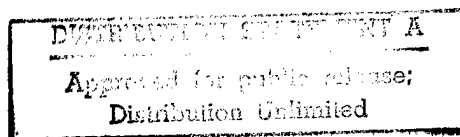


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22 APRIL 1987

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UK'S YOUNGER ON SECURITY OF MALAYSIA, SINGAPORE

BK011159 Kuala Lumpur BERNAMA in English 1143 GMT 1 Apr 87

[Text] Singapore, April 1 (OANA-BERNAMA)--Britain is confident and happy with the security and stability of Malaysia and Singapore as the economic growth of both countries is sound, a British official said Wednesday.

George Younger, British secretary of state for defence, told newsmen before leaving for home that Britain considered both countries "very important friends" and their relations were extremely close.

"We are having constant contacts not only with officials of both countries but also between the chiefs of staff as we regard security and stability of our friends important", he said. Younger had earlier visited Malaysia, Brunei and Thailand.

On the Soviet presence in this part of the world, Younger said they can cope with any eventuality that might arise, adding that "all countries I visited are in good shape and they can handle their security".

On the five power defence arrangement comprising Britain, Malaysia, Australia, New Zealand and Singapore, the British minister said his country would try to take an active part by providing modern equipment in military exercises.

He said other members of the pact had said Britain had not provided "good enough contribution" in the past.

Younger said he was impressed with the setup of Singapore Air Force.

He also said he had discussed the manufacture of defence equipment here on a joint-venture basis between British and Singapore companies during his talks with Singapore leaders.

/6662

CSO: 4200/462

GOVERNMENT PLANS TO SELL OFF NAVAL DOCKYARD

BK010941 Melbourne Overseas Service in English 0830 GMT 1 Apr 87

[Text] The federal government has decided to sell its controlling interests in the Williamstown Naval Dockyard in Melbourne this year. It has also decided not to renew the lease on the Cockatoo Island Dockyard in Sydney after the refit of the Oberon class submarines in the early 1990's. This story from a Radio Australia reporter in Canberra, (Damien Kingsbury):

[Begin (Kingsbury) recording] In making the announcement the minister for defense, Mr Beazley, said Australia's ship building industry had to be restructured to make it more efficient and internationally competitive for planned ship-building projects. These include the construction of six submarines, eight light frigates, mine sweepers, survey vessels, and hydrographic vessels valued at about \$7,000 million [currency not specific].

This followed last week's caucus meeting with the government in which some members suggested that the government could sell off Defense Department plans and government naval dockyards.

Mr Beazley said Australian shipbuilding and ship repair industries were recovering after a long decline from world oversupply. But he said that while the industry was now more efficient in producing smaller craft, larger projects would test the competence of the industries.

Mr Beazley said that the Williamstown Dockyard could be better structured under private control to improve its performance. The Cockatoo Island Dockyard, he said, is not suited to current requirements and would take substantial investment to take on major new programs. The (?Garden Island) Dockyard will become the only government-owned and operated yard concentrating on fleet support and repair. [end recording]

/12232

CSO: 4200/465

AUSTRALIA

BRIEFS

HAWKE RULES OUT EARLY ELECTION--The Prime minister, Mr Hawke, has ruled out the possibility of an early national election. He made the announcement at a news conference in Canberra, saying that the instability which would have followed the announcement of an early election was an important consideration in his decision. He said divisions within the opposition had tempted him to hold an early election. However, he said, the electorate wanted a strong government and that by pursuing present policies without calling an early election he would be demonstrating that. He repeated that there would be a major government economic statement next month which he said would contain tough but fair measures. [Text] [Melbourne Overseas Service in English 0830 GMT 1 Apr 87 BK] /12232

CSO: 4200/465

BERNAMA REPORTS SULTAN BOLKIAH'S BANQUET SPEECH

BK051035 Kuala Lumpur BERNAMA in English 1012 GMT 5 Apr 87

[From Abdul Latif Abu Bakar]

[Text] Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei, April 5 (OANA-BERNAMA)--The sultan of Brunei has declared that no quarter should harbour any suspicion about the possibility of outside interference in his state's relations with Malaysia.

Speaking at a royal banquet held in honour of the king and queen of Malaysia last night, Sultan Hasanal Bolkiah urged that his country and Malaysia overcome, on a joint and comprehensive basis, common problems involving their two countries.

Problems such as determining their land and sea boundaries should be resolved to avoid any untoward development.

The Brunei sultan said his government always strove towards upgrading the bilateral relations with Malaysia, which had been laid down a long time ago. Their links were based on not only mutual interest but also cultural, racial and religious homogeneity.

He described the king's visit here as of great meaning and significance in fostering and strengthening the existing brotherly relations between the two countries.

On ASEAN, he said the youth in the region should be made aware of the existing close relations among member countries, as they were the future leaders of these countries. He hoped the coming ASEAN summit would bring out concrete and positive resolutions to further strengthen the group.

In his speech, the Malaysian king said he would always remind his government to give full cooperation to the Brunei Government. He described relations between them as being between members of the same family.

The king Sunday visited the Lambak housing area near here. The 630-ha area which can accommodate about 14,000 residents was opened last year.

/6662

CSO: 4200/461

BRIEFS

MAHATHIR SATISFIED WITH VISIT--Datuk Sri Dr Mahathir Mohamed has expressed satisfaction at the outcome of his official visit to Brunei Darussalam. The prime minister told a news conference in Bandar Seri Bagawan at the end of his visit that discussions with the Sultan of Brunei have resolved several issues and problems. [Words indistinct] the problem related to the construction of a trans-Borneo highway, linking Kuching to Kota Kinabalu passing through Brunei Darussalam. Another area covered in the talk was the need to upgrade air services between the capital cities in the country. In this respect, further discussions will be held in 2 weeks' time. Datuk Sri Dr Mahathir also said Brunei's businessmen have responded positively to the proposal to set up joint ventures with their Malaysian counterparts in the Federal Territory of Labuan. The businessmen could take advantage of the free port status of the island. The prime minister has returned to Kuala Lumpur. [Text] [Kuala Lumpur Domestic Service in English 1130 GMT 31 Mar 87 BK] /6662

MALAYSIAN KING ADDRESSES BANQUET--His majesty the king says that relations between Malaysia and Brunei Darussalam have been well established. He pointed out that both nations shared similarities in various fields, including culture, religion, and history. His majesty was speaking at a state banquet in Brunei Darussalam last night. He said that recently several steps had been taken to foster closer ties between the two countries. His majesty hoped that cooperation between the two countries would be further enhanced and strengthened. [Text] [Kuala Lumpur International Service in English 0800 GMT 5 Apr 87 BK] /6662

CSO: 4200/461

HAN-KA DIALOGUE ON RESULTS OF BANGKOK TALKS

BK030251 Vientiane Domestic Service in Lao 0430 GMT 2 Apr 87

[Dialogue between "Comrade Ka" and "Comrade Han"]

[Excerpt] [Han] Let's talk about the Lao-Thai negotiations in Bangkok, comrade. what was the result of the talks?

[Ka] According to KPL, on the morning of 25 March after Souban Salitthilat, head of the Lao delegation, had paid a courtesy call on Thai Foreign Minister Sitthi Sawetsila at the Thai Foreign Ministry, the high-level Lao and Thai technical delegations held an official meeting in the meeting hall of the Thai Foreign Ministry.

[Han] I guess the Lao delegation must have energetically carried out its assignment after its arrival in Bangkok. Is that correct, comrade?

[Ka] That's right, comrade.

[Han] What was the outcome of the meeting with Sitthi Sawetsila that day, comrade [as heard]?

[Ka] In that meeting, the Lao side sincerely made its views known to the Thai side in a straightforward manner by pointing out the consistent policy of the LPDR to maintain friendly relations and to genuine peaceful coexistence with the Kingdom of Thailand on the basis of the 1979 Lao-Thai joint communiques, comrade.

[Han] That is true, comrade. One cannot do whatever he pleases. We must have a stand. This is not a matter for any individual. Each side has to represent its own country. Therefore, the talks must be conducted on the basis of the Lao-Thai joint communiques so that the aspirations of the Lao and Thai peoples can be fulfilled. Is that correct, comrade?

[Ka] Of course, comrade. Then the Lao side stressed that the statements and acts of certain persons and bad elements in Thailand failed to conform to their deeds in promoting friendly relations and peaceful coexistence, including the setting up of an economic blockade against Laos and the encroachment on Lao territorial integrity and sovereignty, especially nibbling at the three Lao

villages in Sayaboury Province, provocations, feeding and training Lao exiles to be sent back into Laos to create disturbances among the Lao people, and continued implementation of the Pan-Thailand doctrine that counters the aspirations of the fraternal Lao and Thai peoples. In addition, the Lao side also informed the Thai side of relations between Laos and the friendly countries in Indochina.

[Han] Well, there is no doubt that the Lao people have always aspired not to be anyone's enemy. What did they do after that?

[Ka] Right after the meeting, Souban Salitthilat gave a press conference describing these acts once again.

[Han] So, our Lao side raised those questions with the Thai side on 25 March. What questions did our Lao delegation raise on 26 March?

[Ka] On 26 March, the Lao and Thai high-level technical delegations continued the talks to discuss the questions of tourism, border markets, local-level contacts, and trade. Mutual understanding was reached on the promotion of cultural and sports exchanges and visits between university professors and students of the two countries. Following the morning session, the heads of the two delegations gave interviews to the press. In his press interview, Souban Salitthilat denied baseless allegations by the spokesman of the Thai delegation on the previous day and stressed our side's concern that the Thai side pay attention to sincerely resolving the problem of the three Lao villages. Nevertheless, the talks made little progress. It was, however, an important step for creating a basis for further negotiation. Souban Salitthilat assessed this round of talks as an important step in the improvement of Lao-Thai relations. The two sides agreed to hold further talks, and the Lao side will invite the Thai delegation to Vientiane.

On the morning of 27 March, Souban Salitthilat paid a courtesy call on General Prem Tinsulanon, prime minister of the Kingdom of Thailand. On this occasion, the head of our Lao delegation conveyed best wishes and greetings from Kaysone Phomvihan, chairman of the LPDR Council of Ministers, to General Prem Tinsulanon and the Thai people, comrade.

[Han] How did Prem Tinsulanon react to the greetings from Kaysone Phomvihan, comrade?

[Ka] With regard to Kaysone Phomvihan's greetings, Prem said that he was very glad that the Lao delegation had come to Bangkok and held talks in a straightforward manner. He agreed that the talks should continue, comrade.

[Han] If Prem Stated that intention, it is very good, comrade. If he really means it, no problems will remain unresolved.

[Ka] Of course, comrade.

[Han] Where there is a will, there is a way, comrade. After returning to Vientiane, what did Souban Salitthilat say, comrade?

[Ka] Our Lao delegation arrived back in Vientiane on the afternoon of 28 March. Welcoming Souban Salitthilat and the delegation were Khamphai Boupha, first deputy foreign affairs minister, and several high-ranking cadres. Upon arriving at the airport, Souban Salitthilat immediately gave a press conference.

[Han] That was right, comrade, because everyone was very interested in the matter. What did he say, comrade?

[Ka] To promptly inform the Lao people of the outcome of the talks, Souban Salitthilat said at Wattai Airport that the Bangkok negotiations were very useful because each side was able to express its views on the fundamental questions that must be resolved on relations between the two countries. For the Lao side, a fundamental question is the problem of the three villages--Ban Mai, Ban Kang, and Ban Savang--in Sayaboury Province.

[Han] It was absolutely correct for Souban Salitthilat to raise this question in the talks. We must know what problems should be settled first. We must not confuse them with other, minor problems.

[Ka] Well, you are right, comrade, because Thai troops are still stationed in the three villages. Souban Salitthilat pointed out that in certain spots, Thai troops are stationed deep in Lao territory, 100 to 300 meters from the border.

[Han] That is true, comrade. Laos wanted this problem to be resolved a long time ago.

[Ka] It is the first question that the Thai side must resolve. The second question was raised by the Lao side with regard to the spirit of the 1979 Lao-Thai joint communiques signed by the prime ministers of the two countries, stipulating that the two countries will refrain from directly and indirectly interfering in each other's internal affairs or from creating bitter feelings toward each other. For example, the Thai side fabricated a story to insult Laos' pride by organizing a commemoration of the so-called Thao Suranari or Nang Mo event [Thai heroine's defense against Lao invaders], comrade.

[Han] Many commemorations of such events can also be staged by our Lao side, comrade, and those events would arouse a deeper sense of indignation among the Lao. What did Souban Salitthilat say about the outcome of the talks?

[Ka] With regard to the negotiation, Souban Salitthilat told the press that the bilateral talks between Laos and Thailand have not been broken off because both sides still want to continue the negotiations. Our Lao side has invited the head of the high-level Thai technical delegation to visit Vientiane again to continue the talks. Well, that is all there is to say about this question. We will see each other again next time.

[Han] So, I must take leave now, comrade

[Ka] Okay, comrade. Good luck.

[Han] Same to you, comrade.

/12232

CSO: 4200/459

DEPUTY PM VISITS PRC, HOPES 'OPEN DOOR' POLICY SURVIVES

Auckland THE NEW ZEALAND HERALD in English 16 Mar 87 p 5

[Article: "Open Door to China Vital for NZ Trade"]..

[Text]

New Zealand hopes the People's Republic of China will continue with its economic reform programme, the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Palmer, said on the eve of an official visit to China yesterday.

Mr Palmer, accompanied by his wife, and the Deputy Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Mr Tim Francis, flew to Shanghai from Hong Kong late last night to begin the eight-day visit.

The party will visit Xian, remote Shandan in Gansu Province, where the Rewi Alley Bailie School is being rebuilt, and Peking.

Mr and Mrs Palmer will be welcomed to the Chinese capital next Friday by Vice-Premier Wan Li, who visited New Zealand last September.

The Deputy Prime Minister also has a meeting scheduled with the Premier, Mr Zhao Ziyang, who took over as the Communist Party General Secretary from the disgraced Mr Hu Yaobang earlier this year.

Very Different

"I think it is very important from New Zealand's point of view that the Chinese Government's policy

does not change," Mr Palmer said.

Politically the China Mr Palmer flew to last night is vastly different from the one the Prime Minister, Mr Lange, left last year.

In 1986 the general impression was that the reform policies of the para-

mount leader, Mr Deng Xiaoping, were being successfully implemented and all was well in the "new China."

However, in December the fuse was lit by students of the National Science and Technology University in Hefei, Anhui Province, and demonstrators in about 12 cities took to the streets.

Mr Hu, who was a friend of New Zealand, took the blame for the discord and resigned, leaving the reformists in a weakened position.

Imbalance

Shortly before he left for China, Mr Palmer said it was very important from New Zealand's perspective that the Chinese Government's open-door policy, introduced in 1979, did not change.

His wish is understandable, given that two-way trade reached \$454 million for the 1986 calendar year.

The trade imbalance between the two countries (5.6 to one in New Zealand's favour last year) is something the Chinese would like to see rectified.

NZ Centre

It is no coincidence that Mr Palmer has been scheduled to visit a textile plant in Lanzhou on Thursday.

The visit reflects the fact that China has become New Zealand's biggest wool customer, accounting for 65 per cent of wool exports.

Tomorrow Mr Palmer will visit the Shanghai International Studies University to help to launch a New Zealand studies centre.

The tour also includes discussions with Rewi Alley in Peking, visits to the excavation site of the terracotta army in Xian, and stopovers at the Great Wall and Ming tombs.

Mr Palmer is expected to sign a science and technology co-operation agreement.

He will also visit Japan before returning to New Zealand on Tuesday, March 31.

/12828

CSO: 4200/470

MULDOON PROMISES RURAL 'RESCUE' BY NATIONAL PARTY

Auckland THE NEW ZEALAND HERALD in English 17 Mar 87 p 3

[Text] Rural New Zealand will be rescued by the next National government, Sir Robert Muldoon said last night.

Outlining a policy not yet announced by the National Party caucus, the former Prime Minister told a gathering of supporters that National would have to repair the damage caused by Labour's lack of social conscience.

"We are going to have to conduct some sort of rescue operation for the rural and provincial economy," he said.

"We have got to lift the farming industry up again so that infrastructure there is being used."

Among the rescue measures would be a review of the livestock tax, removing the burden of high interest and improving exports.

"We have got problems, and these problems are in the provinces and rural areas," Sir Robert said.

"The burden of interest on the farming industry is criminal."

A National Government would have to do something about the livestock tax, a Treasury invention accepted by Labour.

"Farmers are paying income tax before they get the income from their stock."

The new tax meant farmers now paid more than before, he said.

The effect of Labour policies was to close provincial schools and move families to Auckland in search of work.

"When half the coal-miners on the West Coast are put out of jobs, we do not just lose jobs; there are several hundred perfectly good houses down there."

A massive amount of capital was being wasted housing those families in Auckland and building new schools.

With some farmers losing everything they had worked all their lives for and families being uprooted from the provinces, the Government could not claim to have a monopoly on caring.

"The one thing this Government lacks is any vestige of a social conscience."

/12828

CSO; 4200/470

'ONE-THIRD' WHANGAREI FIRMS REPORTED NEAR 'COLLAPSE'

Auckland THE NEW ZEALAND HERALD in English 18 Mar 87 p 10

[Text]

One-third of businesses in Whangarei are on the verge of financial collapse, the annual meeting of the Whangarei subprovince of Federated Farmers was told yesterday.

"That is one in three jobs," said Mr Stan Hayes, Northland representative on the New Zealand Provincial Support Group.

"Those aren't my figures — they are the business community's.

"There is no doubt in our view that there will be an increase in mortgagee sales.

"Some of the cases are so desperate they are easier to fix.

"But where the lender could sell a property and get all of the money owed out of it, resistance could be more difficult.

"Some people are prepared to stand up and that is very important, especially

in the finance area," said Mr Hayes.

The re-elected president, Mr Bill Shepherd, said in his report to the subprovince that lending institutions did not seem to realise the extent of their risk.

Market Values

"If all of the insolvent farms in the country were put on the market, market values would collapse," he said.

"It must be made abundantly clear to the financial sector, which has taken advantage of the deregulation in that area to extract every possible dollar from the market, that to continue in this direction could totally collapse the value of land and put the whole of their capital investment at risk.

Disappointing

"It would be a much more sensible medium-term policy to substantially reduce interest rates and enable their clients to trade their way through this difficult period."

Mr Shepherd said the whole of Northland was on

the verge of being declared a drought relief area. Dairy production was expected to be down at least 15 per cent on last season.

Lamb returns had recently been disappointing because of the strength of the kiwi dollar. Unemployment in Northland had topped 6000.

"A number of large, important farm supply firms have pulled out of Northland," he said. "Fertiliser use is down 30 per cent on last year and 50 per cent on two seasons ago.

"The retail sector is feeling the pinch. A number of retail businesses have closed down recently and heavily discounted prices at sales are numerous.

"All these are symptoms of a severely depressed economy in Northland."

/12828

CSO: 4200/470

GOVERNMENT WITHDRAWS SEVERANCE PAY FROM MINERS

Auckland THE NEW ZEALAND HERALD in English 18 Mar 87 p 1

[Text]

The Government withdrew its offer of voluntary severance for State Coal workers last night to head off what it described as threats of major abuse of the severance arrangements.

The threat of workers turning down firm jobs offers in favour of large lump sum payments, knowing they would have to be rehired the next day, triggered the move.

The Miners' Union, Public Service Association and the Opposition all attacked the withdrawal, last night.

The Miners' Union is furious over the change and says the Government has gone back on its word. A PSA delegate, Judith Ulrich, said State Coal staff would be outraged at the withdrawal of the offer.

Restricted

"It is the one constant thing they have lived with, and to have it taken away at the 11th-hour is more than a punch in the face," she said.

The national president of the Miners' Union, Mr Ray Urquhart, last night described the withdrawal as "totally, utterly irresponsible."

"It has got to be overturned or there will be big trouble."

Mr Urquhart said union and Federation of Labour officials would meet Government ministers this morning to ask them why the offer was changed, and why they had not contacted the union if they believed workers intended to abuse the severance deal.

He understood that members of one particular union branch had been saying they were all going to take severance pay, in the belief that they would be asked back to work the next day.

If that were the case the branch was irresponsible and he "would be having words with them, too," Mr Urquhart said.

But he said such action was certainly not on any recommendation of the national executive, which represented the majority of workers.

Under the previous offer all State Coal staff were unconditionally offered voluntary severance.

But the offer is now restricted to those who elected to take voluntary severance in writing by last Monday and to those whose jobs would be significantly altered as a result of the switch to the new Coal Corporation.

No Choice

The Minister of State Services, Mr Rodger, and the Minister of Energy, Mr Tizard, said last night that there was evidence whole groups of workers were intending to take the lump sum payments, knowing they would have to be rehired the next day.

Some staff had been planning to take voluntary severance, pick up payments, typically, of \$20,000 to \$30,000, and present themselves to the new corporation for rehiring the next day.

"Where those staff hold positions of critical importance to the operation, there

would be no choice but to rehire them," the ministers said.

"Having suffered no pain or risk whatever, they would reap a windfall."

Soundings taken by State Coal in Huntly, for example, had indicated that a large percentage of the officials supervising underground operations at one mine intended to take voluntary severance pay.

Confident

"People in that position could be completely confident that they would be rehired at once because it is impossible to run the mine without them," said the ministers.

Similar soundings around the country among secretary-typists indicated that many intended taking \$8000 each in voluntary severance pay, confident they would have no problem finding work elsewhere.

"There is absolutely no justification for paying sums ranging as high as \$50,000 to \$60,000 to people whose jobs are not under any threat at all," said Mr Rodger and Mr Tizard. "That is just an abuse of the taxpayer."

As a result the Government had decided that

- Except where staff had elected voluntary severance in writing by last Monday, anyone offered employment yesterday with the corporation, and who declined it, would now be ineligible for voluntary severance.

- Anyone who accepts employment with the corporation will be eligible for the equivalent of the voluntary severance option for up to 12 months from April 1, should they be declared redundant by the corporation.

- Anyone offered a position with the corporation which involves significant adverse change of duties or salary or change of location will retain the option of voluntary severance.

Judith Ulrich said those affected had already suffered a lot of stress as a result of the corporatisation move, but they had been able to take into account the severance payments when planning their futures.

"There is going to be a lot of anger and outrage expressed about this," she said.

FINANCE MINISTER HITS POWER CHIEF ON VALUE DISCLOSURE

Auckland THE NEW ZEALAND HERALD in English 18 Mar 87 p 3

[Text]

The Minister of Finance, Mr Douglas, was yesterday at the centre of the first major dispute between the Government and one of its fledgling state-owned corporations.

The clash followed disclosure of a Treasury estimate of the value of the country's electricity system.

The chairman of the Electricity Corporation establishment board, Mr John Fernyhough, revealed yesterday that the Treasury had hung an \$8.5 billion price tag on the system, to be taken over by the corporation on April 1.

The corporation, which will buy out the Ministry of Energy's electricity division, has claimed that \$3.8 billion is a fair price for the division's assets.

Mr Fernyhough, in revealing the disparity in the calculations, suggested that the Treasury figure would inevitably mean a significant increase in power prices.

Questions

Mr Douglas yesterday criticised Mr Fernyhough for making public the details of the assets question, to be the subject of negotiations between the corporation and the Treasury this week.

"The fact that Mr Fer-

nyhough is raising the issue publicly causes me to question whether the Electricity Corporation is approaching its business in a commercial manner," he said.

"If it is not, then there are serious implications for the development of an efficient and competitive electricity industry."

Mr Douglas added that he was surprised at Mr Fernyhough's "threat" of substantial price rises this year, at a time of substan-

tial excess power generating capacity.

"That does not appear to be competitive behaviour on the part of the corporation," he said.

Mr Douglas said some claims by Mr Fernyhough could not be supported and he suggested that the corporation take a more commercial approach to the asset negotiations.

Mr Fernyhough said later that he stood by his decision to disclose the contrasting asset estimates.

"I think it was necessary and desirable that the public were aware of the range of prices," he said.

Affordable

"The fact that the Treasury has formed a view on a different price is a matter of public importance and it is proper that that be known."

Mr Fernyhough said there was no question that the corporation would be unable to afford to buy the electricity system, even if the Treasury figure was finally adopted.

The issue was whether it would be reasonable for consumers to pay the increased prices necessary to finance the takeover.

Mr Fernyhough said he wondered if the Treasury had assumed that the electricity system would be more profitable under the corporation's control and had taken increased profits into account in setting the \$8.5 billion valuation.

Extraordinary

The corporation board believed, however, that profits derived as a result of its own achievements should be reflected as a benefit to consumers.

The Opposition spokesman on energy, the Hon Merv Wellington, said the

"extraordinary" Treasury figure had been triggered by the disclosure that the Government's internal deficit was above the budget forecast.

"New Zealanders are now under no illusion that the Government is desperate to shift this burden indirectly on to every person by the 'double purchase' of state-owned assets."

The Treasury figure would mean an increase in power prices to the detriment of producers and manufacturers.

"As such, it is a pistol pointed at the heart of the regions, especially the South Island, whose economic lifeline has for so long been reasonably priced power."

SUP CENTRAL COMMITTEE HITS NATIONAL PARTY ON MAORI ISSUE

Auckland NEW ZEALAND TRIBUNE in English 16 Feb 87 p 10

[Socialist Unity Party Central Committee statement; "SUP SAYS CAPITALIST SPENDING WON'T HELP MAORI IDENTITY"]

[Text]

THE Maori loans affair and the contract work schemes which involve Maori gangs have provided a field-day for the National Party to play politics, with the Maori as the pawn.

Our government system requires the Minister of Finance to plan a budget and be responsible for working within it. Priorities must be decided in a government programme and the Minister must allot finances to each section. This leaves scope for decentralised working to use the resources most effectively.

If each section decided its own priorities and was responsible for finding its own finance, the resulting chaos would ultimately require the government to bail it out in the national interests.

Maori people have specific interests which are producing

a great resurgence of identity, and this should be welcomed by the rest of the working class and its organisations.

In fact, they should be taking the lead in helping forward this great movement and in working to see that higher priorities are given to assisting those objectives.

A community of economic life is one of the requirements which is part of becoming a nation. Even if Maori people get unlimited amounts of finance and spend it on projects within the economic framework of capitalism, it will only increase their absorption and undermine their identity.

The furthering of their interests requires that they de-

velop plans of their own, controlled by themselves, and that other workers help in seeing that the Government provides for those priorities. No harm is done in finding out where financial help can be obtained and then campaigning to win political support to make it possible. Nothing more than that was done in the present case and the Minister correctly kept it at that level.

The work schemes and gang participations were under the control of the Minister of Labour working within the budget and were doing useful work involving production and cultural work with self-management. They cannot be com-

pared to contract work in view of their educational and social content. Efficiency, however, should still be part of their operations, and the work schemes must be responsible for this.

The National Party is not concerned about the real Maori interests but is simply using some weaknesses as an opportunity to try to make narrow political gains. ■

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CSO: 4200/470

SUP GEARS UP TO SUPPORT LABOR PARTY IN GENERAL ELECTION

Wellington Regional Planning Meeting

Auckland NEW ZEALAND TRIBUNE in English 16 Feb 87 p 12

[Article in "Party Life" column by Mark Thomas, "a Wellington Branch Member": "SUP in Wellington Looks at Challenge of 1987"]

[Text]

IF we thought 1986 was hard work, we've got 1987 to go yet," Ritchie Gillespie reminded members of the Socialist Unity Party at a Regional planning meeting on February 1.

The meeting was organised so that everybody contributed, making clear the strengths and weaknesses of the branches. That it is right to form industry branches was apparent, although there is still much work to be done in that area.

Marilyn Tucker opened the second part of the meeting, which was for the branches to discuss their particular work in 1987. She stressed the importance of understanding the general questions before trying to look at the specifics. Lenin warned that not to do this would expose Communists to the dangers of left-sectarianism and right-wing opportunism. We must check to see that our work is being directed towards building the mass movement and lifting class understanding for the struggle against monopoly capital.

To return a Labour government we must win workers to activity to build pressure on the Government around the alternative policies. Power lies not in Parliament but in the working class itself; the realisation of this power is the issue at stake.

Marilyn suggested that a good slogan for 1987 might be 'Develop a Party of Organised Action'.

It is felt that more research should be done in Wellington into who actually owns the city (more large buildings are replacing the old) and who works there. In Porirua it was

felt the branches could get more involved in what is happening in the community there. The branches saw that more work had to go into *Tribune* sales and subscriptions. A contact list must be developed. Greater use must be made of collective ways of work. The areas of youth and women were falling behind. Anti-racism within New Zealand, a better understanding of the industries in the area, knowledge of closures and peace activity—all have to be integrated further into branch life.

All of this and much more indicates that we are ready for the increased demands that will be made on us in 1987. Ritchie Gillespie, in opening discussion on the General Election, stressed our need to build the mass movement of the working class around the anti-monopoly struggle as outlined in the Seventh Conference document. This does not stop because it's an election year. An election year means that we must struggle harder. It is important to apply the lessons of the 1984 election. That saw the class mobilised to get National out. This time there is an equal need to keep them out. It also saw the development of the Alternative Economic Policy, part of which the Labour Party adopted. This, of course, has not been applied by the Labour Government. We must struggle to pressure them to implement it. Ritchie concluded by reminding us that if we thought 1986 was hard work, we have 1987 to go yet. I feel confident the Wellington Region will be equal to the task. ■

Call to Vote

Auckland NEW ZEALAND TRIBUNE in English 2 Mar 87 p 2

[Commentary by Barbara Stewart: "Why you should vote": "Hard-fought in Godzone"]

[Text]

DITHERING about whether to vote in the General Election? Spare a thought for the millions around the globe denied the right to vote. Compared with the countless numbers imprisoned for daring to oppose the right to vote of a privileged, propertied few with the right skin colour, we Kiwis have a rather smooth ride.

However, your right to vote in Godzone was won by long and hard battles—the last over women's franchise and before that by wage earners who refused to be dismissed as non-entities at election times because they had no property holdings.

The early reformism of social democratic parties such as Labour, arose from attempts by the capitalist class to stem the tide of revolution which succeeded in Russia in 1917 and which has had the rich roosters quaking in their boots ever since.

The great social reforms of New Zealand's first Labour Government under Mickey Savage, though not a socialist revolution, were the result of

mass desperation on the part of the country's working people and, above all, their desire for immediate change. As they did five decades ago, the working people of this country have the potential political strength to let those who reside in the Beehive know what they want done in order to have a greater share of the national cake.

Nothing would suit the wealthy class more than for the working people of this country to stay away from the polls (the wealthy never do!) and hand over the reins of parliamentary power entirely to the real servants of monopoly—the National Party.

Many progressive policies exist within the FOL/CSU and

Labour Party themselves. We can organise around these policies and convince the Labour Government that it's time to return to its traditions of serving a few more crumbs up to the working class.

The National Party has never represented the interests of workers. Labour, on the other hand, arose from the needs of the working class. It remains, as yet, the only immediate electoral alternative for the working people of this country

Don't forget that New Zealand has shown the world what one small nation can do on the nuclear-free issue. WE can also do it on the economic front if we approach the task with the same conviction and set our minds and muscle to it. ■

Welcomes FOL Campaign

Auckland NEW ZEALAND TRIBUNE in English 2 Mar 87 pp 1, 3

[Editorial: "SUP welcomes FOL campaign"]

[Text]

The Socialist Unity Party of New Zealand welcomes the Federation of Labour National Council decision to develop a membership campaign around a trade union movement programme for:

- jobs and industrial development;
- maintenance of workers' living standards and protection of workers' rights;
- balanced economic development between the cities and the regions;
- peace.

Such a programme reflects the vital needs of New Zealand's working class and other working people—including working farmers and small-business people and other sections exploited by monopoly.

It requires challenging the financial and industrial monopolies—the only real beneficiaries in a "more market" approach.

It clearly highlights the fact that 'letting the market decide' is the same as 'letting the monopolies decide'.

However, it does much more as well.

The general line of the SUP as set out in the Seventh Conference resolution is that "the primary issues for the Party are: the building of the mass movement of the working class, leading the movement into an anti-monopoly struggle and raising the political consciousness of the working class."

All of the work of the SUP in performing its role as a Marxist-Leninist Party to build a socialist New Zealand by way of a socialist revolution should be guided by that line.

The various tactical considerations arising from that are currently under debate in the SUP and the wider labour movement with regard to the specific question of the 1987 Parliamentary elections.

The FOL resolution in fact addresses some of those considerations. That resolution should not be seen or presented as an ultimatum to the Government to change 'or else', nor a position of supporting Labour because the alternative is worse, both of which are propositions for a negative campaign of inaction.

The FOL resolution provides the potential for a campaign of concerted action by the trade union movement to win the support of those sections within the Labour Party (and other sections of the labour movement) for policies and actions for peace, for jobs, for protection of living standards — for both urban and rural workers; and for policies and actions opposing monopoly control.

It is, in itself, a programme for positive action and development of class consciousness that, if correctly and successfully developed, will continue to develop way beyond the General Election, at the same time providing a solid basis for re-electing a Labour government. Voting is a part of this process. The trade union movement must be wary that frustration, confusion and disillusionment of significant sections of its membership does not lead to workers ignoring this fact.

Successful implementation of the programme requires the assessment of the class allies of the trade union movement and the working with them against the union movement's class enemies.

In that process there can be neither Tweedledums and Tweedledees nor vote stabilisers. ■

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CSO: 4200/470

INTERNATIONAL PHYSICIANS AGAINST NUCLEAR WAR MEET 9-10 FEB

Auckland NEW ZEALAND TRIBUNE in English 16 Feb 87 p 8

[Article--IPPNW CONFERENCE: Scientists Predict Death of Pacific"]

[Text]

MANY international speakers congratulated New Zealand on its anti-nuclear stand at the conference of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW), February 9-10.

The 900 New Zealand members who hosted the conference are not so happy. This week they put out a statement which noted "with concern the continuing delay in the passage of the New Zealand Nuclear Free Zone, Disarmament and Arms Control Bill."

Information from Pacific doctors showed the necessity to continue all work for a strongly nuclear-free South Pacific. (China's signing of the South Pacific Nuclear Free Treaty in the same week is another step forward.)

Melbourne researcher, Dr Tilman Ruff, told the confer-

ence that there has been a high incidence of a fish disease which doesn't hurt fish but can lead to a slow agonising death for human beings.

The disease—ciguatera—occurs first in tropical reef fish and moves through the food chain. It is caused by major disturbances of the coral

environment—and nuclear blasts appear to have made the worst impact. A further result is the loss of fishing trade for the islands, forcing them to rely on imported food which he calls 'dietary colonialism.'

Dr Abraham Behar, professor of biophysics at Paris University, said that it was common knowledge in Paris that Moruroa was near the end of its life as a testing centre. This was supported by research from two New Zealand scientists--Dr Manfred Hochstein and Dr Mike O'Sullivan--which showed that the coral atoll would leak radioactive material into the environment in 10-100 years and not 1000 to 10,000 years as the French predicted.

A nearby French Polynesian atoll or the French colony of Kerguelen Island in the southern Indian Ocean will

be the probable replacements, he said.

Dr Rob Robotham informed the conference of the 30 years of distress of the aboriginal Pitjantjatjara people of Australia after 600 British tests had deposited about 25kg of highly radioactive plutonium over a wide area of their land. Many have returned and died of cancer--some have died from the grief of being separated from their ancestral land.

The conference voted unanimously that "Britain and Australia should be reminded of their obligation to clean up the land. The cost is assessed at more than \$750 million. ■

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CSO: 4200/470

ANTINUCLEAR ACTIVIST CONTRADICTS MOVEMENT'S CRITICS

Auckland THE NEW ZEALAND HERALD in English 17 Mar 87 p 6

[Article by Ray Galvin, "the Maclaurin chaplain at Auckland University, (who) has been involved in the nuclear-free cause for many years. He responds here to Air Marshal Sir Ewan Jamieson's recent article": "Isolationist Drift Forced on Peace Movement"]

[Text]

In recent years New Zealand has shown signs of coming adrift from its traditional defence role in the Western Alliance.

Air Marshal Sir Ewan Jamieson sees this as largely the influence of a scurrilous peace movement, employing questionable means, lopsided in its thinking about East and West.

Sir Ewan accuses elements of the peace movement of being inspired by "the most sinister form of anti-Americanism, generated by those with a hidden agenda of their own, calculated to undermine the cohesion of the West."

Using covert methods, he says, they bring together widespread social concerns under a single banner (such as the peace movement), focusing the energies of diverse causes against our link with the United States.

They mount "furious personal attacks" on any who dare speak against them.

Co-operative People

As one who is deeply involved in the nuclear-free cause, I wondered what "peace movement" Sir Ewan was referring to.

His description hardly fitted the hundreds of intelligent, co-operative people alongside whom I have worked for many years — scientists, lawyers, teachers, home-makers, secretaries, company managers, clergy, skilled and unskilled workers — who have with integrity carried the debate about nuclear weapons into the heart and soul of New Zealand life.

One of Sir Ewan's chief objections to this movement centres on its alleged attitude to the Soviet Union.

Sir Ewan singles out the recent "Peacemaking Now" conference in Hamilton as typifying the attitudes of peace movement leadership.

So unbalanced was this conference, he says, that the United States was seen as the aggressor and "throughout the conference the Soviet Union was never mentioned."

I was a keynote speaker and seminar leader at that conference. I distinctly heard the Soviet threat acknowledged and taken into account many times.

Campaign Away

Like the peace movement in general, the conference did not pretend that the Soviet Union's totalitarian political system, its military adventurism and its vast stocks of nuclear and conventional weapons pose no danger to justice and peace in the world.

We are not so naive. Indeed, our networks are often the first to criticise publicly such unwelcome events as Soviet nuclear explosions and ballistic missile tests in the Pacific.

If the Soviet Union is less feared than in earlier days, it is no fault of ours. Mikhail Gorbachev has mastered the art of appealing to Western hearts without any help from a perverse and sinister peace movement.

Secondly, Sir Ewan suggests the nuclear warship issue was itself a carefully planned diversion, calculated to engender anti-American feeling and lead to a rift with the United States. I quote in full.

"Objection to the possibility that nuclear

weapons might be carried during ship visits was hardly discovered in New Zealand until late in the run up to the 1984 elections.

"Before then, opposition to warship visits centred on the question of nuclear power.

"Only as the inherent weakness of that position became plain was the target switched to nuclear weapons, then the campaign took off."

This is sheer nonsense. Many of those leading in the peace movement in the early 1980s were veterans of the "Ban the Bomb" days of the 50s and 60s. New Zealand books criticising nuclear weapons were coming out in the early 1980s.

By the beginning of 1983 the pressure of requests to speak on the dangers of nuclear weapons at schools, churches, community colleges, public meetings and service clubs up and down the country had become so intense as to be virtually unmanageable.

The distinct impression I gained was of a growing, deeply felt concern about nuclear weapons rising from within the heart of the community.

Pacifist Aims

This was no sinister trick of anti-American manipulators. It came powerfully up from the grassroots of New Zealand society and was live among conservative and liberal, rural and urban New Zealand.

One could surmise that if there had been no nuclear weapon-free movement at that time, one would have formed anyway.

Sir Ewan's third objection is to the alleged pacifist aims of the peace movement.

There must, of course, be pacifists in the peace movement: what other movement would such people join?

But the pacifist/non-pacifist debate is far from settled among us. I am not a pacifist; I believe it can sometimes be necessary to oppose aggression and injustice by force of arms.

But this does not make it ethical for me to be armed to the teeth and defended to death in every situation. I share with pacifists a belief that continued militarisation on a superpower scale is not making the world more secure, but less. The earth is being turned into an armed camp and no one is the safer for it.

If we are to have any future at all, we need urgently and carefully to find a new way back to (multilateral) arms control, arms reduction and disarmament.

I happen to believe, like many other New Zealanders, that our country's unilateral nuclear-free stance is a creative initiative that can awaken some of the will and energy required to do this throughout the world.

Divergent Views

Sir Ewan's fourth objection is also fatally flawed: that the peace movement's goal is non-alignment for New Zealand.

In fact, the peace movement (if there is literally such a thing) is widely divergent on such matters.

Some would delight in non-alignment. They no doubt rub their hands with glee at each United States move to "punish" New Zealand and push us further away from co-operation with the West.

Most, however, simply want to be nuclear-free.

A recent attempt by some to promote an energetic non-alignment focus within the peace movement, equal in impetus to the nuclear-free focus of 1982-84, foundered before it got started.

If Sir Ewan were right in claiming that non-alignment has been the covert aim of peace movement leaders all along, the movement has been a singular flop. It has not succeeded in producing any great desire among New Zealanders to leave the Western fold. Indeed, opinion polls show the desire to stay to be stronger than ever.

Ironically, it is the United States more than any other body that could be pushing us, step by step, towards the non-

aligned position Sir Ewan fears. It is its reaction to our nuclear-free stand that has led to our drift towards isolation.

The United States must, as a matter of urgency, come to accept New Zealand's nuclear-free stance as an expression of the genuine will of the vast majority of people in a democratic nation.

This stance arose not as a result of covert manipulation by a sinister group with a hidden agenda, but as a deeply felt grassroots concern of the people of an intelligent and thoughtful nation, who want the world to last somewhat longer than this generation.

I pray the United States will come to honour and respect this stance for what it is.

VERITAS HITS AQUINO NEGLECT OF GOVERNMENT

Quezon City VERITAS in English 12-18 Mar 87 p 7

[Editorial: "Campaign Fever"]

[Text] "Banners, Balloons and a bevy of beautiful girls" is how one reporter for a daily described the scene at Monday's campaign launching for the Aquino administration's 24 senatorial bets.

The sun scorched the crowds at the Batangas City rally, but the heat of political fervor seemed greater still. Happy days are here again?

Those who were around before September 21, 1972 get misty-eyed at the memory of the political ruckus that used to be raised every two years or so, when the very wheels of government seemed to slow down or screech to a halt as candidates, campaigners, officials and their constituents wallowed in the campaign brouhaha. It seemed that we were only marking time between elections.

One hopes that isn't the case today, when we as a nation are presumed to have learned some lessons from the past 14 years of living under a dictatorship. Then maybe again we have not.

Already, campaign posters--for "Cory-candidates," oppositionists and presumptive independents--are defacing city walls. Prominent names and familiar faces have been making the rounds of coffeeshops and public affairs TV shows. And the President promises another punishing tour of "major cities" there to raise the arms of her chosen ones who have just under two months to make themselves "household names."

We wonder, while she is doing that, how will the government run? We have already seen a diaspora of hopefuls, vacating their appointed posts and chasing their dreams of making it in the electoral arena, carving out their own fiefdoms among voters. In their place, new appointees have been named. How will the new team function when the key players, and perhaps even the coach herself, are so distracted by the cheerleaders?

The campaign fever will not burn away our problems. And there are things to be done. There are problems facing the Aquino government, some of them, like land reform, needing immediate attention before Congress convenes. Someone must mind the store. The elections are important. But our officials should be reminded that they cannot govern with half-a-mind, one eye cocked to the hustings. The wheels of government must keep on turning.

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CSO: 4200/463

WEEKLY ANALYZES CHANGING PUBLIC VIEW OF AQUINO GOVERNMENT

Quezon City VERITAS in English 12-18 Mar 87 pp 10-12

[News Analysis by Felipe B. Miranda: "Weathering Crisis After Crisis"; "Year One of the Aquino Administration: Objective Conditions and Public Perceptions"]

[Text]

IN LESS than a year, the Aquino government has managed to arrest the further deterioration of the national economy. The 1986 GNP after two years of negative growth finally registered a positive growth rate of 0.13 per cent. Foreign exchange reserves have more than doubled to \$2.4 billion in December, 1986, inflation was down to less than one per cent, peso purchasing power has stopped dropping and deterioration in real wages has been largely arrested. (As a matter of fact, if one considered the rest of the country other than the Metropolitan Manila area, there has even a little gain in real wages in the last 10 months.)

Some problem areas remain. The foreign debt situation of the country has not significantly improved, largely on account of difficult, protracted negotiations with international finance agencies and foreign banks. Unemployment continues to be high, at roughly the same level as a year ago, and labor restlessness has even increased. There were 571 strikes in 1986, up 54 per cent from 1985's 371, involving 46,000 more workers in 1986 than in 1985. Both local and foreign businessmen have adopted very cautious investment strategies and thus the economy continues to be a bit sluggish.

It is the political situation, however, which appears to have been most volatile in the last twelve months. The libertarian inclinations of the Aquino administration were initially clearly manifested in its decision to free political prisoners, resulting in the release of captured top leaders of the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army. A policy of national reconciliation with both communist and Muslim rebels, as well as Marcos loyalists, was also activated.

The expansion of the legitimate or above-ground political arena to include diverse and arguably irreconcilable elements has predictably resulted in a lot of political turmoil. Leftist political groups exerted demands on the Aquino government which would have resulted in a radical restructuring of both the economy and the political system in the Philippines. Radical agrarian reform, nationalistic economic programs which would curb the traditional privileges and gross incentives enjoyed by foreign capital, dismantling of foreign military facilities and a basic re-orientation of Philippine foreign policy and security programs were pressed for.

Other political groups, on the other hand, were just as zealous in protecting their economic and political interests. With connections in big business and in the military, rightist groups opposed all the programs stridently called for by the left and assiduously cultivated a cold-warrior anti-communist mentality among their members. Marcos loyalists in particular have projected themselves as staunchly anti-communists and the Aquino supporters as well as more liberal groups to be either outright reds or red sympathizers.

Many Filipinos, both civilian and military, who initially were supportive of national reconciliation policies have become a bit more skeptical about them. The propagandistic ends which ceasefire negotiations have been made to serve, the increasing tension and violence in demonstrations by extremist groups, as well as the persistent destabilization campaigns through a series of coups participated in by some military men have created much public distrust and even exasperation for both extremist groups, leftist as well as rightist, in Philippine politics.

Within the Aquino government itself, serious differences in policy orientations specifically as regards the conduct of labor policies, the handling of officers-in-charge to replace local government officials and the management of the insurgency problem have led to acrimonious debates, serious charges and counter-charges and finally, demands for the removal of some cabinet members. At least four cabinet members have become casualties of these political struggles.

Finally, the military has been subjected to a great deal of stress as an institution. The basic competing, even conflicting orientations have been along lines of *constitutionalism* or support for the civilian government of President Aquino and *politicalization* which calls for a much more active and decisive role for the military in Philippine politics. The second orientation appears currently to bifurcate into two types: (1) that which seriously disagrees with current government policies perceived to be contributory to an increasingly dangerous communist threat, and (2) that which seeks to re-install the Marcos government through the efforts of remaining Marcos loyalists within the military. The success of the Marcos loyalists clearly depend on their abilities to ride on the truly anti-communist sentiments of most military men. There is some evidence of ongoing attempts by the politicalized military groups to at least tactically link with each other towards a more dominant military role in government decision-making. To date the constitutionalists have managed to maintain their delicate control within the military and so far have neutralized military elements involved in coup operations against the government. The inability or unwillingness to severely discipline these errant or "misguided" military men, however, is an indication of the need for further consolidation of the constitutionalists' control within the military.

Surveys indicate that popular support continues as Filipinos acknowledge the enormity of their national problems and aver that government really needs more time to effectively address them.

IN THE midst of the continuing economic and political crisis in the Philippines, a political singularity stands out: Filipinos continue to overwhelmingly support President Aquino and her government. This fact has been charted in the last twelve months by credible surveys done by the Social Weather Stations and Ateneo University. Aquino's public support in October, 1986 was even higher than in the first 100 days of her Presidency, when the euphoria of the February revolution might have precipitated a political honeymoon between her and the general public. The results of the recently concluded plebiscite on the draft Philippine Constitution, suggesting that as many as eight out of 10 Filipinos support her administration, is only the most contemporary evidence of extensive public confidence. This confidence in the President extends to practically all members of her Cabinet and specially to General Fidel Ramos, the constitutionalist Chief of Staff who has been credited with upholding Aquino's civilian government against politicized military men.

Surveys indicate that popular support continues as Filipinos acknowledge the enormity of their national problems and aver that government really needs more time to effectively address them. Furthermore, after twenty difficult years of Marcos rule, Filipinos express a pragmatic view as regards how soon and by how much their quality of life could realistically improve. In both the May 1986 and October 1986 nationwide surveys alluded to above, the respondents largely profess moderate optimism regarding the short-term future (from one to three years) and the belief that present times would mean no further deterioration in their living conditions.

Although initially (in May, 1986) the public was much supportive of the national reconciliation policies of the government as regards the communists, the Muslim secessionists and the Marcos loyalists, there appears to be a hardening of public attitudes as indicated by an increasing number of respondents in October, 1986 who perceive these policies as being too lenient. In the case of communist and Muslim rebels, even as a significant number (32 per cent of respondents) still resists the idea of taking up the "sword of war" against these opponents should reconciliation policies fail, the plurality (42 per cent of respondents) already believes the government should use armed force on the rebels should ceasefire programs break down. The public mood is further indicated in a recent survey done last February 1987 on Metro Manila reactions to the killing of demonstrators as soldiers and policemen opened fire on the largely peasant demonstrators marching to the Presidential palace. The survey reveals the respondents to be disappointed with the behavior of the demonstrators as they tried to crash the barricades, as well as the overreaction of the military and policemen in shooting at the demonstrators. What may be more revealing is the respondents' belief that the leader of the demonstrators, who appears to have lost his temper during the tense confrontation, has great responsibility for the march's tragic consequences.

Public support for President Aquino appears to be a function of at least three things: (1) the widespread feeling that she has been trying and in many instances has kept her promises as she campaigned for the Presidency in the months preceding the February snap presidential elections; (2) the widespread perception that her government is beleaguered with threats from the left as well as the right and even from within her own government; and (3) the widespread perception that some progress has been effected in the last year as the deterioration of material conditions has been checked and some popular relief may continue to be expected in the form of stabilized prices,

improvement in real wages, and the like. Filipinos appear to be contented, at the moment counting not only their very modest blessings, but also grateful for the non-deterioration of their many more difficulties.

Even as there is incontrovertible, extensive and unprecedented public support for Aquino and her government, a very serious aspect of public thinking is also revealed in recent public opinion surveys. In these extremely trying times, Filipinos appear to acknowledge in their President one of their last hopes in an attempt to improve their desperate conditions. Should there be another betrayal of public trust (as happened in the case of Marcos and his government), or perhaps even simply a failure of political will by their leadership, Filipinos could turn to more radical alternatives in effecting social change. In October, 1986, for the first time in post-war Philippine history, an unprecedented majority (51 per cent) confirms their belief that Filipinos could lose their faith in peaceful means of effecting democracy. The paradoxical and frightening thing about this avowal is that at no time during Marcos' dictatorship was this level of potential disillusionment with peaceful alternatives attained. Even the February 1986 revolution itself was a public testimony to the Filipino commitment for peaceful change. It is as if Filipinos wanted to send a clear message to their current political leaders that time is running out and the proverbial Filipino patience is wearing thin. If this is so, then Aquino's phenomenal public support also has a grim aspect to it.

Political Imperatives for the Aquino Government

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QUINO'S popular support is a huge political asset which the present government cannot long squander without dire consequences. In 1972, the Marcos government gained quite a bit of public support as it provoked martial law through a series of shrewdly-induced crises in the political system. Unfortunately, the political capital gained was systematically dissipated through governmental corruption and ineffectiveness. The fall of the Marcos government in 1986 does not represent the full or even the major cost of squandering public confidence.

The cost has to be reckoned in terms of foregone opportunities for human development and greater social justice in the Philippines; or, alternatively, in terms of the greater impoverishment, brutalization, and subsequent cynicism of most Filipinos who suffered Marcos to be their national leader.

The Aquino government cannot hope to endure by taking for granted the impressive popular support it now enjoys. Unlike in the 1972 Philippines of Marcos, the political crises in 1987 are not contrived but far too real; and the Filipinos are no longer as naive nor as docile as when Marcos first tempted them with a New Society in 1972.

Many urgent issues, economic and political, demand the attention and resources of the Aquino government. There is, however, no greater urgency than in ensuring that Aquino's government is, first of all, able to govern. Aquino's fundamental political imperative is the consolidation of her government's political authority.

The recent approval of a new Constitution is a step in the right direction. It gives her government a clear mandate to govern and provides her in particular the formal presidential authority which the flawed presidential

election of 1986 formally denied. Her political opponents can no longer ascribe illegitimacy to her government or her position, nor can they credibly advance the theory of coalition government which makes her only one more, equal partner in a political duumvirate or triumvirate after the February revolution.

Still, the new Constitution only legalistically consolidates political authority for Aquino and her government. The political consolidation of political authority goes beyond formal, legalistic provisions. The singular challenge to this task of consolidation lies in the relationship which Aquino must forge with the military.

Civilian supremacy is the constitutional dictum which the military itself formally avows. Still, given the undeniable presence of military factions, Aquino will have to help ensure the dominance of the constitutionalists within the military. Promotions must be carefully monitored to see to it that the constitutionalists' hands are strengthened. Operational, field commands must be in the hands of constitutionalist officers; anti-constitutionalists must be deprived of effective control over troops, military hardware, and communication as well as other logistical services.

The Marcos loyalists in particular have to be weeded out. The ones who can be prosecuted for corruption or graft or gross human rights violation must be identified and formal cases filed against them. Those who are not as vulnerable may be allowed to resign or retire from the military; those who choose to remain in the military must be reassigned to areas and military duties which minimize their ability to foment instability. There must also be provisions made for others who show consistent signs of constitutionalist conversion; such military men may be re-integrated into full military duties, responsibilities and corresponding authority, privileges and material benefits.

The sincerely disaffected anti-communists, who also are not merely fronting for either Marcos or any other politically ambitious patron, may be turned toward constitutionalism by seeing to it that the military is not denied its legitimate influence in the making of policies affecting insurgency. It is not in the interest of Aquino's government to isolate the military in the political and economic effort to neutralize insurgency. By involving the military at all stages of counter-insurgency operations, the probability is increased that there will be greater understanding, more coordinated effort and less political tension should the civilian authorities effect tactical negotiations or agreements with the rebels.

Beyond her own cabinet and the military, President Aquino's consolidation of political authority will ultimately depend on the effectiveness with which her government addresses the distressed conditions of her constituency.

The military is an institution that functions hierarchically. It is vital for military men to always have a clear conception of the operational chain of command, within the military as well as beyond it. One of the current problems of the Philippine military is the obfuscation of this chain of command, as a result of the political challenges to the legitimacy of the Aquino government itself as well as the presence within the military of politicalized officers linked to ambitious political patrons.

The popular ratification of the new Constitution might help somewhat in fortifying the doctrine of civilian supremacy and clarifying the military's civilian chain of command. But within the military, the strengthening of the constitutionalists' demands no less than a purge of politicalized military men who are unable or unwilling to breakaway from their political patrons. It is specially important that those who participate in actions which destabilize the present government, either in overt or covert coup operations, be prosecuted and severely dealt with.

There are long-run strategies for developing a constitutionalist military, among which would be the professionalization of its officer corps, the upgrading of its recruitment policies, and the improvement of the compensation and material benefits for the members of the military. In the short-run, however, there is nothing more urgent than the clarification of the operational chain of command and the imposition of strict discipline. These are two items which could have immediate returns, in-particular to a civilian government whose President indubitably enjoys the mandate of her people. At the very least, "misguided" military men tempted to conduct "unauthorized military exercises" in patently civilian centers will not yield to temptation three times within three months.

It is obvious that the consolidation of authority within the military requires decisive and even risky action by President Aquino, as well as the constitutionalist military men who work with her government. To persist with policies that betray unwillingness to clearly discipline the anti-constitutionalists, purportedly to keep the armed forces unified, is to misunderstand the nature of the crisis of command within and over the military. These policies will serve to maintain the crisis and, instead of unifying the military, will precisely encourage multiple challenges by armed factions who become contemptuous of the indecisiveness of the authorities.

(Military men appear to appreciate leaders who manifest decisiveness and willingness to take risks in patently crisis situations. The appeal to many military men of some civilian political patrons as well as the apparently impulsive core members of RAM probably is partly accounted for by this perception of their decisiveness and risk-taking personalities. On the other hand, their contempt is clearly reflected by the allusion to some of their highest military superiors as being "wobblers," which is an improvisation over another Taglish term graphically denouncing the lack of an essential attribute of manhood.)

Beyond her own cabinet and the military, President Aquino's consolidation of political authority will ultimately depend on the effectiveness with which her government addresses the distressed conditions of her constituency. This is necessarily a long-term process, given the widespread poverty and the gross social inequities in the Philippines. Much lead time is needed even by a decisive leadership in activating resources to minimize not only material poverty, but the poverty of spirit which keeps a nation from helping itself towards sustained economic and political recovery. That poverty of spirit, it must be hoped, does not afflict the very leadership itself. It would be a tragic waste of public support if the leadership's decisiveness should be unable or unwilling to transcend the highest levels of oratory.

* Felipe Miranda is a visiting Research Scholar, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University and Professor of Political Science, University of the Philippines

AQUINO CANDIDATES PLAN TO DE-EMPHASIZE CAMPAIGN SPENDING

Quezon City VERITAS in English 12-18 Mar 87 p 13

["Overview" column by Felix B. Bautista: "From Where Will the Money Come?"]

[Text]

PERHAPS the most pathetic sight during the snap election campaign last year was that presented by the deposed dictator on the campaign trail. Televiewers still vividly remember seeing him being borne triumphantly(?) on the shoulders of security men from his car to the stage.

The intention was to portray a leader so popular that he had to be borne aloft so everyone could see him. The people saw him all right, but what they saw was a man who looked half-dead. And, when he waves feebly at the loyalist crowd, the bandages on his hand were very much in evidence.

Actually, the entire thing was a gimmick. He had to be carried because the strength in his legs was gone, and he could not negotiate the short distance to the platform.

We saw a similar gimmick last Sunday, this time more distasteful than pathetic. This time, it was the movie actor, Ramon Revilla, claiming center stage when he filed his certificate of candidacy as an independent running for the Senate.

Two burly stuntmen carried him on their shoulders to the Commission on Elections. All around were his fans carrying placards announcing the macho actor's candidacy. And, in the background, was a brass band blaring a lilting tune.

It was a full production worthy of the most garish traditions of showbiz. It was an extravaganza the likes of which the Comelec officials had never seen in all their born days.

It was also, like most extravaganzas, contrived and artificial—and expensive. And it set the mood and the tempo of what promises to be a very expensive senatorial campaign.

When the present government started talking about the “new politics,” the people were happy. They thought the term connoted the throwing away of everything that was undesirable in the old system, the lavish campaign spending, the vote-buying, the intimidation of voters, the stuffing of ballot boxes and, worst of all, the count manipulation by the Comelec.

When President Aquino accepted the resignation of all the Comelec commissioners except one—that of Ramon Felipe who was perceived as the only one in the batch who did not go along with the elaborate cheating machinery cooked up by some diabolical minds of the old regime—they saw this as the portent of a new day in politics. When she appointed new commissioners who were persons of proven probity and independence of mind, they cheered. Truly, they told each other, all the elections henceforth would be clean and honest.

Then, when the President announced her roster of twenty-four candidates, the overall impression was that the era of the “new politics” had indeed begun. For the slate, except for a few former senators, was made up of people who had had no national political exposure. Many of them had never run for public office before. Some had limited experience in running for the Batasan Pambansa.

With perhaps one exception, they were perceived as the new breed of politicians, obsessed with the notion of serving the public rather than themselves, competent, dedicated and, most important of all, incorruptible.

But, pray tell, how long can they remain clean if, just to get elected, they must shell out millions of pesos? How can they serve the public when, before they can do anything, they must first repay certain political debts incurred?

The candidates of President Aquino are particularly vulnerable. For they were chosen because of ICAW (integrity, competence, and ability to win). They were not singled out because they were multi-millionaires. And if a man whose means are modest and whose lifestyle is simple is suddenly asked to spend millions (some estimates run as high as P30 million per candidate), where is he going to get that kind of money?

From donations, that is where. And if he accepts a million here from a logger, another million there from a government contractor or a

smuggler or some such slimey but filthily wealthy character, what is he expected to do in return?

One candidate who looked and sounded like Rene V. Saguisag was reported to have had extreme difficulty in raising the ₱250,000 every candidate was supposed to throw into a common campaign kitty. But he also came through, thanks, he said, to some generous donors.

But the ₱250,000 is only the first installment. There are at least three more, for each candidate now is expected to give ₱1 million. It was originally set at ₱2 million, but it was later scaled down.

Even so, where are Cory's Chosen going to get the funding? From more "generous donors" who, later on, are sure to extract their pound of flesh in the form of new contracts and new logging concessions? These donors, remember, are not in business for their health. They want a reasonable (at least) return on their investment. And they expect their investments to yield rich dividends.

Already, if reports we hear are true, the spending spree has begun.

Millions and millions of t-shirts have been ordered, despite a Comelec ban on the distribution of these and similar items. One candidate we know has bought a combined radio-television package costing ₱5 million. This, on top of two million t-shirts he is now stencilling with his name and photo emblazoned thereon.

Expect this candidate to saturate the airwaves with his campaign plugs. And expect every man and his brother to go around as a walking advertisement of his candidacy between now and election day.

We are told that among the candidates proclaimed by President Aquino in Batangas last Monday, there are a handful who are reluctant to accept donations because it is against their principles. Do these candidates have any chance of winning because they allow their principles to get in the way of their campaigning and spending like the rest of the field?

At first blush, the answer would be a resounding no. But, if there is any basis to reports that these candidates' think tanks are working on an innovative and imaginative plan that de-emphasizes election spending, there may be hope for them yet.

The details of the plan are still being worked out. But, as we heard them, the main outline goes like this:

It is premised on the fact that the Senate needs at least twelve, or perhaps just eight, good men and true who would not have any election debts

to pay. These men may not be in a position to control the Senate, but they would form a significant and influential bloc.

Who would these men be? That is the job of a non-partisan top-caliber body of men and women (maybe the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court could be prevailed upon to head it) who would set the criteria for the selection. Who among all the candidates have proven track records, who are unimpeachably honest, have clear vision, nationalism, leadership? Who among them have the statesmanship needed at a time like this?

This body will screen all the candidates from all the parties, go through their records with a fine-toothed comb and evaluate them on the basis of the criteria agreed upon.

And then the anointed eight will be presented to the people. It will not matter what party these candidates come from, they will be selected on the basis of what they have done and what they can do for the country and the people.

And then a movement, similar to the Corazon Aquino for President Movement (CAPM) which sprouted overnight and which attracted hundreds of thousands of members in an incredibly short time, could be started touting the names of the eight.

It would, hopefully, be People Power in an election setting.

The think tanks believe that it could be done despite the limited amount of time remaining between now and the May 11 election. They are certain that among the 120-odd candidates for the Senate, eight can be singled out who are capable of exciting the public imagination.

Some business leaders we talked to mentioned four or five names which came to their minds off-hand when we talked to them. Two of them, not unexpectedly, are identified with the opposition. There are undoubtedly others.

Can this movement get off the ground? The think tanks say a lot depends on who will be in the superbody screening the candidates. Perhaps, they told this writer, His Eminence, Jaime L. Cardinal Sin, could be persuaded to be a member of this body. The think tanks are aware that the Cardinal has adopted a hands-off attitude in this campaign, but since this project is going to be non-partisan and since the aim is ultimately to do

away with extravagant and unconscionable election spending, then perhaps he would not turn his back on it.

As outlined above, the plan still contains many rough spots, but the organizers hope to be able to iron them out before very long. They know that they are racing against time, that if they don't succeed in launching it, then the alternative would be more of the disreputable politics institutionalized by the dictatorship.

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VERITAS EDITOR QUESTIONS AQUINO RELATIVES' QUEST FOR OFFICE

Quezon City VERITAS in English 12-18 Mar 87 p 12

["The Human Factor" column by Melinda Quintos-De Jesus: "Family Ties"]

[Text]

IN SO many ways, the Filipino family is one of the strengths of Philippine society. Large and extended, the network of relatives provides many forms of social and emotional security. Kinship ties are a kind of glue that bind mutual loyalties. These humanize many transactions and processes in an increasingly complex social organization. As such, families foster social stability, a resilience and solidarity of human relationships that hold out against disruptions of all kinds, even violent social upheaval.

But the family can also be a source of weakness. We have only to recall the family names of Marcos and Romualdez as a recurring reference in the political and economic affairs of the dictatorship to realize the potential damage of too many family members in government.

The Constitutional Commission has provided many safeguards against the kind of nepotism which marked the Marcos regime, prohibiting the appointment of presidential relatives to certain offices during the President's tenure. Section 26 in the Declaration of General Principles vaguely warns against the formation of political dynasties with the statement: "The State shall guarantee equal access to opportunities for public service, and prohibit political dynasties as may be defined by law." But there are no restraints on family members running for election, or even running political parties and managing political campaigns.

Still, the high visibility of Aquinos and Cojuangcos in the first election for Congress has not escaped notice.

Presidential brother-in-law Butz Aquino's candidacy for the Senate was certainly no surprise. He is seen by many as a deserving and worthy aspirant for Congress. Margarita Cojuangco, Cory's sister-in-law, was recently a subject of a full-page ad drafting her as a candidate for Makati. Another sister-in-law, Tessie Aquino Oreta, has been proclaimed as UNIDO candidate for Congress in the district of Malabon. Before his name was implicated in the BLISS fund mess, Herminio S. Aquino, the President's uncle-in-law, was also expected to run for office in Tarlac.

One can only wonder how many more presidential connections will seek local and provincial office. Behind the scenes are even more relatives playing key political roles: The president's brother, Jose "Peping" Cojuangco Jr., is chairman of the PDP-Laban which forms part of the ruling coalition. Another relative, on the Sumulong side, Emigdio "Ding" Tanjuatco is a stalwart in the Lakas ng Bansa umbrella party. Younger brother-in-law, Paul Aquino, is directing and managing the Administration's campaign.

It is quite likely that these presidential relations have been sought, even pressed into action by party organizers and their supporters. The kinship with the President is a strong drawing card. They have the magic in the name. Doubtless, they are also regarded as more effective power brokers.

The pattern indicates the entrenchment of the old habits of elitist politics. The traditions of political patronage, of political and economic dyads dominating the affairs of the country suggest a return to the status quo ante and does not help the growth of new political dynamics in this country. Certainly, it is not only the Aquino family that will have more than one member seeking power in the system. If people of the same economic and social background, belonging to the same extended economic or business power blocs, come to hold a larger share of the political powers and thereby dominate political processes, the constitutional mandate to guarantee equal access to opportunities will be much, much more difficult to serve. There will also be greater pressures against legislation that will bring about necessary fundamental change.

There are families and families, of course. There is the possibility that families together can commit to public service, to new political values that will make possible the greater sharing of the fruits of development.

The present concern is perhaps best expressed by the dual question: First, how good are the Aquino-Cojuangco relatives for the President? And second, how good are they for the country?

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VERITAS COLUMNIST PREDICTS AQUINO SLATE TO DO WELL

Quezon City VERITAS in English 12-18 Mar 87 p 19

["In Vino..." column by Alfred A. Yuson: "Lackluster Versus Blockbuster?"]

[Text]

TWO columns ago I went out on a limb with an early forecast on the Senate polls. Once again some friends who quickly forget my 72.3 per cent prediction for Yes in the recent plebiscite (four mercifully measly points off the actual result) have taken to contemptuous laughter. These pessimists had thought Cory would be hard put to swing the ratification by 60 per cent. Now these same doomsayers say that the Administration's "lackluster" slate can't possibly place more than a dozen.

The Opposition has officially fielded split rosters and the PnB and scores of independents have helped swell the number of aspirants to an incredible 132. I can't help feeling that I'm destined for a private last laugh. Call the optimism faith in Cory's magic, or in her obvious affinity with angels.

Last Sunday of the official announcements, the latest tabulations as per the *Chronicle's* own straw vote showed that I hadn't been too far off on my prognostication, precipitate as it may have been. Of the top twelve I only missed out on Romulo whom I had pegged for eighteenth but who came out tenth in the daily's results. Alvarez whom I had given the ninth slot was fourteenth in theirs.

Well, perhaps I had overestimated Sonny's appeal. I'm now inclined to lower my assessment on his chances specially after seeing how luckless his timing can be. Last Saturday a Letter to the Editor came out where he assailed the late Rafael Salas' statements on the Mendiola incident. A day later, another daily reported Alvarez as paying tribute to the same man. I suppose he just had to do something to obviate the effects of the ill-timed publication of that fighting letter. For how cross swords with a dead man who's being extolled in all the papers? The follow-up attempt only showed up the senatorial aspirant's poor relations with the stars.

Getting back to that straw vote, it showed only four Oppositionists in the Magic 24, and these are the same people I had said would be worthy contenders: Ople, Enrile, Tolentino and Kalaw. What surprises me is Joey Lina's non-inclusion in the top thirty. Can't he even ask his friends and relatives to buy more copies of the *Chronicle*? It's downright embarrassing for a Metro Manila politico to register negatively in a survey presumably geared more towards Metro Manila readers.

Another survey, this time conducted by the NAFP, showed stats that were hard to believe, with media personality Orly Mercado bringing up the rear and the little-known Wilson Gamboa, former Defense Deputy Minister, coming out an incredible eighth. Does this reflect the wide margin often enjoyed by military perception over that of media?

My own forecast merits some rethinking. I'm sticking to my first seven slots for Salonga, Gonzales, Guingona, Mercado, Saguisag, Aquino and Manglapus. Maceda and Alvarez, whom I had rated with Pimentel as from eighth to tenth, may move down to accommodate a fast-rising Angara. I can't help feeling that I myself have underestimated the chances for a new vote in the coming elections.

There are growing indications that a new breed of politicians will find favor from a more conscientious electorate. In a television documentary aired recently, theater director and *Bulletin* columnist Zeneida Amador stressed that the number of right-thinking Filipinos has risen immeasurably since the EDSA experience. This, she avers, will finally show the door to the traditional politicians. Another interviewee, poet Gemino Abad of UP, pronounced even bolder words, declaring that the next elections will be another EDSA.

Personally, I think a sweep would be unhealthy for democracy, this despite a fervent wish to see Homobono Adaza fall flat on his grinning face, or eat those adjectives he has used to describe the opposition ticket: "knockout" and "blockbuster". If there is any busting to be done, it'll have to be perpetrated on Bono's political fate. His tapes won't help him win votes, but could only drag down the rest of his ticket-mates.

As for the reported plan of some Oppositionists to circulate photographs of two of the Administration's contenders in shameless drag, all I can say is that it's high time we find out if a gay vote can be counted upon.

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MAKIBAKA RESURFACES, ADVISES ON VOTING

Quezon City VERITAS in English 12-18 Mar 87 p 4

[Text]

AFTER more than a month of living underground again since the peace talks collapsed last January, Makabayang Kilusan ng Bagong Kababaihan (MAKIBAKA) spokesperson, Marivic Justiniani, last week briefly resurfaced and presided over a free-wheeling press conference somewhere in Southern Tagalog.

MAKIBAKA members were proud of the fact that the women's group was the first among the NDF's 12 underground organizations to take the risk of personally meeting the press again after the ceasefire fizzled out.

In a brief ceremony, the underground group reaffirmed their vow to support the armed struggle. It noted, however, that most Filipinos would likely participate in the congressional and local elections this year and the Left, which suffered a stinging setback when it boycotted the 1986 snap presidential elections, now aims to make amends.

Says Justiniani: "If the citizens will choose to vote, we will tell them to vote for candidates who are truly progressive and nationalist and will carry the people's basic demands."

It will be the first time that the MAKIBAKA will be adopting a "no boycott policy" in the elections. The last time it did this was during the 1982 barangay elections. PLA

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VERITAS ON DEATHS OF CEBU NDF REPRESENTATIVES

Quezon City VERITAS in English 12-18 Mar 87 p 4

[Text]

RUSTICO Tan, the rebel priest who led a three-man panel representing the National Democratic Front (NDF) in Cebu during the ceasefire period, was confirmed dead in a *Manila Times* report last Saturday.

Tan, 45, recently expelled from the Sacred Heart Missionary Order for his involvement in the armed revolutionary struggle, was reportedly killed by his comrades in the government.

Veritas sources, however, said rumors of Tan's death had been circulating for more than a week already before the news report citing Tan's brother as a source, confirmed.

There has been no official confirmation, either from NDF-Cebu or from the regional constabulary command intelligence.

If confirmed, Tan's death would bring to two the number of Cebu-NDF representatives who have been assassinated after the ceasefire ended last February 8. Jovito Plaza, the New People's Army representative to the provincial ceasefire committee, was killed reportedly by his own comrades last month.

An NDF press release at the time, however, said it was a military agent who killed Plaza while the latter was asleep. —RMC

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FERRER, MINDANAO GOVERNOR'S MEET ON CIVILIAN ANTI-INSURGENCY

Quezon City VERITAS in English 12-18 Mar 87 p 20

[Article by Carolyn O. Agruillas: "When Ferrer Comes Marching In"]

[Text]

"Sir, what about criticisms that this is the implementation of the low intensity conflict?"

Local Governments Secretary Jaime Ferrer to reporters: "We've given (the rebels) all the opportunities during the ceasefire to come to terms with government but they still persist. . . what else can we do?"

"This anti-communism campaign has similarities with that launched in Thailand and Indonesia. . ."

Ferrer: "They learned that from us during Mag-saysay's time. The Thais just picked it up. At that time it was called the. . . the. . ."

"Civic Action, Sir?"

Ferrer: "Yes. yes. Civic Action, Civac."

"That was also the time of Lansdale, right?"

Ferrer: "Yes, yes."

WHILE everybody focused on the Defense Department and Office of the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, nobody was looking at the Department of Local Governments for implementation of a nationwide counter-insurgency and anti-communism campaign on the grassroots level.

Local Governments Secretary Jaime Ferrer, linked with the reportedly CIA-backed NAM-FREL of the 1950s, visited Davao City and Davao del Sur on March 6 and 7 and announced that 14 Mindanao governors and their representatives "will organize the barangays in their respective areas along the principles of NAKASAKA (United People for Peace) in some areas and along the principles of *Alsa Masa* in other areas, whichever is applicable." The *Alsa Masa* (Davao City) and

NAKASAKA (Davao del Sur) are village-based anti-communism organizations. (See *Veritas* Special Report March 5-11 issue.)

The *Alsa Masa* and NAKASAKA will be used as prototypes for counter-insurgency first in Mindanao, then in Visayas and Luzon, Ferrer told reporters. Deadline for organizing the barangays in Mindanao is "end of May."

The idea of a nationwide application of these programs, Ferrer said, is to deny the rebels food, resources and mass base. "Just driving away the rebels in other areas is also not fruitful," Ferrer said, adding that even in non-NPA infested areas, people must still be organized to prevent the entry of the rebels driven from other provinces into their province. If they have nowhere to go in Mindanao and nowhere to go in Luzon, where will they go? asked Ferrer.

The program makes use of civilians as active participants in the war against the communists. To a certain degree, it follows the concept of deposed President Marcos' Civilian Home Defense Force, which is due for disbandment in accordance with the Transitory Provisions of the 1986 Constitution.

The program likewise dismisses as "communist-inspired" the legitimate demands (e.g. land reform) of those who have taken up arms, (who, Ferrer said, are "not necessarily communists.")

Ferrer said he sees no reason why the *Alsa Masa* or NAKASAKA concept will not work in other areas. "There are no differences in the situation. It is just a matter of galvanizing the people to act together."

Earlier, before the secretary and the governors proceeded to their closed-door conference, Ferrer told reporters that counter-insurgency should not be a purely military problem, but "primarily people power."

Membership in the organization, he said, must be voluntary on the part of the people. (NAKASAKA, however, is being organized by the Davao del Sur government and the Provincial Military Command while *Alsa Masa* was fathered by the military in Davao City).

Ferrer said that he "wouldn't want these organizations to be using firearms. The military must do the fighting. Not the civilians. If barangay people are one in fighting communism, NPAs can't enter anymore. If it is necessary to arm them,

let the people pick and choose (who will be armed so that those armed will be responsible to the community and therefore, they won't commit abuses."

Ferrer said he informed the Cabinet about the program last Wednesday and quoted the President as having said "if people are trying to work together against insurgency, that's good."

The *Alsa Masa* and NAKASAKA are anti-communism organizations. Their ultimate objective is for the NPA to surrender. However, political observers here believe that instead of winning the non-communist rebels "back into the folds of law, the campaign may alienate them further by lumping them all as "communists."

Asked what safeguards the program will have against human rights violations, Ferrer answered "I really do not know yet."

Davao Sur OIC Governor Douglas Cagas told reporters waiting outside the closed door conference that "it is a unanimous decision to implement Nakasaka." Cagas has been selling his anti-communism campaign to the other governors.

Davao Oriental Governor Sibala said "We have our original plans also," and added that there is "not enough motivation (on the part of our residents) to fight back since our province is not as troubled as Davao City; and the NPAs there are not enough to give us trouble because Davao Oriental is just a temporary place for them to rest." Sibala said they will just adopt a "wait and see attitude" regarding the NAKASAKA implementation. "We are keeping our options open."

Surigao Sur Governor Felicidad Pimentel foresees problems if she implements either NAKASAKA or *Alsa Masa* in her province. "Most of the NPA in our province come from the same place. The problem is if you organize them to go after the rebels, I don't think the parents and relatives will go against them (rebels)." In her province, it is "only the military that wants to fight back." Sixty per cent of the residents of her province, Pimentel said, is "mass base of the NPA." Pimentel added that most of the rebels there are not communists: "*yung nasa taas lang ang* maybe (classified as) hardcore communists." Another problem she foresees is "that (implementation) is also expensive. It always rains in our province, so you will have to provide the volunteers with flashlights, raincoats and there are no big businessmen there who are willing to donate."

South Cotabato Governor Ismael Sueno suggested that cooperatives be set up in the barangays.

In Bukidnon, however, where there are also NPAs, Governor Carlos Fortich does not see the need for NAKASAKA. "In our province, we do not define what communism is. We define what true democracy is. The institution of true democracy is important because if you do that, communism becomes irrelevant."

Development plans in Bukidnon, Fortich said, emanate from the people, not from the representatives. It is the people themselves who propose projects, Fortich said, and these proposals are subjected to nominal voting by those 15 years old and above in the barangays, through general assemblies.

The cure to ignorance, Fortich added, is education. "We fight the idea of communism with democratic institutions."

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CSO: 4200/463

VIGILANTES WELCOMED TO JOIN DAVAO AFP OPERATIONS

Quezon City VERITAS in English 12-18 Mar 87 pp 20, 21

[Text]

AT LEAST 4,500 families (about 23,289 persons) in Region XI have abandoned their homes last March for fear of being caught in a crossfire between the military and New People's Army (NPA) guerillas.

The military has intensified its anti-insurgency operations code-named Oplan Eagle after the March 7 midnight deadline for rebels to surrender lapsed.

Brig. Gen. Romeo Reciña, Regional Unified Command (RUC) and Recom chief, told *Veritas* that "at least 10,000 officers and men of the AFP" are involved in the operations.

Asked about reports that Tadtad and Pulahan fanatics and the Bangsa Moro Army under Nur Khan are intending to join the operations, Reciña said: "Those who want to join may do so."

He also admitted that some Alsa Masa members are involved in the anti-insurgency operation as "guides."

AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Fidel Ramos, who came to Davao city for a command conference Tuesday, thanked and congratulated some 2,000 Alsa Masa members and organizers.

Said Ramos: "Without them (Alsa Masa) we shall not attain this degree of peace and order and stability in this area."

Ramos also said that the Armed Forces and

the Defense Department support "civilian organizations dedicated to the defense of their respective communities for as long as this is done according to law and with local government and military supervision."

A big number of evacuees left their homes because of radio reports (specifically those broadcast by Jun Pala, see past two issues of *Veritas*) that "we will be massacred if we don't evacuate," said residents of Fatima, Mandug, Davao.

Meanwhile, Ariel Badiang, National Democratic Front (NDF) representative to the Davao city ceasefire committee and two other NDF spokesmen said that Oplan Eagle "won't result to peace but rather, more violent incidents will occur."

They also said that the evacuation will affect the economic livelihood of the displaced farmers "while the psychological warfare being waged on television, radio, and in the newspapers will dislocate more residents."

The NDF spokesmen also warned that they will not hesitate to launch tactical offensives against abusive Alsa Masa members adding that they will do so "to defend the masses." Earlier, an Alsa Masa leader in Talomo District, Davao city, bragged to a foreign correspondent that they now have their own "Sparrow Units."

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CSO: 4200/463

COLUMNIST ANALYZES, CRITICIZES PACIFICATION CONCEPT

Quezon City VERITAS in English 12-18 Mar 87 p 21

[Commentary by Ed C. de Jesus: "Winning Hearts and Minds"]

[Text]

IT WOULD be unwise, perhaps, to read too much into the rhetorical flourishes of a presidential speech. But it would be imprudent to ignore statements that may be mistaken as reflecting government strategy.

Addressing the Artillery Association of the Philippines on March 9, President Corazon C. Aquino recalled the People Power phenomenon that toppled the Marcos regime: "The battle for hearts and minds was won here a year ago. It is now up to the men in uniform to protect that victory and defend its gains."

Unfortunately, hearts and minds are never irretrievably won or lost in one decisive battle. Hearts and minds can disagree with each other, deal selectively with complex issues, suspend judgment. They can grow weary, become disenchanted, turn fickle and reverse themselves. Hearts and minds embraced Cory Aquino last year. But it would be premature to claim that, in rejecting Marcos, they have permanently aligned themselves with Aquino.

The dubious premise that the battle for hearts and minds has been won leads to a flawed and potentially fatal conclusion: that, henceforth, the men in uniform bear the primary responsibility for protecting the "victory" and defending its gains. The statement reduces the challenge of insurgency to a peace and order problem requiring only a program of pacification.

By proclaiming the men in uniform as the guardians of victory, Aquino probably intended also to honor the soldiers and to express her confidence in them. The irony is that the military would probably decline the honor of taking the lead in a pacification program.

Its leading spokesmen have appealed frequently enough for the government to assume the responsibility in framing an integrated and comprehensive approach to combat insurgency. While confident in their ability to defeat the enemy in the battlefield, they appear less sanguine about the progress of the struggle for hearts and minds.

The increase in the incidence of armed encounters between government troops and NPA forces in fact makes a program of pacification mandatory. But such a program can take two forms. It can focus on

political issues and address the need for social development and fundamental reforms. Or, it can place the emphasis on the military threat facing the government and concentrate on strictly security issues.

The American authorities in Vietnam faced the problem of defining its pacification problem in the mid-Sixties. Although they already had nearly 200,000 troops in South Vietnam by 1966, they recognized the importance of "the other war," the war for hearts and minds.

Their response was a new pacification program called CORDS, Civil Operations and Rural Development Support. But the stress was still on the military and security dimension of pacification. Gen. William Westmoreland, chief of the U.S. Military Assistance Command in South Vietnam (MACV), asked for and received command over CORDS.

In practice, CORDS became secondary to other programs with more overt military objectives. While supporting the deployment of government cadre teams to assist in rural development, MACV also launched a program to encourage defections. The Phoenix Program, also initiated at this time, aimed at identifying and eliminating the communist political infrastructure at the village level.

But of greater impact on the population of Vietnam than any of these programs was the massive use of firepower to drive the peasants to the relative safety of the cities. The process of transforming rural farmers into urban refugees reduced the manpower pool available to the enemy. But this enforced urbanization also exposed the real intent of the pacification program. While ostensibly seeking to win hearts and minds, the basic concern was gaining physical and administrative control of warm bodies.

The strategy, of course, eventually failed. Even when warm bodies were forced to resettle within government boundaries, hearts and minds remained sympathetic to the rebel forces. In the absence of any movement towards social reform, no other result could be reasonably expected.

The comments of President Cory Aquino before the Artillery Association unfortunately do not help to clarify the thrust of the administration's pacification program. But she made other statements which all those who contend for hearts and minds ought to ponder upon: "Those who misread the rational will and overestimate their popular support will fall by the wayside."

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WEEKLY UPDATES ACTIVITIES OF RAM LEADERSHIP

Manila MR. & MS. (Special Edition) in English 27 Feb-5 Mar 87 pp 6, 7

[Article: "Remember RAM?"]

[Text]

JUAN PONCE ENRILE walks to the grave of a dear friend, Col. Tirso Gador, one of the heroes of the February revolt who was killed in a skydiving accident last July.

A year ago on that day, Feb. 22, an Uzi-toting Enrile with a few hundred reformist soldiers, spearheaded a rebellion which three days later sent Ferdinand Marcos into oblivion in Hawaii. Since then, Enrile has gone through the best of times and the worst of times. First feted as a hero, a survivor of 20 years of collaboration with the Marcos regime, his exit was that of a misfit in a new order with a different frame of mind. His leave-taking brought with it the twilight of the military reform movement's heroism in the minds of the public.

"Those of us who participated directly and actively in that event know only too well the risks, the doubts, the uncertainties and the price

that we were to pay for what we were doing at that time," Enrile told others gathered around Gador's grave, "But we did it not to seek glory, not to seek power. We did it not even to be remembered."

COL. GREGORIO "GRINGO" HONASAN helped trigger not just a revolution but a collective swooning among women with a yen for Mustaches and military gear. The mustache that graced so many magazine covers and television screens is no longer worn by this most familiar face of the revolution. Still-avid Gringo fans recoiled in shock as he read the gospel during the mass for Gador. "He shaved," they cried. The Gringo image has evolved since February, 1986 from that of mustachioed machismo, leading the attack on Marcos' presidential palace to that of a dangerous man whose orders were blocked by Armed Forces chief Gen.

Fidel Ramos during a supposed coup attempt against President Aquino last November.

For his role in the February uprising, Honasan has won the award of one of the ten most outstanding young men in the country and was awarded the military "distinguished star" award. Since then, the 38-year-old colonel has been kept from the public eye and has been under investigation for allegedly trying to oust Aquino, his commander-in-chief, the housewife he helped sweep into power.

The turn of fortunes appears to have embittered Honasan. "If I knew this was going to happen to us, I wish we had died." These words he qualified as a figure of speech, saying that "at least our place in history would have been secured."

Honasan has almost emptied the office he has occupied as security officer. Friends sometimes come in and go. The compound

has been quiet, the main door padlocked, and many of his 300 highly-trained men have been reassigned elsewhere.

Honasan has already become a target of suspicion. Closely watched, he cannot stay in any other military camp longer than perhaps five hours unless given permission. Recently, there has been an order to hold an inventory of his force's weapons.

"When there's trouble, or rumors of another coup come up, they call me up and ask, 'Where are you?'" Honasan said, shaking his head and smiling. "It's really flattering. I have been controversial enough even without talking."

But one morning last month, upon seeing his name linked to a coup attempt that was later staged by loyalist soldiers, Honasan telephoned higher officials, giving his "word of honor" that he has nothing to do with it. He told one officer, "*Wala naman akong ginagawa. . . paki sabi naman maawa sila.*" (I have done nothing. Tell them to have pity.)

Honasan said he worries most about his wife Jane, who is pregnant, and his three sons, two of whom are studying at the Ateneo de Manila.

Honasan recalls that one time, "some children in school told my sons, 'Did you know your father killed Olalia and planned to kill the President?' My sons went home and said, 'Papa, who's Olalia?'"

A son of a soldier, Honasan tries to look ahead — with 17 more years in the service of the Armed Forces. "I like to look at the sky and tell myself, there's going to be a future." He added, "People still smile and ask for me. They still ask for autographs, not as many as before. People will not forget."

* * *

COL. EDUARDO "RED" KAPUNAN

will be remembered by a stranger who requested that they be photographed side by side during the Gador services. Dressed smartly in black beret and green fatigues, Kapunan obliged, as reporters standing by shot questions at him.

Kapunan says he has accepted things as they come. "I feel bad not because I am leaving the ministry. I really feel bad about these seeming efforts to destroy us." By "us", Kapunan is referring to himself, Honasan and other key officers close to Enrile. Last month, Kapunan was linked to the murder of leftist labor union leader Rolando Olalia. The colonel denied involvement.

Friendship between Honasan and Kapunan began almost 16 years ago at the Philippine Military Academy. In combat two years after graduation, Kapunan rescued a wounded Honasan amid continuous firing from the enemy. As intelligence officer, Kapunan worked alongside Honasan (then Enrile's chief security offi-

cer and later his junior aide-de-camp). Both officers could have worked together again as instructors at the academy but plans have changed.

There have been jokes, Kapunan said, that he would become "Victor Corpus II" because of his new assignment at the academy. Eloquent and well-read, Kapunan shows promise as an instructor.

Did he regret taking part in the revolt? Says Kapunan: "That's past. I don't languish on the thought. It was something we had to do . . . we were expecting to be killed . . . I don't consider myself a hero."

He adds: "Why should I feel bitter? I did it because of myself. It was a very selfish thing." Kapunan shared accolades during the revolt with wife Linda who led computer analysts in walking out of a spurious COMELEC counting of votes at the Philippine International Convention Center soon after the presidential elections last year.

For weeks after the crisis last November, he felt unsure of where to go, except perhaps the golf course. "When I wake up in the morning, I had to decide whether to wear short pants or long pants," he said. He recalls not knowing where to go soon after graduation. He recalls staying at a convent for divine guidance and still not knowing where to go. "Now I am living by the day."

* * *

CAPT. REX ROBLES' wife, Marilyn, wore a black dress for the anniversary mass. She said it was her way of remembering a "world I threw away". Ms. Robles said she lost a good job when her boss fired her because she missed going to work at the height of the rebellion. Now that her husband has also lost his job as senior military assistant at the defense ministry since November, she can only make the best of what is left of the future.

"When they made a stand, I also made a stand," Ms. Robles said. "From the 22nd up until now, I've been depressed. *Ang iniisip ko sayang*. (It's such a waste) How can one live a normal life when one decides to take a stand?"

Robles has more free time now — with less hours on his new assignment, which is to find new recommendations

regarding the U.S.-Philippines Base Agreement, a subject he said he is totally familiar with. In fact, a former office-mate dubbed him a "walking encyclopedia on the Philippine bases."

"Sometimes, I would even feel terrible if I have to work twice a week," joked Robles. Now, there are social appointments to attend to, mostly with journalists, and rows of books to read.

"Rex has books from the Joy of Sex to strategy to a book collection on chess games. When our maid cleans the book shelves, Rex would know exactly what she moved," said Ms. Robles, a talkative and gregarious woman. At one point, she was telling a reporter where her husband's expertise as a soldier lies, but Robles stopped her before he "gets into trouble".

The captain had been in trouble. Like the others,

Robles was accused of being a coup plotter and allegedly threatened to kill Enrile, a man he served for nearly 12 years, if he does not go along with the plan. He denied the allegations, Ms. Robles said, and asked AFP Chief Gen. Fidel Ramos to conduct an investigation on the charge, which was made by an officer (Corpus). "If they hit my husband, they better hit me and my daughter."

* * *

ENRILE puts his palms together and bows his head. It was the sign of peace.

"It was nice for us to gather here, no longer as combatants but as brothers and friends, (not) as loyalist or reformist but simply Filipinos wishing to heal the wounds."

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CSO: 4200/463

DUTIES, CONTRIBUTIONS OF ECONOMIC SECRETARY MONSOD REPORTED

Sydney THE AUSTRALIAN in English 26 Feb 87 p 9

[Article by Barry Lowe]

[Text]

SOLITA Monsod talks faster than a livestock auctioneer in a voice made low and husky by years of chain smoking.

In the rough and tumble world of Philippines politics, this feisty middle-aged mother of five has in the space of less than 12 months created for herself a reputation for toughness and determination matched by only a few of her male colleagues in the Aquino Cabinet.

As Economic Planning Minister, she occupies a key role in President Cory Aquino's drive to get her beleaguered nation back on its feet after two decades of a downhill roller-coaster ride to economic ruin under the disgraced and discarded Marcos regime.

If Mrs Aquino is successful in dragging her country into a new era of prosperity then Solita Monsod will be remembered as the architect of her economic recovery plan.

For this former university lecturer the heady world of Cabinet meetings and international finance is a big step from her office on the University of the Philippines campus where she was sitting last March when she took a call from the presidential palace inviting her to a meeting with Mrs Aquino.

"That was all there was to it. I had had no involvement in politics before that. The caller just asked me to come to the palace and when I got there Mrs Aquino said would I take the job," she recalled.

In the year since then that job has grown into a consuming commitment to her nation's bid to throw off its "sick man of Asia" image and to embrace a rosier future.

Besides her economic planning portfolio, Mrs Monsod is director-general of the National Economic and Development Authority, chairman of six government committees and two institutions, and a member of 32 other commissions, committees, boards, centres, trusts, academies, corporations, councils, administrations and authorities.

She has also retained her post as Associate Professor of the University of the Philippines School of Economics.

"A good day is 11 or 12 hours, but sometimes it's from seven in the morning until one the following morning," she says, her accent still thick with the American burr she acquired during postgraduate studies at Pennsylvania University.

"But I jealously guard my weekends, that time is for my family and the only exception I make is if I get a summons to see the President."

The latest summons came last November when Mrs Aquino awoke all her Cabinet members early one Sunday morning to request their presence at a meeting to defuse yet another military-led conspiracy against the Government.

"But I try not to get involved too much in the political side of Cabinet life," Mrs Monsod asserts.

"After all, the economic turnaround is about the most important objective this Government has and it's more than enough for me to concentrate my energies on."

To Solita Monsod a big part of her job is selling her vision of economic prosperity to the people who will make that vision possible.

Her conviction is that the creative energy unleashed in the revolution against the Marcos dictatorship 12 months ago can be transformed into the popular will needed to solve the country's economic problems.

"The hard part is convincing people that this can be done . . . that they have the power to do it."

"It really boils down to a problem of habit. Under Marcos economic planning was a 'coffee table book' idea."

"The Government put out a glossy presentation of the economic future and the people were supposed to look at it and

say, 'Isn't that marvellous'.

"All economic decisions started and stopped at the presidential level.

"The only way to get anything done was to get to the President first.

"Now we have to change all that and convince the people that economic development begins with them.

"You could call it a bottoms up approach. We have to convince people at the bottom they can initiate economic growth themselves. We need to make them realise they have the power . . . and, boy, do they have the power."

One person who doesn't need convincing that the Philippines is on the way up is Mrs Monsod herself; she has drawn criticism from some quarters in recent months for her optimistic forecasts of economic progress.

The focus of these attacks on her optimism is her economic growth target of 6.5 per cent a year for the next six years, something that prosperous developed nations don't often achieve.

"I know we can do it," is the blunt way she answers these critics.

"Okay, 6½ per cent is an ambitious target, but the conditions are there for us to achieve it.

"We could get 4 per cent easily, but I say, 'Are we going to be lazy about it or are we are going to try?' So let's try.

"I don't care if people say I'm sticking my neck out and I don't give a damn about my personal credibility.

"Six and a half per cent is an achievable target so we've got nothing to lose by going for it."

But Mrs Monsod, together with other economists, concedes one thing that could stand in the way of strong economic growth is the external factor of the Philippines' need to reschedule its \$42 billion debt.

Much of that money was borrowed by ousted President Marcos and his extravagant wife, Imelda, for prestigious but wasteful projects.

The Aquino Government is struggling to persuade foreign debtors to give it some breathing space so it can get its house in order while paying back those debts at a slower rate.

But so far the foreign bankers have not been in a mood to compromise, setting Mrs Monsod and her Cabinet colleagues on a collision course with the international finance community.

"Over the next six years the Philippines will be paying out \$21 billion in interest payments to its foreign creditors.

"This is a hefty slice of the money we could be using to finance our own economic priorities such as land redistribution.

"The foreign creditors are going to have to realise that if

they don't come to the party over our request for easier repayment terms then it will be a big temptation for us to simply take matters into our own hands and decide unilaterally how we'll deal with our debts."

The threat of a debt moratorium, such as that declared by Brazil last week, is the stuff of nightmares for international creditor banks and Mrs Monsod and her colleagues are already talking openly about taking this radical option.

"We won't be pushed around; we can't afford to be," she declares.

"We don't have much in the way of alternatives and that has to be pounded into the heads of these foreign bankers."

That type of tough talking is typical of the Monsod approach to the Philippines' morass of sometimes seemingly insurmountable economic problems.

But it's an approach in which President Aquino appears to have unshakable confidence, reflected in her recent use of quotations from her Economic Planning Minister in speeches on the economy.

With the likes of Mrs Monsod in government even the most jaded Philippine watchers are forced to concede that if optimism and determination were enough the Philippines would achieve its economic miracle.

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CSO: 4200/463

VERITAS FOCUS ON AGRARIAN REFORM ISSUES

Complications Analyzed

Quezon City VERITAS in English 12-18 Mar 87 pp 14-19

[Article by Gigi S. Oyog: "Agrarian Reform in Perspective--This Land Is My Land"]

[Text]

EVEN before the sun is up, Ka Auring sets out daily to work on a 1.7 hectare piece of land in Barrio Look, Malolos, Bulacan, staying there well after sunset. She acquired this parcel of land in 1971 when a relative relinquished to her the right to till the land in gratitude for a favor from Ka Auring.

Since then, she has been religiously paying a rent of 12 cavans of palay per crop season. The rent was received by the landowner's overseer in the name of her relative. And there lies the roots of Ka Auring's dilemma.

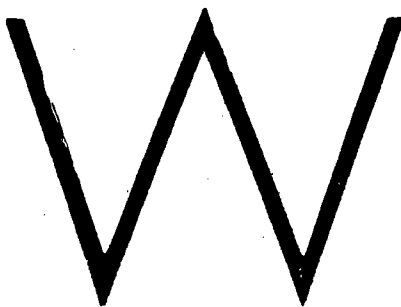
In 1982, when Conrado Estrella was still the Minister of Agrarian Reform under the Marcos government, Ka Auring received her Certificate of Land Transfer (CLT). The document identified her as the tenant and stated that when she would have paid up the amortization after 15 years, the land would become hers.

But even before obtaining the CLT, beginning in 1980, Ka Auring had been paying the amount of ₱1,000 a year as amortization. She has the receipts from the Land Bank of the Philippines to prove this.

Twelve cavans of palay or ₱1,000 a year may seem a pittance to the salaried class. But it means a lot to the ordinary farmer. Ka Auring, married with four children, estimates that after subtracting the amount for rent and production expenses, she is left with a monthly income of only ₱600. She says, "No matter how hard it is to pay the ₱1,000 annual amortization, my family persevered because we thought the land was going to be ours in the end."

Last February 8, she was summoned to the house of the barangay captain, where an employee of the landowner read to her some document in English and which she had to ask a friend to explain to her in Tagalog.

"My chest hurt for three days after I found out what the document said," Ka Auring relates. It was an order, signed by then Agrarian Reform Secretary Heherson Alvarez, cancelling her CLT and upholding the landowner in a case filed in 1985. The landowner argued in his petition that Ka Auring's relative who used to till the land was not even a tenant but a mere farmworker who had no right under the law to hand over the land to Ka Auring. The case is still on appeal.



WHEN 70 per cent of the entire population lives in poverty, when peasants till the land yet do not reap the rewards of their labor, it becomes necessary to distinguish law or legality from justice. Noted economist (and one of the candidates for the post of Secretary of Agrarian Reform) Dr. Mahar Mangahas wrote in "The Political Economy of Land Reform and Land Distribution in the Philippines," that acquisition of land may have been lawful since the Spanish occupation. But "the abuse of state prerogatives over the centuries to grant land and any other natural resources to the merely powerful and... socially undeserving few" has spawned glaring inequities in the distribution of land, and as a consequence, political power as well.

The need for the State to intervene and institute a comprehensive, "genuine" land reform program has been recognized for decades. The urgency was heightened all the more by the Mendiola tragedy of January 22 where at least 18 people were killed during a march to Malacanang led by the peasant organization Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP). The farmers' group was rallying for immediate government action on land reform.

Several key issues must first be threshed out, though before a land reform program can be implemented.

One is the question of justice — for both landowner and tenant.

To be fair to landowners who would be dispossessed of their lands, the contention is that they should receive "just compensation," which the landowning class defines as the lands' market value. But justice for peasants, says KMP Chairman Jaime Tadeo, calls for free distribution of lands.

Immediately, "free distribution" connotes "confiscation" of private property. From the outset, the government has said it cannot allow this. On the first meeting of the Cabinet Action Committee which President Corazon Aquino created last January 28 to study the demands of the KMP, the CAC held the view that "arbitrary confiscation is unfair deprivation of property and undermines the democratic principle of due process and equal protection of the law." The CAC, a Cabinet-level group, affirmed that "land distribution will take into consideration the rights of landowners to reasonable compensation."

Just what is meant by "reasonable" or "just" compensation? The members of the Constitutional Commission, who saw fit to protect the rights of landowners by inserting the words "just compensation" in the land reform provisions, indicated by the tenor of the debate in the Con-Com that "just compensation" means fair market value, as defined by jurisprudence.

But others hold contrary views. Dr. Mangahas, who serves as consultant to the NEDA task force on agrarian reform, points to the results of a nationwide survey conducted in October 1986 that shows 48 per cent of respondents reject the idea that just compensation equals fair market value, while 40 per cent agree with that definition.

GLORIA Erquiaga, owner of coconut lands, says she has been offering the remaining 517 hectares of her spread in Irosin, Sorsogon to the government since 1982. Among other reasons, she has grown tired of "people encroaching little by little on my land." She adds: "I might as well sell the whole thing. And the best thing would be to sell

it to the government because they will distribute the land to people who have been working for me for many years and who have lived there longer than I have."

If there are landowners who do not want to sell their lands, Erquiaga avers that there are those like her who do. But there have to be trade-offs. "When they take your land from you, they should pay right away. And they should pay you at good, fair market value. After all, I could sell it to other people."

In 1975, her late husband sold the first 72 hectares. Erquiaga does not remember why her husband sold the land, only that "he was happy selling it." Without saying that it was the reason her husband was happy over the deal, Erquiaga recalls that "they paid us fast for that, in maybe seven or eight months." "Which is what it should be," she quips.

But quick payment is just one of her requirements. Erquiaga demands to be paid in cash, but may give the government "two or three years" to pay her fully "to give the government time." She will even accept a valuation pegged "a little lower than market value, as long as I am paid in cash right away.

"The Land Bank paid us 10 per cent in cash and the rest in bonds that will mature only after 25 years," she says of the 1975 transaction. They assured us then that we could at least pay our taxes with those bonds. (But) you try paying your taxes with (the bonds), they will not accept. The real property taxes — nothing. The only bank that will accept those bonds is DBP and yet... If you sell those bonds outside, you only get 40 per cent consideration is a proposal which would allow former landowners to convert 10 per cent of those bonds into cash every year.

The underlying principle in arriving at a compensation formula, Dr. Mangahas added, should be "that it be progressive." Because land reform involves redressal of injustices, some sacrifices should be exacted from those who have benefited from the injustices. If adopted, the principle may mean that the landowner's "sacrifice" (or loss) should be in proportion to the size of his estate.

Understandably, the clamor for land reform alarms small landowners who acquired small tracts of land with their lifetime savings. According to Tadeo, the peasants will recognize their duty to pay small landowners who have gotten their landholdings cleanly. But, Mangahas also writes, "in the many instances in which great injustice and repression occurred, landholdings and land concessions can be recovered from the present holders without any compensation. . . Where social injustice has been present, (e.g. landgrabbing by Marcos cronies), there cannot be full economic compensation for landholders, for under full compensation, there is no sacrifice and therefore, no redressal."

But the issue of compensation for the landowners should not even be put on the same level as the issue of redressing injustice. Eduardo Tadem, Research Fellow on agrarian issues at the University of the Philippines, says: "It goes without saying that the compensation burden should not fall on the peasants because you will not be redressing the injustice that way."

Observers say the government's seeming reluctance to declare a clear-cut, basic agrarian reform policy, lies in its efforts to carefully balance the interests of the landed minority and the landless majority. But Tadem contends: "The centrist position the government has been holding on to all this time is not tenable. It will have to be a position that leans towards favoring the peasantry, farmworkers, and the rural poor who have suffered by the iniquitous land tenure system in the country."

KA Moteo, 62, came down from his farm in the hinterlands to the town center of Calumpit, Bulacan to buy medicine. Thirty years of tilling a 2.7 hectare piece of land have worn him down.

In 1984, Ka Moteo received his Certificate of Land Transfer that would have set him on the road to an independent income. With the land valued at P11,000, to be paid for in 15 years, Ka Moteo paid as amortization 26 cavans per crop season or 52 cavans of palay a year for 1985 and 1986.

After two years of paying amortizations, Ka Moteo was told that his papers at the Department of Agrarian Reform had not been put in order. A new set of documents was readied but he would have to start the payments all over again. The amortizations he paid in 1985 and 1986 would not be considered.

Compounding these problems are the vagaries of nature. When the rainy season comes, his fields frequently get flooded and most of his crops are washed out. He would be thankful, he says, if, out of the 80 cavans that each hectare ordinarily yields, he could salvage 10.

When Masagana 99 was launched in the 70s, Ka Moteo obtained a loan of P3,000. Unfortunately, that year, a typhoon wiped out the entire crop. He has since been unable to pay off his debt, which by now amounts to P14,000 including interest charges.

Natural disasters do not absolve him from the obligation to pay the landlord. With no earnings, Ka Moteo has had to borrow at usurious rates for the next planting's production expenses. If everything goes well, Ka Moteo, by the next harvest season, would have to pay the landowner two crop seasons' worth of rent. He also hopes to pay off the usurer. If not, his debts will just keep piling up. Shaking his weary head, Ka Moteo says, "Even if we wanted to pay, we just could not because there is not even enough money for the family's needs. It would be a big help to us if the land were ours and we would no longer have to pay rent to the landowner."

IF JUSTICE were to be rendered the peasants, Tadeo says, the government would have to distribute the lands free in view of historical imperatives. But the inter-agency task force which includes representatives of NEDA, the Departments of Agrarian Reform, Natural Resources, Finance, and the Land Bank, holds the view that farmers must pay for the land given them. In the first CAC meeting and dialogue with the KMP last February 6, the peasant organization backtracked from its previous stance of "free distribution" and compromised on "affordable cost." However, Tadeo clarifies, "affordable cost" hinges on the peasant's capability to pay after fulfilling his basic needs first, like food, shelter, clothing, and education for his children.

One would have to go back to the past - - re-live the decades of suffering wrought by tenancy - - to appreciate the KMP's demand for free distribution. Tadeo says PD 27, promulgated on October 21, 1972, for one, decreed the "emancipation of tenants from the bondage of the soil transferring to them the ownership of the land they till . . ." and enjoined the tenants to pay the amortization of about P15,000 to be paid in 15 years. KMP officers contend that the rentals paid by tenants even before they received their CLTs should be considered as part of the amortization payments.

KA MIKE, now 60, has been tilling the soil since he was 20. He used to help his father until he got married in 1955 and acquired his own two-hectare plot.

He received his CLT in 1983 but after only a year, stopped paying the amortizations due "to give myself a break."

Ka Mike recounts that the Marcos land reform program, which was attractive at the beginning, eventually doomed the peasants to more years of suffering. High-yielding varieties of palay were introduced, and although these new varieties required the use of pesticides and fertilizers, these inputs were still affordable then. Whether by design or due to circumstance, the prices of these and other production inputs began to increase. And by 1981, Filipino farmers like Ka Mike among them, definitely felt the pinch.

As with most tenants, Ka Mike spent for all the production requirements per hectare of land: a conservative estimate of about three bags of "16-20" fertilizer and two bags of urea; three bottles of three different pesticides; about 45 liters of gasoline for the hand tractor; about five cavans of palay (to save on labor costs); transportation costs in bringing the harvest to the warehouse; irrigation; and extra labor during the harvest season.

On top of these was the interest paid on money to buy the inputs. Aside from this, Ka Mike had to pay 12 cavans per crop season as land rental. If all went well, he earned P17 a day.

Focus

IN addition to limiting land reform to rice and corn lands, the Marcos government's program was slowed down by a complicated and unattractive compensation scheme for landowners who, in turn dragged their feet when it came to turning over ownership of land.

For instance, one alternative to fixing compensation value was the Landowner/Tenant Production Agreement which provided for bilateral negotiations between the landowner and the tenant with the then Ministry of Agrarian Reform as the mediator. This alternative scheme, however, "appears not only to have contributed to delays in the process of land valuation but also vested a powerful weapon in the hands of landowners to delay the completion of the land transfer process," a NEDA study notes.

During the ensuing delay in the land transfer, and distribution of CLTs, tenants continued to pay rentals to the landowners. These rentals, paid from October 21, 1972, Tadeo explains, should have been considered amortizations. By now, many peasants should have been landowners, if only these payments had been considered, not to mention the land rents they had been paying before 1972.

"In all the years he has worked the soil and paid rent, the peasant has more than paid for the land," Tadeo believes. "This is the crux of (our cry for) social justice."

SO FAR no definite formula for repayment by former tenant-farmers has been adopted. But one likely formula for affordable cost is based on the land value as computed from actual and past production. The same method of land valuation was adopted under PD 27.

The value of the land is the average gross production for the last three years preceding the placement of the land under PD 27 multiplied by 2.5 times. Under PD 27, six per cent was added on to the principal. To further make it even easier on the peasants, policy-makers of the Aquino government have proposed that the cost arrived at may be paid over 30 years, instead of 15 and at three per cent interest instead of six per cent.

On the surface, the proposal may seem to have eased the plight of tenants by halving the interest rates and stretching the period of amortization. But the KMP argues that essentially, the proposed formula is no different from that adopted under the Marcos regime. If the tenants had to pay P15,000 in 15 years under the Marcos regime, they would now have to pay about P30,000 in 30 years, they say. It should be recalled, says Tadeo, that even Land Bank data reveal that the collection rate under the Marcos administration was a poor nine per cent. In the study (done by NEDA), it was recognized that though there were other reasons for this low performance, one major reason was the low paying capacity of the farmers. "The adverse movement in the farmers' terms of trade (high input and low output prices) has largely eroded their paying capacity," the report said.

In his paper, Dr. Mangahas warns that "we should learn from the mistakes of the past." Marcos' Operation Land Transfer, he wrote, "was impelled less by sincere concern for social justice than by the need of the authoritarian government to divide opposition forces."

The present government has set itself up as the exact opposite of the Marcos government. Former DAR Secretary (and now Senatorial candidate) Heherson Alvarez, on whom was pinned responsibility for the Mendiola massacre because he had supposedly ignored the peasants' demand for a genuine land reform program, contends that the government has in fact started to address the issue of land ownership since 1986.

Last February 8, Alvarez announced in a press conference the proposed comprehensive land reform program of the government, divided into four phases and complemented by support programs like marketing facilities and credit.

Phase A will complete the remaining 70 per cent of tenanted rice and corn lands originally targeted in 1972 under PD 27 by the end of 1988, affecting 557,000 hectares of land.

Under Phase B, agrarian reform will be expanded to include 936,000 hectares of idle and abandoned lands, foreclosed farm lands, sequestered agricultural properties, voluntary offers and lands to be expropriated.

These land transfer activities are expected to be completed by 1989. Simultaneously, the government will undertake a campaign to reduce land rents being paid by share tenants regardless of crop and to promote land sharing in sugarcane and other croplands so that farm workers will at least have some land on which to plant food crops.

Phase C will cover the *haciendas* under labor administration (private industrial plantations), retained parcels in tenanted rice and corn areas, and the tenanted non-rice and non-corn croplands. Phase C is not expected to begin until 1989.

Phase D will cover public alienable and disposable lands.

ALL these will take money. Some P36 billion will be needed to finance Phases A and B alone, and 60 per cent of this amount may have to come from foreign loans. The proposed financing of the program will be discussed during a meeting of the Consultative Group of foreign creditor governments and multilateral financial institutions this April. Early last month, Finance Secretary Jaime Ongpin (in a *Businessday* article) said he was hoping to get soft loans payable in 30 years with a 10-year grace period at an interest of three per cent.

There is no guarantee the country will be able to secure these soft loans, even as some people are sure to protest at the prospect of adding to the country's already huge foreign debt. *Veritas* sources say the government's finance people repeatedly stress during CAC and other such meetings that without the foreign loans, it would be difficult to implement the government's land reform program.

Executive Secretary Joker Arroyo, in an article in *Panorama* magazine, asks: "Where will we get all that money? So we have the proposal—but it cannot be implemented without any source of funds." Although the government is determined to push through with land reform, Arroyo says, "until we can find the money, it cannot be done the way we want it to be done."

There may be other sources of funds to finance agrarian reform. One would be to levy special taxes which would go to the land reform program. Dr. Mangahas cites the results of the survey referred to earlier showing 67 per cent are willing to pay special taxes for land reform.

Last March 3, President Aquino announced that proceeds from the sale of the government's non-performing assets will be used to fund land reform.

These idle assets are companies owned or controlled by Marcos cronies which have been taken over by the government. These NPAs have a book value of P108 billion but may fetch only P23 billion in the market. Even then, there may be no takers at all.

Another way, to some the better way, is to revise the national budget and allot a bigger, if not the biggest, portion for agrarian reform. Gerry Bulatao, DAR planning chief, says that if done this way, the government could prove its commitment to giving priority to implementing land reform. Even before the Mendiola massacre, word got around in government circles that land reform was of "low priority" precisely because of the government's limited resources and the huge amount of money needed to finance the program.

Ongpin, in another article in *Business Day*, declared that the government is committed to the program even without the foreign loans. However, he warns that the pace of implementation would be slower. But, as Dr. Mangahas writes, "Land reform should not wait until after the money comes."

If the Aquino government were truly committed to genuine and comprehensive agrarian reform, peasant leaders and even concerned officials urge her to declare a sweeping land reform policy even before Congress convenes in June. Such an announcement would also pre-empt Congress, that has, by tradition, been dominated by the landed elite, who could very possibly indefinitely postpone action on land reform.

Specifically, the KMP has urged the Aquino government to assert itself using interim measures on the implementation of Phases C and D which will cover the big plantations. By choosing to merely continue the land re-

from program of Marcos, the Aquino administration has inadvertently run against small landowners. According to Tadeo, 57 per cent of rice and corn lands are small landholdings.

Last March 3, President Aquino announced that she would legislate land reform even before Congress convenes in July if necessary and if recommended by her Cabinet. Previously, the government has said it would leave to Congress to flesh out the details of Phases C and D, which would need enabling legislation.

IMPLEMENTING genuine land reform requires strong political will. And vision, adds Bulatao, a vision that includes national industrialization and not only limited to the redistribution of wealth or land ownership and increased agricultural productivity.

One hopes the Aquino government lacks neither political will nor vision when it comes to redressing social injustices. The President even has the mandate to institute reform, given the landslide Yes vote in the last plebiscite. In fact, it was precisely such a mandate that she asked the farmers marching to Mendiola to wait for. Now is the best time for the Aquino government to take action, for as Dr. Mangahas writes, land redistribution schemes have always been launched at the beginning of new political regimes. And for this regime, the "beginning" is fast running out.

Planters Consider Impact

Quezon City VERITAS in English 12-18 Mar 87 p 18

[Article by Gigi S. Oyog: "The Debate Rages On"]

[Text]

LAND reform is bound to fail," Silverio Berenguer, an owner of coconut lands from Sorsogon, Sorsogon says succinctly. But another landowner, Jess Lazatin from San Fernando, Pampanga says resignedly: "If people believe that land reform is necessary for the salvation of the nation, I am willing to go along."

Perhaps the reason for the historical failings of land reform programs in this country is not that land reform threatens too many people and holds out the possibility of overturning the social order. Perhaps it has more to do with the question of survival.

A common fear about the program is that it would simply create more candidates for the ranks of the poor out of the dispossessed landowners. Stripped of their land, from where will the landed class earn their income? Where will

farm laborers with no land to till go?

This is what Berenguer had in mind when he says: "For land reform to be successful, it must be accompanied by industrialization."

Berenguer's doubts arise from his observation that, given the state of national affairs, there seem to be no viable industries landowners could invest in or establish. Even if landowners were to set up their own businesses, Berenguer wonders if the government would protect small entrepreneurs like him. Picking up a plastic napkin

holder from the table top, he asks: "If I start producing this for example, would the government protect me?" Then he proceeds to answer his own question: "But what is happening right now is (that the government is allowing other countries) to dump their excess finished products here."

Much of the reservations about land reform stem from a set of inter-related traditional and "static" notions. It starts off from the misconception that land re-

form necessarily means only endless fragmentation of a limited resource like land among generations of peasant families until the land units become "postage stamp-sized farms."

This brings up, in turn, the question of productivity, especially with farms whose productivity would fall as the operating sizes shrink. Gerry Rodriguez, owner of sugar farmlands in Pampanga, says that land planted to sugar is not suitable for fragmentation. He adds: "If we have radical land reform for the moment, I am afraid the production will completely cease. Right now, I think we need all the production we can get to revive the economy."

In a research paper, Dr. Mahar Mangahas of the think-tank Social Weather Station warns against confusing the attainment of "distributive equity," which is the bottom-line of land reform in the Philippine context, with the attainment of economic productivity.

Productivity may or may not be affected depending on how the program operates, Mangahas says. There is even a very good chance that the effect of land reform on productivity will be *neutral* if the operating sizes of farms are left undisturbed.

The present thrust of land reform planners is towards both individual and collective ownership of land. But some doubt that farmers' cooperatives could work, asking if peasants are ready for the discipline and responsibilities of collectivism. Some ask if farmers are ready for land reform at all.

Lazatin recalls that he once joined a group of Central Luzon landowners who were consulted by former President Diosdado Macapagal when he was about to launch a land reform program. The landowners suggested that land reform be implemented on a voluntary or optional basis, the option being on the part of the tenant. Lazatin quoted Macapagal as having made a "wise comment": "If former US President Abraham Lincoln gave the slaves the chance to be emancipated, or to remain slaves they would prefer to remain slaves." Says Lazatin: "Because I must admit that a lot of slaves were treated well. Now the same thing is true in tenancy. A lot of tenants are being treated well and would like to remain tenants, I believe."

When asked in a recent interview, about the prospects of Hacienda Luisita going under land reform, President Aquino's brother Jose "Peping" Cojuangco reportedly asked: "Is it not possible that Filipinos would want to remain feudal?"

Educating the farmers would be one way to tackle this question. Rodriguez suggested this, although his vision extended only so far as educating the farmers on their duties and responsibilities like paying taxes, and all other dues to the government.

He muses: "If we can wean them out of this paternalistic system, (which, it must be pointed out, was established and actively encouraged by the landed class. — Ed) maybe this thing will work."

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CSO: 4200/463

WEEKLY CRITICIZES LAG IN AGRARIAN REFORM APPOINTMENT

Quezon City VERITAS in English 12-18 Mar 87 p 7

[Editorial: The Man for DAR"]

[Text]

The tragedy in Mendiola should weigh significantly on the choice for Secretary for Agrarian Reform. The current Cabinet revamp has so far left a vacancy in this department which is the key agency in formulating and translating the government's program on land use and rural development. As such, it will also necessarily play a role in the government's approach to the problem of insurgency.

It took a while for the Aquino government to appoint a minister for agrarian reform. It was read by many as a lack of resolve on the part of the government to attend to the issue of landless peasants. The appointment of someone who had to live so long abroad as a political exile was met by skepticism on the part of the farmers and their leaders who felt that Alvarez would come to his tasks cold and out of touch with the current mainstream of his land issues.

The government will need to think out its second appointment to this office but it should not allow the position to go empty for too long. The agrarian community has rightfully agitated for reforms and these should be attended to with sensitivity as well as with urgency.

The appointment requires certain personal and professional qualifications. The DAR secretary must demonstrate a personal commitment to a vision of land reform as a major component of the government's development program. He must be willing to take up its advocacy as a priority of the Aquino government, to speak convincingly of its importance and urgency to both private and public sectors. But the new secretary must also be able to establish rapport with agrarian sectors and their leaders so that he can win their confidence and credibly represent their interests in government.

Most important, the official must be action-and-goal-oriented, one who can set up a program and manage the process that will bring about the accomplishment of set objectives.

The government cannot afford to err in its appointment. The decision should consider primarily the interests of those in the countryside who have suffered deprivation and who have for so long waited for government to attend seriously and sincerely to their needs.

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CSO: 4200/463

BUSINESS DAY STRIKE, IMPACT REPORTED

Quezon City VERITAS in English 12-18 Mar 87 p 4

[Text]

A STRIKE staged by about 100 employees of *Business Day* (circulation: approximately 60,000) continued to cripple operations of the country's only business daily since strikers started Sunday to protest management's alleged refusal to negotiate a collective bargaining agreement.

The Buklod-Manggagawa ng *Businessday*, which won in a certification election held last December 23, succeeded in preventing the distribution of last Monday's issue, the first time in 20 years that the business daily failed to hit the streets.

Union demands also include the reinstatement of dismissed union officers and the restoration of previous status and benefits of active union members who were demoted.

Leticia M. Locsin, managing editor and wife of *Business Day* publisher Raul L. Locsin, said management would sit down with labor to

thresh out a CBA only if the strikers lift the picket lines. Locsin added that the other union demands were "non-negotiable."

Management, she said, did not want to negotiate "at the point of a gun."

The BMB has rejected this position saying their notice of strike, filed December 16, is three months old, during which attempts to hold preventive conciliation talks failed to solve the dispute. "This (the strike) is the only weapon we have," union members said.

On Monday night, management called union officials to a meeting and issued what amounted to an ultimatum: allow the paper to come out or we will close down the paper.

The BMB agreed in what it called "a gesture of good faith," but promptly resumed the picket after the delivery vans had driven off.

Observers felt that with the contending parties baring their "weapons," it was time the ministry of labor stepped in.

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CSO: 4200/463

COLUMNIST REPORTS MIXED BLESSINGS IN COCONUT INDUSTRY

Quezon City VERITAS in English 12-18 Mar 87 p 17

["It Was Like This" column by Mario P. Chanco: "Coco Days, Political Daze"]

[Text]

THE good news is that the coconut industry might yet see a true renaissance.

The bad news is that politics (and economics) may prevent that from ever happening.

Likeable and knowledgeable Joe Romero has taken over the chairmanship of the Philippine Coconut Administration. But almost simultaneously, events have been happening fast and furiously in the field of coconut economics and politics. It will be a deathly race to the finish to see which one wins out — the old and new coconut Mafias, or the coconut farmers and workers.

What is at stake is control and rationalization of potentially the biggest and most promising of all the agri-based industries in the Philippines. That's the coconut industry. More than half of the nation's population is directly dependent upon it for survival. But the economic and political interests who control the coconut peoples' sole source of livelihood are an implacable and greedy lot. If they can help it, they will keep the people from forevermore raising their bodies above the poverty line.

Today a crazy-quilt situation exists in the coconut business.

As a hangover from the oppressive coconut levy that heavily penalized the poor coconut work people, the EDSA revolution notwithstanding, the farmers had to suffer many more months before the price of copra recovered. Today, even with a bad supply situation staring the world in the face, the cartels abroad, and their dummies in the Philippines, have started a psychological warfare campaign. They are whispering that many new substitute oils are due to appear on the market, in volumes that will surely affect coconut products. They hint darkly at another swing downwards of all basic coconut products.

Adding to the confusion is the uniquely perverse situation prevailing in the local coconut world.

Some 38,000,000 shares of United Coconut Planters Bank stock, which are theoretically owned by 1.4 million coconut farmers, are at present the subject of an acrimonious struggle. The three groups involved are the big coconut cartels standing behind Coco King Danding Cojuangco,

the San Miguel Corporation's new management staff led by Ramon del Rosario Jr. and Andres Soriano III, and the sequestered UCPB itself, represented by the PCGG's Ramon Diaz and newly appointed SMC Board Member Ramon Sy. Sy is also president of UCPB.

The San Miguel partisans tried to acquire the sequestered shares of the farmers, and last year made a gallant though unrequited attempt to buy them. PCGG stopped them cold in their tracks. An arbitration committee was recently set up to handle this matter. But if the committee fails to reach an agreement, the government -- meaning the PCGG -- will have to hand down the final word.

The SMC group hopes for relief when the courts become recognized as the venue for such disputes. But this seems a forlorn hope, at best. Even if the case is temporarily decided in favor of SMC, appeals and long petitions for review are likely to keep the petition in the courts for years.

By that time, the farmers figure, those of them who still hold their UCPB (and SMC) shares will either be six feet below the earth, or will have been forced to sell their unproductive lands. But there is a ray of hope. PCGG Chairman Ramon Diaz told *Veritas* last week that 300,000 farmer-owners of PCGG and SMC stock had been identified. If the ownership papers of the 1.1 million other farmers can be found, hallelujah! Then it may be possible to instigate proceedings that will allow the farmers to get back what they had lost during the days of the coconut levy.

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CSO: 4200/463

PROBLEMS OF BATAAN EPZ ANALYZED

Quezon City VERITAS in English 12-18 Mar 87 p 22

[Article by Riza A. Moises: "How Do You Solve the Problem of Bataan's EPZ"]

[Text]

THE Bataan Export Processing Zone, once considered the showcase of export processing zones in the world, is in danger of collapse.

Plagued by labor unrest and allegedly inadequate facilities, the BEPZ faces the threat of pull-outs by its remaining companies.

The BEPZ, the first to be established in the country, started operations in 1974, as part of the government's industrialization bid export thrust. It is located in a 345-hectare lot of rolling hills in Mariveles town, some 170 kilometers northwest of Manila.

Initially, the zone was equipped with modern facilities such as housing units, recreation and commercial establishments, schools and hospitals to provide management and workers "ideal and dignified working atmosphere."

By 1979, about 50 companies employing some 20,000 workers operated in the zone. These companies produced an average of US\$12 million worth of export products yearly.

The years 1980 to 1982 saw the peak years of the BEPZ; it had a total of 56 companies in full operation, employing about 25,000 workers.

The decline started in late 1983 when labor unrest as in other businesses in the other parts of the country, started to affect business operations at the zone.

Among other things, the workers demanded more realistic wages, better working conditions and additional benefits.

The continued deterioration of the labor conditions at the zone forced a number of giant firms to close shop. These were: Ford, Phils.; Mattel,

Phils., (maker of Barbie dolls); Caemark, an electronic motor manufacturer; and San-Ros, makers of shoe components and leather accessories.

Consequently, over 6,000 workers, mostly from Bataan and neighboring provinces, lost their jobs.

Today, only 31 firms, which employ about 18,000 workers, are operating at the BEPZ. These multi-national companies are, however, threatening to pull out from the zone if the labor unrest persists and facilities remain unattended.

Lotus Manufacturing Company, a Korean firm engaged in the production of rubber shoes, has expressed desperation over the labor conditions at the BEPZ and is expected to pull out from the zone.

Other firms, Zone sources say, are thinking of following suit.

Recently operations at the zone bogged down as about 5,000 workers led by the *Alyansa ng mga Manggagawa sa Bataan-Bataan Labor Alliance* (AMBA-BALA), an affiliate of the Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU), barricaded the zone from January 27 to 31 to protest the killing of farmers and sympathizers in Mendiola last January 22.

In the course of a military dispersal operation, two persons, one a 10-year old boy, died while 33 others were wounded.

As a consequence of the work stoppage companies suffered losses in export earnings amounting to millions of dollars.

The labor problems were further compounded by power failures which prevented most of the companies from meeting production targets and delivery schedules. As a result, many importers cancelled their orders.

The investors also cited other problems such as inadequate facilities, the alleged ineptitude of Export Processing Zone Authority (EPZA) officials and "total government neglect."

The investors have expressed fears that the problems may turn the export processing zone into a "monumental disaster" and "another of the nation's white elephants."

Jaime Guerrero, EPZA administrator, told newsmen in Balanga, Bataan last week, however, that "normal operations" prevail at the BEPZ.

Guerrero said some companies have left the zone for reasons other than the alleged unfair labor conditions and inadequate facilities. He said some of them have pulled out because the raw materials they need are not available. Others have been affected by world-wide recession.

On the problem of power failure, Guerrero said that cables have been rehabilitated since Decem-

ber last year, explaining that from underground cables, power cables have "now been set up aerially to facilitate repair and rehabilitation."

The situation at the BEPZ, at present, is not as bad as it is portrayed in the papers, Guerrero said. In fact, three companies are expanding operations and additional investors are expected to start operations next month at the BEPZ and other export processing zones in the country.

Aside from the BEPZ, three other export processing zones are operating in the country. These are in Cebu, Baguio City and Cavite.

The regional Ministry of Labor and Employment is now negotiating for a dialog with the workers, in the hope of threshing out problem areas of the labor group at the zone.

Regional Director Bienvenido Laguesma said the workers are scheduled to meet shortly with Labor Secretary Franklin Drilon.

Drilon had earlier said that the Labor Department would immediately pinpoint critical areas and settle management-labor disputes before they erupt into big strikes.

The BEPZ workers' demands include a 25 per cent salary increase including cost of living allowance and basic pay, repeal of repressive labor laws, cementing of all Mariveles roads, abolition of parking fees in the town, protection of fishermen from illegal fishing and pirates, and improvement of the town's public market.

The BEPZ operators, on the other hand, said some of the demands of the workers are beyond their capacity to deny or grant, since they are "politically-motivated."

However, they are hopeful that the situation at the zone will improve once the guidelines on strikes embodied in Executive Order concerning labor signed recently by the president takes effect.

Meanwhile, Trade and Industry Secretary Jose Concepcion, Jr. announced the formation of a special board by the President which will oversee day-to-day activities at the BEPZ.

The management board will assess the labor conditions at the Zone and implement solutions to the problems to prevent company pull-outs.

The board, composed of the BEPZ zone administrator, representatives of companies operating at the zone, Department of Trade and Industry, Bureau of Customs and the Department of Labor and Employment, was organized by the President in the wake of continued labor unrest at the zone which could spell the untimely death of the nation's premier export processing zone.

'CIVIL SERVANT' VIEWS HMONG ISSUE, LAOS, U.S. CULPABILITY

BK021437 Bangkok NAE0 NA in Thai 2 Apr 87 p 3

[Column by Witthaya Tanthasut: "International Politics"--quotation marks as published]

[Text] When I came across a high ranking civil servant in Chiang Mai Province, this is what he told me: "I have such an uneasy feeling and I do not know in whom I am going to confide. Please relay what I feel to others." And this is what he said to me.

1. On the U.S. protest of Thailand eviction of the Hmong to Laos.

This tribal people have largely created the problem. In time of peace, they grow opium. In time of war, they are mercenaries. During the Vietnam War, many of the Hmong were hired by the United States as mercenaries. It is right for Thailand, therefore, to push them out. Those illegal Hmong are real trouble for Thailand. We want to ask the United States if we can build cages to contain these people the way the United States did for the Red Indians in case we have to keep the Hmong here? If so, let the Americans pay us for the construction of the cages.

2. On Lao Deputy Foreign Minister Souban Salitthilat's interview attacking Thailand in Thailand.

This is, in fact, the fault of the Foreign Ministry for failing to block Souban. A visitor to a country for talks is supposed to respect the host country. Otherwise, the host country has the right to stop the interview, or impose other measures in retaliation.

"The Foreign Ministry is too well meaning. It does not know who they are. This Mr Souban was an average youth who got a chance to study in France. Once back home, he became vain. When he was invited as guest of the Thai Government, he exploited the occasion, eating sirloin steak, drinking wine, and bringing along a bunch of friends to the feast. It was not his money. During a previous visit, he brought along 50 friends. The Thai Government was host to all those people. His visit to Thailand this time is a precondition for the future trip to Laos by the Thai army chief. How then can we term our talks with Laos as fraternal and sincere?

3. On the accusation by U.S. politicians that Thailand lacks sincerity in efforts to make hilltribes give up opium cultivation.

The fact is: The hilltribes depend on opium poppies because the crops earn them money and they are easy to grow and to tend. If they grow other crops, they will have to bring them down to the markets. They also get low prices for those crops. The problem of marketing is most important. Opium is also for them a medicine for all kinds of pains. They take opium when they have a stomach ache or headache. When a woman has delivery pains, she is given opium. Opium is put on her womb to heal the tear.

"If we stop the hilltribes from growing opium, what would they have to support themselves? American politicians want us to use herbicide to spray opium crops. That would be tantamount to poisoning our water sources down to the Chao Phraya River, tantamount to destroying Thailand. Will the United States be responsible for the lives of the Thai people? The United States is the first to be blamed because it only blames the opium growing countries without doing anything to stop the American people from being addicted to the drug. If there are no more drug addicts in the United States, there will be less demand for opium."

This senior official told me: We must try to make the United States understand that it cannot blame others alone--the United States itself has a lot of blame too.

Yes, I'll be your mouthpiece. If what I put in this column is not enough, you can make a long-distance call to me.

In international politics, each country tries its best to protect its interests. Thailand has been too modest. It should now stand straight in front of its peers in the international arena.

The United States has a headache over its growing deficit and dropping dollar value. The more he tries to solve the problem, the more it seems Reagan loses to Japan. If he bans imports of computer microchips, Reagan would again make American businessmen trading with Japan suffer more.

What helps America survive today is its interest from overseas investment in various countries around the world. As for us, we must try to limit the American role and its arrogance in our country by being arrogant ourselves.

/12232

CSO: 4200/458

LAW PROFESSOR ON REFUGEE/ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT ISSUE

BK020317 Bangkok THE NATION in English 2 Apr 87 p 4

[Article by Withit Muntaphon, Associate Law Professor, Chulalongkon University:
"Differentiating Refugees from Illegal Immigrants"]

[Text] Much acrimony has arisen recently between Thailand and the United States on account of two incidents of forced repatriation of refugees to Laos. In fact, two groups of Hmong hilltribes. One group of some 38 persons was taken from Ban Winai refugee camp and sent back to Laos, while another group of some 97 persons was apprehended en route to Ban Winai and likewise sent back to Laos. The Thais have claimed that these were not refugees but were illegal immigrants, and that we have a right to return them to Laos. The United States seems to be less convinced. One U.S. source has referred to these incidents as 'one of the gravest violations in Southeast Asian refugee camps in more than a decade.'

Regrettably, the 'Noi Chai' (Hurt) syndrome seems to be gaining ground. Since we have done so much, why is it that they are pointing the accusing finger at us? Why the disruption among old friends?

Hmongs

Hmong hilltribes have been present in Thailand for centuries. However, it is in the context of refugees from Laos since 1975 (the fall of Laos into communist hands) that the current Hmong refugee problem has to be viewed. Laotian refugees are generally divided into two groups: lowlanders and hilltribes, the Hmongs constituting the majority of the latter. Since 1975, some 320,000 Laotian refugees have entered Thailand, of whom some 200,000 have been lowlanders, the rest being hilltribes. Of this group, some 160,000 lowlanders have been resettled abroad, while some 74,000 hilltribe people have been resettled likewise. The United States has been the main resettlement country. Current statistics in internationally assisted camps in Thailand indicate that there are some 24,000 lowlanders and 60,000 hilltribe people waiting for solutions.

The Hmongs are a particularly sensitive group for various reasons. Rightly or wrongly, the Thai public tends to associate them with opium cultivation, although recent development initiatives on the part of the Thais have encouraged the Hmongs to change their modus vivendi. However, there is another sensitive

side to them: Hmongs are generally known to have been allies of U.S. activities and personnel before the change of government in Laos in 1975. Therefore, their political and military affiliations with the United States have not endeared them to the present regime in Laos which is of a diametrically opposed ideological mould. A fortiori, if there is persecution against opponents of the Laotian Government, it is not improbable that the Hmongs would be high on the list of targets for such persecution.

With regard to the two groups of Hmongs who were recently sent back to Laos, although the numbers were relatively small, the 'qualitative' nature of the alleged forced repatriation raises a range of mine-boggling questions, including the following:

--Is there a difference between refugees' and "illegal immigrants"?

--Is there a procedure for differentiating between 'good faith' asylum-seekers and 'bad faith' asylum-seekers?

--What are the options for establishing an equitable balance for the future?

Refugees and Illegals

A general definition of the term 'refugees' can be found in the 1951 UN Refugee Convention, as amended in 1967. A 'refugee' is he who "owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it."

It is worth noting at this juncture that Thailand is not bound by its provisions. However, the definition proffered, based upon 'well-founded fear of persecution,' may be said to represent the viewpoint of the international community which has immediate bearing on Thailand. Moreover, the definition of the term 'refugees' has been extended in recent years at the international level to cover two other important categories: victims of man-made disasters (i.e. warfare) and victims of human rights violations. In other words, it may be submitted that the term 'refugees' encompasses persecuted persons, victims of armed conflicts and of human rights violations.

However, at the national level, it has been Thai policy to refer to those seeking asylum in Thailand as 'displaced persons' or 'illegal immigrants' rather than as 'refugees.' This is a significant terminological differentiation between national and international perspectives. While the international community is prone to refer to asylum-seekers, including the Hmongs in question, as 'refugees,' the Thai authorities prefer to name them 'displaced persons' or 'illegal immigrants,' the latter being most commonly used at present.

By classifying asylum-seekers as 'illegal immigrants,' general immigration law is called into play thereby conferring upon the Thai authorities great latitude

in the actions that may be taken vis-a-vis asylum-seekers; indeed much greater latitude than in the actions which may be taken vis-a-vis 'refugees,' as the latter have specific rights according to international law irrespective of the national viewpoint. Of critical importance is the principle of international law which prohibits the forced repatriation (refoulement) of refugees to their country of origin if they have 'well-founded fear of persecution' relating thereto. In other words, it may be argued that international law prohibits countries of refuge in this region, as elsewhere, from sending back refugees to countries which may persecute them.

However, the national viewpoint may, indeed, clash with international law. If one classifies asylum-seekers as 'illegal immigrants,' the local presumption is that the national authorities are justified (according to national immigration law) in sending back 'illegal immigrants' to their country of origin regardless of their fear of persecution, even against their volition. In this respect, the current local legislation is the Immigration Act of 1979, as amended. Penalties which may be imposed on 'illegal immigrants' include deportation (i.e. forced repatriation), imprisonment and/or fine.

How then should one know whether a person is a 'refugee' or an 'illegal immigrant'? The answer depends upon whether one takes an 'internationalist' or a 'nationalist' stance.

Some compromise may be possible if one can distinguish between if one can distinguish between those who seek asylum in good faith and others who seek asylum in bad faith. Is there a procedure for this?

Procedures

Let us note firstly that there is no procedure here for determining 'refugee' status, simply because this category of persons, protected by international law, is not officially recognized in Thailand. However, the Laotians, since 1985, there has been a screening process to distinguish between good faith and bad faith cases.

In the north of Thailand in the provinces of Chiang Rai, Payao, Nan, Uttaradit, Loei, Nongkhai, Nakkon Phanom, Mukdahan and Ubon, Laotians have been screened since 1985. The good faith cases are granted temporary asylum in Thailand while the bad faith cases are detained pending repatriation to their home country. How does one establish one's good faith? The test seems to be 'persecution' complemented by four examples;

--Former civil servants, soldiers and police of the government that existed prior to the revolution in 1975.

--Persons who worked for embassies, international organizations or private companies prior to the revolution.

--Persons who participated in political, administrative or social activities deemed to be antagonistic to the present (Laotian) Government and

--Persons who have direct relatives in third countries, i.e. father, mother, son or daughters.

For those who are not considered to fall under the above criteria, they are deemed to be persons entering for economic gain or personal convenience, i.e. in bad faith, and they may be forcibly repatriated as 'illegal immigrants.'

In practice, at the district level, there is a committee for screening asylum-seekers as above. At the screening session a representative of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is allowed to be present. If an applicant is adjudged to be in bad faith, he may appeal to a provincial committee headed by the governor of the province. To date, out of some 7,600 persons screened, some 60 percent have been considered to be in good faith. As for the other 40 percent who are considered to be in bad faith, none have yet been forcibly returned to Laos. The situation is made more complicated by the fact that the Laotian authorities are proving somewhat intransigent in accepting them back.

The big caseload of bad faith cases which have not yet been returned to Laos may, no doubt, cause some frustration among the Thai authorities. Add to this the fact that there are more hilltribe asylum-seekers than lowland Laotian asylum-seekers on Thai soil, compounded by declining resettlement places in third countries. Should one, therefore, be surprised that the two groups of Hmongs discussed earlier were forcibly repatriated, without being able to avail themselves of the screening procedure?

Options

Now is not the time for recrimination. Let us follow the option of 'Chai Kwang' (broad-mindedness) rather than 'Chai Noi.' This may include the following:

--The existence of the screening procedure noted above is laudable. The option of being screened should be open to asylum-seekers from Laos whether they are lowlanders or hilltribes.

--Greater attention should be paid to the criterion of 'persecution' stipulated in the screening procedure. At present, there tends to be more emphasis on the four examples, in particular the first and the last examples as above (i.e. former civil servants etc., and persons who have relatives in third countries), rather than analysis of the motives and circumstances for a person's departure which would indicate 'persecution.'

En passant, although political factors may be accepted readily as leading to 'persecution,' economic considerations may also indicate 'persecution.' One should not exclude economic consideration in all instances, especially if they are tantamount to human rights violations. The benefit of the doubt should thus be granted to asylum-seekers.

In addition to the bad faith cases which may be identified in the above screening procedure, it is interesting to note that in international law, certain

categories of persons are considered to fall outside the scope of the term 'refugees,' arguably because they are in bad faith. There include, according to the 1951 Refugee Convention, the following instances where:

--A person has committed a crime against peace, a war crime, or a crime against humanity,

--A person has committed a serious crime outside the country of refuge prior to his admission to that country, and

--A person has been guilty of acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

--There is more room for uniformity in the screening procedure. Because the procedure takes place in several provinces, there may be insufficient information as to how the decisions are being reached. Greater uniformity is thus required. Moreover, there is greater scope for the screening procedure to provide 'reasoning' which may enhance more openness in the decisionmaking process.

--Interchange of experiences may be promoted through more dialogue between the various national and international agencies involved with Laotian asylum-seekers. This may include training programmes to analyse the criteria for the screening procedure, bearing in mind cross-cultural experiences.

--More pressure should be exerted on Laos as the country of origin to accept those who have been screened and rejected as bad faith cases. This is contingent upon the role of the United States and the other powers operating in the region in pushing for channels of return for bad faith cases to Laos. This has to be complemented by other measures to curb the root causes of flight from Laos. Clearly, high-level, multi-partite talking is necessary, with a view to easing the load shouldered by Thailand as the country of first asylum.

--Last, but not least, durable solutions, i.e. voluntary repatriation, local assimilation and resettlement in third countries, await further incentives in relation to asylum-seekers who come in good faith.

Hmongs or no Hmongs, the reality is that we have to work among friends. Not accusing fingers, but firm handshakes.

/12232

CSO: 4200/458

SANG-SAT CONVERSATION ON THAI-LAO TALKS

BK010700 Vientiane Domestic Service in Lao 0500 GMT 29 Mar 87

[Conversation between Uncle Sang and Uncle Sat on Thai-Lao talks in Bangkok--recorded]

[Text] [Sang] Who is that at the door? Is it you, old man Sat? Come in.

[Sat] Hello, old man. I was just leaving. I thought you were not home.

[Sang] Where would I be? I am old already. Come on in, old man.

[Sat] Are you okay, old friend?

[Sang] Just fine, old man. Just fine. Well, why are you here today?

[Sat] I am also fine. I just want to ask you something. The most important thing is the issue of Lao-Thai relations. I want to know what it is all about.

[Sang] Well, on 24 March our high-level Lao technical delegation went to Thailand to meet and hold talks with the high-level technical delegation of the Thai side in Bangkok.

[Sat] What was the outcome of the bilateral negotiations, then? I just want to know that.

[Sang] You do not have to ask questions right now. Come in and smoke first. We can talk about this later.

[Sat] Thank you, old friend.

[Sang] As we discussed with each other before, including last week, with its consistent good intentions and constant adherence to the Lao-Thai and Thai-Lao 1979 joint communiques on normalizing relations between our brotherly countries and turning the Mekong River into a river of peace and friendship, the high-level Lao technical delegation headed by Souban Salitthilat went to Bangkok to hold negotiations on certain remaining questions so as to find a mutual solution to them.

[Sat] What did our delegation do upon arriving in Bangkok? What were the issues they raised for discussion? I want you to explain them in detail to me.

[Sang] Well, upon arrival at Don Muang Airport, Souban Salitthilat told the press that the visit to Bangkok by our high-level technical delegation was the result of an agreement we made at the 27-29 November 1986 meeting held in Vientiane between the Lao and Thai high-level technical delegations. He said: I attach great importance to these negotiations because we will continue discussions to resolve the remaining fundamental questions so as to improve and strengthen Lao-Thai relations on the basis of the Lao-Thai and Thai-Lao 1979 joint communiques. At the same time, the Lao side will try its utmost to attain this goal so as to meet the aspirations of the Lao and Thai peoples and to conform to the interests of this region and the world. I hope that the Thai side intends to do the same.

[Sat] Very clear, old man. Very good. I think the statement made by Souban Salitthilat shows the sincere wish of the Lao side to normalize and improve Lao-Thai relations on the basis of mutual sincerity. Of course, if the Thai side only finds measures to obstruct these efforts, as it has done in the past, I think it will be very difficult, this goal. Very difficult.

[Sat] Go on, old man.

[Sang] If they only want to create endless troubles and refuse to cooperate with our side, the negotiations will achieve no concrete results. The day after arrival in Bangkok on 24 March, the Lao delegation paid a courtesy call on Thai Foreign Minister Air Chief Marshal Sitthi Sawetsila. The bilateral negotiations to resolve the questions on Lao-Thai relations were then held at the Thai Foreign Ministry. The high-level technical delegation of our Lao side sincerely presented straightforward views on our consistent policy to have friendly relations and to peacefully coexist with the Kingdom of Thailand on the basis of the Lao-Thai 1979 joint communiques.

[Sat] That is true, old man. It is just as you have said. We fully realize who was responsible in the past for (encroaching) on the spirit of the Lao-Thai joint communiques. Everyone--children and adults--is aware of this.

[Sang] Of course, everyone knows.

[Sat] They know who has exercised aggression against and nibbled at the three Lao villages in Sayaboury Province; who has committed provocations along the border; who has closed the border; and who has fed and trained the exiled Lao refugees and sent them into the LPDR to create disturbances. Everyone knows.

[Sang] Of course, old man. Everyone knows. Well, Souban Salitthilat also emphasized that the statements of certain persons and bad elements in Thailand do not conform to the efforts to promote good relations between Thailand and Laos that you have just mentioned. The blockade of the the LPDR and the encroachment on Lao territory, especially on the three villages in Sayaboury Province, clearly show who the aggressor is and who is sincere about [word indistinct] and friendly ties. Moreover, these persons have also smuggled bad elements into our

country to create disruptive and destructive activities. We have captured many of these bad elements. This means, old man, that the implementation of the Pan-Thailand Doctrine continues.

[Sat] That is absolutely right, old man. I agree to what you have said.

[Sang] Recently, they also organized shows on the so-called deeds of Nang Mo [Thai heroine who led people to fight Lao invasion in Nakhon Ratchasima Province] in fighting and killing Lao soldiers. The shows were televised nationwide.

[Sat] I am fed up with them, old man.

[Sang] Everybody feels like that. You see, old man, while Laos and Thailand were holding talks aimed at improving bilateral relations, Thai radios, television, and other media recalled stories of the past. It is not appropriate.

[Sat] Of course, old man, that is not the proper way. Recalling the past will only lead to disputes. Right, old man?

[Sang] You are right, old man. Regarding this, do you still remember the past incident?

[Sat] What is it, old man.

[Sang] It is about the bad elements in Thailand, the bad elements who have cooked up stories.

[Sat] Oh, I see. It is the group of bad elements.

[Sang] The Thai side itself charged the Lao mass media with have repeatedly attacked Thailand. But now they themselves have done that against Laos, and they do not accept what they have done. They are just like that. They know only how to accuse others of doing wrong. They have never looked at themselves.

[Sat] You are right, old man. As we know, Thai radios of Nong Khai, Udon, and other regions have related stories with the intention of creating tension with Laos. Am I right, old man?

[Sang] There is no doubt about that, old man.

[Sat] They have just come out with dozens of slanderous propaganda stories charging Laos and other Indochinese countries with doing this and that. I am really fed up with them.

[Sang] Here is a fact, old man. On the 27th of this month....

[Sat] You mean just a few days ago?

[Sang] Yes, old man, on 27 March. You must also know about it.

[Sat] Oh, I know what you mean, old man. I also listen to the radio.

[Sang] The people's court tried the criminal cases of lackeys of the United States and the Thai ultrarightist reactionaries. These agents were sent to our LPDR from Thailand to carry out sabotage activities. I believe you also know about this, old man.

[Sat] Oh, yes. I am interested in this issue and I also followed the news reports about it from the newspapers and radio. Can you tell me more about this, old man?

[Sang] Among the three prisoners is a Thai national. His name is Prayut Phothiwong. He is 19 years old, born in Langkhao Village, Thakho precinct, Thakho District, Saraburi Province, Thailand. This, old man, is undeniable evidence--concrete evidence proving the fact.

[Sat] Right, old man. How can they deny a fact which has been proved through concrete evidence. It is concrete evidence and not a fabrication. The man was arrested on 2 June 1986.

[Sang] That is correct, old man. Your memory is good. You still remember that. I also was about to tell you this.

[Sat] He was arrested in Paksan, wasn't he?

[Sang] Right, old man. How about the others?

[Sat] The other two are CIA agents. One is Ounheuan Silimongkhon. He was arrested on 23 January or early this year. The third one is a tall man. I am not sure of his name. He was unable to enter a plea at his trial.

[Sang] Is it Manivong Keovisai, old man?

[Sat] Oh, yes. His name is Manivong.

[Sang] He was arrested on the 15th of last month.

[Sat] Yes, old man. He was arrested while trying to plant bombs at the fuel oil depot at the airport.

[Sang] That is right, old man.

[Sat] He was seriously injured as a result of the bomb explosion. That was why he was unable to enter a plea at the court. However, the court sentenced him to 15 years imprisonment.

[Sang] 15 years?

[Sat] Yes, old man. This was the concrete evidence to prove who is sincere and who is not sincere in improving the Lao-Thai relations.

[Sang] Yes, old man. It is the evidence to prove that who really wants to achieve harmony and concord.

[Sat] Now, old man, is there anything more about the activities of our high-level Lao technical delegation in Bangkok? I would like you to tell me more about it.

[Sang] Oh, yes, old man, I have a little more to tell you about our delegation's activities.

[Sat] Please.

[Sang] On the following day, 26 March, our Lao delegation continued talks with the Thai side.

[Sat] What did they discuss on that day?

[Sang] Many issues, old man. I cannot remember all of them, of course.

[Sat] Just tell me what you remember, old man.

[Sang] In brief, they discussed many issues, including issues of tourism, market places along the border, and meetings at the local level. Also discussed were the issues on trading, the promotion of activities in the art, literary, and sports fields, and exchanges of visits between students of the two countries.

[Sat] What do you think about the results of the consultations, old man? Have they achieved mutual understanding or just maintained different views?

[Sang] It can be said in short that the talks continued in a good atmosphere. This is because both sides held talks on issues which are regarded as matching the aspirations of the people.

[Sat] That is correct.

[Sang] In fact, there is nothing that Laos and Thailand cannot understand among each other. But, it is regrettable that on the previous day [the] head of the Thai delegation groundlessly made accusations against Laos.

[Sat] What were the accusations about, old man?

[Sang] Many issues, old man. Souban Salitthilat denied all the charges. Souban Salitthilat also noted his concern about the time problem of the three Lao villages which were invaded and occupied by the Thai side. He expressed his desire to have this problem resolved.

[Sat] Of course, old man, to settle the problem of Lao-Thai relations, first and foremost, this basic point of dispute must be settled.

[Sang] You are right, old man. The basic problem is nothing but the problem of the three villages. This problem must be explicitly resolved. The Thai side

must accept its mistake. On the other hand, it must respect the independence and sovereignty of Laos, stop fostering the exiled Lao, and stop allowing other countries to use Thai territory as place from which to carry out sabotage activities against our LPDR. Right, old man? The Thai side must also put an end to its provocative acts against Laos in the border areas, and so forth. If all these things come to an end of if they all are settled, the other issues--markets, tourism, trading, art, literature, or sports as well as the exchange of visits between peoples--will be easily settled.

[Sat] Certainly, old man, if the basic problem is resolved, other problems will become easy ones. Right, old man?

[Sang] I agree with you. As Souban Salitthilat said, the talks on this occasion mark a significant step for the normalization and improvement of the Lao-Thai relations. Regarding this, the two sides have agreed to hold talks again. The Lao side has invited the Thai side to meet in Vientiane. Later, on the morning of 27 March, Souban Salitthilat paid a courtesy call on General Prem Tinsulanon, prime minister of the Kingdom of Thailand.

[Sat] I see, old man. How was it? What was the atmosphere?

[Sang] Generally, the atmosphere was good. First of all, the head of our high-level Lao technical delegation conveyed the greetings and best wishes of Chairman of the Council of Ministers Kaysone Phomvihane to Prime Minister Prem Tinsulanon, he also expressed satisfaction over our Lao delegation's visit to Bangkok and over its straightforward talks with the Thai side. He considered it a good thing between the two fraternal countries which need no interpreter. He also extended salutations and best wishes to Chairman of the Council of Ministers Kaysone Phomvihane. That is all, old man.

[Sat] I see. By the way, old man, it seems to me that at 2100 last night and at 0700 today, the radio carried a news report on the press interview on the talks between our Lao and the Thai high-level technical delegations.

[Sang] Oh, yes, old man. You mean the interview given to correspondents by Souban Salitthilat upon his return from the talks in Bangkok. In the interview, Souban Salitthilat spoke of many issues, all of which were discussed in the talks.

[Sat] As I heard it, Souban Salitthilat said there still remain some problems unresolved and that the Thai side still lacked sincerity in solving them. I would like you to tell me about those remaining problems since you know the issues in detail.

[Sang] There is nothing new, old man. All are the same old problems. In the talks, they discussed in details all the remaining problems.

[Sat] Well, if both sides maintained sincerity, there would not be any unresolved problems. Without the desire to solve the problems, the talks, no matter how many occasions they are held, will be useless. But our Lao side, as Souban Salitthilat said, is truly sincere in discussing ways and means to

restore and improve the relations and to have the two peoples of Laos and Thailand maintain mutual understanding and normalize their relations so that they can conveniently travel to visit each other.

[Sang] It should be like that because the two are brotherly countries. The people from this side can go over to the other side and have meals together as close relatives. A son-in-law may live on that side while his father-in-law is on this side of the border. Brothers also live on each side of the border and they naturally miss each other. How can we separate them? We only pin our hope on the leaders of the Thai side. Any agreement reached in the negotiations will only benefit the two countries, primarily the peoples in the two countries. Is there anything else you want to talk about, old friend?

[Sat] I think that is all there is to it for today. I only want to note that in summarizing the outcome of the talks between the two delegations, Souban Salitthilat said that the Lao side was very sincere in creating better understanding between the two sides and that it had no other intentions. As for the remaining questions, further negotiations will be held. He also stressed that the Lao Government and people are always sincere to develop friendship relations with the Thai side. He invited the Thai side to come to Vientiane at an appropriate time to continue the talks.

[Sang] That is why I can say that with sincerity, the problems between Laos and Thailand (?can be settled). There is nothing, old man. Well, we think it is too serious just to talk about politics only. How is your ricefield, old friend?

[Sat] Well, it has rained quite a lot in the past few days.

[Sang] I heard that crop pests are widespread in certain ricefields in the Vientiane area. Is there any danger to rice plants.

[Sat] I don't think that any harm will be done to rice crops because our agricultural services have just distributed insecticide to farmers.

[Sang] I think that will be all for us today. If you have anything new, I hope you will keep me informed. I must take leave now. See you next week.

/12232

CS0: 4200/459

CABINET MEETING HEARS PROJECT PROPOSALS, TRADE PLANS

BK011008 Bangkok Domestic Service in Thai 1300 GMT 31 Mar 87

[Text] [Michai Wirawaithaya, spokesman for the Prime Minister's Office, and Montri Chenwitkan, deputy spokesman for the office, jointly held a news conference at 1500 hours on the results of today's cabinet meeting.

At 0900 today, Prime Minister General Prem Tinsulanon presided over the cabinet meeting at Government House. The cabinet acknowledged the actions taken to accelerate the economic recovery and expansion programs as approved by the committee in charge of acceleration of the economic recovery and expansion. The cabinet was informed:

I. The committee has already completed the study and approved the remaining economic expansion projects. The expenditure of 159.15 million baht to finance nine projects will be drawn from the 1987 fiscal budget's central fund. Government agencies and state enterprises concerned will be instructed to contact the Fiscal Bureau to arrange the drawing of the fund.

II. The committee has approved 72 projects involving the expenditure of 1,285.43 million baht.

III. The committee is now expediting the study of 16 projects pending their approval. The additional nine projects which have been approved by the committee are:

A. The job creation and poverty reduction program involving the spending of 44.59 million:

1. The construction of a road according to the standard of the Accelerating Rural Development Office, worth 1.9 million baht.

2. The Dairy Farming Development Project worth 39.4 million baht.

3. The Cattle Raising Promotion Project worth 3.19 million baht.

B. The Foreign Exchange Earning Program at a cost of 114.92 million baht:

1. The construction of asphalt road between Tha Thungna-Sai Yok in Kanchanaburi Province worth 23.14 million baht.

2. The construction of asphalt road at Ao Mae Ramphung in Rayong Province worth 16.65 million baht.
3. The construction of Tourist Service Center at Thale Noi in Phatthalung Province worth 0.30 million bhat.
4. The construction of roadside pavement at Thale Noi in Phatthalung Province 0.43 million baht.
5. The construction of parking lot and wharf at Thale Noi in Phatthalung Province worth 0.20 million baht.
6. The construction of six tourism-oriented roads worth 74.20 million.

The cabinet also acknowledged the outcome of the textile negotiations on the exports of cotton thread to Italy and the European Community as proposed by the Commerce Ministry and assigned the Foreign Ministry to proceed to exchanging diplomatic documents. The Commerce Ministry held talks with the EC delegation in Bangkok from 20 to 23 February on the export quotas for Thai cotton thread to Italy. Thailand and the EC have reached an agreement on annual export quota for cotton trade to Italy from 1987 to 1991 with annual increase of 3 percent. An additional 400 tons has been added to this year's quota. According to the contract signed by Thai exporters and the EC importers. The Thai side can ask for about 400-ton increase of its annual export quota from 1988 to 1991. The EC has agreed to expedite the consideration of such a request. Without the agreement on the annual cotton thread export quota, the EC might be able to unilaterally reduce its intake of Thai cotton thread to the lowest level.

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CSO: 4200/458

OPPOSITION AGREES ON CENSURE OF 'ENTIRE CABINET'

BK030153 Bangkok THE NATION in English 3 Apr 87 pp 1, 2

[By Phanni N. Konkrit and Naowarat Suksamrarn]

[Text] The Opposition yesterday managed to get the signatures of 97 MPs to sponsor a motion to censure the entire Cabinet and assigned Prachakon Thai leader Samak Suntharawet and Progressive leader Uthai Phimchaichon to grill Prime Minister General Prem Tinsulanon.

This added specualtions that the Opposition would be unable to get 70 MPs--the minimum required to call a no-confidence debate in the House--to endorse the motion....

In a meeting of leaders of opposition parties at Parliament yesterday, Samak and Uthai--both strong advocates of a censure motion against the whole Cabinet--were assigned to take on the premier.

Muachon leader Pol Captain Chaloeam Yubamrung volunteered to grill Agriculture Minister General Han Linanon and Commerce Minister Montri Phongphanit.

Community Action Leader Bunchu Rotchanasathian, a former banker and an ex-deputy premier in charge of economic affairs, will zero in on Finance Minister Suthi Singsane.

United Democratic Party [UDP] leader Buntheng Thongsawat will fire the first salvo in an introductory speech for the deposition in which he will attach the alleged failures in several areas of the government. Ruam Thai leader Narong Wongwan will criticize the alleged government shortcomings in agriculture as well as other issues.

The lists of signatures are separately kept by opposition party leaders. They will be enclosed in the paperwork when the motion is filed next Wednesday. The co-sponsors of the motion and the MPs who seconded it are not allowed to withdraw their names, according to Article 48 of the regulations on House meetings. However, under Article 46, they can withdraw their support after the motion has been placed on the agenda if they have the consent of the House meeting during the deliberation on the motion.

Informed sources said that the number of the UDP MPs who signed the lists for the motion increased from 25 on Wednesday to 30 when then opposition leaders met yesterday. The 30th signature was that of Boonlert Lertpreecha. All the MPs in the group of 19 and the Prachakon Thai Party gave their signatures to their respective leaders.

An opposition leader suggested during the meeting that the lists be combined yesterday for an early submission of the motion, but Buntheng, a staunch opponent of the premier, replied that there was no need to hurry. He told the meeting that he wanted more time to get a few more signatures from UDP MPs; he believes he will be able to get signatures of 32 or 35 out of the total 38 MPs in his party.

The veteran politician reasoned that he wants to get as many MPs as possible to support the motion to show unity in the opposition ranks.

A UDP source told THE NATION that Buntheng would not press party Chairman Colonel Phon Roengprasoetwit and Secretary General Tamchai Kamthato into signing the motion because both were sure to refuse. Phon told a recent party meeting that he had to excuse himself out because the premier was once his commander.

The opposition leaders yesterday outlined the points they would raise in the censure debate and agreed to meet Tuesday to work out the details of the vote and complete the draft motion.

They set next Wednesday evening as the time to file the non-confidence motion with House Speaker Chuan Likphai and expect the debate to start late this month.

Somak told the meeting that he would concentrate on the premier's frequent reference to the monarchy, a recent report on a dud cheque by one of Prem's relatives, and the premier's alleged lack of a consistent policy on foreign investment.

Uthai will focus on the allegation that the premier has been indecisive in tackling national problems. He intended to cite the premier's alleged failure to take any action against former Supreme commander General Athit Kamlang-ek when the latter openly criticized the government's decision to devalue the baht currency. He will also blame the premier for the Phuket Tantalum Plant riot.

Chalerm claimed that he had acquired documents to incriminate Han on the controversial 3,200-million-yen Japanese grant to boost food production. He also claimed to have evidence on Han's "back-door connection." Chaleom will grill Montri on the Iran rice deal.

Bunchu's attack on the performance of the Finance Ministry is expected to include the collapse of a large number of finance [?]and] credit [word indistinct] firms and the liquor controversy in which the Cabinet offered a reprimand to the Surathip Group.

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CSO: 4200/458

KHUKRIT CALLS PREM 'GENTLEMAN OF LEISURE'

BK020101 Bangkok BANGKOK POST in English 2 Apr 87 pp 1, 2

[Text] M.R. Khukrit Pramot predicted yesterday that Army Commander General Chawalit Yongchaiyut is unlikely to succeed in his so-called "revolution" through restructuring the Internal Security Operations Command (ISOC).

Speaking on trends in Thai politics at the seminar on "Thai Politics At the Crossroads," organised by Chulalongkon University's Institute of Security and International Studies, the former premier had some harsh words for the prime minister.

General Prem Tinsulanon, he said, had done nothing and "has become a sort of a gentleman of leisure."

With Gen Prem being unable to do anything, Gen Chawalit has not become the most powerful person in the country who everyone looks to, M.R. Khukrit commented.

The veteran politician said he did not believe Gen Chawalit would become or would want to be prime minister. "He is aiming at something broader. He wants to be the head of a revolution that will change everything in Thai society.

"As far as I know, he wants a sort of communism with the king as the head," M.R. Khukrit said.

Gen Chawalit was unlikely to succeed in his plan, said M.R. Khukrit, who said he could make such a prediction because he knew Gen Chawalit personally and has seen his character.

"He don't be able to achieve anything at all. It won't be a French or a Russian revolution.

"Gen Chawalit has been sort of brainwashed by some communists who say they are no longer communists.

"They brainwash everyone at the ISOC. That is the base of communist infiltration," M.R. Khukrit said.

He believed Gen Chawalit was sincere in trying to enable the people to have a bigger say under the present democratic system and he was also sincerely loyal to the monarchy.

But Gen Chawalit believed that in doing so there had to be a presidium. M.R. Khukrit said the army chief had acquired his line of thinking from the so-called democratic soldiers, and if the idea materialised, Parliament would become just one of many councils that would be created.

There have been no trends in Thai politics because it has been under the pattern or military domination for the past 700 years, he added.

M.R. Khukrit said he came to know the military might when he became prime minister in 1975 when he told himself he had to learn to know the military desire "because they (the military) only knew that they must win."

Military domination, he said has continued until the present government under Gen Prem.

"He (Gen Prem) hasn't made himself a field marshal yet. But he will," M.R. Khurit said.

Gen Prem, he said, was the soldier who commands the government. He was also the person who named the army commander-in-chief who undeniably had to give him support.

"There is no trend, just military domination," M.R. Khukrit said.

Because military domination in government has become an unchangeable pattern, the politicians' remaining hope is to obtain a cabinet post from which they can work for the country or for money.

He said politicians formerly sold themselves to the military on an individual basis but now whole parties do so in order to be included in the coalition.

Meanwhile, any military leader that came into power continued to foster the democratic image by bringing political parties into the government.

Criticising the prime minister for doing nothing, M.R. Khukrit said: "Gen Prem has become a sort of gentleman of leisure, taking trips to the North. That's all I can see him do.

"I don't think there's much hope of change. Trends can change but a pattern is fixed," M.R. Khukrit said.

Thais, he said, favoured this pattern of military domination because it gave them a sense of security.

M.R. Khukrit warned: "But this won't last. Some day, something will happen, perhaps an uprising. Maybe, but not in my lifetime."

Commenting on the present political situation, M.R. Khukrit said: "I don't think there will be a coup. I don't think there will be any real debate in parliament or any revolutions.

"There will be no cabinet reshuffle. There will be no change in the prime minister. Gen Prem will be prime minister indefinitely.

"Yes, spring is still far away," M.R. Khukrit said.

Asked from the floor if there was an alternative to his scenario, M.R. Khukrit said he did not believe Thailand had a choice. "We don't have any alternative at all, must like we don't have any alternative to Gen Prem being Prime Minister."

M.R. Khukrit dismissed a suggestion from the floor that Gen Prem had contributed to democratic development by being in power for 7 years.

He said the person who has contributed to democratic stability was his majesty the king. Without the king, Thais would have been fighting each other. "That's why Gen Prem tries to be grateful," M.R. Khukrit said.

Gen Prem had not solved problems but let the problems solve themselves.

"He does not do anybody any harm. He's just a boring man," M.R. Khukrit said.

He accused Gen Prem of being the person who destroyed the parliamentary institution by killing political party spirit and public confidence in parties.

Gen Prem does not like professional politicians and most politicians at present are obsessed with personal and party interests, he said.

M.R. Khukrit admitted he was responsible for keeping Gen Prem.

"You are quite right. I created Prem. There he was and I said let there be Prem. But after 3 or 4 years I got bored stiff with my own creation but I don't know what to do with him.

"He has become a sort of Dorian Gray (a narcissistic character from Oscar Wilde's novel)," he said.

M.R. Khukrit said he had supported Gen Prem in the past because he was afraid of a political instability.

He noted, however, he no longer had to always support the man because it was time to give other people a chance to become prime minister.

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CSO: 4200/458

THAILAND

BORDER MEETING TO VIEW FISHERY, CPM DEFECTIONS

BK010745 Bangkok BANGKOK WORLD in English 1 Apr 87 p 3

[Text] Fishery problems and defections from the Communist Party of Malaya (CPM) are expected to be raised during a Thai-Malaysian border meeting in Penang on Saturday, a source said.

The source said Fourth Army Region Commander Lieutenant General Wisit Atkhumwong, in his capacity as Thai chief of the Regional Border Committee, will leave for Malaysia on Friday to attend the meeting.

Besides the cooperation of both countries on solving border problems, Lt Gen Wisit is expected to discuss with his Malaysian counterpart the recent incident in which Thai fishing boats were seized and a number of crewmen arrested by Malaysian authorities.

The Thai side will also inform the Malaysian authorities of Thailand's move to grant amnesty to CPM defectors.

In a related development, negotiations are reportedly under way between high-level Thai authorities and leaders of the CPM and CPM Marxist-Leninist factions, with a total strength of about 1,600, in an attempt to pave the way for their defection.

A military source said it would be known by 10 April whether they will surrender, and when and under what conditions.

So far altogether 114 CPM guerrillas of the 8th CPM Regiment have defected to the Thai authorities. It could be said that their former base at Khao Nam Khang in Sadao District is now free of CPM influence, the source said.

The army today will hold a press conference at 1.30 pm at the Army Hall to introduce a leader of the Eighth Regiment, Ah Sin, who defected on 26 March.

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CSO: 4200/458

GENERAL ON CPM DEFECTIONS, REPATRIATION OFFER

BK020125 Bangkok BANGKOK POST in English 2 Apr 87 p 2

[Text] A total of 114 Communist Party of Malaya members surrendered [CPM] with more than 285 weapons and 33,143 rounds of ammunition in two defections last month, the Fourth Army said yesterday.

Region Commander Lieutenant General Wisit Detkhumwong said 51 male and 38 female members of the 8th Regiment came out of the jungle on 13 March in the biggest mass defection ever.

They were followed on 26 March by 25 more from the 8th Regiment. Of the total, 30 are Thais and 84 Malaysian.

Lt Gen Wisit attributed the success to the 66/23 order under which political tactics are used against insurgency.

The 13 March group handed over 207 weapons, including 134 carbines, 18 M16 assault rifles, 9 M79 grenade launchers and 19,279 rounds of ammunition.

On 19 March, some defectors led troops to their former Khao Nam Khang base, 30 km west of Sadao District of Songkhla, where 78 more weapons and 13,500 rounds of ammunition were unearthed.

The camp, which comprised living quarters for 46, a hall and a kitchen, covered a 30-rai area surrounded by double trenches.

According to the Fourth Army, there were 1,350-1,475 CPM insurgents operating mainly in Yala and Narathiwat.

Lt Gen Wisit said the guerrillas surrendered to Thai authorities because they were uncertain of the treatment they could expect in Malaysia, where tough security and firearms laws carry the death penalty.

The general said some of the defectors' leaders had apologised for causing the country trouble in the past.

Lt Gen Wisit said the government would arrange the repatriation of the Malaysian and Chinese insurgents if they wished to return home.

The Thai element would be resettled in a cooperative where they will be able to make a living under the protection of officials.

Lt Gen Wisit said the Fourth Army would continue to pursue its open arms policy to encourage defections.

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PROTESTING FISHERMEN END RALLY IN PATTANI

BK010219 Bangkok THE NATION in English 1 Apr 87 p 3

[Text] Some 2,000 protesting fishermen in Pattani yesterday ended their rally against Malaysian siezures of Thai trawlers but threatened to stage another demonstration if Bangkok and Kuala Lumpur failed to settle their fishing conflict "permanently."

Meanwhile, the Foreign Ministry announced that Malaysia yesterday released two of the six Thai fishing boats it had seized this month in the raids which sparked the fishermen's protest. Their crew, however, were still detained in Malasia.

The protesters dispersed at around 10 am after learning from their representatives who met Foreign Minister CAM (Air Chief Marshal) Sitthi Sawetsila in Bangkok on Monday that the government had accepted their demands and is acting on the issue.

Pattani Governor Wirot Ratcharak told THE NATION that the fishermen "appreciated" the government's attitude toward the problem and decided to end the protest so that attempts between Bangkok and Kuala Lumpur to solve the problem can be made in good atmosphere.

However, the governor said whether or not the fishermen will stage another rally "depends on the outcome of Thai-Malaysian negotiation on the matter."

He quoted the fishermen's representatives who met him yesterday morning as saying that another demonstration might be held if the Thai and Malaysian Governments could not settle the fishing dispute once and for all.

"They (the fishermen) do not want only the release of their colleagues detained in Malaysia, but also a practical, permanent solution," said the governor.

He added that the fishermen are willing to wait for the outcome of high-level talks. "They will give the government time to negotiate with Malaysia to achieve the goal," he said.

The fishermen--whose 5-day peaceful protest was prompted by recent captures of Thai fishing boats which reportedly took place in a area under joint jurisdiction

and other areas inside Thai boundary--earlier demanded that the government hold talks with Kuala Lumpur immediately to secure the release of their colleagues and the seized fishing vessels.

They also want Malaysia to give up its drastic action against Thai fishermen--many of them have had to sail through Malaysian maritime boundary to fish in international waters.

Further, they want the government to speed up efforts to seek joint fishery ventures with Malaysia in order to solve the long-standing fishing problem--said to be caused by the rapid decrease of maritime resources in the Gulf of Thailand and the overlapping boundaries of the two countries.

Premier Prem Tinsulanon told a cabinet meeting yesterday that he was "very concerned" by the frequent arrests of Thai fishermen by neighbouring countries. He was quoted as saying that the situation "must not be allowed to continue."

He asked the Foreign Ministry to discuss with neighbouring countries which have good relations with Thailand the possibility of launching joint air patrols to solve the encroachment problem.

--Meanwhile, Kuala Lumpur has defended this month's arrests of an estimated 200 Thai fishermen which prompted the Thai Government to ask for its explanation.

Malaysian Agriculture Minister Sanusi Junid was quoted by the national BERNAMA News Agency as saying that Malaysia had acted fairly in "protecting its territorial waters from foreign encroachment."

He also said accusations that the Thais had been beaten and forced to confess to trespassing were not true.

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CSO: 4200/458

GENERAL CHAWALIT WARNS COMMUNIST DEFECTORS

BK040249 Bangkok BANGKOK POST in English 4 Apr 87 pp 1, 3

[Text] Army Commander-in-Chief General Chawalit Yongchaiyut yesterday said the army, the Internal Security Operations Command (ISOC), Prime Minister Prem Tinsulanon and himself deserve the credit for getting the communists to come out of the jungles and rejoin society.

He also warned communist defectors not to criticise the military or oppose its efforts at national reconciliation and unity, because "I wish to remind them (the defectors) of how they got out of the jungles to pursue a normal life. What are they doing now towards the people they are criticising?" he asked, adding "What (I) have said, (I) don't expect a favour in return."

In his first response to M.R. Khukrit Pramot's severe criticism of him and Gen Prem, Gen Chawalit said that he had always held the former prime minister in high esteem.

"He (Khukrit) is a Phuyai [elder, deserving respect] I am a minor. I will not answer back, and this is from my heart," said the army chief, adding that in a democracy, M.R. Khukrit as well as anybody else is entitled to express personal views within the limits of the law.

Police patrols were yesterday despatched to M.R. Khukrit's Soi Suan Plu residence and SIAM RAT newspaper following a bomb threat. Last month, a bomb went off at the house of opposition leader Samak Sunthorawej after his criticism of Gen Prem.

Speaking at a seminar, "Thai Politics at the Crossroads?," M.R. Khukrit accused Gen Chawalit of being brainwashed by communists and of wanting to introduce a sort of communism with the king as the head. He also charged that ISOC was heavily infiltrated by communists.

In reply, Gen Chawalit said that every since taking charge of the ISOC's fight against communism, he had been attacked "from the underground and above ground because they (communists) know that I am their No 1 Enemy, because they know that I have been fighting against them with flesh and blood, not with a pen." He said he held no grudges against those who criticise him "but I wish they would understand me."

Gen Chawalit noted that he would have to prepare answers for his soldiers, especially those fighting communists at the border.

He said he also may have to search for replies for those who died fighting the communists: "These people who sacrificed their lives for the protection of the throne and the country have no way to make their voices heard."

He complained that despite the military's good intentions, its efforts to bring about national reconciliation, unity and social justice have been opposed by several people, including communist defectors who have criticised the military.

He added that the military's initiatives have always been treated with deep mistrust and suspicion.

I wish everyone to come together to do something constructive in the public interest. We have spent enough time fighting each other. We should see each other as friends rather than shutting ourselves to their opinions," said Gen Chawalit.

He added: "We have done everything within the limits and we wish others to act within the limits as well."

Commenting on recent changes in the ISOC that were accused of being aimed at making the body as powerful as the Cabinet, Gen Chawalit said the agency was streamlined to cut costs and to adapt to new challenges from the Communist party of Thailand.

The ISOC, he said, had been bloated with a staff of about 2,000 when, in fact, the work could be managed by 100-200 men.

The military would not be able to defeat the communists, he warned, without the help of all sectors of society under the direction of a single authority. Without such a joint effort, he said, the communists would launch a revolutionary war.

"The leader, that is the prime minister, must have the real power," he said, adding that he made Gen Prem the head of the ISOC's anti-communist effort for that reason.

Gen Chawalit maintained that the military had no intention to centralise power through the changes at ISOC. The agency, he said, will also not duplicate the work of other government units. For instance, the reservists for security projects will be turned over to the Defense Ministry.

"In fact, we are trying to decentralise power," he claimed.

Gen Chawalit said the reorganisation had given a wrong impression of the ISOC, making it look like a sort of policy-making body "which it is not."

He admitted that some military officials had contributed to that impression by saying that the legislature would be controlled by the ISOC because the secretary-general of Parliament will sit on the agency's board. We sincerely have no such intention," said the general, adding that action had been taken to rectify that impression. "That impression is wrong. It is the intention that counts. We need cooperation to solve problems," he said.

FORMER PRIME MINISTER ON CHAWALIT, POLICE GUARD

BK050354 Bangkok BANGKOK POST in English 5 Apr 87 pp 1, 3

[Excerpt] Former Prime Minister M.R. Khukrit Pramot said yesterday he believed in Army Commander-in-Chief General Chawalit Yongchaiyut's sincerity towards the people and impeccable loyalty to his majesty the king.

But he said he doubted Gen Chawalit would succeed in carrying out his concept of revolution because the general's loyalty to the king and sincerity towards the people were a stumbling block to the success of his own idea.

He added that anything concerning the king should be treated with importance "because the king is not the Emerald Buddha: he exists in person, feeling and judgment to decide what is good or bad; to place the king anywhere at one's wish cannot be done.

"Gen Chawalit cannot do anything with his bare hands; he needs the institution and a lot of people. Even men in the armed forces will have to follow his idea--which, I think, is difficult," said M.R. Khukrit.

The former Social Action Party leader maintained he had no personal grudges against Gen Chawalit and said his criticism of the army chief's revolution and the restructured Internal Security Operations Command was just an academic's point of view.

As an academic, he said that he had to speak out openly and at length. He maintained his speech was not very frightening and blamed the press for sensationalising it.

M.R. Khukrit insisted that his relationship with Gen Chawalit remained unchanged. I gave an interview and he responded on television. I am happy because it created good understanding," he said and referred to the emergence of underground publications attacking the army chief.

Asked about the police guard in front of his Soi Suan Phlu residence, M.R. Khukrit said he was not aware of their presence on Friday night until someone told him and added he was also visited by police officers from Thung Mahamek yesterday.

But he insisted he was not under house arrest. "The police are outside, I am inside and I can still go anywhere I want although I do not go out very often," he said.

Asked whether he had received any threatening phone calls, the veteran politician said he hadn't and added that in any case he wasn't worried about it. "I am now this old. Whatever happens will happen. I don't think someone wants to kill me. Just leave me alone, then I will die myself very soon."

He said he would continue writing "unless I am lazy or get sick or go up-country."

Asked whether he was afraid of the military, the ex-premier said: "My hands do not usually stay idle. When I visit museums I usually touch things despite the warnings. Even if I get hurt, it is my own hands."

"But the knife has not hurt me yet, except a few old nails which keep piercing me," he said in an apparent reference to columnists who have kept snipping at him.

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CSO: 4200/458

SENATE REJECTS PARLIAMENT BROADCAST BILL 138 TO 2

BK030730 Bangkok Domestic Service in Thai 0530 GMT 3 Apr 87

[Text] Ukrit Mongkhonawin, president of the Senate this morning presided over the Senate's first meeting of the current annual session. The meeting began at 0930 and ended at 1030. It discussed and approved the draft automobile bill. This was followed by debate on the draft bill on the broadcasting of parliamentary sessions, which the senate rejected with the vote of 138 to 2. During the debate, the chairman of the Senate Commission on Administration Affairs pointed out that there are loopholes in the bill and it appears to contradict the constitution. The commission, therefore, did not attempt to amend the draft bill and suggested that it be sent back to the House of Representatives for review.

Speaking to reporters afterward, minister attached to the Prime Minister's Office Chirayu Itsarangkun Na Ayutthaya said the Senate's rejection of the draft bill is regrettable because the House of Representatives spent considerable time in drafting the bill so as to avoid legal disputes and expand constitutional immunity privileges. It would have been better for the Senate to reject the bill in its first reading than to let it reach the third reading as it did. In any event, if the House of Representatives insists on implementation of the bill, it can reconsider it again 180 days after it received the bill back from the Senate to reconfirm its approval with a vote in excess of half the total number of the entire Parliament. In that case, the bill will be regarded as approved by Parliament.

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CSO: 4200/458

HOUSE SPEAKER VOWS TO REINTRODUCE BROADCAST BILL

BK040239 Bangkok THE NATION in English 4 Apr 87 p 2

[Text] Responding to the Senate's decision to reject the bill on the live broadcast of the parliamentary session, House Speaker Chuan Likphai said yesterday he will ask the government to broadcast the House meeting during the no-confidence debate.

He also vowed to reintroduce the bill for reconsideration in the House after the compulsory 6-month waiting period is over to pass it into law in spite of the Senate's objection.

Chuan said the government should take the initiative in broadcasting the parliamentary session; if not, he will urge the government to do it.

"There was live broadcast in 1975 and 1976. Everything went fine then. I see the benefits outweigh the cost or bad consequences," he told reporters.

Chuan also said the House is preparing to start its own radio station. The Committee on House Members' Affairs is studying the plan.

After 6 months, the bill can be reintroduced in the House. If it is passed by at least a majority vote, it can be sent for HM the king's signature and promulgation into law in the Royal Gazette.

Opposition MPs were quick to criticize the Senate for rejecting the bill. Prachakorn Thai leader Samak Sunthorawet said infringement on the executive domain was a poor excuse for rejection the bill because the offices in the executive branch such as the Revenue Department sometimes seized private property without going through the due process of law, and this is a clear infringement on the judicial branch.

Ruam Thai Party Secretary General Piyanat Watcharaphon noted that the Senate's decision was like an insult on the government because the bill was technically proposed by the Cabinet.

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CSO: 4200/458

BIGGEST COMMERCIAL BANK LOWERS LENDING RATES

BK010245 Bangkok THE NATION in English 1 Apr 87 p 25

[Text] Bangkok Bank Ltd., the country's largest commercial bank, yesterday announced a wide range of cuts in its lending rates effective today in an effort to boost credit and investment. Other banks have yet to effectively reduce ceiling of lending rate from 15 percent to 14 percent.

The Bank's executive board met yesterday and agreed to cut what is described as the maximum lending rate down from 15 to 14 percent, spokesman and Vice President Dr Sathit Uthaisi said.

The decision came after a meeting of the Thai Bankers' Association [TBA] which agreed that the proposed cut in the ceiling rate will be voluntary for all banks.

The reduction of Bangkok Bank's lending rates will benefit borrowers in Bangkok and in the provinces who continue to pay at the 15 percent rate. Since Bangkok Bank has a big market share, its reduction will substantially cut down the cost of business operators.

Dr Sathit said the cut will benefit rural and agricultural sectors as well as the retail business. All categories of savings and deposit rates remain unchanged, however.

Sathit said the cuts in the lending rates will stimulate economic recovery and investment spending to expand production and employment in line with the government's policy to let Thai banks take the lead in taking the economy on the path of favourable economic growth.

The cuts include a reduction of rural and agricultural credit rates down to a maximum of 13.5 percent. Bangkok Bank subsequently announced the establishment of the "Rural and Agricultural Credit Department" to promote lending to the agro-industrial and regional industrial activities.

Retail customers of the bank in the Metropolitan area will also benefit from the move when the maximum lending rate to them has been set at 13.5 percent. This will benefit all categories of debtors although a good retail customer of the bank would have already enjoyed a favourable credit rate of 11.75 percent from the Bua Luang credit facility.

Sathid and Bangkok Bank was fully aware that the lending rate cuts will affect its earnings and he disclosed that the bank has already taken steps to improve efficiency and service, and streamline the management to cope with the burden.

He described the decision of the bank's Executive Board as one that will benefit all customers of the bank and provide a direction for new investment in the rural and agricultural sectors.

But Thai Farmers Bank will not reduce its lending rate ceiling because the interest it charges on loans is already below the existing rate of 15 percent, said President Banyong Lamsam.

The Thai Bankers' Association decided on Monday to ask members to consider a reduction in the ceiling rate from 15 percent but most of the member banks are already charging below the ceiling rate.

However, the effective reduction would help borrowers in the provinces because 15 percent of them still pay the maximum rate.

Banyong said: "It is not necessary for us to reduce the ceiling to 14 percent. Our loans are already cheaper than that."

Bangkok Bank held a meeting yesterday to reduce the rate. Four other banks whose representatives are members of the TBA's Executive Committee--Krung Thai, Siam Commercial, Thai Military and Thai Thanu--will enforce a cut soon.

Bank of Ayutthaya will ask the board to decide whether it should follow other banks.

Siam Commercial Bank Executive Vice President Dr Olan Chaiprawat said the cut would benefit borrowers who pay at the maximum rate but then he cautioned that this would not reduce the prevailing excess liquidity.

He said only the development and introduction of more financial instruments would help absorb the excess liquidity. The bank will reduce the ceiling rate at the middle of next month.

He pointed out that the excess liquidity remains high in the market. In the past 3 weeks, Bangkok Bank, Thai Farmers Bank, Krung Thai Bank and Siam Commercial Bank had an increase in deposits up to 6,000 million baht compared with a monthly increase of only 5,000 million baht in the whole commercial banking system.

Dr Olan said that there was a large flow of funds into the system while the cause remains unknown. He said deposits increased 15,800 million baht during the first 2 months of this year.

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CSO: 4200/458

BRIEFS

GOVERNMENT FORCES ADVANCE CONTINUES--Government forces have been advancing toward the strategic Hill No 500 near Chong Bok in Ubon Ratchathani after dislodging Vietnamese intruders from nearby Hill No 408 during a series of fierce clashes last week. Lieutenant General Panya Singsakda, assistant chief-of-staff of the Royal Thai Army, said the government forces are using modern equipment to detect and detonate landmines planted by Vietnamese troops on Hill No 500. Lt Gen Panya visited the battlefield in this northeastern province last Saturday and found that most of the Thai casualties were inflicted by landmines. He said no more Vietnamese troops could be found on Hill No 408; 19 bodies of Vietnamese soldiers were left behind by the retreating intruders. He is confident that the remaining Vietnamese troops on Hill No 500, which is about 2-4 kilometres inside the Thai territory, will soon be flushed out. The government intends to develop this border area and tighten security after clearing out the Vietnamese troops, Lt Gen Panya said. [Text] [Bangkok THE NATION in English 1 Apr 87 p 2 BK] /12232

HILL CAPTURED FROM VIETNAMESE--Troops have driven intruding Vietnamese forces off one hill and are now fighting to regain another hill near the Thai-Kampuchean border, army spokesman Major General Narudon Detpradiyut said yesterday. Thai forces recaptured Hill 408 after killing 20 Vietnamese soldiers, including a lieutenant, and wounding three others on 25 March. About 500 rounds of 82 mm mortar shells were seized from the hill, he said. The spokesman said two villagers were killed and one wounded when Vietnamese gunners shelled Ban Kho and Ban Kaeng Ruang in Ubon Ratchathani during the skirmishes for Hill 408 last month. Vietnamese troops holding out on Hill 500, near the Bok Pass, also in Ubon Ratchathani, would be wiped out if they do not pull back into Kampuchea," he said. Maj Gen Narudon denied charges by Phnom Penh that Thai aircraft dropped napalm in Kampuchea near a border area where Thai forces were battling Vietnamese troops on 21 February and 21 March. He said that no planes were used to dislodge the Vietnamese. [Text] [Bangkok BANGKOK POST in English 2 Apr 87 p 1 BK] /12232

NEW FOREIGN MINISTRY COMMITTEE--The Foreign Ministry has set up a new committee to formulate policy, it was announced last Friday. The foreign minister will chair the new committee while the deputy foreign minister will serve as deputy chairman. Other members on the committee are: Dr Arun Phanupnong, foreign affairs adviser to the prime minister; the permanent secretary for foreign affairs; the directors general of the Departments of Political Affairs, Economic

Affairs, Treaties and Legal Affairs, Information, International Organizations, and ASEAN Affairs; the coordinator between military affairs and politics; Major General Charan Kunlawanit, an aide to Foreign Minister ACM [Air Chief Marshal] Sitthi Sawetsila; and the director of the Policy and Planning Division who serves as secretary to the committee. The committee will study foreign policy goals, objectives, obstacles, and options. It may invite senior officials from other government agencies and ambassadors to help in the study of specific issues.
[Text] [Bangkok THE NATION in English 5 Apr 87 p 2 BK] /12232

CSO: 4200/458

COALITION GOVERNMENT OF DEMOCRATIC KAMPUCHEA

VONADK SAYS SRV POSITIONS IN KOMPONG CHHNANG ATTACKED

BK120119 (Clandestine) Voice of the National Army of Democratic Kampuchea
in Cambodian 2315 GMT 11 Mar 87

[From the "Daily report from various battlefields" feature]

[Exerpt] Kompong Chhnang battlefield: On 7 March, our national army, in cooperation with the people and patriotic Cambodian soldiers, attacked and dismantled Vietnamese administrative networks in Svay Chup commune and two Vietnamese company positions in Krang Sramar and Chak Sangke villages in Svay Chup commune, Kompong Tralach District, Kompong Chhnang Province.

After a 1-hour battle, we completely liberated the Svay Chup commune and the two Vietnamese company positions. We killed 23 Vietnamese enemy soldiers -- 16 bodies were left on the battlefield, including a company commander and 2 platoon commanders -- and wounded 19 others. We destroyed 47 assorted weapons, including a 60-mm mortar, 2 M-30's, an M-79, 6 RPD's, 9 AK's, 14 AR-15's, 13 SK and SKS rifles, a pistol, 100 60-mm mortar shells, 5 cases of M-30 ammunition, a C-25 radio, a commune office building, 26 barracks, a paddy stock containing 60 sacks of paddy, and a quantity of other materiel. We seized 21 weapons, including 3 M-79's, 2 B-40's, 4 B-41's, 8 AK's, 3 SKS rifles, 4 AR-15's, 29 B-40 rockets, 17 B-41 rockets, 49 M-79 grenades, 600 rounds of AK ammunition, 3 Soviet-made mines, 3 maps, 14 hammocks, 10 backpacks, 9 canteens, 5 sacks of rice, and a quantity of other materiel. We liberated 10 villages: Chrak Sangke, Prey Peam, Tang Khley, Krang Troneap, Krang Sramar, Roleang Neak, Tang Krang, Svay Kambet, Trapeang Mtes, and Tavai. We also freed 52 Cambodian soldiers, militiamen, and village and commune administrative officials forced to serve the Vietnamese.

On the same day, the Vietnamese enemy gathered their forces from Tang Koul and Kdol positions and Peam commune in an attempt to oppose us. However, we ambushed and routed them, killing four and wounding another four. Fifteen minutes later, the Vietnamese sent 3 truckloads of their forces to Route 5 to retrieve the bodies of their dead comrades. While doing this, they stepped on our mines; six were killed and another four were wounded. In sum, we killed 33 Vietnamese enemy soldiers and wounded 27 others.

/12624

CSO: 4200/451

COALITION GOVERNMENT OF DEMOCRATIC KAMPUCHEA

DK FORCES ATTACK SANTUK DISTRICT, ROCKETS SIEM REAP

BK180144 (Clandestine) Voice of Democratic Kampuchea in Cambodian 2330 GMT
17 Mar 87

[Excerpt] In cooperation with the local population and fraternal patriotic Cambodian soldiers, the DK National Army launched a 3-pronged attack on the Santuk District seat located in Tang Krasang town on 10 March. The first prong hit the Santuk District office in Tang Krasang; the second hit the Vietnamese company position at Ang Khleang monastery; and the third hit another company position at Thormmaneet monastery. After 30 minutes of fighting we completely controlled the three objectives, killing 26 Vietnamese soldiers and wounding 28 others, destroying 2 60-mm mortars, 10 B-30's, 1 12.7-mm machinegun, 15 AK's, 1 ammunition depot, 15 barracks, 8 bicycles, 600 liters of gasoline, and other war materiel; and seizing 2 AK's, 5 AR-15's, 1 carbine, 2 SKS's, 1 typewriter, 2 telephones, 2 bicycles, and some other war materiel.

On 8 March, our National Army fired a 107-mm rocket into the international airport of Siem Reap town. The rocket smashed into the Vietnamese enemy's gasoline cistern which exploded and burned from noon until 2100 at night.

On 10 March, it fired two more 107-mm rockets at the Vietnamese position defending the smaller group of Angkor temples, killing two Vietnamese soldiers and wounding five others.

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CSO: 4200/451

COALITION GOVERNMENT OF DEMOCRATIC KAMPUCHEA

SRV POSITION IN KOMPONG THOM TOWN ATTACKED

BK230143 (Clandestine) Voice of Democratic Kampuchea in Cambodian
2330 GMT 22 Mar 87

[Text] On 17 March, in cooperation with the patriotic Cambodian soldiers and local people, our commandos raided a Vietnamese company position defending Tuol Kruos worksite in the central area of Kompong Thom town. After 15 minutes of fighting, we took full control of this position. We killed 15 Vietnamese soldiers and wounded 15 others for a total of 30 Vietnamese casualties. We destroyed 4 AK's, 1 B-40, 1 60-mm mortar, 1 RPD gun, 3 caterpillar tractors, 27 tractors, 1 truck, 7,000 liters of gasoline, 3,000 liters of diesel oil, 1 power generator, 1 rice store house, 2 barracks, and some war materiel; seized 4 AK's, 6 SKS guns, 700 B-40 rockets, 15 B-41 rockets, 40 rucksacks, 6 hammocks, and 4 pairs of shoes; and freed and sent home 4 Cambodian soldiers and 30 workers.

Following the attack, the situation in Kompong Thom town banning our fraternal Cambodian soldiers, militiamen, and people from moving in or out of the town from 1800 [1100 GMT] to dawn, accusing the Cambodians of leading our national army to attack them.

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CSO: 4200/451

COALITION GOVERNMENT OF DEMOCRATIC KAMPUCHEA

VODK COMMENTARY HAILS KOMPONG CHEM COMBAT SUCCESS

BK240209 (Clandestine) Voice of Democratic Kampuchea in Cambodian
2330 GMT 23 Mar 87

[Station commentary: "Our National Army and People on Kompong Cham Battlefield Have Jointly Continued To Attack the Vietnamese Aggressors"]

[Text] At the end of the current 9th dry season, our National Army and people on Kompong Chem battlefield had actively and effectively implemented our five attack tactics, particularly in the attack to disperse and dismantle the Vietnamese enemy's village and commune administrative networks. They scored one victory after another.

Between the end of February and the middle of March, our National Army and people jointly liberated, dispersed, and dismantled the Vietnamese administrations in 68 villages and 4 communes. They have repeatedly dispersed and dismantled the Vietnamese village and commune administration in all districts in Kompong Cham Province, including various areas along the banks of the Mekong river. For example, on 14 March they dispersed and dismantled the Vietnamese village and commune administration in Treang Commune of Kompong Siem District and liberated 10 villages. On 16 March, they dispersed and dismantled the Vietnamese village and commune administrations in Ro'ang and Kien Chrey communes in Kompong Siem District and liberated 17 villages. On 14, 15, and 19 March, they dispersed and dismantled the Vietnamese village and commune administrations in Stoeng Trang District and liberated 16 villages. Moreover, they continually ambushed and routed the Vietnamese aggressor troops in various areas. For example, they ambushed a Vietnamese company near O Ta Sek during which 18 Vietnamese soldiers were killed and 5 others were wounded; ambushed a Vietnamese battalion at Chamka Leu in Chamka Leu District during which 11 Vietnamese soldiers were killed or wounded; ambushed 2 Vietnamese companies at Bat Khteah dam in Cheung Prey District; ambushed a Vietnamese company launching operations at Bos Pou in Chamka Leu District during which 8 enemy soldiers were killed and 13 others were wounded.

Since the beginning of February, our National Army has been launching an offensive against the Vietnamese enemy in the suburb of Kompong Cham town and carrying out activities right inside Kompong Cham town, thus turning all of Kompong Cham Province into an increasingly hot battlefield.

During these attacks, we liberated and sent home many patriotic Cambodian soldiers, village and commune guerrillas, village and commune administrators, and inhabitants who were recruited under the K-5 plan or jailed by the Vietnamese enemy. This has greatly encouraged our people who have welcomed our National Army warmly and have turned against the Vietnamese and joined with our National Army in the struggle against the Vietnamese aggressors. Thus, the situation of our struggle in Kompong Cham Province has developed more favorable for us.

This constitutes a brilliant feat of arms of our National Army and people on Kompong Cham battlefield. It is made possible due to the fact that our National Army and people have effectively implemented the five attack tactics and coordinated our three forces well to the point that they could attack the targets directly and score successive victories.

Kompong Cham is one of the fertile provinces in Cambodia. The fact that the National Army, people, and patriotic Cambodian soldiers, militiamen, and administrators have jointly attacked the Vietnamese enemy more vigorously, thus turning their province into an increasingly hot battlefield, is an obstacle preventing the Vietnamese aggressors from plundering the property and resources of our people in this region to be sent to Vietnam or to feed their aggressor troops in Cambodia. This has caused more serious difficulties for the Hanoi authorities both in Cambodia and in Vietnam. This is a significant contribution to our struggle against the Vietnamese aggressors and race exterminators.

We wish our National Army, people, and fraternal patriotic Cambodian soldiers and militiamen on Kompong Cham battlefield good health and greater victories in carrying out your noble mission to fight against the Vietnamese aggressors and race exterminators.

/12624
CSO: 4200/451

COALITION GOVERNMENT OF DEMOCRATIC KAMPUCHEA

VODK REVIEWS SITUATION ON N. SISOPHON BATTLEFIELD

BK290422 (Clandestine) Voice of Democratic Kampuchea in Cambodian 2330 GMT
28 Mar 87

[Station commentary: "Our National Army and People on the North Sisophon Battlefield Are Cooperating To Actively Increase our Attacks Against the Vietnamese Enemy"]

[Text] In this 9th dry season, the north Sisophon battlefield, like the entire Battambang battlefield and other battlefields throughout the country, is becoming a hot one, burning the Vietnamese enemy aggressors every day. Our National Army and people on the north Sisophon battlefield, with the close cooperation of patriotic Cambodian soldiers and administrative officials forced to serve the Vietnamese, have vigorously intensified attacks against the Vietnamese enemy aggressors, according to our 5-point fighting method, by attacking and dismantling Vietnamese commune and village administrative networks, ambushing Vietnamese soldiers, and attacking their positions to constantly destroy the Vietnamese enemy's fighting forces.

In February, our National Army and people on the north Sisophon battlefield killed or wounded 500 Vietnamese soldiers and attacked and dismantled Vietnamese administrative networks in 36 villages and 3 communes. In March, our National Army and people continue to actively attack the Vietnamese who tried to gather their forces to oppose us. However, every time they did this, they were beaten back by our National Army.

Furthermore, we even attacked the Vietnamese at many of their positions. On 27 February, we attacked and dismantled Vietnamese administrative networks in Khlang Hai commune and attacked a Vietnamese company position in Phnum Srok District [Battambang Province]. On 6 March, we ambushed a Vietnamese company leaving Svay Chik for Pring Kaong. On 7 March, we ambushed a Vietnamese battalion at Thnung village. On 5 and 7 March, we ambushed a company in Thmar Puok District. On 7 March, we attacked a Vietnamese regiment command in Anlung Chrey village in Thmar Puok District. On 15 March, we attacked a Vietnamese regiment position in Samraong village, Phnum Srok District. Apart from this, we also attacked and dismantled administrative networks in many villages and communes in every district. Also in March, our National Army cooperated with our people in thwarting the Vietnamese K-5 plan and freed 30,000 people who were forced to build barracks for the Vietnamese in Phnum Srok District.

This has greatly encouraged our people, Cambodian soldiers, militiamen, and administrative officials who have been forced to serve the Vietnamese. It has further motivated our compatriots to rise up and cooperate with our National Army to form a 3-element force to more vigorously struggle against the Vietnamese aggressors. The increased attacks by our National Army on the North Sisophon battlefield are part of the contribution to tie down and split the Vietnamese enemy forces. This is done to scatter the Vietnamese enemy aggressor forces and make them face more difficulties.

Currently, the Vietnamese enemy forces on the entire Battambang battlefield are panicking because of the widespread attacks by our forces on the north Sisophon and south Sisophon battlefields, around Battambang town, and on the Pailin-Samlot battlefields. The Vietnamese lack fighting forces to oppose and resist our attacks everywhere. Although they have rounded up people to build defensive works for them, they cannot resist activities by our National Army and people.

Our National Army on the north Sisophon battlefield is determined to intensify its attacks on the Vietnamese enemy according to our 5-point fighting method of destroying more Vietnamese fighting forces and dismantling more Vietnamese administrative networks. This is done to shake the Vietnamese more, weaken them, and make them face increasingly difficult problems. These efforts contribute to the struggle of our National Army and people throughout the country to chase out the Vietnamese aggressors from our Cambodian territory.

We wish our National Army, people, patriotic Cambodian soldiers, and administrative officials on the north Sisophon battlefield good health, strength, and unity in the struggle against the Vietnamese, and also successive great victories until the complete and final victory over the Vietnamese enemy aggressors and race exterminators.

/12624

CSO: 4200/451

COALITION GOVERNMENT OF DEMOCRATIC KAMPUCHEA

VODK SUMS UP BATTLE RESULTS IN MARCH

BK030145 (Clandestine) Voice of Democratic Kampuchea in Cambodia 2330 GMT
2 Apr 87

[Roundup of March Battle Results]

- [Text] 1. Koh Kong-Kompong Som battlefield: 44 Vietnamese enemy soldiers were killed and 48 wounded. There was a total of 92 casualties. Administrative networks in seven villages were dismantled.
2. Leach-Peam Ta battlefield: 115 killed and 123 wounded. Total 238 casualties. Administrative networks in six villages were dismantled.
3. Samlot battlefield: 120 killed and 147 wounded. Total: 275 casualties. Administrative networks in eight villages were dismantled.
4. Palin battlefield. 214 killed and 273 wounded. Total 487 casualties.
5. South Sisophon battlefield: 124 killed and 141 wounded. Total: 265 casualties. Administrative networks in four villages were dismantled.
6. North Sisophon battlefield: 347 killed and 417 wounded. Total: 764 casualties. Administrative networks in 36 villages, 7 communes, 1 township, and 1 district were dismantled.
7. Around Battambang battlefield: 127 killed and 106 wounded. Total: 233 casualties. Administrative networks in 70 villages and 9 communes were dismantled.
8. Siem Reap-Oddar Meanchey battlefield: 236 killed and 219 wounded. Total: 455 casualties. Administrative networks in 93 villages, 13 communes, and 2 townships were dismantled.
9. Preah Vihear battlefield: 56 killed and 51 wounded. Total: 107 casualties. Administrative networks in 13 villages and 1 commune were dismantled.
10. Kompong Thom-Kompong Cham battlefield: 211 killed and 220 wounded. Total: 431 casualties. Administrative networks in 175 villages, 13 communes, 1 township, and 2 districts were dismantled.

11. Moung-Pursat battlefield: 135 killed and 121 wounded. Total: 256 casualties. Administrative networks in 81 villages and 10 communes were dismantled.
12. Kompong Chhnang battlefield: 80 killed and 63 wounded. Total: 143 casualties. Administrative networks in 59 villages, 5 communes, and 1 township were dismantled.
13. Tonle Sap battlefield: 78 killed and 26 wounded. Total: 104 casualties. Administrative networks in 10 villages were dismantled.
14. Phnom Penh and around Phnom Penh battlefield: 229 killed and 187 wounded. total: 416 casualties. Administrative networks in 291 villages, 19 communes, 1 township, and 1 district were dismantled.
15. Southwest region battlefield: 104 killed and 122 wounded. Total 226 casualties. Administrative networks in 106 villages and 12 communes were dismantled.
16. Northeast-Eastern Region battlefield: 34 killed and 25 wounded. Total: 59 casualties. Administrative networks in 25 villages and 2 communes were dismantled.

In sum, we killed 2,262 Vietnamese enemy soldiers and wounded 2,289 others for a total of 4,551 casualties and dismantled administrative networks in 984 villages, 91 communes, 6 townships, and 4 districts.

/12232

CSO: 4200/459

COALITION GOVERNMENT OF DEMOCRATIC KAMPUCHEA

BRIEFS

GOVERNMENT SOLDIERS IN SAMLOT MUTINY--On 18 March, a company of fraternal Cambodian soldiers posted on top of Kop Hill near Chheuteal Phloah on Samlot battlefield [Battambang Province] mutinied against the Vietnamese enemy by destroying a quantity of its weapons and ammunition, including a DK-82 and a 12.7-mm machinegun. They then deserted their position and fled back home. This is a form of patriotic gesture displayed by this company of fraternal Cambodian soldiers who did not want to serve nor fight and die for the Vietnamese aggressors. [Excerpt] [(Clandestine) Voice of the National Army of Democratic Kampuchea in Cambodian 2315 GMT 26 Mar 87 BK] /12624

DKNA SHELLS AIRFIELD--According to a report from the Kratie battlefield, our National Army shelled the airfield of Kratie town and a Vietnamese position at Toek Chha monastery. On 8 March, our National Army shelled the airfield of Kratie town and a Vietnamese position at Toek Chha monastery, killing or wounding a number of Vietnamese soldiers. The shelling threw the Vietnamese enemy in Kratie town into panic. [Excerpt] [(Clandestine) Voice of the National Army of Democratic Kampuchea in Cambodian 2315 GMT 24 Mar 87 BK] /12624

AMMUNITION DEPOT DESTROYED--North Phnom Penh battlefield: On 1 March, patriotic Cambodian soldiers in Kaoh Chen commune, Ponhea Loe District, Kandal Province, set fire to a Vietnamese ammunition depot, which burnt through the night, before fleeing home. [Excerpt] [(Clandestine) Voice of the National Army of Democratic Kampuchea in Cambodian 2315 GMT 19 Mar 87 BK] /12624

DK FORCES SHELL KOMPONG THOM TOWN--Kompong Thom battlefield: On the night of 10 March, our National Army fired three DK-82 shells at the Vietnamese position at Pou Bak Kar in Kompong Thom town, killing or wounding some Vietnamese enemy soldiers. Other Vietnamese soldiers in Kompong Thom town panicked and fired their guns indiscriminately. On 12 March, our National Army attacked and dismantled Vietnamese administrative networks in the Fifth Ward in the western part of Kompong Thom town along the Stoeng Sen River. We liberated 4 villages -- Kdei Dong, Sambuo, Prey Preal, and Peam Trei; killed a Vietnamese enemy soldier and wounded 2 others; destroyed a commune office building, 3 barracks, a B-40, 2 AK's, 10 sacks of paddy, and some war materiel; and seized some war materiel. [Excerpt] [(Clandestine) Voice of the National Army of Democratic Kampuchea in Cambodian 2315 GMT 16 Mar 87 BK] /12624

37 SRV SOLDIERS KILLED--A report from the 5th Army Region command of the KPNLF says that 37 Vietnamese soldiers were killed, 14 others seriously wounded, and another 8 taken prisoners during an attack in Battambang Province. The report said that on 8 March, at 0030 [1730 GMT on 7 March], KPNLF combatants of the 5th Army Region, in cooperation with a number of Democratic Kampuchean combatants, attacked three Vietnamese positions in the vicinity of Kandal, Smach, and east of Smach villages in Sereisaophan District, Battambang Province. In the attack, apart from killing 37 Vietnamese soldiers on the spot, wounding 14 others, and capturing another 8, including a commander, the KPNLF combatants also seized 32 weapons, including 1 M-60, 1 B-40, 1 B-40.5, 20 AK's, and 9 SKS rifles; and destroyed 1 B-40, 1 B-40.5, 20 AK's, and 9 SKS rifles; and destroyed 1 motorcycle and 50 sacks of paddy. [Text] [(Clandestine) Voice of the Khmer in Cambodian 0500 GMT 17 Mar 87 BK] /12624

SRV BATTALION POSITION ATTACKED--On 13 March, our National Army attacked and took control of a Vietnamese battalion position near Peam Ta [Pursat Province]. We killed 20 and wounded 15 Vietnamese enemy soldiers; destroyed some weapons, ammunition, and war materiel; and seized 3 AK's, 10 cases of AK ammunition, 150 B-40 rockets, and a large quantity of war materiel. [Excerpt] [(Clandestine) Voice of the National Army of Democratic Kampuchea in Cambodian 2315 GMT 15 Mar 87 BK] /12624

500 BATTAMBANG WORKERS REVOLT--On 26 March, 500 of our people, who have been forced to clear brushes and dig trenches for the Vietnamese on South Sisophon battlefield, revolted and killed or wounded a number of Vietnamese soldiers before fleeing home. Our people are determined to unite and thwart the Vietnamese enemy's K-5 plan. [Text] [(Clandestine) Voice of Democratic Kampuchea in Cambodian 2330 GMT 3 Apr 87 BK] /12232

ARTILLERY PIECE DESTROYED--Samlot battlefield: On 31 March, a Vietnamese truck towing an artillery piece from Treng drove over our mines at Kamput Svay and was completely destroyed. Two Vietnamese soldiers on the truck were killed and seven other wounded; a 122-mm gun was destroyed along with all the shells in the truck. [From the "Daily Report From Various Battlefields" feature] [Excerpt] [(Clandestine) Voice of the National Army of Democratic Kampuchea in Cambodian 2315 GMT 5 Apr 87 BK] /12232

KOMPONG THOM BATTLEFIELD ACTIONS--Kompong Thom battlefield: On 30 March, our National Army attacked Trapeang Veng Township on Route 6, south of Kompong Thom Provincial Town, and attacked and dismantled Vietnamese administrative networks in Srayov Commune, Kompong Svay District [Kompong Thom Province]. We killed 1 and wounded 2 Vietnamese soldiers; destroyed a rice mill, a warehouse containing 30 rolls of cloth, a paddy and rice stock containing 6 metric tons of paddy and 15 sacks of rice, a commune office, and 2 barrels of diesel; seized 2 SK rifles, 2 bicycles, 10 rolls of cloth, and some war materiel; and liberated 4 villates: So Ta En, Krang Veng, Srayov Khang Cheung, and Srayov Khang Tbong. We also freed five militiamen. [From the "Daily Report From Various Battlefields" feature] [Excerpt] [(Clandestine) Voice of the National Army of Democratic Kampuchea in Cambodian 2315 GMT 3 Apr 87 BK] /12232