

EARTHQUAKE VICTIMS NEED OUR HELP

OVER 100,000 FAMILIES LEFT HOMELESS

To date, the July 16th killer quake that hit northern and central Luzon in the Philippines has claimed the lives of 1,648 people, injured 3,513 and left 110,418 families without homes. There are still 782 people missing. The damage to infrastructure, private property and agricultural crops is estimated at P15 billion (about 1 billion Australian dollars). Zenaida Delica, Executive Director of the Citizens' Disaster Rehabilitation Center (CDRC) in the Philippines, sent us a report on the relief work of the Citizens' Disaster Rehabilitation Network (CDRN).

CDRN, a network of disaster response centres, reacted quickly to the plight of thousands of victims by providing food, medicine and clothing. Funds were raised locally from concerned individuals and organizations involved in resource generation. Four of CDRN's member affiliates, MRRS of the Cordillera, RDC of Northern Luzon, CONCERN and CRRS of Cagayan Valley were among the first agencies to deliver assistance in their areas.

CDRC, the national secretariat of CDRN, coordinated the relief efforts of Non-government organizations (NGOs), church people and service institutions. In La Union, CDRC was directly involved in relief operations and initiated an NGO network. To date, CDRN has reached a total of 218 communities and serviced 24,432 families.

Many Filipinos gave aid to the earthquake victims; mainly in the form of relief supplies. But the affected families will need more than relief.

Rehabilitation resources for the people and the ravaged environment are now necessary. CDRC, being cautious in this matter, is waiting for appraisals from volunteer teams in the areas to ensure that any rehabilitation programs undertaken will meet real needs.

Reports from the afflicted provinces summarizing damage, immediate needs, responses to date and financial requirements follow on page 2. So far, CDRC has confirmed a requirement of over P10.5 million and seeks our help in providing this amount. Their need is actually greater but the request is based upon CDRN's capacity to implement projects.

Fundraising has commenced in Australia and some money has already been sent to CDRC through the Lingap Pinoy (Philippine Help) Campaign. In Queensland, Kabalikat (the Association of Filipinos and Australians for Social Concerns) has set itself a target of raising \$1,000 by Christmas.

KABALIKAT FUNDRAISING BBQ

2pm Saturday, November 24th

at 15 Greenfields Rd, Capalaba

Tickets \$10 per person (children under 18 free of charge)

All profits go to LINGAP PINOY CAMPAIGN for Philippine earthquake victims

* Door Prize * Raffles * Music * Food *



C.D.R.N. PROVINCIAL REPORTS

ABRA

Ten affected towns: Bucloc, Sallapadan, Dagueman, Baliney, Luba, Licuan, Lacub, Baay, Malibcong and Timog were reached by the RDC initiated inter-NGO network. 189 families of barrios Kilong-Ulaw and Dacangan in Baliney evacuated. Landslides cover roads eroded by recent typhoon. Potable water and irrigation systems destroyed. Ricefields and residential areas flooded as waterways are blocked. Massive erosion of mountains and sinking of some areas. Some houses, schools, chapels and churches destroyed completely. Farm implements are lost.

Immediate Needs: Food for volunteers on clearing and rebuilding operations. Medicine, boots, housing. Bulldozers, drills, shovels, picks and a vehicle.

Response: CDRC sent 4 boxes of boots, 30 picks, 238 shovels and 10 rolls of plastic sheeting for tents. Negotiated with Public Works Dept for equipment and with Benguet Consolidated Mines for use of bulldozers. Volunteer teams re-surveying damaged areas.

Long Term Needs: crop rehabilitation, potable water and irrigation systems.

Minimum aid required for rehabilitation of poorest beneficiaries in prioritized areas = P8,696,000.

NUEVA VIZCAYA

Severely affected towns: Dupax Sur, Sta. Fe, Kayapa, Kasibu, Ambaguio, and Aritao isolated due to massive landslides and 300 students stranded in Bayambang, Bambang and Solano towns. Houses totally or partially destroyed.

Immediate Needs: Continue assistance to affected families. Road clearing equipment. Food for stranded students and volunteers working on relief and clearing operations. Radio communications system, blankets, tents, medicine.

Response: Initial relief assistance to affected families mostly in 8 barangays of Ambaguio - Salinsingan, Tiblac and Dulili. Formed inter-NGO network to coordinate relief efforts. CDRC sent P300,000 for food for volunteers,

renting jeepneys and purchase of relief goods like rice. Sending volunteer team to set up radio communications system.

Amount needed for additional relief goods and housing assistance for 100 families = P800,000. Rehabilitation projects still to be identified.

LA UNION

17,800 families affected in 209 barangays of Aringay, Agoo, Bauang, Rosario, Caba, Sto. Tomas, and Naguilian. 4,904 homes damaged, 4,567 totally destroyed. Some ricefields sinking. Crops, farmlands covered by mud and water. Most churches, chapels and municipal buildings have collapsed. Irrigation canals clogged, drains destroyed.

Immediate needs: Relief assistance for another week. Short and long term rehabilitation.

Amount needed for repair of irrigation system = P1,000,000. Rehabilitation projects still to be identified.

BENGUET

48,088 families were heavily affected in Kabayan, Tublay, Trinidad, Kibungan, Sablan, Baguias, Atok and Tuba. Irrigation systems, crops and roads severely damaged. The Cordillera region suffered the heaviest damage to property.

Immediate Needs: Continue relief operations. Medicine, tents, several months' food, crowbars and shovels. Bulldozers, cranes, graders, and drilling machines. Transport and radio communications. Survey and service outlying areas.

Response: MRRS set up operations center with other NGOs in Baguio. Served 5,854 families in 59 communities. CDRC facilitated vehicle purchase because need to reach mining communities urgent. Sent medicine, rolls of plastic sheeting, clothing, food and P279,000.

Amount Needed: Additional fund for operation = P300,000. Rehabilitation projects still to be identified.

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PROFILE ON MINDANAO

MORO PEOPLE CALL FOR PEACE

Since colonial days, Mindanao has been the object of assimilation campaigns. The Spanish and American colonizers, and even the national Philippine government, turned the island into a stage for war and resettlement programs.

The Moro Human Rights Center (MHRC), a non-government organization, says, "The Aquino administration continues to intensify militarization in the countryside of Mindanao, resulting in massive evacuations of Moro families and the displacement of great numbers of innocent civilians."

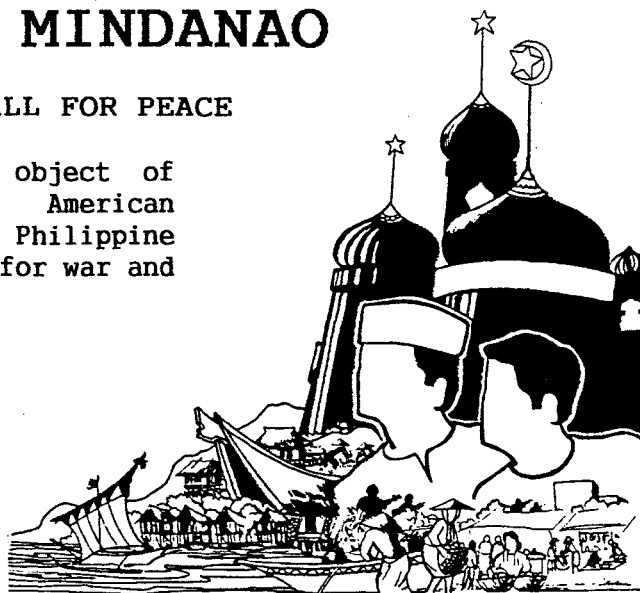
Today, some 40,000 Moro refugees live in the slum areas of Quiapo in Manila. They are plagued with the diseases and problems that arise from lack of housing and sanitary facilities.

Mindanao is the country's "milking cow". The island contributes about 60% to the gross national product, but gets almost nothing back for infrastructure projects. Mindanao Regions IX and XII rank first and third in illiteracy rates. About 66% of its households have incomes on or below the poverty line.

In a paper entitled "Moro People Call for Peace", the MHRC said government must respect "the rejection of the deceptive US-Aquino program of autonomy (i.e. Organic Acts RA 6734 & 6766 which established the autonomous regions)".

(After a plebiscite in November last year, an autonomous region was formed out of the Muslim-dominated provinces of Lanao de Sur, Tawi-tawi, Sulu and Maguindanao.)

The Moro National Liberation Front, a main contender for power in the area, opposed the government's version of autonomy and boycotted the regional autonomy elections. Strong opposition also came from indigenous people's groups, among them Lumad Mindanao. The Lumads decry the Act's loopholes and inconsistencies. Central to their objection is a provision on ancestral lands that excludes land vacated by indigenous peoples because of "war, force majeure and other forms of forcible usurpation."



This provision makes the Lumads 'squatters in their own land' says the Kalipunan ng Katutubong Mamamayan ng Pilipinas (Federation of Indigenous Peoples of the Philippines). They cite the centuries of colonization, and the migration and resettlement programs of various Philippine presidents.

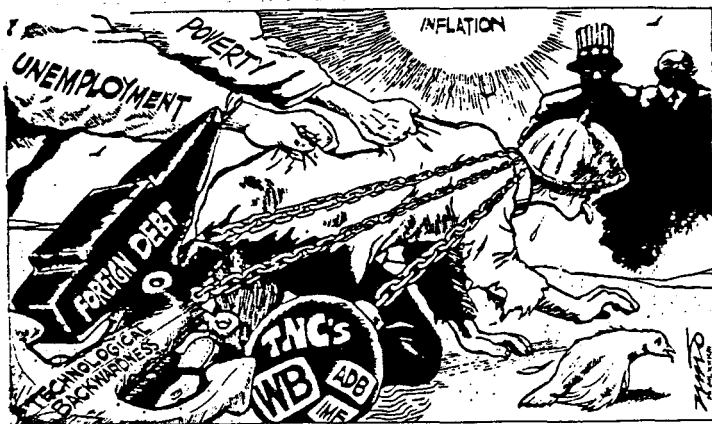
The Federation adds that the policy of "total war under Corazon Aquino, forcible usurpation by big corporations and Philippine and Moro big landlords" have driven tribal Filipinos off their land.

Sandugo (Blood Brothers), a publication of the People's Action for Cultural Ties, printed the peace agenda of the Moro Human Rights Center and the Al Fatimah Foundation, a community-based program of Christians and Muslims. Its five main points are:

- o Resolution of the problem of poverty among the Moro people;
- o Resolution of the issue of ancestral domain and other land problems of the Moro people;
- o End the increasing trend in human rights violations in Moroland;
- o Resolution of the problem of national sovereignty of the Filipino people as a requisite to meaningful Moro self-determination;
- o Resolution of the continuing colonial, repressive and commercialized Philippine educational system.

ECONOMIC RUIN - RISING OIL PRICES - US BASES - SEVENTH COUP ATTEMPT

WHAT'S NEXT FOR THE PHILIPPINES?



On September 24th, members of militant peoples' organisations and drivers' associations took to the streets nationwide to protest against the Aquino government's unilateral decision to raise the price of oil.

Transportation was paralyzed in the major cities of the country. As usual, the government's response was to arrest the leaders and members of dissenting groups, rallyists and anyone who happened to get caught in the net of the police roundup.

As well as arbitrarily making arrests, police raided an office of the National Alliance of Free Labor Unions (NAFLU). NAFLU workers said the police took five sacks of rice, P35,000 worth of goods from the union's cooperative store, P500 in cash and jewelry. They also destroyed a mimeo machine, typewriters and medical equipment. The raiding team were armed with pistols and armalites.

In the meantime, organised workers had already called for a nationwide peoples' strike. Aquino, cabinet officials and military generals have appealed to the militant organisations to desist from staging a general strike because "right-wing forces will use the occasion to grab power from the democratic government".

An increase in the price of oil would only aggravate the present situation of the people who are still reeling from a series of crises brought about by natural and man made disasters: a powerful earthquake, successive floods, the Middle East crisis which dislocated about 60,000 Filipino workers, and bombings executed by right-wing military forces.

It must be recalled that when petrol prices went up on two previous occasions, military rebels used these events to mount their coup, once in August 1987 and again in December 1989. The 1989 occasion, considered the bloodiest, almost toppled the Aquino government.

Once again a rise in the price of petrol has coincided with a failed coup attempt. On October 4, rebel troops seized control of two military camps in Butuan and Cagayan de Oro on the island of Mindanao. Two days later Colonel Alexander Noble, the leader of the rebel military forces, surrendered to government forces unconditionally after he tried to slip out of Camp Evangelista. According to the Chairman of the Davide Commission investigating the 1989 coup attempt, there is no doubt that Noble was a participant on that occasion as well.

In its statement to the press, the Coalition Against the Oil Price Increases (COAPI), an umbrella coalition of cause-oriented groups said, "In the first place, it is the government that is causing destabilisation by increasing the oil prices at this time of extreme crisis."

According to the World Bank's vice-president for Asia, the Philippines and other Asian countries like India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka "are likely to suffer the severest economic hardship."

The Philippines has 60,000 workers in Iraq and Kuwait, India has 170,000, Bangladesh some 100,000 to 140,000 and Sri Lanka 100,000. While India has a large export sector and can cope with the crisis, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh live on a shoestring budget and are the most vulnerable because of rising oil prices, displaced workers and lost foreign earnings.

The Philippines depends heavily on the foreign exchange remittances of its overseas workers who contribute US\$2 billion to its government's coffers. The spectre of massive hunger and poverty looms even larger now because returning overseas workers are looking for jobs in their own country and must compete with others for the same local work.

There is also an economic downturn due to the July earthquake, the Middle East crisis, the drought in Mindanao, inflation rising to 13.89% and fundamental problems confronting the nation.

After reaching a high of 6.8% in 1988, which was mainly artificial due to a big number of investments in real estate and shopping malls, GNP growth fell to 5.43% in 1989 and is estimated to go down to a dangerous 3.8% this year. Last year's huge trade deficit, an unprecedented US\$2.6 billion shortfall, is expected to rise to US\$3 billion this year as a result of the continued import liberalization policy of the present administration.

Exacerbating the slowdown is the Aquino government's insistence on fulfilling its "honorable commitments" to the WB-IMF and other foreign commercial banks. Total debt servicing on foreign and domestic loans eats up over 40% of the annual fiscal budget. Even Cardinal Sin has publicly supported the call of the Freedom from Debt Coalition.

The Philippine government's position in the Bases negotiations, the so-called Philippine-American Cooperation Talks is to take control of Clark Air Base, Camp O'Donnel, Camp John Hay and San Miguel Naval Station by September 17, 1991. But, Aquino has said she is considering the US proposal for a "phasing down" of Subic Naval Base.

According to the US government, the phase down takes into consideration the time that must be given to the US military to restructure, the AFP to deal with the CPP-NPA-NDF and, "friends in the region to adjust to a world in which superpower rivalry is replaced" by regional powers seeking "domination of their neighborhoods".

Even with the termination of the current Military Bases Agreement, the US wishes to have access to and use of Philippine facilities and maintain, "a US military presence which both countries would judge appropriate to meet our needs."

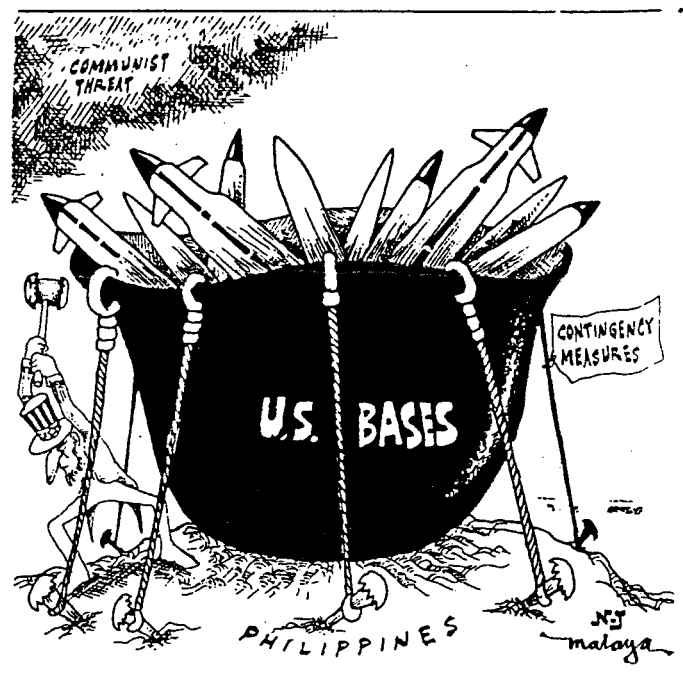
At this stage of the negotiations, which resume in October at a place not yet indicated due to "security reasons", some political analysts believe that the Aquino government has already prepared a phaseout treaty containing details like: how long

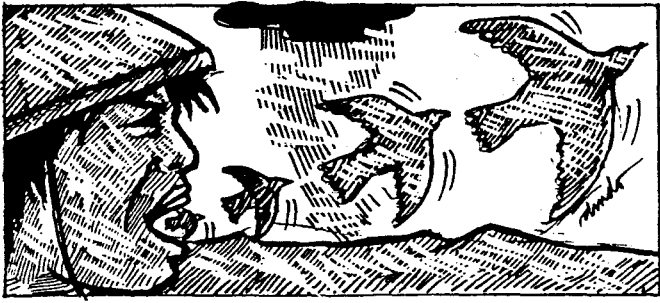
the US will stay; what to do with the equipment after a US withdrawal; how much the US will pay for its stay.

With most of the Senators now softening their stance on the US presence in the Philippines and agreeing to either a 5 or 7 year phaseout, the stage is set for the US to maneuver itself into staying until the year 2000. The US special negotiator on Bases in the Philippines, Richard Armitage, said at the start of the bases talks: "Let the voters of the 21st century decide whether or not they believe a continued US presence will be helpful."

In the meantime, the Aquino government showed its usual subservient character by unleashing its military and police forces against anti-bases advocates. Wave after wave of protesters, wanting to hold demonstrations in front of the Central Bank complex where the bases talks were being conducted and also in front of the US embassy, were brutally dispersed. A KMU rallyist was seriously wounded when a security guard opened fire on September 16th.

The coming months in 1990 and the first few months of 1991 will see the unfolding of many events. But what is crucial here at this juncture in Philippine history, is the decision of the Filipino people about which path they must take in order to finally resolve their age-old problems, their extreme economic crisis, and the destabilization wrought by their own government and right-wing military forces.





KAINGIN AND FOREST CONSERVATION

"How can we be the cause of the loss of the forests? We have lived here since the beginning of time and we have always drawn from the forest. The forest always remained. It was not until the time that logging came did we lose so many trees!"

As of 1987, the Philippines' highland population was 18 million, of which 11 million (about one-sixth of the country's total population) live in forested land.

Anthropologists loosely classify slash-and-burn farmers, who make up a sizable majority of highland dwellers, into 'indigenous' and 'migrant' kaingineros (swidden farmers). The term indigenous kaingineros generally refers to traditional communities while migrant kaingineros refers to landless lowlanders who move upland in search of better economic opportunities.

Kaingin (in Pilipino) means swidden farming or slash-and-burn agriculture. Kaingin is an important means of subsistence to the majority of tribal Filipinos and plays a role in their cultural and social cycle.

Kaingin usually involves the non-permanent agricultural use of sloping forest lands which are cleared by cutting back and burning off forest vegetation. The cleared area is planted to a wide variety of crops. In fact, the traditional kaingineros' multi-cropping system imitates the diversity of forest vegetation in the variety of crops and vegetables raised.

Once harvested the field is left fallow, ideally for a number of years, before the cycle is repeated, thus preserving soil fertility and regeneration of fauna. This is the way traditional kaingineros, like tribal Filipinos as distinguished from lowland migrant groups, practice swidden farming. Indigenous peoples are environmentally astute. They have a good sense of kaingin management.

As early as colonial times, the authorities were already condemning kaingin as destructive. In 1874, the Spanish overlords banned kaingin and

imposed a Royal Decree in 1889 called "Definitive Forest Laws and Regulations" which fined kaingineros. The Spaniards were more interested in curtailing the free movement of Filipinos and collecting taxes than they were in maintaining forest lands.

Anti-kaingin policies continued into American colonial times to conserve the forests for the use of American investments. Succeeding post-colonial governments continued to look upon kaingineros with displeasure, blaming them for the denuding of the forests. Even though logging concessions can cut up to 3,000 trees a day, whole communities that cut less than this number in a year are blamed for environmental degradation.

Joselito Alisuag, head of Haribon Palawan, during a recent workshop of the Communicators' League for Environmental Action and Restoration, said:

Forest destruction due to slash-and-burn farming practices is a direct offshoot of the country's agrarian reform problem. People turn to the forests and engage in shifting cultivation because they have been dispossessed of their farms in the flatlands.

A 1982 Ministry of Natural Resources research study traced the migrant kainginero phenomenon to economic pressure in lowland communities. Among the problems lowlanders faced were land deprivation, insufficiency of cultivated land and irregularity of wage income. If they had land to farm, they wouldn't do slash-and-burn farming, Alisuag explained.

The 1982 study also said plows and other agricultural tools used by migrant kaingineros damage soil structure, making land less resistant to water flow and more prone to erosion. ►

(← Cont'd from page 6)

Livestock, when these are numerous and uncontrolled, tend to compact soil structure to the point where animal paths, becoming unprotected by vegetation cover, result in hardpans which act as stream runoffs.

The migrant kainginero method has also caused soil unproductivity due to overdependence on chemical fertilizers. These methods of lowland farming were generally unknown to indigenous kainingeros prior to migration.

Government efforts to implement the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) have repeatedly been criticised by farmers' organizations for the Department of Agrarian Reform's (DAR) failure to expedite land distribution. Its critics say that 79% of the land the DAR claims to have distributed from July 1987 to May 1990, were dispersed under President Marcos' land reform scheme (PD 27) and only 6.2% of CARP's ten-year hectarage target has been met.

Alisuag also disputes the popular condemnation of kaingineros as being responsible for the bulk of the country's forest destruction. Haribon documents purportedly culled from the government's Strategic Environment Plan for Palawan show that two major Palawan logging companies grossed P480 million as compared to the P15.6 million earned by 21,437 kainginero families in the province last year.

"IF RAPE IS INEVITABLE RELAX AND ENJOY IT"

This remark, supposedly made in jest, by Philippine Foreign Secretary Raul Manglapus caused several women to walk out of the House Appropriations Committee hearing on the Foreign Office's proposed budget for next year.

"People like him do not deserve to be in the government," said Liza Maza, a member of Gabriella. "The quip showed the low regard of the government for women," she added.

Philippine Daily Inquirer 5 September 1990

WELGANG BAYAN WEEK OF PROTEST

The Welgang Bayan (people's strike) launched by militant organisations on September 24 had its affect upon the main streets of Metro Manila and other urban centres.

Led by BAYAN (Bagong Alyansang Makabayan - New Nationalist Alliance), KMU (Kilusang Mayo Uno - May First Movement), Piston (National Organisation of Jeepney Drivers and Operators), LFS (League of Filipino Students), ACT (Alliance of Concerned Teachers) and MPSTA (Manila Public School Teachers Association), the strikers protested the latest oil-price increase.

The Aquino government raised the price of oil products on September 21 by an average of P1.42 per litre due to the increase in the price of crude oil from the Middle East.

KMU Chairman, Crispin Beltran, said that in the National Capital Region alone, workers in 183 companies took action on the Monday, while 95 companies were paralyzed on September 25th. He added that the government was so afraid of large numbers supporting the strike it resorted to threatening workers with dismissal and used a crack riot team against protesters.

A number of companies were also affected in the Bataan Export Processing Zone. Transport along several routes in Metro Manila was crippled and commuters were stranded in Bicol, Cebu, Iligan and Davao as well.

The 5 days of protest actions ended on the Friday with a demonstration of 10,000 people at Liwasang Bonifacio and Mendiola Bridge near Malacañang, the Presidential Palace.

The protesters accused the government of "irresponsibility". They said there was enough 'old oil' to last till October or even December. Senator Ernesto Maceda has filed a petition at the Supreme Court to stop the implementation of the new prices in the absence of a public hearing.

DID YOU MISS THE P.A.S.G. FORUM ON SEPTEMBER 16th?

DEADLINE ON THE US BASES IN THE PHILIPPINES: WHICH WAY TO GO?

If you did, then you also missed getting your copies of the background papers produced for discussion. Filled with facts and figures, these papers paint a graphic picture of the current debate about the Filipino anti-nuclear/pro-peace constitution and the future of US Bases in the Philippines - conversion or retention.

Extracts from the "1990 IBON DATABANK Calendar" 4 PAGES

Extracts from "FREEDOM FROM NUCLEAR WEAPONS: A QUEST FOR NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY, A PILGRIMAGE FOR WORLD PEACE"

by Wigberto E. Tañada, Senator, Republic of the Philippines 5 pages

Extracts from NORTHERN DISPATCH: "ANCESTRAL LAND CLAIMANTS ASSERT OWNERSHIP OVER PART OF CAMP JOHN HAY" 1 PAGE

Extracts from PHILIPPINE NEWS AND FEATURES: "IN CASE OF U.S. BASES PULL-OUT - Feminists Propose Prostitute Rehab Program" and "NON-TRADITIONAL PLAN - NGOs Push For Base Areas Conversion" 3 PAGES

To receive copies of any or all of these papers, please send us a suitably sized and stamped envelope with payment for the photocopying costs at 20¢ per page.

IF THERE IS A RED X ON YOUR ADDRESS LABEL YOUR SUBSCRIPTION HAS ALREADY EXPIRED!

At its state meeting in March 1990 PASG Qld decided to offer two ways of receiving its bi-monthly publications. You can either become a member of PASG Qld for \$20 per year or just subscribe to Philippine Issues and the PASG Qld Newsletter for \$15 per year.

PASG Qld. aims to generate support in Australia for all Filipino organisations working for genuine democracy, freedom and sovereignty; to end Australian military aid to the Philippines and to oppose all forms of foreign intervention in the affairs of the Filipino peoples. PASG Qld. holds regular monthly meetings. For further information contact Chris Bush on (07) 377 4029 or write to the address below.

ATTENTION: PASG Co-ordinator, P.O. Box 174, St. Lucia 4067 Qld.

I would like to: [] have more information about PASG. [] make a donation of \$..... for solidarity work.

[] join PASG (including a one year subscription to the PASG Qld. Newsletter and Philippines Issues). I enclose \$20.

[] receive a one year subscription to the PASG Qld. Newsletter and Philippines Issues. I enclose payment of \$15.

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P.A.S.G. Annual General Meeting

at 7pm on Tuesday, 11th December 1990

in the Albion Peace Centre, 102 McDonald Road, Albion