As a matter of fact, to curry favor with American businessmen, President Marcos unconstitutionally suspended the operation of a provision of the Constitution in order to extend by one year the lifetime of the Parity Agreement, which should have expired July 3, 1974. The American businessmen then dutifully reported to their home offices which, presumably in turn reported to the State Department, that American investors and businessmen are enjoying a bonanza under martial law.

However, an inquiry would show that American investors in the Philippines are among the most disappointed lot. The old corruption which they dreaded so much under the pre-martial law government is back. Every now and then,

their executives are called to the Music Room and slapped with assessments for contribution to this or that Miss Universe Pageant project of the First Lady. For, while the regime had so solemnly proclaimed the reformation of society, it now has had to contend with realities, particularly in the Philippines, of an endemic tradition of corruption of public officials. The U.S. press has so courageously traced the ugly footprints of corruption right up to the office of the President of the Philippines!

There is no doubt that the martial regime has gone corrupt, absolutely corrupt. And as the axiom goes, when an authoritarian regime is corrupt, it becomes, therefore, not an instrument for the reallocation of the country's resources, but for the accumulation of these resources by a limited few. When a government fails to satisfy the growing needs of the populace, or worst yet, fails to satisfy the appetite of rising expectations whipped up by the propaganda machine, as in the Philippines, then civil unrest ensues. A situation then develops which, as history has shown, is successfully exploited by the Communists.

South Vietnam and Cambodia are the most recent examples of corrupt authoritarian regimes which, having failed to satisfy the needs of the populace, fell to the Communist onslaught. A South Korean opposition lawmaker was quoted by the news agencies recently as having stated that the fall of South Vietnam to the Communists was due to the corruption of one man, Nguyen van Thieu, and that the same thing could happen to Park Chung Hee's South Korea. I might add that the same misfortune could befall the Philippines.

The question, therefore, is whether it is in the best interest of the United States to save the Philippines. Or, would the United States, in the face of reversals in Indochina, abandon the Far East and retreat to the shores of California?

To my mind, the answers must be in the affirmative to the first poser, and negative to the second question. But the second query deserves the first answer and explanation.

It has been the traditional policy of the United States to fight its wars with aggressors outside the mainland United States. To fight such wars within the United States mainland would understandably prove very costly in terms of loss of human lives, American lives, and terrible destruction of properties and installations. This is a major rationale in the global defense system of the United States as established in a network of defense treaties with countries around the globe through the years.

Now, the Philippines is a vital link in the defense line drawn by the United States in the Pacific and Oceania. The biggest U.S. air force and naval bases outside continental United States are located in the Philippines, thus making the Philippines the most important link in the defense setup. But a threat has surfaced to this vital defense network by the establishment by Mr. Marcos of an authoritarian regime. Having turned corrupt and betrayed the expectations of the Filipino people, the dictatorship now exposes the country to a clear and present danger of a Communist take-over. The Marcos regime has thereby created the threat of a Portugal-type risk or danger to a major defense network of the United States. While the corruption within the martial regime and the repression of legitimate dissenting groups, such as genuinely-motivated political leaders and nuns and priests, go on unabated, the Communists have

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gone underground and are organizing and expanding rapidly. The establishment of diplomatic ties with Mao's China on the embassy level would soon give Peking and its agents direct access to the Maoist rebels in the hills of Sierra Madre. Only last June 3, 1975, "Reuters" news agency dispatched a story from Peking that a Red Chinese press attache in Canada was expelled by Ottawa authorities because he was nabbed smuggling money (\$70,000.00) into the United States to aid leftist insurgents in the Philippines. With the Marcos-Mao tete-a-tete, there won't be any need for such a circuitous route for Mao's agents to destroy America's defense network from the Philippine side.

How should the United States deal with the problem posed by the dictatorship of Marcos to America's Asian defense network? Mr. Marcos should be told in no uncertain terms that the United States will not support his repressive regime and he should, therefore, restore democratic rule in the country, relinquish his dictatorial powers, and stop immediately the internment of political prisoners.

One thing I would like to remind the committee of is this: Mr. Marcos is a very shrewd man. He believes that his newly-established alliance with Mao TseTung elevates him to a position of strength in bargaining for better terms on the Philippines-United States defense arrangements. Mr. Marcos realizes that the U.S. government, whether it likes it or not, is in no position to "de-stabilize" his martial regime, at least not until after the American presidential elections of 1976.

Mr. Marcos has taken cognizance, however, of the new wind blowing in the U.S. Congress concerning the reexamination of U.S. aid policy towards the Philippines. It was precisely in anticipation of this reexamination task by this committee that Mr. Marcos started beaming messages all over that he himself wants such a reexamination of all Philippine treaties with the United States. He was hoping that, since he himself had already called for the restudy, the U.S. Congress would no longer do that. Mr. Marcos is a master of the strategy of preemptive strike. At the same time, Mr. Marcos started preparing the minds of the Filipino people to the possibility of a cutback or complete denial of U.S. aid to the Philippines. His gambit is to claim later, if aid be really cut or denied, that he himself had asked for such action from the U.S. government because aid was being given under terms so iniquitous and derogatory to the self-respect and dignity of a free country as the Philippines is.

The regime's propaganda line has already been passed around to the effect that the American assistance to the Philippines is not really much, only about \$100 million a year. The line now being mouthed by Manila's press, obviously under the baton of President Marcos himself, is that the \$100 million U.S. aid is less than FIVE (5%) percent of the country's export income, and could easily be covered by resources available to the Philippines, if finally cut off. In any case, so the propaganda line goes, about 60 percent of U.S. aid goes to salaries and maintenance of U.S. personnel administering the aid; U.S. AID personnel are in turn given access to high councils of government, with opportunities to spy, meddle and spread gossips and rumors disruptive of the aims of the authoritarian regime.

While U.S. aid is not really much, the fact that it is being given, with the undeniable implication that its grant is a direct support of the martial regime, is what really counts; it serves as a stabilizing factor to the authoritarian regime,

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while it deters any massive opposition that could compel Mr. Marcos to restore democracy in my hapless country.

The current state of repression and burgeoning upheaval occasioned by the authoritarian rule set upon the Filipinos must necessarily make a claim on the conscience of Dictator Marcos and his wife, Imelda, the AFP generals and the Cabinet members, Kokoy Romualdez and other in-laws of the President who are the only ones really profiting from the state of repression and oppression in the Philippines.

They cannot escape the obvious question: If the implementation of martial law was misguided, are we to continue it further until it finally becomes a national nightmare?

A calmer reckoning of Marcos' responsibility must be in several stages - his plotting in the ROTC bivouac areas, the killing of Julio Nahindasan, his marriage to Imelda, the taste of powers of the presidency and the imposition of martial law for perpetuating himself, his wife and/or son in power.

This process is not new. History has guided the President; will he also allow a traditional ending to his rule - the gallows for overthrown despots?

Now, to lift martial law? Marcos would not do that. For him to do so now would render his guilt to his nation so palpable - all his "daring and sacrifices" for nothing. Hence, he must concoct more deceptions and always more to save himself from an adverse verdict of history in the hope that such deceptions would hold down historians to give him a fair judgment. But the series of lies and deceptions will victimize his conscience and he will trip along the way long enough for people or another scheming group, like Imelda and Kokoy on the one hand, and the military clique on the other, to decapitate him.

The people of the Philippines did not, never did, "draft" Marcos for the presidency for life. His was only to serve four years - as was the tradition in the country; but he cheated his way into a second term, and concocted all those excuses to impose martial law on the eve of the end of the illegally-won second term as President.

What should be circumstantially useful a tack for Dictator Marcos to take to lead the country through a wrenching readjustment under martial law?

He cannot rely on military coercion all the time. He cannot have non-partisan support merely by asking for it or continuing a perpetual climate of fear. It takes special political and intellectual conditions for that to happen, and sad to admit, both have been lacking. Plus, candor which has been absent conspicuously, too.

The political problems can be solved, if Marcos would be mentally honest and truthful for once — he should discipline his own instincts, instead of being a recluse and listening only to the self-serving advices that filter through his cordon sanitaire.

So far, the President has been unable to decide whether he wants the military to be his sole ally or the politicians or his clique of cronies and his insatiable in-laws.

Most of the time his public pronouncements are laced with evidence of unresolved issues in his own thinking.

He would ask for cooperation, and yet, in another forum, he would launch unto an unbridled imputation of blame for the ills of the Old Society to the old

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Congress or the “backsliders.” Blame everything or everybody, but his own doing or himself.

The President cannot have it both ways. Even if he opts for reconciliation, rather than recrimination, he would have to supply a fresh concept of the Philippines’ national interest as a basis for wide-ranging non-partisan support. The “discarded” politicians who still have a lot of say among their constituencies must be convinced that the New Society is not just for the generals, Marcos cronies and Kokoy and the other Marcos in-laws.

He must have other uses for the national leaders other than just parading them whenever some foreigner or visiting U.S. lawmakers are around. I am sure they curse him behind his back for making them adornments in his show window of a smiling martial law.

The President must not engage in mere word games. The national policy cannot be simply a collection of special economic and political interest of the Marcoses, Kokoy and the cronies. The conceptual and strategic confusion in the New Society has to be clarified, not by mere word games, but by deed by the President.

Let us not be naive to think that Marcos will allow himself to be caught in Malacanang by a counter-revolution. Of course, he knew the stakes when he decided to impose martial law. He knew he could either rule for life or one day he might just be assassinated or overthrown. He has prepared himself to accept death in the hands of assassins or revolutionaries.

Neither is he stupid not to make provisions for living a life of luxury and ease somewhere, like an exiled King Farouk, if the Philippines can no longer be his domain. After all, he has already amassed so much. His Swiss bank accounts are fabulous but known only to himself — not even to Imelda who has her own.

There are various reasons why Dictator Marcos will never lift martial law. Among them are:

- 1) It is part of a plan to perpetuate himself in power;
- 2) Fear that he would offend the military who wouldn't want to lose their powers now;
- 3) Fear he would offend sectors of the military which he has misled into going along with him on the imposition of martial law in the honest belief that there was a real escalating rebellion. On the other hand, some military officers have sworn an oath of personal loyalty to Marcos before martial law was proclaimed and now they are afraid to go back on it;
- 4) Imelda, Kokoy and Benedicto would advise him against it, realizing as they do that, the moment the coercive process of martial law is removed, they would lose their ill-gotten wealth and their heads to the irate citizens.

If the pressure builds up against the martial regime. Marcos will lift martial law - in name only. He will go through the motions of revoking Proclamation Nos. 1081 and 1104 on some auspicious occasion or date, like his birthday or the natal day of Mrs. Marcos and present such act as a “gift” to the Filipino people.

However, the situation will not change. It will still be the same dog with a different collar. The restrictions imposed upon the proclamation of martial law

will be retained. Dictator Marcos will then spell out the frame of reference for such restrictions under the terms of the provisions of the Internal Security Act by which he created the NISA and set up the apparatus of the country's secret police, and enumerated the "do's" and "don't's" for political parties and the press as well as the labor unions. There will be no uniformed soldiers; only the hooded secret police.

Marcos spelled out to me and De Vega the vague details of this stage of his dictatorship during several talks we used to hold in his Study Room on Saturdays, the day when no callers are scheduled so the President could be with his assistants, which included myself.

Among the plans of the President is to strengthen the apparatus of the Presidential Security Command, including its secret police network, to a point when he no longer would have to rely on the armed forces for the stability of his dictatorship. By that time, he would do away with the military as his main support, with a statement that the armed forces are being restored to its professional status and would no longer be needed to run the government.

It is unfair to state that the continuous bombardment by the hordes of Palace photographers and, during martial law, the controlled media, brought out the latent talent for play-acting on the part of Ferdinand and Imelda. They have had it for so long.

Marcos always speaks in the self-aggrandizing royal "we" instead of the contemporary and slightly deranged public relations "he".

The Dictator has welcomed with open arms the insidious encroachments of personal fantasy on life as it is, and embraced the phantom of living in or projecting a heroic account of himself.

What has taken place in Malacanang, especially since the imposition of martial law, is something quite different from the ordinary image project that is a necessary tool of governing, something more nearly akin to the posture and strut we associate with newly-adolescent boys - a kind of self-consciousness gone mad. They deserve general opprobrium for this.

He has not yet collapsed, but I predict that when he does, then historians will seize on this aspect of his behavior to illustrate the perils of a politician's indulging that instinct for what is immediate and authentic into a pseudo-reality for mass consumption. The politician himself loses touch (he is playing to an imaginary audience not present) and the public discourse that flows from his acts is hopelessly falsified and skewed and deep down everyone knows it.

Since the temptation to this kind of contrivance goes with the job of the presidency, the Marcoses have notoriously showed themselves to be politicians obsessed with image; no consternation may be seen being displayed by the hordes of Palace TV, movie and still cameramen.

Marcos apparently wants to do another De Gaulle, that artful of modern politicians who had a breath-taking sense of the legitimate uses to which mystery, symbolism and "image" could be put. No one can fault him for not trying to create an illusion of mystery and larger-than-life purpose and strength which he wants people to believe he had brought into the national leadership when he proclaimed martial law. He resorts to all contrivances to lead people into a perception of the supposed noble objectives he has for the New Society.

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The posture of the conjugal dictatorship in the Philippines is that the former oligarchs, especially the Lopezes, should never again regain their position of economic and political strength to be able to use this once more against the Marcoses or any other ruling clique that might succeed their joint reign.

In a word, they want no other power brokers outside themselves in any future Philippine regime.

Besides, they want to erase the stigma that Marcos was power-brokered by the Lopezes into the presidency in 1965. When the press in Manila still had its full freedom, and the charges were insinuated that they were acting as ingrates by going after the Lopezes, the joint rulers invariably resorted to this defense: If we really owe them anything, do you think we would be behaving this way? Assuming that the Lopezes did help, what did they expect of Marcos? Perpetual gratitude?

How so different from the posture of the late widely-lamented President Ramon Magsaysay who, on being asked for a favor in return for a pre-election campaign contribution given by gambler Ted Lewin, retorted: "But he gave me that money for the cause of good government; how can I now accede to this request which would lead to bad government? Tell him, 'no I can't do it'."

The strongest pillar of the martial regime in the Philippines is the loyalty of the present general officers of the armed forces to Marcos. Take them all out today and tomorrow Marcos will find himself inside (a stockade) looking out, at best. That is, if the junior officers do not decide to execute him.

But the same pillar of strength on which Marcos relies so much could also be the source of his own weakness. For, how long can he keep the generals in the service, while non-Ilocano officers grumble over their long over-due promotions? Most of the generals are overstaying; they should have been retired a long time ago.

Some of the "overstayers" are General Romeo Espino, AFP chief of staff; Major General Jose Rancudo, air force chief; Major General Zagala, army chief; and Brig. Gen. Guillermo Pecache, home defense force chief.

Soon there would be an inexorable pressure from below, with the junior officers trying military methods punishable by the articles of war to get rid of the aging generals and the man who condones their over-staying.

A number of displaced political leaders preach and hope with public piety pray that Marcos would succeed in his task of reforming the country into a new society. However, privately they irreverently seek his failure or even early demise — so they can take over once more.

One politician in the Philippines who still dares dream of recapturing old glory is Speaker Comelio T. Villareal who has always played the docile man to Marcos. He has repeatedly told the Dictator, "I am your man."

Villareal's game is for Marcos to convene the interim National Assembly and have himself elected Speaker of the Assembly — and Marcos as the interim Prime Minister. As ISpeaker, he had repeatedly assured the President, he should be able to "handle" (with adequate funds, of course) the assemblymen and make them do what Marcos wants to run the government. But what is not being articulated by Villareal is that, with his cunning and capacity to manipulate public funds, he would hope to be able to stir enough

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upheavals in the assembly to topple Marcos as Prime Minister and have himself elected as the new leader of the country in no time at all.

Of course, Marcos had anticipated this. And that is the reason, at least one of them, the Dictator has not prepared himself to convene the interim National Assembly as mandated by the New Constitution.

Marcos' plans is to wait until such time when potential rivals for the position of Prime Minister, like Speaker Vilareal, Senator President Gil J. Puyat, Senators Jovito Salonga, Jose W. Diokno, or even imprisoned Benigno S. Aquino, Jr. shall have definitely cancelled themselves out of contention from the premier's post.

Marcos has no illusions about what might happen to him should there be a counter-revolution. He knows he would probably lose his head or face the firing squad.

Knowing the consequences of his having placed the country under martial law he has taken steps to prevent the defeat of his program; security is the No. 1 priority of such program. Marcos is keeping himself physically fit at all times, which is one reason why one might call him a lazy President. Marcos really does not do much work, but he makes his work schedule such that people would think that he is a very busy man who would even forego his lunch just to be able to attend to his presidential duties. And when callers observe that it is way past lunch time, he would usually remark, "Oh, yes, we have been up and working since 5 a.m. this morning."

Marcos devotes very little time to official work. He usually wakes up at 5 a.m. when he asks if any matter involving national security, especially his personal security, had cropped up during the night while he was asleep. If nothing demands his immediate personal attention, he goes back to bed and is awakened at about 9 a.m., at which time he drinks his fruit juice and lazily stays in bed for more sleep. By about 10 a.m., when he officially schedules his first caller, he buzzes the Agent on duty in the communications room to inquire if the visitors scheduled for the day have started coming in. On being answered in the affirmative, Marcos would then have a 15-minute exercise in his small gymnasium right near his bedroom, then have a shower and the usual heavy breakfast of fried rice. At about 11:15 a.m., Marcos starts receiving his callers who have been scheduled for as early as 10 a.m. It is only when he has to receive the credentials of a foreign envoy that he promptly starts his official work at 10 a.m. Marcos attends to his work and callers up to about 2:30 p.m. He takes his lunch at about that time, after which he takes a nap with instructions that he be awakened at 4 p.m., by which time, his playmates (golf Of pelota) are supposed to be waiting for him at the Malacanang Park. However, he does not really cross over to the park to play either pelota or golf until about 5 p.m. After the round of golf or pelota, the President then indulges in his own Buddhist-like physical workout, and then takes in an invigorating massage. He goes back to the Palace to attend a reception or dinner or, if there is none, he goes into his private study to write or make entries into his memoirs, presumably to falsify more documents to insure his proper niche in history.

Marcos can give up almost anything in any given day, except his recreation and physical exercises. This easily leads one to conclude that Marcos wants to keep physically fit for a long, long reign ala-Franco of Spain.

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Despite the luxury and easy living Marcos enjoys, I doubt whether the Philippine dictator ever sleeps soundly at all. He would lie alone in Suite No. 1, guarded in the Palace by a division of elite security men, and in the Palace building, countless security agents take turns. Sometimes, to keep themselves from being bored, they open the President's Study Room television set, and listen to the muffled sound of the picture being shown.

Marcos is now about 58, entering the period of self-appraisal when the past presents itself for assessment. He must be seeing the faces of people he has oppressed, people whose properties he had or allowed to be confiscated, like the properties of the Lopezes and the Jacintos. He must be remembering the way he has hacked his way towards absolute power, with the heads of those who dared oppose him on the wayside. He must be trying to equate all these with supposed achievements of the New Society, the new image of the country, compared to the aUeged bad image of the political and economic oligarchs of premarital law days.

When martial law was declared in the Philippines, the media in America either was favorable to Mr. Marcos or at worst gave him the benefit of the doubt.

Now, there is hardly a newspaper, television or radio station that speaks well of the Marcos dictatorship. In fact, the media in the free world has become generally hostile to the one-man rule of Mr. Marcos in the Philippines.

What has brought about this turnabout on Mr. Marcos?

The biggest blame must, of course, be on Dictator and Diktadora Marcoses themselves. Theirs were, firstly, not the cause of justice, truth and virtue.

But nobody could have been made aware of the ugly truth about this conjugal dictatorship had there not been a systematic and unceasing effort to bring these facts to the world outside the Philippines.

To be sure, the anti-martial law forces have on their side former Senator Manglapus, perhaps the most articulate and eloquent Filipino of his time in several foreign and Philippine languages.

The Marcos dictatorship will never admit it but what hurts it most in the eyes of the world and particularly with the American Congress and media was the information and propaganda campaign mounted against the regime by the Movement for a Free Philippines, the Union for a Democratic Philippines, the National Coordinating Committee or the Anti-Martial Law Coalition, the Friends of the Filipino People, and allied groups.

Particularly effective in turning the US Congress and media against Mr. Marcos was the aspect of the concerted campaign which concentrated on mailing to American legislators and American media persons hitherto unknown facts about Dictator and Mrs. Marcos - widespread corruption, extravagance, social climbing and gate-crashing antics of Imelda Marcos, phoney and exaggerated war records of Marcos, the greed for material gain of the Marcos couple and their relatives and cronies, and the many hoaxes pulled by the Marcos dictatorship on a gullible and unknowing world.

So damaging was this information campaign against the Marcos regime that a "counter-demolition" team headed by Ifugao Provincial Governor Gualberto Lumauig was dispatched to Detroit, Michigan, where Garcia, MFP propaganda chief and architect, was printing and mailing thousands of "revealing and inflammatory" literature against the Marcos dictatorship. Garcia's operations and activities were being funded and supported by a

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number of Filipino physicians in Michigan.

A confrontation between Marcos forces and Filipino consular officials on the one hand and the MFP people on the other hand in Michigan erupted in a heated verbal exchange in an airport hotel and climaxed with a death threat levelled against Garcia by a member of the Marcos group.

The Marcos regime has no reason to wish Garcia a long life. His proposal for a Radio Free Philippines has been given top priority by the MFP. With world figures like William Winter, who was the original broadcaster of Voice of Freedom which beamed news to the Philippines during the dark days of World War II, volunteering his services, and Paul Ringler, chairman of the board of the International Press Institute, placing his considerable influence and prestige in support of the radio project, RFP may yet become the most effective instrument in rousing the people at home against the totalitarian regime.

Later, as the other anti-martial law organizations became more organized, the Friends of the Filipino People based in Boston and the Katipunan ng Demokratikong Pilipino (KDP) based in San Francisco, mounted parallel propaganda operations and contributed immeasurably to turning the tide of the media and congressional campaign against the Marcos dictatorship.

How effective and successful these propaganda operations can be gauged from the reaction of the Marcos regime. To counter the propaganda onslaught against it, the Marcos dictatorship launched multi-million dollar projects - the "balikbayan" program, expensive publications and newspaper supplements, cultural and dance troupes, beauty pageants, the world championship bout between Muhammad Ali and Joe Frazier and all sorts of international contests, including a weightlifting tournament.

The irony and contradiction unrealized by the geniuses of the Marcos regime is the spectacle of an impoverished nation, publicly panhandling for American aid, bankrupting its treasury holding sideshows and circuses to impress the outside world that things have become better in the Philippines and at the same time holding the country in the iron grip of martial law — a situation only imposed in times of war or widespread rebellion.

In the meantime, the mail campaign against the Marcos tyranny continues, with the bulk of the materials now coming from clippings of articles in American publications and the targets of the mail now including more and more people in the Philippines, particularly elements of the Philippine military at all levels.

By no means should the anti-martial law elements in America be smug. There will be elements in their own ranks, whether Marcos infiltrators or well-meaning but counter-productive friends who will try to get their organizations go where Marcos wants them. For example, it would make Mr. Marcos very happy to see his foes attacking him on the so-called "basic issues" of whether martial law is illegal or not, whether he is the legal or illegal head of state, whether his decrees and referendums have bases in law, and all those matters which lend themselves to endless legalistic debates and academic discussions which do not hurt Marcos but which he, in fact, welcomes, because these make him appear as a ruler who welcomes dissent so long as they are "constructive criticism."

If Watergate is to have any lessons for those engaged in propaganda efforts, it is the fact that those "little" things which damage a corrupt politician's credibility beyond repair are the most effective devices because these are what

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capture the public's emotions and imagination.

The outraged reaction of exiles has now subtly spread, challenging Filipinos everywhere to undertake any form of activity that would show defiance of martial law, e.g. protest marches, teach-ins, funeral marches, nonpayment of taxes and other forms of civil disobedience.

Even the American Congress is astir, practically calling Philippine diplomatic officials and President Marcos himself as liars on the question of suppression of human rights and press freedom in the Philippines.

In a campaign to bring the truth about the Philippines to public attention, a non-Filipino and his Filipino wife might as well be credited with a lot of guts and savvy for the yeoman effort. He is Steve Psinakis and his wife is Presentacion Lopez Psinakis, the only daughter of the late Don Eugcnio Lopez, Sr. It is said that, ironically, Presentacion, the only daughter out of five children, is also the only Lopez child who inherited the strong will of her father and the determination to fight for her beliefs against all odds and at any cost.

Steve Psinakis is an ordinary engineer and business executive who, after living ten years in the Philippines (1959-1969), moved to his native country in Athens, Greece with his wife and children early in 1969. The Psinakises lived in Athens until late 1974 but, between 1972 and 1974. they used to visit periodically the ailing Lopez Sr. residing in San Francisco.

It was during one of these visits to San Francisco in November 1974 when on November 10. Steve received an urgent call from Geny's eldest son. Gabby, asking Steve to fly to Manila immediately on "a matter of life and death". Upon his arrival in Manila on November 12, Chita Lopez, the wife of Geny, told Steve about Geny's decision to go on a hunger strike beginning November 18. Psikanis quickly grasped the import of Geny's planned hunger strike.

Steve's first question was whether the hunger was intended to get Geny's release or whether he wanted to risk his life for the benefit of all political prisoners who, like himself, were unjustly imprisoned by Marcos without charges and without trial. Geny's reply, through Chita, was the latter. Geny had precisely asked for Steve, a close friend long before the marriage to his sister, because he wanted Steve to carry on the fight abroad for the benefit of all political prisoners and not for his personal benefit.

So, on November 14, Steve and Chita and Gabby visited Geny at Fort Bonifacio. Geny reassured Steve that he was going on a hunger strike on November 18, to secure the release of all political prisoners and reiterated his request that Steve assist Chita in calling a press conference on November 18 to announce his hunger strike Geny then signed a statement announcing his" hunger strike - for release on November 18. However, on the way out from Fort Bonifacio, the Lopez hunger strike statement was discovered by an alert guard inside the purse of Chita Lopez; the guard then had the statement xeroxed before giving it back to Chita. Right after being cleared out of the Fort Bonifacio gates, about 11:30 a.m., Psinakis quickly decided that Chita should announce that very' day the contemplated hunger strike of Geny on November 18, lest Marcos succeed in preempting Geny on the impact of his hunger strike by a series of possible moves he could take, like announcing that Geny has been charged in court of this or that crime.

Psinakis himself felt that his presence in Manila had become untenable. Marcos certainly would go after him for coordinating with Geny on the hunger

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strike statement. Immediately after leaving Fort Bonifacio, he booked himself on a Philippine Air Lines flight out of Manila in the same afternoon and in anticipation of a hasty arrest order, he checked in at the PAL counter as early as 1 p.m. Psinakis also booked his son, Rogy, on another flight out of Manila (a Pan American Airways flight) in order that Marcos would not be able to arrest and hold their son also as a hostage. For by then, Psinakis had firmly made up his mind that he would conduct a sustained information campaign in the United States, specially among the mass media and members of the United States Congress, on the repression and oppression taking place in the Philippines.

Psinakis has never wavered in his determination to expose the truth about the Marcos dictatorship. He has repeatedly explained that he was conducting his crusade in the interest of a cause which a friend (Geny) has taken upon himself and which he (Geny) had asked Psinakis to champion in the United States. Psinakis explained it this way:

"I know that Geny is a man dedicated to his country; he has the determination and strength to fight for his principles and I am sure he will not hesitate to end his life through the hunger strike if his call for justice is not answered.

"I feel that his cause is noble and selfless since he is undertaking this sacrifice to call the attention of the freedom-loving peoples of the world on the plight of thousands of prisoners like him whose fate is unknown.

"I reside with my family in Greece where very recently a similar dictatorial regime was replaced by a democratic government. This was accomplished through sacrifices of courageous men like Geny. It is a fact that, just like the Greek dictatorship, there is no freedom of the press within the Philippines. The only way to bring out the truth about oppression in the Philippines is through the press of the free world.

"I share my wife's deep concern for the Philippines and her fears for the life of her brother. I stand by her in her own struggle to support her brother's fight."

Since he started his fight for "truth, justice and freedom" in the Philippines, Psinakis received several death threats from Marcos agents or supporters, the first one during the last week of November 1974, when the Lopez-Osmena hunger strike was still in progress and the Psinakis couple was in New York gathering support from Congress and publicity through the press.

However the Psinakises ignored the threats and did not report them either to the US Government or to the press realizing that, since the threats were not documented and could not be proven, Psinakis could be blamed for "heroics" or "publicity stunts."

The Psinakis "snub" to the Marcos threats paid off. On February 3, 1976 Marcos decided to threaten the Psinakises once more in a manner which would leave no doubt that the threat was factual and directly from Marcos. The threat message was conveyed through the incarcerated Geny Lopez by overseas telephone directly to Psinakis, thus leaving no doubt as to the origin of the "message." Geny is Marcos' prisoner and could not possibly have called Psinakis in San Francisco without Marcos' instructions.

Psinakis, having this time the evidence to support his claim, reported the threat to the US Government and to the press placing Marcos again on the

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defensive and forcing him to attempt and cover-up his crime with ridiculous and incredible denials.

There are two distinct characteristics about the modus operandi of the Psinakis couple which account for most of the success of their campaign.

1. They operate alone and in absolute secrecy. No one, but no one knows the plans of the Psinakis couple until they make their plans known themselves and, by that time, they want their plans known by everyone.

This characteristic has frustrated and damaged Marcos more than anything else because he has no way of infiltrating the "Psinakis organization" since there is no organization to be infiltrated and no way to frustrate their plans since there is no way to learn their plans in advance.

The Psinakises "secret approach" places Marcos always on the defensive; Marcos then tries to "explain" the exposes of the Psinakises rather than attack the Psinakis plans in advance.

2. The exposes and information revealed by the Psinakises have been truthful, accurate and usually well-documented. Both Steve and Presy, particularly Presy, possess a great deal of "personal" information about the Marcoses, and their frontclan. but they have never exposed cheap gossip, or rumors or hearsay without substantial documentation.

Although, for example, the Psinakises have spoken frequently of the corruption of the Marcos family and cronies, specifically about Marcos, Imelda, Kokoy and Benedicto, they have always backed their accusations with documents. In fact they had hoped that the Marcoses would challenge the PsinaJcis accusations in international courts, however, in spite of the fact that Marcos has threatened to sue several times, he always shamelessly withdrew from his threats, knowing that he (Marcos) would be disgraced in a US court.

This second characteristic has established a respected credibility for the Psinakis couple among US Government officials and among the international press.

The Psinakises have repeatedly stated that their only weapon against Marcos is TRUTH. Consequently: "If we deviate from the truth, we would lose the only weapon against the Marcoses who have all the power, resources and every other weapon at their disposal except the power of TRUTH".

Contrary to the many official statements by several Congressional leaders challenging the veracity of information submitted by Marcos and his high-ranking officials, there has not been a single case wherein the veracity of reports submitted by the Psinakises have been challenged by anyone except, of course, by Marcos and his agents. It is noteworthy to mention that in a letter of Congressman Michael J. Harrington, to the U.S. Attorney General Edward Levy, Congressman Harrington stated:

"I have corresponded with Mr. Psinakis before, and although he is emotionally and personally involved in this case, his previous communications have been careful, deliberate and responsible. I believe the contents of his letter deserves the most careful attention."

J.G. Quijano, the courtly lawyer of the now suppressed *Philippines Free Press*, was to play a prominent role in bringing to the attention of the world press the plight of Lopez Jr. and other Filipino political prisoners. Quijano was

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in Poughkeepsie, New York, in November 1974. He was undecided on attending the World Press Symposium in Racine, Wisconsin scheduled that month because he felt the International Press Institute, of which he was a member, was already represented by its director, Ernest Meyer and Paul Ringler, chairman of the board.

But when his law partner in Manila, Joker Arroyo, and Alex Esclamado, publisher of the *Philippine News*, called Quifano to inform him that Lopez Jr. was on the verge of death, he flew to Racine on November 24 for the press meet. Ringler and Meyer scheduled Quijano to address the body the following day. After Quijano's remarks where he said the Lopez case exemplified Marcos' "absolute and ruthless control of the press," the symposium sent a cable of protests to Marcos, demanding that Lopez "be set free or brought immediately to trial in open court, if there is a legitimate charge against him." As *World Press Freedom*, the official report of the symposium stated: "Within a week, the Philippine government announced that Lopez soon would be brought to trial."

Aside from helping bring about the release of hundreds of political prisoners by his action on the Lopez case. Quijano also succeeded in working for the expulsion of the Marcos controlled press from the International Press Institute during its executive board meeting in January, 1971, in Zurich, a move later unanimously approved at the convention of the IP 1 June, 1975. Because of the refusal of the Japanese consul in San Francisco to grant him a visa. Quijano was not able to attend the IPI convention in Kyoto held May 11, 1974. Marcos retaliated against Quijano by cancelling his passport on orders of Manuel Collantes, acting secretary of foreign affairs.

Like Psinakis, there is another strong-willed man who has carried on an unrelenting day and night campaign to expose the truth of the Marcos dictatorship in the Philippines. The man, Alejandro A. Esclamado, has not bothered to pay attention to the various forms of harassment that Marcos and his minion have tried in order to silence him and kill his newspaper, the *Philippine News*. Alex finds solace in the fact that his name and that of his wife, Lourdes Mitra-Esclamado, are synonymous to anti-dictatorship in the Philippines. Alex has a band of stout-hearted Filipino journalists who have ignored risks to themselves in carrying on the struggle to restore freedom in the Philippines. Among them are Nick G. Benozza, Leandro Quintana and Virgilio Makalalad.

As stout-hearted as Alex's band in San Francisco, and perhaps more dedicated than any other anti-martial law element in the United States is an old colleague from my Manila newspapering days, writer Hermie Rotea. Rotea has wielded both pen and his tiny purse, coordinating with Danny Lamila, a former technical assistant to Senator Aquino, in calling the attention of America, from their Los Angeles stations, on the dictatorship that has destroyed democracy in the Philippines.

Rotea and Colonel Manzano were among the first persons to come out openly in America against martial law. Rotea's hard-hitting column in the *Philippine News* was a voice in the wilderness for so few dared write or speak against Marcos in the early days of the dictatorship. Rotea, with the help of Lamila, whom the family of Ninoy Aquino was to say "the only friend we have left with us in America," gathered in Los Angeles, the biggest audience of Filipinos to ever assemble in America to listen to speeches against the Marcos

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dictatorship. Where nobody would lead demonstrations and pickets against the Marcos regime in Los Angeles, Rotea and Lamila stepped forward and organized these activities.

Rotea also took charge of the publicity of the defection of Consul General Ruperto Baliao, producing headlines and television mileage all over the world for Baliao and for the cause of Philippine freedom.

While firebrands like Rotea were fighting Marcos their way, the Movement for a free Philippines was gaining members from a group that now provides the MFP the kind of mature and wise leadership that comes from age and experience. Joining the group of Colonel Manzano and Quiano were Primo Mendoza and Judge Eliodoro Marasigan. Mendoza is the regional coordinator of the MFP in the American Midwest with headquarters in Chicago. He was an ex-paratrooper commando with the US Army who smuggled supplies to Philippine guerrillas in Mindanao in World War II.

Marasigan was a classmate of Marcos in Law School. He was appointed by Marcos to the judiciary and was visiting the United States when martial law was imposed. The judge's dissimulation with Marcos was gradual. Now certain that Marcos has no intention of restoring constitutional government to the Philippines, Marasigan is one of the most effective critics of the Filipino dictator through his Tagalog column in the Philippine News.

The ideas of the democratic revolution, under whose banner Marcos wants the world to believe he had imposed martial law to reform Philippine society, were not originally Marcos' own concoction. They were deductions developed by Socialists Bias F. Ople and Adrian Cristobal which Marcos then refined, and which political thinker De Vega further developed and refined for Marcos, with the assistance of Gilberto Duavit.

Marcos felt that Philippine society, given the conditioning of centuries of rebellion against Spain and briefly against the United States and later against Japan, could no longer be changed by prescribed democratic methods but by a show of force and punishment.

So the radical treatment provided by martial law to cure what he perceived as a cancer that had its roots in the social and economic malaise which have so gripped the Filioinos for centuries.

Marcos also wanted to change the people's internal view of themselves and their country.

But was there need for repressive measures?

Now, it is turning out that the country will have to pay more in the steady erosion of the Filipino values and the magnification of the repressive forces that in the end succumb to the very diseases they seek to combat as they themselves are corrupted.

The action taken by Marcos can only find justification, albeit negative, in the oft-repeated remarks made by the late President Manuel L. Quezon during the campaign for independence from the United States: "Better a government run like hell by Filipinos than a government run like heaven by Americans!" . This was Quezon's answer to the condescending charge that the Filipinos were not yet ready for self-government; that, left alone by the Americans, they would make a mess of their own country.

Since Marcos imposed martial law, he had adopted most of the classic tools of dictatorship to guarantee political control. Labor strikes have been banned,

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political parties “recessed,” the press closed down and only the controlled ones authorized to re appear, and Congress disbanded.

He also set up a varied network of secret police. He forced the retirement of armed forces ranking officers whose loyalty to him was in doubt and set up the nucleus of the secret police, the National Intelligence and Security Agency, and the Presidential Security Command to insure himself against any coup d'etat by a misguided military commander. Both the NISA and the PSC are headed by Major Gen. Fabian C. Ver.

Manila today has an outward semblance of tranquility, with few of the surface signs of a police state, what with several hundreds of the Marcos opponents, including the young activists, still in jail.

The continued imprisonment without charges, nay trial, of Marcos' opponents, notably Senator Aquino, Jr., Lopez, Jr. and Osmena III, has drawn so much attention and criticism from abroad, not to mention the anguish and torment of the families and relatives of these prisoners at home.

To counter the foreign critics, Marcos recently freed several thousands of the political prisoners under “houde arrest.” He would not let any one of them leave the country because they can make disturbing noises abroad, especially in the United States.

Marcos is relying on too much cosmetics to improve his image instead of getting to the root of his world-wide isolation, which is his oppressive martial regime.

To indicate the kind of people who are collaborating with Marcos, a top American newsmagazine said that the best Filipinos were in jail while the scoundrels and thieves were running the government. Indeed, no Filipino president has corrupted his nation and people as Marcos has. If Marcos corrupts everything he touches, the same can be said of his effect on people beyond the shores of his country. He has fooled unsuspecting people of the world media, for example, to swallow as fact his hoaxes calculated to make him look like an authentic war hero and a reform-minded leader.

By throwing away hundreds of millions of dollars on public relations and cosmetic projects that his impoverished nation can ill afford, Marcos has so glamourized despotism and repression that nations around the Philippines have seen fit to follow his example. Indira* Gandhi must have been so impressed with his success in placing the Philippines under his heel that she is trying the same tactics on what used to be the world's largest democracy.

South Korean Dictate/ Park was probably emboldened the way Marcos has been getting away with banditry and murder that the world is now witness to the worst and most callous wave of repression to hit South Korea. Under Marcos' influence and inspiration, the strongmen of East Asia, particularly Singapore's Lee and Indonesia's Suharto, are organizing themselves under Marcos' leadership into some kind of a Dictators' Club that authoritarianism is becoming the world's latest status symbol.

Behind its smokescreen of Miss Universe beauty contests, boxing and weightlifting bouts, chess tournaments and the kind of circuses that the Marcos regime has become an expert on, the Filipino dictatorship may have looked good on newspapers. But documented mass murders, torture and inhuman violation of human rights establish beyond doubt that the Marcos tyranny as the most repressive in Asia. It is only under Marcos that the Philippines has seen a

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bishop murdered in his own cathedral in Manila, a Marcos cabinetman shot dead in the presidential palace at Malacanang, tabernacles of churches desecrated, seminaries raided and ransacked, priests, nuns and ministers abused, tortured and jailed, judges and congressmen shot dead in churches while receiving communion and as the latest "Associated Press" dispatch (by Arnold Zeitlin) reported, a harmless 61-year-old shoemaker beaten to death in an army camp.

The Marcos regime is certainly the only dictatorship in the world without a parliament or legislative body, even a rubber stamp one. India and South Korea have at least allowed their Congresses to exist. Even the most totalitarian of countries, an Alexander Solzhenitzen could give anti-government interviews to the Western press in his Moscow apartment and Soviet dissidents can picket the Kremlin. No such thing is allowed by Marcos in what he calls his "smiling martial law" in the Philippines.

Marcos rules alone. Undisputably, he is the world's most total, most absolute despot, if not also the world's richest considering that *Cosmopolitan* magazine in its December 1975 issue has revealed that Imelda Marcos "is the world's richest woman bar none." The rise of Imelda to becoming one of the ten wealthiest women in the world today without any visible and legal income in less than four years of ruling a poor and under-developed country prompted the Manglapus speech on Marcos being the biggest thief in the world today.

I have so often expressed a wish during the last 365 days of my exile in the United States to be able to go back home to my beloved Philippines. However, I would not want to make the homeward trip for the purpose of attending the funeral of Ferdinand E. Marcos or to be decorated by another successful despot. My wish is that Marcos would subordinate his personal ambitions to the greater interest of restoring democracy to my ravished country.

In pursuance of this objective, I accepted the invitation of the Movement for a Free Philippines to keynote its third annual convention in Los Angeles on November 22, 1975. I also served as leader of its panel discussions. One resolution that came out of these MFP study sessions was what we termed as our alternative to Marcos.

This could be wishful thinking because no dictator in history has willingly given up power or restored government to the people. And the world knows Ferdinand Marcos is neither an honorable nor a noble dictator. He does not have the spartan austerity of a Ho Chi Minn, a Mao Tse Tung or a Fidel Castro. Marcos does not have the asceticism and incorruptibility of a Francisco Franco. True, Marcos has the ruthlessness of Hitler, Mussolini and Stalin. But these tyrants at least wanted greatness for their nations and peoples. They never were accused of having enriched themselves and their families. Marcos has neither love for his country or people whom he has disparaged as indolent morons and addicts to vices.

I have every faith that in God's good time, the descendants of the race that launched the first successful national revolution in Asia in 1896 and gave the world the first republic established by an Asian people will restore to themselves and their posterity their lost honor, dignity and freedom.

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At this stage, we all perhaps could draw inspiration from a section of the *Mi Ultimo Adios* (My Last Farewell) written by the National hero. Dr. Jose Protacio Rizal, before his execution at Bagumbayan:

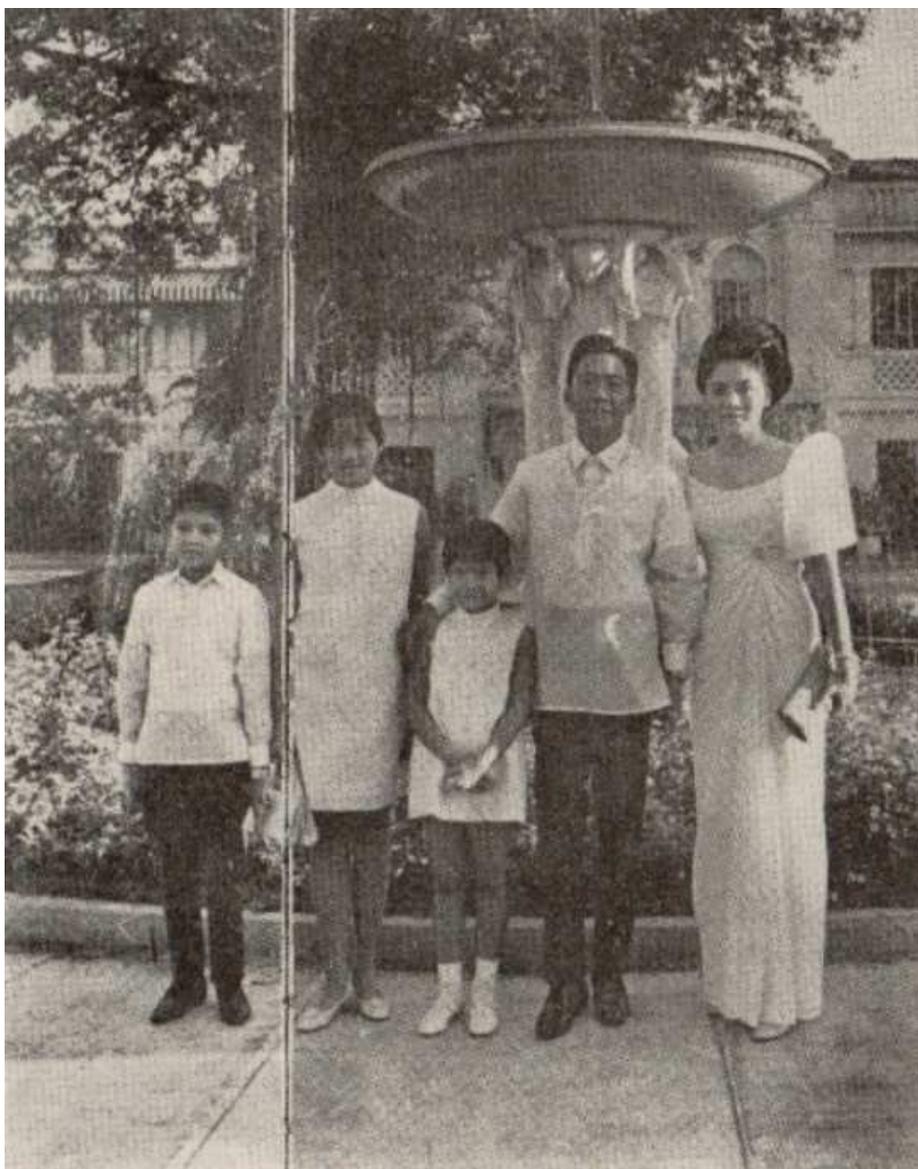
*My dream when but an adolescent boy.
My dream when young, by then with vigor filled
Has been to see a day, O gem of the Orient Sea
When your eyes would be without tears, your head held high
Without line or wrinkle, or blush of shame....*

end

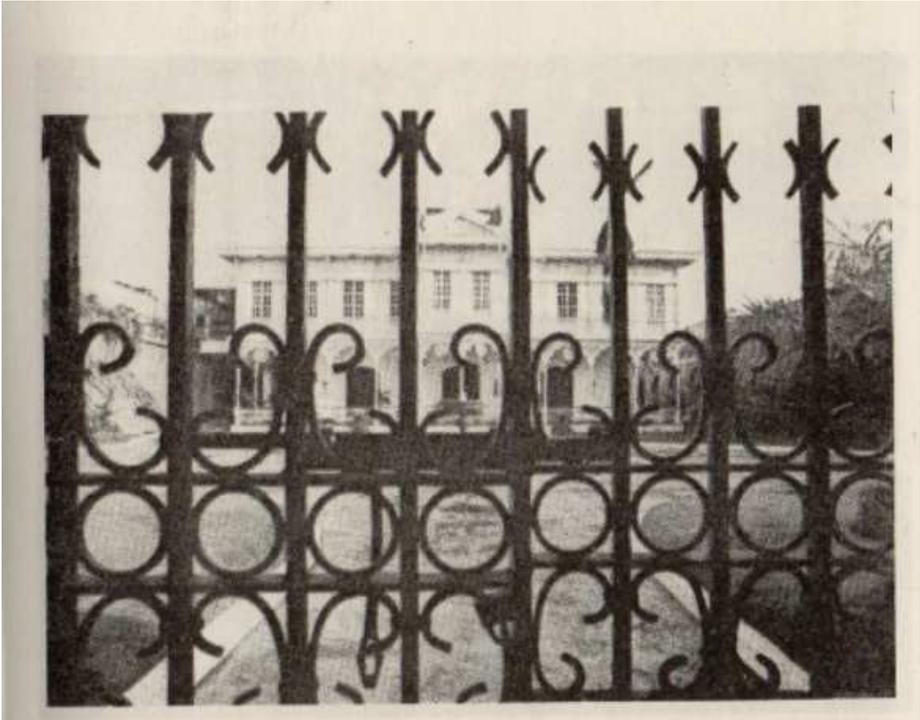
Photo Section



FERDINAND E. MARCOS takes the oath as sixth President of the Republic of the Philippines on December 30, 1965 at the Luneta Independence grandstand. He was to open an era that marked the imperceptible erosion of democracy in the Philippines, culminating in his declaration of martial law on Sept. 21, 1972, as a means of setting up Asia's worst totalitarian dictatorship in this century.



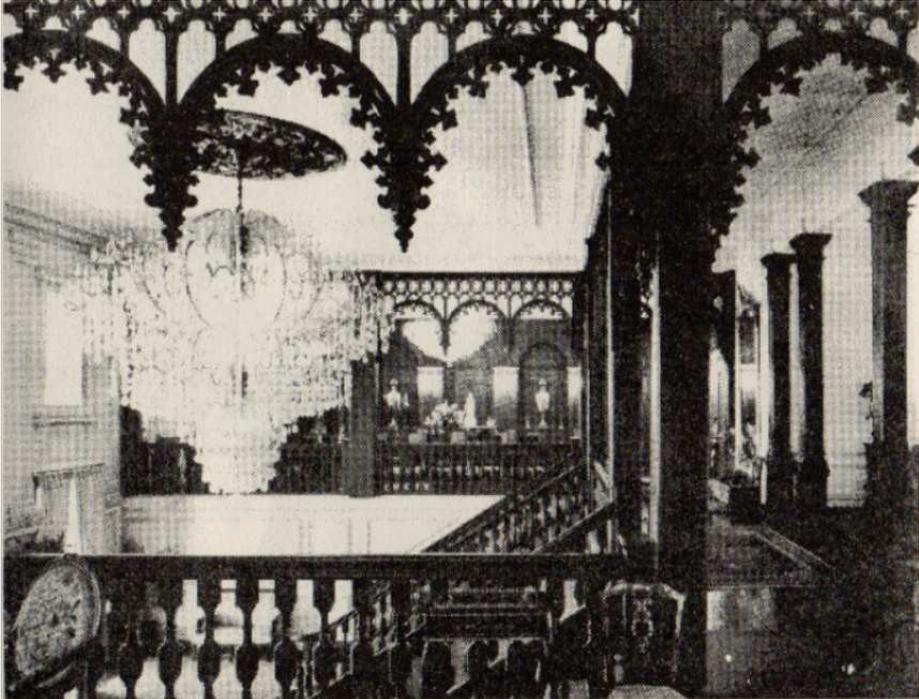
Shortly after his inauguration as sixth President of the Republic, Marcos poses for a photograph with members of his legitimate family before an art-nouveau fountain in Malacanang Palace. To his left is his No. 1 wife, Imelda, who has since their first days in Malacanang told friends that “we will not leave this place anymore.” To Marcos’ right (from left) are son Ferdinand Bong Bong” Marcos, Jr., and daughters Imee and Irene.



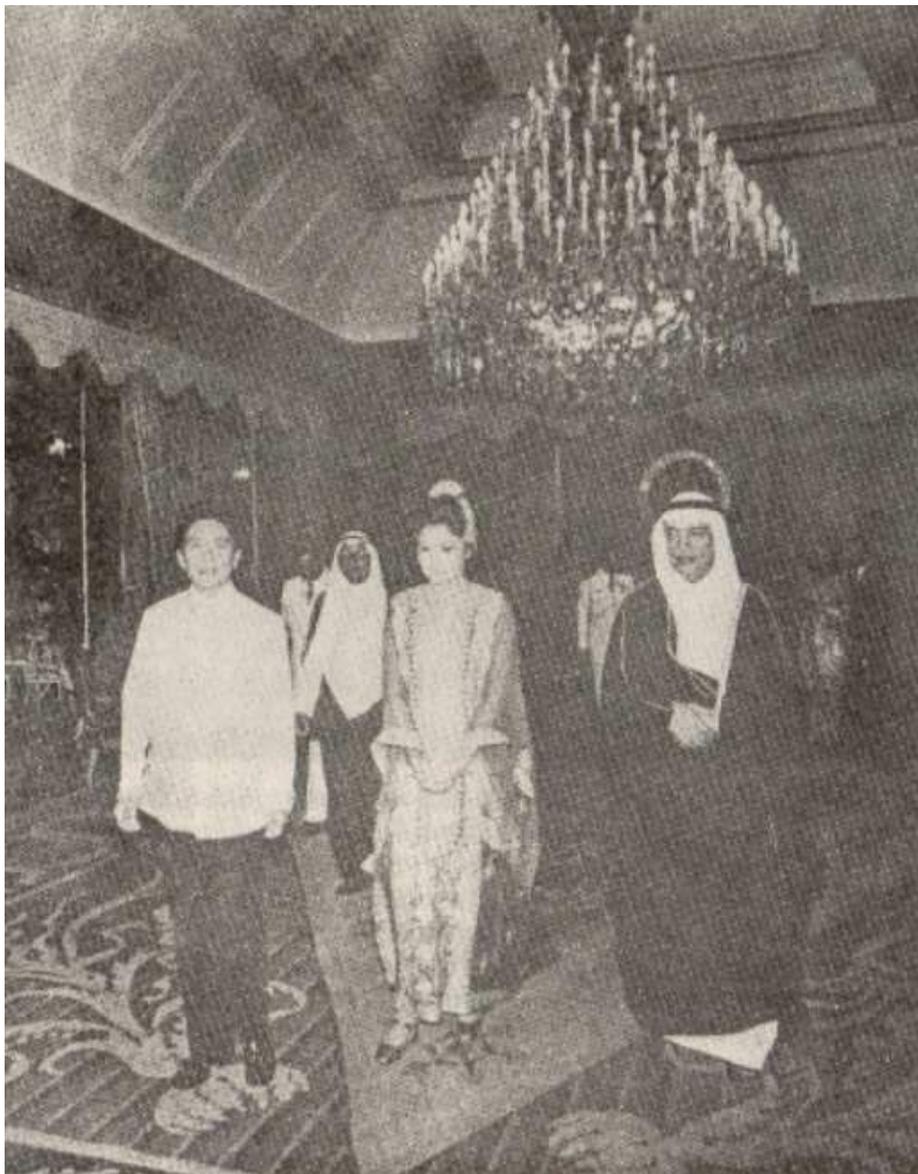
Having tasted elegant and luxurious living in a Palace, Ferdinand and Imelda decided early in their occupancy of Malacanang that, if they should ever leave the official government Palace, they must move only to a palatial home that is as elegant and luxurious as Malacanang. In late 1966, the Marcoses acquired for "over P1,000,000.00" a villa located in a 2,300-square meter lot right next door to Malacanang Palace in San Miguel. It was one of two 17th century "casa de ocampo" which have survived the ravages of time and war. The other one was Malacanang itself. Imelda commissioned Architect Leandro V. Locsin to improve the building and restore it to its originality from the outside. The villa was then renamed "Ang Maharlika" and designated as the site of the Marcos Foundation.



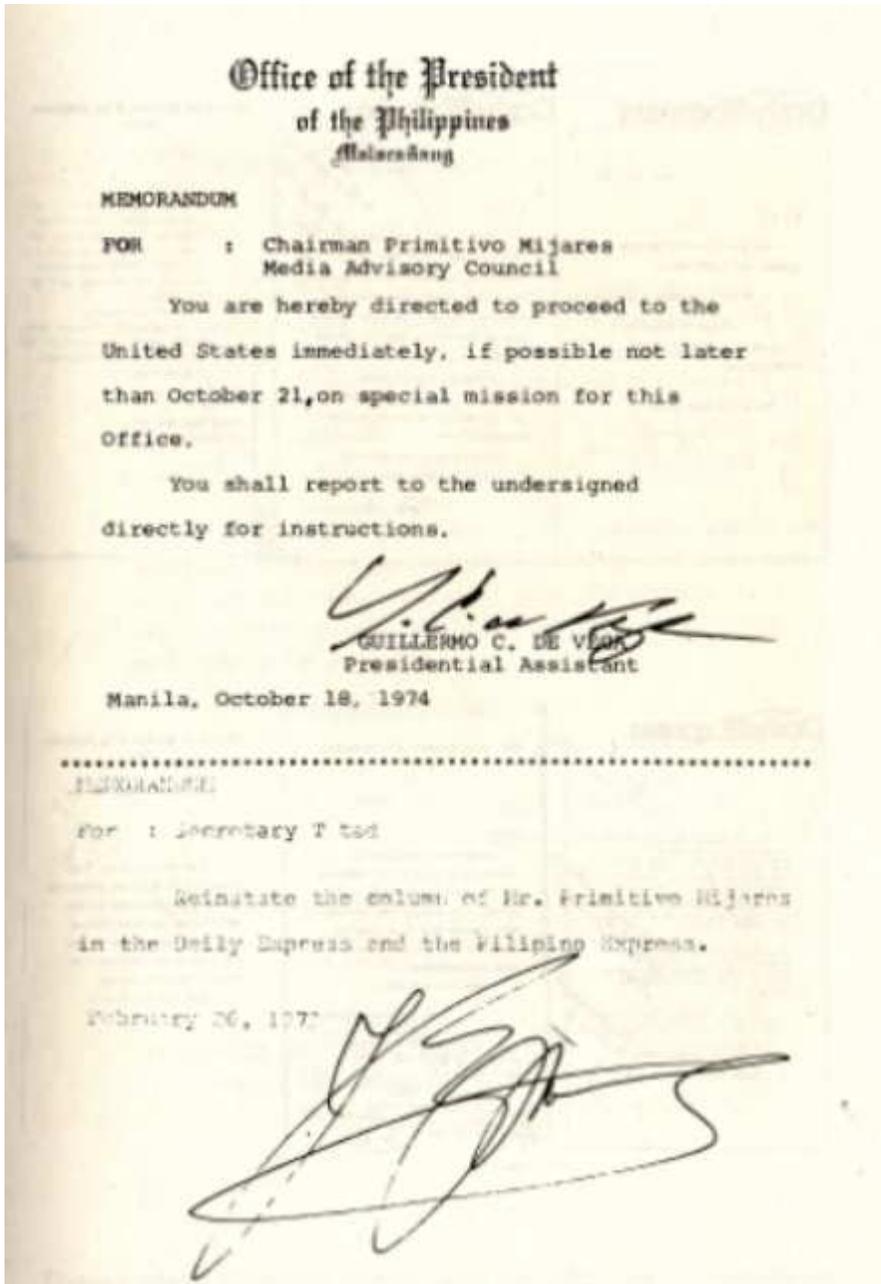
A grand staircase that Imelda had patterned after that of nearby Malacanang Palace is one of the luxurious features of the multi-million Marcos Palace. Its groundfloor has a large reception hall divided into two wings with doors that open up to the surrounding veranda. A central hall leads to the grand staircase. A museum which doubles as the offices of the Marcos Foundation houses the collection of Imelda of finest porcelain and pottery, mostly trade wares excavated in the Philippines, possibly including a "Golden Buddha" statuette. Marcos' study room is decorated with Empire furniture and has a precious collection of Rizaliana, coins and maps. A guest room features French period furniture.



Originally, wooden bannisters popular during the Spanish times decorated the staircase. Imelda had steel supports imported from Belgium and had the arcaded ceilings re-furbished with Gothic features. There is no Philippine touch in this Marcos Palace. The master's bedroom is decorated with French period furniture; Bong Bong's room with Boulle furniture; Imee's room, also with French period furniture highlighted by a Gobelin tapestry and an Aubusson rug; Irene's room with Vernis Martin 18th century French furniture; and the Art Nouveau guest room, named for the style of furniture which decorates it. The dining room has Empire furniture, principally a dining table for sixteen. A smaller receiving room is decorated with French period furniture. The grand reception hall has two sections decorated with Louis XV and Louis XVI furniture.



Imelda's taste for royalty is fabulous. Here she and Ferdinand escort Foreign Minister Omar Sakkaf of Saudi Arabia, who died a few months after his Manila visit, to a reception in Malacanang. Note Imelda's diamond tiara.



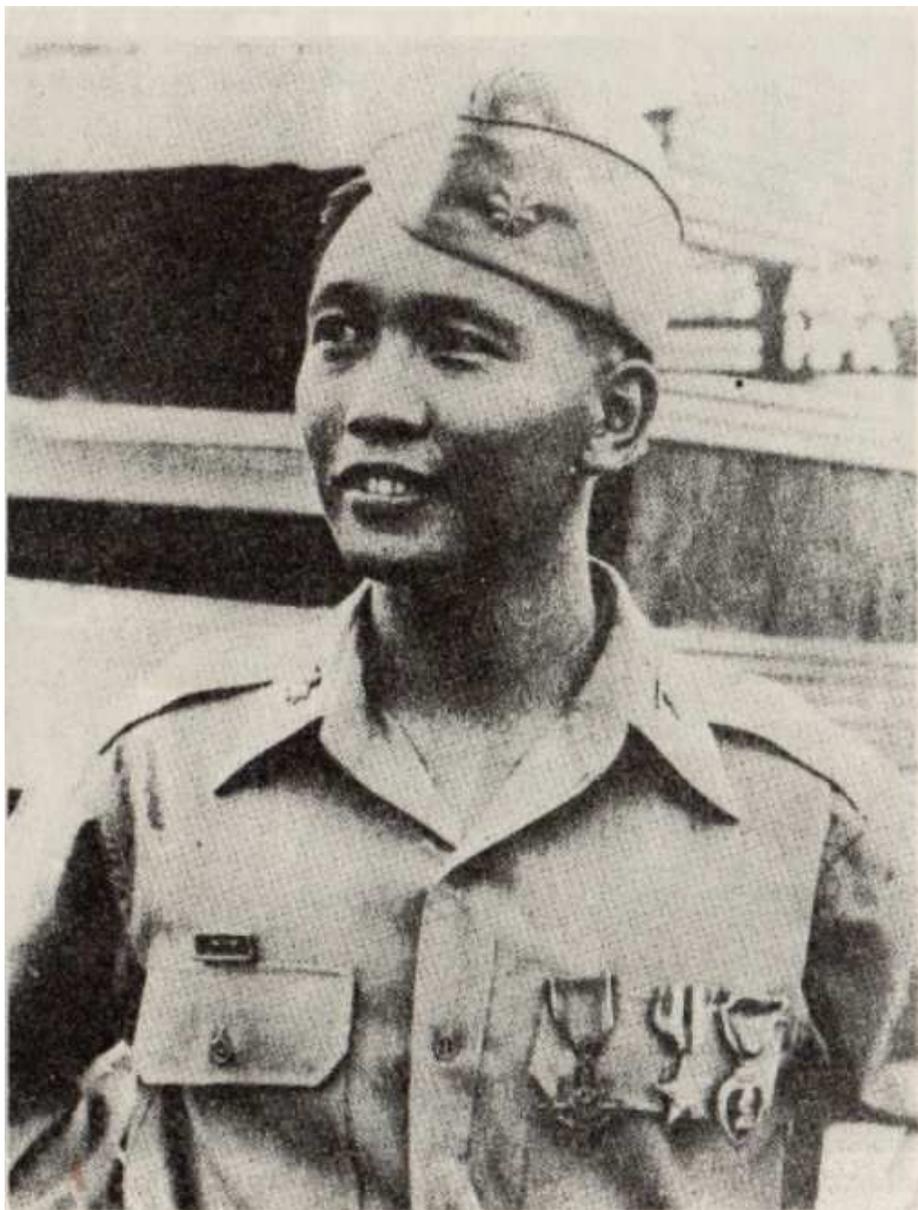
Samples of documents establishing the credentials of Mijares as the top confidential propaganda and censor of Dictator Marcos.



Some of the 27 medals that Marcos suddenly started displaying in 1962, 17 years after the end of World War II, to bolster his claim that he was the most decorated soldier to emerge out of that war. Official statements preserved in the journals of the disbanded Philippine Congress show, however, that the medals were awarded to Marcos by the newly-installed Liberal Party administration in 1962 on the basis of affidavits produced by



Marcos in 1962 of already dead persons "attesting" to his various "exploits" during the war. Secretary of Defense Macario Peralta, Jr., deceased, had declared that he approved of Marcos' requests for those medals "because, he said, he would need them for his reelection campaign for the Senate in 1965 . . . and in exchange for his personal pledge to me that he would not run against President Macapagal in 1965."



Ferdinand E. Marcos emerged as an army major from World War II, displaying what apparently were his only legitimately earned war medals. All others have been branded as “the product of forgeries and/or bloating of minor battle actions into epic and great sagas.”



Two of the uncowed anti-martial law organs of Filipinos in the United States, the *Philippine News* in the West Coast, and the *Philippine Times* in the Midwest, fearlessly raise the banner of overseas opposition to the dictatorship in the Philippines. Subjected, to relentless economic and political pressure by the Philippine dictatorship, the two fighting newspapers articulate the hopes and aspirations of Filipinos to be freed from a home-grown tyrant.

Ex-Aide Reveals Marcos' Corruption

By Jack Anderson and Les Whitten

For the first time in the history of the Philippines, the ex-aide of Ferdinand Marcos has revealed the extent of the dictator's corruption. In a series of columns in this newspaper, Jack Anderson and Les Whitten have exposed the inner workings of the Marcos regime, from the family's private life to the public affairs of the government.

The ex-aide, who has been identified as a high-ranking official in the Marcos administration, has provided a detailed account of the dictator's personal life, including his extramarital affairs and the family's financial dealings.

Anderson and Whitten also reveal the extent of the Marcos family's wealth, which is estimated to be in the billions of dollars. They describe how the family has used its money to buy up land, build a palace, and acquire a fleet of private jets.

The ex-aide also describes the corruption within the government, including the appointment of family members to key positions and the manipulation of the judicial system.

Anderson and Whitten conclude that the Marcos regime is a corrupt and authoritarian one, and that the Philippines is in need of a complete overhaul.

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Merry-Go-Round

Marcos Aide Tells of Bribe Attempt



Jack Anderson

PRIMITIVE FERDINAND MARCOS

The Philippine dictator, who is widely regarded as a primitive and corrupt ruler, is reported to have received a bribe attempt from a high-ranking official in the Marcos administration.

The bribe was reportedly offered to the official in exchange for the official's cooperation in a scheme to divert funds from the government treasury to the Marcos family.

The official is reported to have refused the bribe, and the scheme is reported to have failed.

For a long time it has been believed that a congressional effort to investigate the Marcos regime was a long time ago when Marcos ruled out of the presidential palace after three years in the Philippines.

By now, however, it is widely believed that the Marcos regime is a corrupt and authoritarian one, and that the Philippines is in need of a complete overhaul.

The ex-aide also describes the extent of the Marcos family's wealth, which is estimated to be in the billions of dollars. They describe how the family has used its money to buy up land, build a palace, and acquire a fleet of private jets.

THE MONEY ATTEMPT was described in a San Francisco article in the latter of the Times.

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The ex-aide also describes the corruption within the government, including the appointment of family members to key positions and the manipulation of the judicial system.

Marcos Bribe Offer Cited by Witness

By Jack Anderson and Les Whitten

A witness has revealed that a high-ranking official in the Marcos administration offered a bribe to the official in exchange for the official's cooperation in a scheme to divert funds from the government treasury to the Marcos family.

The witness is reported to have refused the bribe, and the scheme is reported to have failed.

The witness also describes the extent of the Marcos family's wealth, which is estimated to be in the billions of dollars. They describe how the family has used its money to buy up land, build a palace, and acquire a fleet of private jets.

The witness also describes the corruption within the government, including the appointment of family members to key positions and the manipulation of the judicial system.

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Anderson and Whitten conclude that the Marcos regime is a corrupt and authoritarian one, and that the Philippines is in need of a complete overhaul.

Philippine Hush Money Bid

By Jack Anderson and Les Whitten

The Philippine dictator, who is widely regarded as a primitive and corrupt ruler, is reported to have made a bid for hush money from a high-ranking official in the Marcos administration.

The bid was reportedly offered to the official in exchange for the official's cooperation in a scheme to divert funds from the government treasury to the Marcos family.

The official is reported to have refused the bid, and the scheme is reported to have failed.

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Hard-hitting Washington columnist Jack Anderson wrote, in collaboration with Les Whitten, a series of columns on the Philippine dictatorship and Marcos' attempt to block testimony against it before a committee of the United States Congress.

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The front and back of a check for \$50,000.00 dollars made out by the Philippine National Bank to Ambassador Trinidad Q. Alconcel who in turn endorsed it at the back to Primitivo Mijares on June 17, 1975 the day Mijares was to testify before the Fraser committee. It was intended clearly as a bribe to stop Mijares from appearing before the committee.

SAVINGS DEPOSIT

ACCOUNT NUMBER 0667-46062	CODE 1 1 2	Lloyds Bank California
NAME TRINIDAD G ALONCEL		CURRENCY
ADDRESS Primitivo Mijares		COIN
CITY		CHECKS BY BANK NO.
DATE 6-17-75	OFFICE SF HQ #066	11-40 50,000 -
NEW ACCOUNT		TOTAL DEPOSIT 50,000.00
<p style="text-align: center;">LLOYDS BANK CALIFORNIA 17 JUN 1975 40</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;">⑆0667⑆46062⑆ 18 21 ⑆0005000000⑆</p>		

5-150 (09-74)

For more than three checks, list all checks below and enter check total only on front. For less than four checks, list all checks on front.

CHECKS BY SAVER NO.									
33	11-40	1975	1975	1975	1975	1975	1975	1975	1975
TOTAL ENTER ON FRONT SLIP									TOTAL TO FACE

Deposit Slip of June 17 1975.

The original deposit slip (front and back) showing that Aloncel deposited the \$50,000.00 to a joint account in his name and that of Mijares at the Lloyds Bank California on June 17, 1975.

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Solo Authored Books: + + +

Book A, Turning Points, *Job Elizes Sr, 1968 (Reissue 2009)* + + + Book B, Be Considerate For Once, *Tatay Jobo Elizes (Jr), 2013* Book C, Piglets Unlimited - Wealth, *Tatay Jobo Elizes, 2009* + + + Book D, Out of the Misty Sea We Must, *Cesar Lumba, 2010* + + + Book E, Fulfilled – *Gonzales Reynaldo, Editor, 2010* + + + Book F - Reflections - *Bert Guiang, 2010* + + + Book G, Writings 7 - My Vintage Pics, *Tatay Jobo Elizes, 2010* +

Book H, May Bagwis Ang Pag-ibig, *Percival C. Cruz* + + + Book I, Letters To Matrimony, *Irineo P. Goce, Ka Pule2, 2011* + Book J, Songs I Wish You Knew, *Soledad R. Juan, 2011* + + + Book K, Make My Day, *Larry Henares Jr., 1993, Re-issue 2011* + Book

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Book O, *Beyond idle thoughts, MLMunoz, Sept, 2011 + + + Book P, Cracks In The Armor, Mariano Ngan, Oct 2011 + + + Book Q, FaveArt 2, Tatay Jobo Elizes, 2011 + + Book R, Balitang Kutsero, Perry Diaz, Jan 2012 + + + Book S, FaveArt3, Tatay Jobo, 2011 + + + Book T, FaveArt4, 2012, Tatay Jobo + + + Book U, Stack Family Journals, Phil & Fe Stack, 2012 + + + Book V, Emily, An Adoption Journey, Romerl Elizes, 2012 + + +*

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Book BF, *MakeMyDay-6, Villains & Heroes, Henares, 2014 (1993) + + Book BG, Nostalgic Pics 2 (ElizesClan), TatayJE, 2014 + + Book BH, MakeMyDay-7, Tough & Tender, Henares, 2014(1993) + + Book BI, MakeMyDay-8, Light & Shadow, Henares, 2014(1993) + + Book BJ, MakeMyDay-9, Give & Take, Henares, 2014(1993) + + Book BK, MakeMyDay-10, ToBeOrNotToBe, Henares, 2014(1993) +*

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Book BL, *Emily Forever In Love, Poems, Emily Espanol Derry, 2013* + + Book BM, *The Sinatra Songbook, Henares, 2014* + + Book BN, *The Gaborro Reader, Allen Gaborro, 2010* + + Book BO, *Ramon H. Lopez - Art Gallery, 2014* + + Book BP, *Philippines Via Old Pics-1, Tatay Jobo, 2014* + + Book BQ, *Ronna Manansala - Art Gallery, 2014* + + Book BR, *Philippines Via Old Pics-2, Tatay Jobo, 2014* + + Book BS, *Being Good-A Medley Of Love, Dr. Phil Stack, 2014* + + Book BT, *Lifestream Fisherman, A Filipino Odyssey, Paul Dalde, Jul2014* + + Book BU, *Kristina Reed Manansala, Art Gallery-1, August 2014.* + +

Book BV, *Hermes Art Gallery-2, Sep2014,* + + Book BW, *Fave Art-5, Tatay Jobo, Sep2014* + + Book BX, *Cash & Credits, Make My Day-11, Larry Henares, Sept 2014* + + Book BY, *Rise & Fall, Make My Day-12, Larry Henares, Oct 2014* + + Book BZ, *Swans & Swine, Make My Day-13, Larry Henares, Oct 2014* + + Book CA, *Touch & Go, Make My Day-14, Larry Henares, Oct 2014* + + Book CB, *Life & Death, Make My Day-15, Larry Henares, Oct2014* +

Book CC, *Kiss & Bite, Make My day -16, Larry Henares, Oct 2014* + + Book CD, *Good & Evil, Make My Day-17, Larry Henares, Oct2014* + + Book CE, *Beast & Beauty, Make My Day-18, Larry Henares, 2014* + + Book CF, *Beggar & King, Make My Day-19, Larry Henares, Oct 2014* + + Book CG, *Trash & Treasures, Make My Day-20, Larry Henares, Oct 2014* + + Book CH, *Wear & Tear, Make My Day-21, Larry Henares, Oct 2014* + + Book CI, *Why Blame the President, Irineo P. Goce, Oct 2014* + +

Book CJ, *Angel & Devil, Make My Day-22, Larry Henares, Oct 2014* + + Book CK, *Pretty Ugly, Make My Day-23, Larry Henares, Oct 2014* + + Book CL, *Salvation & Damnation, Make My Day-24, Larry Henares, Oct 2014* + + Book CM, *Don Daniel Maramba, Larry Henarez & Edith Perez de Tagle, Oct 2014* + + Book CN, *Hilarion G. Henares, Larry Henares & Edith Perez de Tagle, Oct 2014* + + Book CO, *FaveArt-5* ++ Book CP, *FaveArt-6,* Book CQ, *FaveArt-7,* Book CR, *FaveArt-8 (All FaveArt books by Tatay Jobo), 2014* + +

Book CS, *Minsan May Isang Puta, Ms. Mike Portes, 2014* + + Book CT, *Ramblings A, Danny Gil, 2014* + + Book CU, *Ramblings-B, Danny Gil, 2014* + + Book CV, *Grace Esmeralda Album, by her, 2014* + + Book CW, *Secrets of a Romantic Man, Dr. Phil Stack, 2014* + + Book CX, *Ramblings-C, Danny Gil, 2014* + + Book CY, *Ramblings-D, Danny Gil, 2014* + + Book CZ, *Ramblings-E, Danny Gil, 2014* ++ Book DA, *Tenacious Nurse-1, Gretheline Bolandrina, 2014* + + Book DB, *Tenacious Nurse-2, Gretheline Ramos-Bolandrina, 2015* + + Book DC, *Of Words I Have Found, Dan Jimenez (danmeljim), 2015* + +

Book DD, *Tanjay East Coast Magazine, Issue 1, Feb 2015* + + Book DE, *Tanjay East Coast Magazine, Issue 2, April 2015* + + Book DF, *Catechism Manual, Dr. Latorre, April 2015* + + Book DG, *Tanjay East Coast Magazine, Extra Issue 2A, April 2015* + + Book DH, *Wedding Album, Anita & Barry, May 2015* + + Book DI, *Tanjay E. Coast Magazine, Poconos, May 2015* + + Book DJ, *Baptism Guidebook, Dr. Latorre, May 2015* + + Book DK, *Chita, a Memoir, Tony Joaquin* + + Book DL, *A Journey Unto Peace, Dr. Phil Stack, June2015*+ + Book DM, *Jokes Collection-3, Tatay Jobo Elizes, July2015* + + Book DN, *Jokes Collection-4, Tatay Jobo Elizes, Aug2015* + + Book DO, *Jokes Collection-5, Tatay Jobo Elizes, Sep2015* + + Book DP, *Beautiful Lie, Joecel Jayme, Jan 2016* + +

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by Tatay Jobo Elizes

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