

KASAMA

Newsletter of the Philippines Australia Solidarity Group

(Queensland Edition)

Vol. 6 Nos. 5 & 6

September-December 1992

\$1.00

PREFERRING IMF/WB economic 'reforms' that demand withdrawal of subsidies to small farmers and export-led industrialisation rather than land reform for the Philippine countryside, the current FVR (Fidel Valdez Ramos) administration has placed Cory's old centrepiece, the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP), on the back burner.

There are 53 pending bills and resolutions in the two Chambers of the Philippines' Congress attempting to further dilute the already watered-down land reform law.

Halfway through its ten-year plan, CARP has failed as a social justice measure and as an economic catalyst. In fact, the foremost beneficiaries of Aquino's CARP are none other than the ex-President's Cojuangco family, owners of the 6,431-hectare Hacienda Luisita.

Although agriculture is the primary source of income for more than 70% of the people and contributes about 60% of the country's gross national product, Filipino peasants remain poor. Most do not own the land they till, are heavily indebted to landlords, have their lands grabbed, and eventually become hired farm labourers or jobless. Increasing unemployment forces peasants and farmworkers to accept very low wages. Their actual income is only one fourth the legislated minimum wage of 85 pesos (currently Aus \$6) a day. 50 million of the 62 million population live below the poverty line while only 20% of the population controls 80% of the lands tilled.

From material supplied by Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP, Peasant Movement of the Philippines) and Gino Lopez.

DROUGHT-STRICKEN FARMERS RAID NFA IN MINDANAO

PEASANT leaders in Sultan Kudarat were arrested following the raid of a National Food Authority (NFA) warehouse in Colombio town. The NFA warehouse was looted of its palay stocks by angry and starving farmers one whole day last month.

Sultan Kudarat is one of the provinces declared to be under a state of calamity due to severe drought. The government promised the residents cereal loans. Apparently tired of receiving mere promises while their families suffer from hunger and malnutrition, they carted away some 5,000 NFA sacks of rice themselves.

According to the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, the farmers began with a prayer and sang the national

anthem and *Bayan Ko*. Then they weighed the sacks, listed their names, affixed their signatures or thumb marks attesting to their receipt of the palay stocks, and hauled the sacks away.

Law enforcers did not try to stop them. A few days later, however, their leaders were jailed. The Diocesan priest of Kidapawan who supported the farmers' action said, "We are convinced that all the accused are not guilty of the crime charged, but if helping to feed the hungry is now a crime, so be it."

(August 26, 1992 - Citizens' Disaster Response Center)



SPAN SPAN SPAN SPAN

a new era in Philippines-Australia solidarity

By Karl Lakay

A REMARKABLE event took place on October 17-18, 1992 at the University of Technology in Sydney organised by the Centre for Philippine Concerns-Australia and the Philippines Australia Solidarity Group. The conference, titled **"THE PHILIPPINES: 100 YEARS OF STRUGGLE, 100 YEARS OF SOLIDARITY"**, was attended by over 150 Filipino and non-Filipino solidarists from all over Australia including members of CPCA (Brisbane), PASG (QLD) and Kabalikat Inc. Remarkable, not just because of the plentiful good humour, wide variety of cultural inputs and excellent food (the proceeds from which will assist the struggle for human rights in Burma), but also because of the genuine, often deep and creative debate across a range of questions vital to the effectiveness and principled basis of solidarity work in Australia.

The conference opened with a welcoming ceremony performed by Linda Burney, the Aboriginal representative, and Yul Caringas of the National Federation of Indigenous Peoples Organizations of the Philippines (KAMP). Conference attendees heard keynote speakers: Joel Rocamora of the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement on **"Making History: Prospects of the Filipino People"**, Lidy Nacpil-Alejandro of BAYAN (New Patriotic Alliance) on **"The Philippine Struggle and International Solidarity"**, Mandy Tibby of PASG on **"Philippine-Australian Solidarity: Reviewing the Record"**, Bong Ramilo (cultural activist) on **"100 Years of Filipino-Aboriginal Links in the Top End of Australia"**, Melba de Guzman-Marginson of CPCA on **"The Filipinos in Australia: Migrants and Patriots"**, Sr. Cres Lucero of Task Force Detainees of the Philippines on **"Sectors, Alliances and Solidarity"**, and Petite Peredo of Gabriela on **"The Feminist Agenda in International Solidarity"**.

Workshops covered two main themes: **Issues & Challenges to Philippine-Australian Relations** - focused on Immigration and Settlement Issues, Sex Tours & the Filipino Women, Debt & Overseas Development Aid, Environment, the Peace Process, Military Aid & Human Rights, Trade & Australian Companies and Multiculturalism & Cultural Identity; while **Sectoral Situationers** - covered Workers, Peasants, Indigenous Peoples, Church, Women, NGOs, Youth & Students, Health, and Cultural Workers.

A new network, **SOLIDARITY PHILIPPINES AUSTRALIA NETWORK (SPAN)**, was launched to develop a fresh approach to solidarity work in Australia. The conference approved the Centre for Philippine Concerns-Australia as the SPAN co-ordinator until its next conference in 1994.

Recognising the colonial denial by this Anglo-dominated country of the right to self-determination of the indigenous peoples of this land, the SPAN Statement of Principles says first, **"We actively support the struggles of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander and other Indigenous peoples for self-determination and justice and 3rd World Peoples struggles for national liberation"**. Its approach to solidarity work is based on, **"recognition and respect for the needs and priorities identified by the popular movement in the Philippines"**; a recognition of the authenticity and vitality of Filipino cultural and national identity which lives through Filipinos who have made a home here in multi-cultural Australia.

The conference outcomes were the conclusion of six years of exhaustive, and sometimes painful, debate over the aims and principles of Philippine solidarity work in Australia. The period of uncertainty and confusion, naturally arising in any collective situation when there is sharp contention of views and questions are debated with intensity and passion, has been brought to an end. The founding of SPAN has strengthened and expanded the solidarity network. Many non-Filipinos from all walks of life, both inside and outside PASG, united with CPCA members at the Sydney Conference in this creative and remarkable advance in Philippine solidarity work.

Since the overthrow of Marcos, a growing number of Filipino activists have taken up residence in Australia and have enriched the solidarity network with their unique perspectives, collective approach and new ideas. The on-going developments in the Philippines and the needs and priorities identified by the popular movement there, as well as the growing consciousness of the needs of Filipino migrants here, have exercised an increasing influence over the direction and content of solidarity work in Australia. With the founding of the Centre for Philippine Concerns-Australia in November 1991, Filipino activists brought a new focus to solidarity work intended to integrate and better serve the needs of the popular movement in the Philippines with the needs of Filipinos living in Australia.



Photos on this page:

From *BROADSIDE* -
Top: The Never
Ending Farewell
Centre Left: Atel Hijos
Centre: Yul Caringas
Centre Right:
Sr. Cres Lucero

From C.P.C.A. -
Bottom Left: Liddy
Nacpil-Alejandro
Bottom Right:
Melbourne Cultural
Presentation



peace network

STEERING COMMITTEE: Ecumenical Bishops' Forum (EBF) • National Council of Churches in the Philippines Peace Program (NCCP - Peace) • Association of Major Religious Superiors Justice and Peace Commission (AMRSP - JPC) • Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates (PAHRA) • Promotion of Church People's Rights (PCPR) • Ecumenical Forum for Church Response (EFCR) • PEOPLES CAUCUS • Leandro L. Alejandro Foundation (LLAF)

SECRETARIAT: Institute for Critical Studies, Leandro L. Alejandro Foundation, Telefax 922-0361 # 81 K-9 KAMIAS QUEZON CITY

COORDINATED CAMPAIGN PLAN - 1992 PEACE PROCESS

- Step up education work among the organized constituencies on Peace and the Peace Process to heighten grassroots awareness, unity and participation.
- Conduct nationwide media and public awareness campaign.
- Ensure effective monitoring of developments and the timely dissemination of information among people's organizations, NGOs, church constituencies, international community of partners and solidarity groups.
- Conduct lobby work with key members of the National Unification Commission, Congress and other government officials and agencies that play a significant role in the process.
- Special liaison team will be formed for direct lobby as well as to coordinate various efforts *(to be formed with representatives from each of the multisectoral working group members)*.

- Continuing dialogue with members of the National Unification Commission (NUC) and its committees *(coordinated efforts through the People's Caucus, People's Congress network)*.
- Participate, promote people's concerns and mobilize grassroots organizations for the public consultations to be organized by the NUC.
- Organize counterpart Working Committees to solicit and consolidate inputs on the four major areas of concern as defined in the Joint Declaration of Yap and Jalandoni.
 - Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law
 - Socio-Economic Reforms
 - Political and Constitutional Reforms
 - End of Hostilities and Disposition of Forces
- In coordination with other formations (People's Congress, Freedom from Debt Coalition, Green Forum, etc.) work on a NATIONAL CONSENSUS BUILDING PROCESS on the substantive agenda.

the Profile: **Leandro L. Alejandro Foundation**

The Leandro L. Alejandro Foundation is a tribute to a contemporary hero of the Filipino people. Lean was one of the finest examples of what the youth have to offer their country; brilliance of mind, boundless energy, deep compassion for his

people, and the willingness to dedicate his life to the cause of freedom, peace and justice. He relentlessly pursued this cause until assassin's bullets ended his life at 27 years old. In keeping with his spirit, the Foundation is an offering to the Filipino people.

BE PART OF L.L.A.F.!

The Foundation has a regular network of members and friends including over 400 individual grassroots leaders and workers, writers, artists, professionals and leading citizens, and over 100 people's organizations and NGOs. They are the Foundation's partners - contributing their time, energies, expertise and some material resources and, in turn, benefiting from its programs.
LEANDRO L. ALEJANDRO FOUNDATION, 81 K-9 Kamias, Quezon City, Philippines.

The Institute for Critical Studies

In pursuit of education for the people that is critical, empowering and liberating, the Foundation has established the Institute for Critical Studies. The Institute's main program is a Critical Leadership School for leaders and youth of people's organizations and communities. Special Studies integrate courses, seminars, research, databank and publications work on Peace and Human Rights, Democracy and Development, Gender Relations, Ecology and the Environment. Its services will also include a library and production of multi-media educational materials.

Socio-Economic and Community Services Program

The Foundation is working with local people's organizations in Malabon and Navotas developing multi-service community programmes (health, day care, education and training, etc.) and will be undertaking similar efforts in other areas. With priority to victims of human rights violations, especially women who are sole breadwinners, the Foundation will assist grassroots socio-economic projects through management and skills training services, and facilitation of seed fund support to livelihood endeavours.

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S.O.T.

Behind the Soldier's Smile

DUBBED as "smiling soldiers", the Armed Forces of the Philippines' Special Operations Teams (SOT) aim to capture the "hearts and minds" of the populace through socio-civic works and counter-organizing. The SOT base grabbing methodology is designed to produce more lasting results and relatively minimal devastation to civilians - a far cry from traditional methods of "population control" (e.g. hamletting, evacuation, food and economic blockades) - with, they say, fewer human rights violations to worry about. But, success depends on implementation by a largely unreformed military.

The Ultimate Goal: Deny mass-base support to the rebels.

This is done through destroying the enemy's image in the populace. Live-in seminars, mass meetings and public presentation of alleged former NPAs denouncing the underground movement, are just part of the propaganda work of the SOT.

The Output: At least 670 persons were forced to "surrender" after having attended a series of mass meetings and seminars. This happened in Agusan del Norte, Surigao City, Surigao del Sur, and Misamis Oriental. They were then ordered to join Civilian Volunteers Organizations and stationed in the "recovered" areas to make sure the "rebels" don't go back.

"The involvement of civilians is integral to the counter-insurgency programme to give the impression that it is the people, not the government's forces, who are fighting the insurgency." (Canada-Asia Working Group for 48th UNCHR session)

DID YOU KNOW? SOT strategy is part of the US-designed LIC (Low Intensity Conflict) doctrine used by Aquino during her term and was applied full force in the provinces of Northern Mindanao in 1987.

It was during Fidel Ramos' stint as AFP chief-of-staff and as National Defense Secretary that SOT was first implemented. Being Aquino's chief military planner, he was responsible in formulating policies on counter-insurgency. Now as President, can we expect the man to turn from his old militarist ways?

RESEARCH, DOCUMENTATION AND INFORMATION PROGRAM - Cagayan de Oro City. Printed in *Human Rights Journal*, June 1992, Task Force Detainees of the Philippines.

MARAG VALLEY

Internal Refugees Update

ONE hundred fifty-four internal refugees from Marag Valley, 88 of whom are children below 13 years old, have sought shelter and protection in Pamplona, Cagayan from the continuing military operations.

The children were prioritized by the people of Marag to go to Pamplona in order to experience a semblance of "normal life" and to get what education they can. Nursing mothers and the wounded were also evacuated to save their race from annihilation as the children have been dying from measles, malnutrition and shrapnel wounds.

Disaster Update August 26, 1992 - Citizens' Disaster Response Center.

Salvaging Used as Reprisal for Medical Missions

PAMPLONA, Cagayan (NORDIS) - Immobilised by a bullet that penetrated through his lower back and exited in the pubic area, the victim lay on his back in an inclined position by the riverbank. At the foot of the victim, one of the armed men, presumably after interrogation, positioned his high-powered gun at the already suffering man's nostrils and pulled the trigger.

This was the theory of Dr. Nap Bose, participant of the Relief and Medical Mission of October 24 to 28 in Marag Valley, after exhuming the body of Warlito Alejandro.

Warlito and his wife, Pacita, were fixing their fishnet between 2:00 and 3:00 p.m. on October 11 at a riverbank in Sitio Bolo, Kalayukay, Marag Valley when they heard somebody shout, "Hoy!" As the couple turned to look at the direction where the voice came from, they heard bursts of gunfire.

According to Pacita, she and her husband ran in different directions. She kept on running seeking for cover. "The shooting never stopped and it lasted for about an hour," Pacita recounted. Reaching home after three hours of running and swimming across the Marag River, she told relatives and neighbours what had happened. As it was already dark they decided to look for Warlito at first light the next day.

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Illustration: *Guardian Weekly* 29.3.92

EVERY 30 SECONDS A BABY DIES FROM UNSAFE BOTTLE FEEDING IN THE THIRD WORLD.

UNMASKING A GIANT



Published 1992 by IBON Databank & Research Center Philippines, Edited by Cornelia H. Aldana-Benitez, 74pp, \$5.00 plus p&p from CPCA, c/- AWD, 84 Park Road, Woolloongabba 4102.

The coming of the global corporations wrought many changes in the lives of people in both the advanced and developing countries. Some estimates placed the capital assets of transnational corporations at around 7 trillion US dollars, surpassing the total debts of the Third World and even the gross national products of such nations as the United States, Great Britain and Japan. Indeed the emergence of transnational corporations in the world scene has affected social structures, displaced traditional values and even disturbed the earth's environment.

A leading transnational corporation in the Philippines is Nestle, the foremost manufacturer of milk and its allied products in the country. The corporation has been very aggressive in the media front, even running a daily ad on Philippine TV, purportedly instilling social concerns and positive values among the Filipino peoples. It has also donated to charitable organizations to boost its image among ordinary consumers. Because of its promotional blitz, relatively few Filipinos know about the other face of Nestle Philippines.

This book aims to bring to the public's attention that other side. It chronicles the struggles of the workers at Nestle for a decent and fair treatment from its management. It analyses how Nestle gains the advantage in its relation with the Philippine government.

This book also exposes Nestle's practices which go against the spirit of the International Milk Code and the Philippine Milk Code. These codes aim to promote breastfeeding and save infant lives. Finally, it looks at the merits and demerits of Nestle's integration into the local agricultural economy -- a crucial factor which determines whether the lives of farmers across the nation will turn for the better or for the worse.

This book belongs to that genre which views the high and mighty from the vantage point of the toiling masses when they have time to reflect on the true value of their human labor. May we have more works such as this volume to come.

From the Preface by Dr. Edberto Villegas, Chairman, Department of Social Sciences, University of the Philippines, Manila.

Support the boycott of all Nestle products. Encourage others to take action. Contact: Baby Food Action Group, c/- Community Aid Abroad, Albion Centre, 102 MacDonald Road, Qld. 4030

Boycott Nescafe

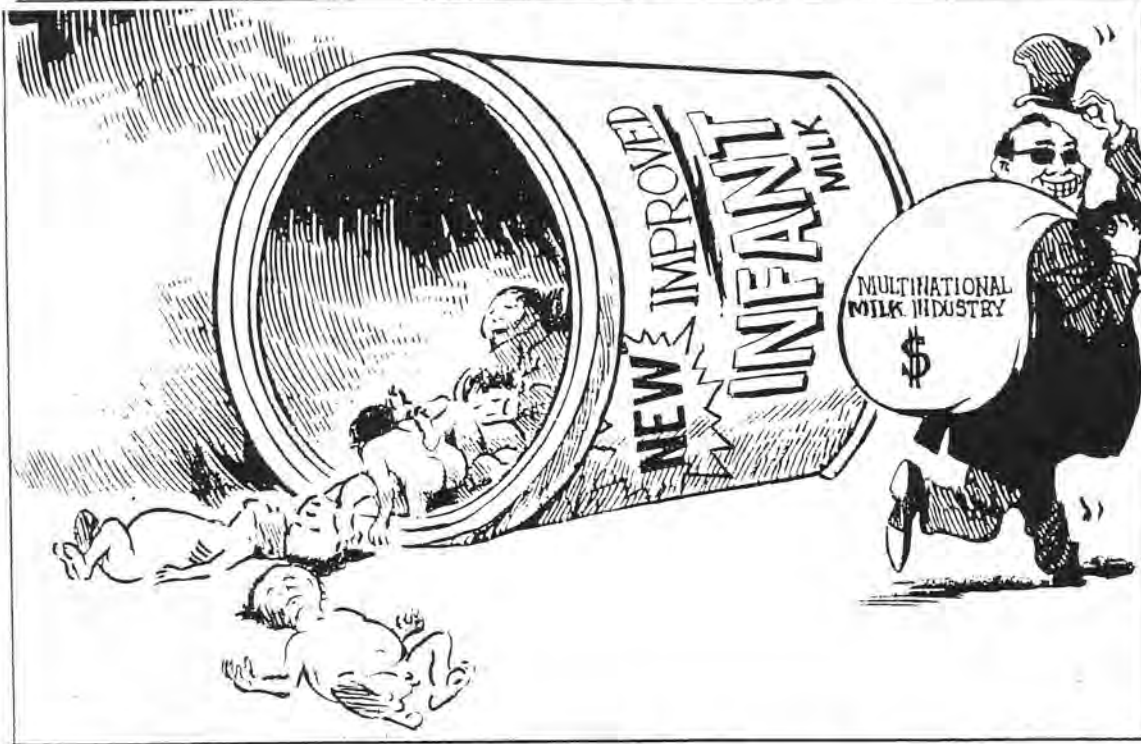
AUSTRALIAN NESTLE PRODUCTS YOU MAY ALSO WANT TO BOYCOTT (Note that not all products are 100% owned by Nestle.)



Nescafe (various brands)
Alevita
Alpen Blend
Andronicus
Bear Brand
Carnation
Caro Extra
Caterers' Blend
Coffeemate
Findus
Flomix
Food Delicacies
GoCat / GoDog / GoPet
Ideal
International Roast
Lactogen
Lean Cuisine
Maggi

Medallion	Fantales
Milo	Fruit Tingles
Nan	Giant Licorice
Nestea	Golden Rush
Papa Guiseppi's	Jaffa
Quik	Kandyland
Santa Rice	Kit Kat
Slender	Kool Mints
Sunshine	Life Savers
Tea Sling	Lucky Boy
Tongala	Macintosh
Nestle	Mastercraft
Confectionery	Milo Bar
Aero	Minties
After 8	Nestle Chocolate
Allens	(various brands)
Anticol	Peppermint Crisp
Australian Licorice	Plastowe
Barratts	Polly Waffle
Bellis	Quality Street
Black Magic	Quik Eze
Blizzard	Rowntree Pastilles
Breath Fresh	Scanlens
Bubble Yum	Scorched Peanut Bars
Butter Menthol	Smalls Easter Eggs
Canterbury Health	Smarties
Bar	Soothers
Choc Melts	SOS
Chokito	Throaties
Dairy Box	Tosca
Drifter	Violet Crumble





... "imported" pati
k a m a t a y a n !
(even death was
"imported"!) -
From MATAPOS
ANG EDSA: mga
guhit ni Neil
Doloricon.

**BOYCOTT
NESTLE**

(PAGE 6)

NO CHRISTMAS WITHOUT HUMAN RIGHTS

by Rev. John Woodley

There can be no proper celebration of Christmas in Australia until we give attention to the abuse of human rights of our neighbours and seek to do all in our power to stop these abuses. At this particular time I am concerned about East Timor, but such abuses exist within Australia as well as within the neighbouring nations of South East Asia.

Recently, when addressing a Rally about the fate of captured East Timorese resistance leader, Xanana Gusmao, in the Queen Street mall, I was struck by the criticism that the Rally was inappropriate in the mall at Christmas time.

We seem to forget that it was Jesus Christ who gave us Christmas. The circumstances surrounding his birth underline just how appropriate it is to give voice to the cries of the oppressed, refugees and the tortured at this time of the year.

Jesus Christ was born in a stable because of the forced relocation of his parents. The occupying forces used the census as a means of control of a rebellious population. When Herod, the puppet king, heard about the birth of Jesus he ordered the slaughter of male infants in Bethlehem. Joseph, Mary and the baby Jesus were forced to flee to Egypt and to live there for some time as refugees.

Across the centuries history records the same tragic events over and over again. Thus, the treatment of the East Timorese by the Indonesian military fits the same horrible pattern. It is significant that, before any

trial has been held, Xanana Gusmao has been declared guilty: "He is not a big hero but a criminal and will be punished..." is the verdict of General Beny Mordani. This is always the excuse used by oppressors - "These people are rebels, communists, terrorists, etc..."

"The questions which always must be asked are, Who defines terrorist, rebel? What is a communist, criminal? In some circumstances, what is defined as rebellion, terrorism, may, in other circumstances and by other people, be defined as heroic resistance and the action of freedom fighters!

Is someone who fights to protect his family, a rebel? Is someone who objects to the wholesale slaughter of his people, a criminal? Is someone who resists a brutal and illegal regime for 17 years, a terrorist?

Antonio Sarmiento stated in a recent media release by the Timorese Democratic Union: "If Xanana Gusmao is a criminal; then all Indonesians who fought to liberate Indonesia from Dutch rule in 1945 were criminals; and all Indonesian governments that followed since Indonesian independence from Dutch rule are illegal governments; and Indonesia is today an illegal nation!"

Another concept which is very slippery is that of legitimate government. To Australia's shame, we have accepted the invasion and occupation of East Timor by Indonesia, when the United Nations consistently has passed resolutions condemning the invasion and refused to recognise the Indonesian occupation as legitimate. Again, "The Timorese Democratic Union reminds the world

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ATEL HIJOS: Brisbane Speaking Tour

From Oct. 16 to Nov. 22 this year, Atel Hijos of GABRIELA, the largest national organisation of women in the Philippines, shared the vision of her organisation in a variety of meetings with Filipinos, other Australian migrants and with Aborigines. The following article is compiled of extracts from her week of meetings in Brisbane.

Economically, there is still nothing new. We are in a financial haemorrhage nowadays. Aquino has left us with \$30 billion foreign debt and we expect more because the new president, Fidel Valdez Ramos, wants more assistance from foreign investors. His agenda includes foreign loans in order to modernise the military. From a man who served in the 20-year Marcos rule, one of the architects of martial law, who acted as Chief of Defence during Aquino's regime, and who is now our president, what can we expect of him?

Politically, the number one issue confronting Filipinos is the ongoing militarisation. For example, I will tell you of one particular military operation (one of many in the country) that happened in the area of Mindanao where BUKAS (the local GABRIELA network of women's organisations that she represents) is operating. The military is always saying the usual lingo that Surigao del Sur is "a rebel infested area." In November 1991, they conducted military operations, put-up check points, implemented food blockade or resource control, and those in the area were forced to join the CAFGUs (Citizens Armed Forces Geographical Units). So, February 15, 1992 was the date when the CPP/NPA and the Government forces clashed. It is now an increasing phenomenon that when there are military operations, the military men do not only hit the NPA (also because they do not know where they are), but the civilians living in the area are also targeted. That February 15th operation has resulted in about 9,000 men, women and children being dislocated.

The problem on the political side cannot be solved with guns and bullets, because concretely the problem is rooted in genuine land reform. There are many farmers in our country, but most of them are tenants. In our call for genuine land reform we mean "land to the tillers".

In terms of unemployment the ones hardest hit are the women. That's why so many of our women go abroad as overseas contractual workers. Close to 55% of all OCWs are women. Women are being distributed, exported by our own government to earn dollars and have their remittances to the Philippines' economy hidden under the pretext of economic recovery! In the Middle East we have 70,000 women as domestic helpers, entertainers, nurses, service workers; in Hong Kong we have 100,000 Filipinas as domestics; in Spain, we have 50,000 entertainers; Singapore, 16,000 entertainers; Japan, 28,000 mostly entertainers; Italy, 50,000 domestics; USA, 7,000 nurses. These numbers do not include the illegal entrants, the tago ng tago ("hide and hide") TNTs, those who go without accomplishing the proper requirements.

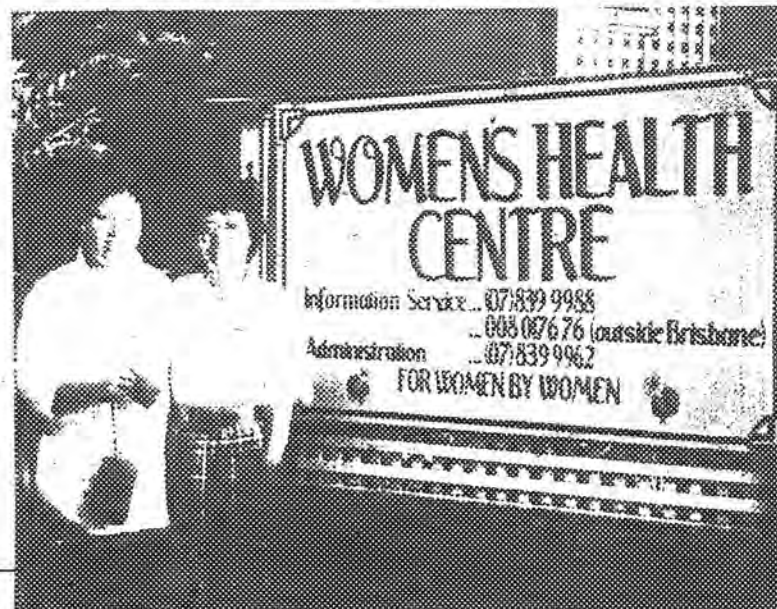
Because of the increasing poverty, the increasing unemployment, Filipino women get into forced prostitution.

"To me, the presence of any foreign invader in a nation, or the imposition of a foreign culture on the other culture is an outright transgression of the rights of that nation."



Above: There is still that cheap labor policy....
From MATAPOS ANG EDSA: mga guhit ni Neil Doloricon.

Below: Atel at the Women's Health Centre in Brisbane.



At the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Corporation for Women



Prostitution, if it is by choice, OK. But if it is by force of poverty, this is another story. We had in 1989 some 400,000 Filipino women prostitutes. What is most discouraging is to have statistics of child prostitutes from 7 to 15 years old, numbering 20,000.

In addition to these problems, there are other forms of violence on women and children. Police reports for 1989 say there were 4 rapes a day, that rape and incest occur every six hours in the Philippines. Let's just think of how many women and girls become victims of violence. The home, religion, media, and the educational system are all arenas where violence against women has been reinforced for centuries.

Then in 1984 there came GABRIELA (General Assembly Binding women for Reforms, Integrity, Equality, Leadership and Action) - a militant group of women trying to question the role of women in Philippine society, politics, economics, and in all spheres of human endeavour. Our organisation is named after Gabriela Silang, that brave women fighter who, with her husband, Diego, fought hard against Spanish domination in the Philippines. Diego and Gabriela were killed but the seeds for change evolved in their time and crept slowly into our hearts and minds such that in '84 there came a new wave of Filipino women. GABRIELA started with 46 individual women from all over the country raising the consciousness of women that we are not that dumb, that dull, that obedient, or subservient, but we are powerful like the men, if given the chance.

SOCIAL ECONOMIC INDICATORS (based on 1989 data)

81.1% of the presently 62 million total population live below the poverty line.

21% inflation as at second quarter 1991.

4.17 million jobless Filipinos out of a labor force of 27.6 million.

Nationwide unemployment rate: 9.2%

Nationwide underemployment rate: 32.4%

Projected loss of jobs for the latter half of 1991: 500,000 (NEDA estimates)

We are now 48,000 women in GABRIELA. So, through education and training we really assert our rights as women and citizens. There is a sector in the Philippines who are really shocked at our presence... well, let it be so! We should have full control over own bodies as women - the men have no wombs. So the first group to push the issue for reproductive rights must come from the women's sector. Whether or not we will subject ourselves to contraception is our decision.

One of GABRIELA's objectives is to organise and mobilise the greatest possible number of Filipino women, especially at the grassroots. Another is to establish links and solidarity networks, not only in the Philippines but also abroad. Because we know that our struggle for national sovereignty, peace and freedom will not be realised without your assistance. We need you in our struggle for genuine social change.

The first world countries are exploiting the third world and, in like manner, first world women are exploiting third world women. For instance, the majority of workers in a Philippine garment factory are women. These women are paid very low and the garments are exported to other countries. The first world is benefiting from the labour and natural resources of the third world. Perhaps the first world women do not know that they subtly exploit the women of the third world in terms of labour. So, these responses of solidarity with our struggle are our inspiration back home to continue our struggle amidst threats, even salvaging.

Specifically addressing Filipinos in Australia, we believe you have a share in the continuing struggle for national sovereignty in the Philippines. That's why when we call for removal of foreign military bases in the Philippines, I hope that you, brother and sister Filipinos living in Australia, also support our call.

The US has always told us that their presence is very important in order to protect the Philippines from Communist aggression. This is not true. We know what is behind this agenda. We cannot exchange our independence for rent. Most of the women who are working in Olongapo and Angeles are prostituted. Can you exchange our humanity for the rent from military bases which is, in any case, very much lower compared to the rent paid for US military bases in other countries?

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XANANA GUSMAO

(- Continued from Page 7)

community that under United Nations resolutions, Indonesian occupation of East Timor is illegal. Consequently, Indonesia's rule is illegal!"

However, Australia's complicity in the Indonesian occupation is doubly shameful. During World War II, up to 40,000 Timorese were killed by the Japanese for assisting and protecting Australian soldiers in Timor. How easily we have forgotten our neighbours!

And to return again to the words of Jesus about what this means, his answer to those who objected that they had not forgotten him, are most pointed: "When, Lord, did we ever see you hungry or thirsty or a refugee or naked or sick or in prison, and would not help you?" It is not too much to paraphrase Jesus as saying: "I tell you, whenever you refused to help one of these least



important East Timor brothers and sisters, you refused to help me." (Matthew 25: 31-46)

AND FOR THIS, AUSTRALIA, YOU WILL BE JUDGED BY HUMANITY AND BY HISTORY.

John Woodley is a minister of the Uniting Church and Queensland President of the Australian Democrats.

GABRIELA

Declaration of Women's Rights

*We, women, as human beings
with shared as well as distinct
characteristics
relative to the rest of humanity,
declare these to be our rights:*

1. Women have the right to the prevention of and protection from all forms of violence and coercion against their person, their freedom, their sexuality, and their individuality.
2. Women have the right to seek and to obtain the elimination of and protection from all forms of discrimination due to race, class, age, gender, civil status, religion, political beliefs, ethnicity, sexual preference, physical disability, or physical appearance.
3. Women have the right to freely and fully participate individually or collectively in the political processes of their communities and nation.
4. Women have the right to the means for assuring their own economic welfare and security.
5. Women have the right to the necessary knowledge and means for the full exercise of their reproductive choice, according to their beliefs and preferences.
6. Women have the right to freely choose a spouse, maintain equality in marriage or its dissolution, and obtain adequate support for the rearing and caring of their children.
7. Women have the right to an adequate, relevant and gender fair education throughout their lives, from childhood to adulthood.
8. Women have the right to adequate nutrition and proper health care.
9. Women have the right to living conditions at least at the level and quality prevailing in the community.
10. Women have the right to equality before the law in principle as well as in practice.

Atel Hijos

(- Continued from Page 9)

Last year was a very historic year for us. On Sept 16, 1991, the 12 senators strongly rejected renewal of the treaty between the Philippines and USA on the continued presence of the US military bases. But Ramos would like to open up new negotiations, that's why we have to continue binding our forces together.

On the problems of Filipina brides in Australia, GABRIELA would like to know what is happening to them, whether they are victims of domestic violence, verbal abuse, murder and the like, because news reached us that there were 11 Filipina wives killed by their Australian husbands. We would like to know how far they are being educated in the Australian culture and laws and in like manner, how much their Australian husbands receive of the Filipino culture. We are really worried about the increasing number of Australian men, 50,000 a year, coming to the Philippines.

Filipinas usually come to Australia as fiances or brides. In 1987 Australia absorbed 40% of Fiance Visa Holders, the USA 50%. In recent years we see the increasing number of Australian men going to the Philippines together with Japanese and Germans on sex holiday or to get Filipina partners. Sex tourism is a big problem.

There is another issue in the situation of Filipino migrants in Australia - the non-recognition of overseas qualifications. And do you know that the Australian government is helping the Philippine government in the military training of our Filipino soldiers? These are also issues to work on.

peace process

Excerpts from the talk of Joanna K. Carino on the Continuing Peace Process in the Cordillera

A discussion of peace and war in the Cordillera would necessarily have to be contextualized within the parameters of the current situation.

In the region, the initial attempt to set up the Cordillera autonomous region within the framework defined by government and the Constitution was a total failure. The people rejected the draft Organic Act in a plebiscite called for the purpose. Presently, the whole process is to start all over again. This time under the leadership of Fidel V. Ramos' government. That is, unless they amend the Constitution.

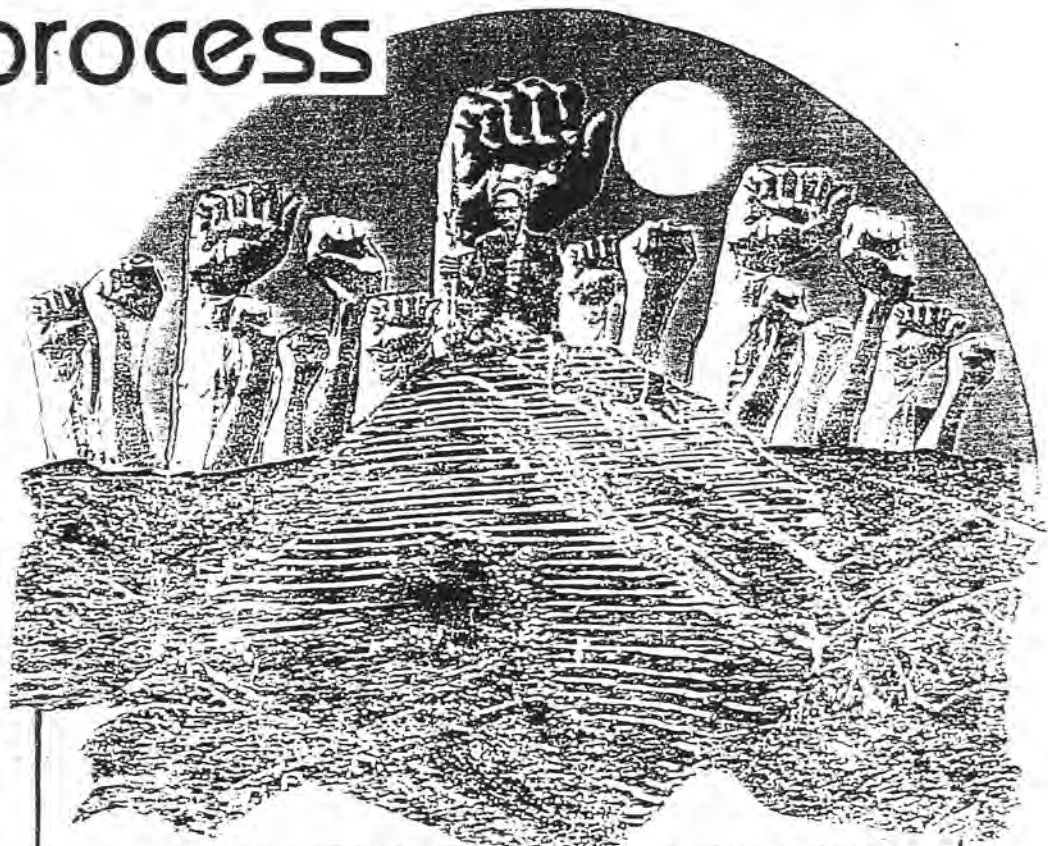
In the national scene, there is the possibility of peace talks between the government and the National Democratic Front (NDF). Bills have been filed towards the repeal of RA 1700 (Anti-Subversion Law) which would mean the legalization of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP). There is also the amnesty package being prepared by government for rightist, leftist and secessionist rebels.

Internationally we have the end of the cold war with the collapse of the so-called communist regimes.

Autonomous self-governance can be achieved -- I have seen it at the village level -- but only through a long and painstaking process of unifying the people through education and organizing, improvement of the people's livelihood, systematic activist development, the conscious assertion of human and indigenous people's rights and being able to defend the gains won through struggle.

Like independence, genuine autonomy cannot just be handed over on a silver platter. It has to be asserted, fought for, won, lived. If it is difficult to establish at a village level, what more on the regional level.

While the Cordillera people may have won the recognition of ancestral land rights and regional autonomy in principle, as provided for in the present



UCAB, ITOGON, BENGUET APRIL 24, 1992
DEFEND OUR LAND! DEFEND OUR FUTURE!

CORDILLERA DAY
CROCIPR

Philippine Constitution, these have not yet been translated into actual practice by the government. They may never be.

The rejection by the Cordillera people of the Organic Act for the Cordillera Autonomous Region was not a rejection of regional autonomy. The results of the referendum, among other things, was a manifestation of confusion.

There is the need for a comprehensive and thoroughgoing education campaign where all the issues are responsibly debated and discussed. In order to be able to do so, a healthy democratic atmosphere conducive to the full participation of various groups in the marketplace of ideas has to be created.

If the Cordillera Regional Consultative Commission is to be recomposed, its composition could be more representative, with a more democratic selection process. At the same time, let us not delude ourselves that a landlord and big-business dominated Congress will enact radical ancestral land rights or regional autonomy laws. The people will have to be very vigilant in the protection of their basic rights.

(Continued on Page 12 •)

CORDILLERA PEACE PROCESS

(• Continued from Page 11)

Unfortunately, the present Cordillera situation is not very conducive to such a democratic process. The ethnocidal total war is being pursued relentlessly throughout the region. The traditional community fabric is being rent asunder in many villages in the countryside by the heavy mortar shelling and bombing, the forced evacuations, economic blockades, travel restrictions, destruction and pillage of material culture, desecration of indigenous traditions and institutions and the selective salvaging and torture of some individuals.

The CPLA (Cordillera People's Liberation Army) is still around, same with the greatly expanded CAFGU and they continue to terrorize the people. There are continuing illegal arrests, deprivation of the right to bail, and harassment of political detainees and those already released.

And against this backdrop is the worsening impoverishment of a large percentage of the population.

How are we to respond?

We support the move between the FVR government and the NDF, without the earlier preconditions which would have made talks impossible.

The two sides should be sincere and strive to work out a peaceful political settlement of the armed conflict, which basically means that the roots of insurgency should be uprooted, that the basic problems of the Filipino peoples should be substantively addressed with the identification of concrete steps towards their resolution.

The more important thing is that the peace talks should continue. The legalization of the CPP, even the very limited amnesty offer, are subsumed under this.

The problem is that FVR is sending out mixed signals. There is all this talk and significant media mileage on his program for peace, amnesty and legalization of the CPP, while total war in the countryside continues, as do the operations against the revolutionary underground and even against the open legal national democratic movement in the urban centers.

I find his proposal to make rebellion a capital crime deserving of the death penalty totally contradictory with the avowed program of peace and amnesty. Thus, while I am hopeful the peace talks will continue, I am at the same time fearful that this is just a sophisticated psywar operation for the FVR government to gain some moral highground so that he can proceed with the increasing militarization of the whole society.

In the hopeful event that peace talks will proceed, the national minority question and the particular case for the Cordillera should be addressed as one of the substantive issues.

A common question raised by pundits is -- are not the armed struggle and the national democratic revolution with its socialist perspective already obsolete with the collapse of the socialist regimes in Europe and the overall crisis of socialism?

The national democratic revolution in the Philippines has always been independent and self-reliant from the start. Although it is characterized by a pronounced Maoist influence, especially in the earlier official documents, it has made efforts to draw lessons from the socialist experience worldwide, lessons from both positive and negative experience.

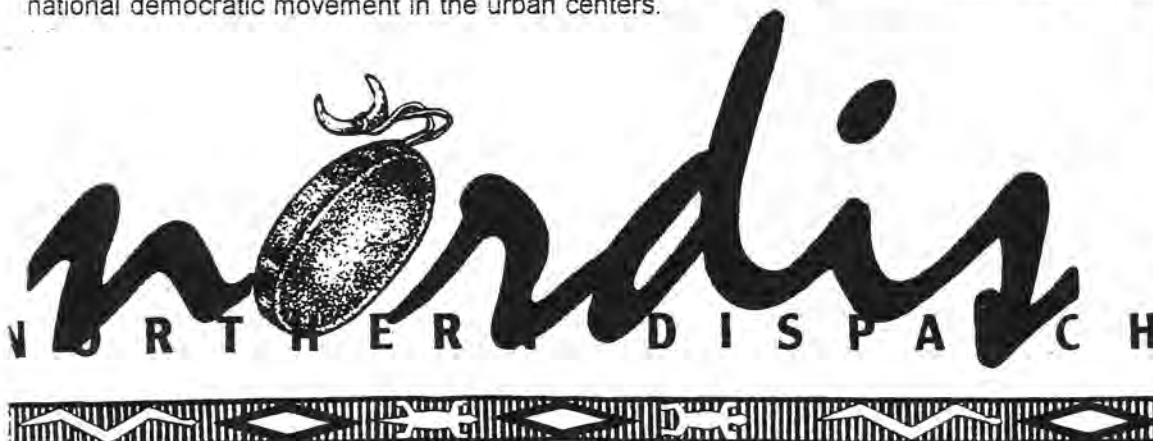
A recent CPP paper on the international situation written by Armando Liwang of the Central Committee states that the fall of the so-called Communist regimes in Europe should not be viewed as the downfall of socialism as these were revisionist states which caused capitalist restoration in the formally socialist states.

The point is to be able to pinpoint where the problem areas were. There will be no lack of visionaries who will be willing to take up the challenge of trying again and improving on what has come earlier. The search for a better world is inherent in the human spirit. There will be those who will always opt for the socialist paradigm over the capitalist.

And happy are those who dream dreams, and are willing to pay the price to make these dreams come true.

Joanna Carino is an Ibaloi woman and a past General Secretary of the Cordillera People's Alliance.

Of the eight intensive military operations currently being waged in the country, two are concentrated in the Cordillera, the longest mountain range in the Philippines. The Cordillera is the home of some one million indigenous Igorots. Article abstracted from the NORDIS 3rd Anniversary Issue September 26, 1992.



Letter from LAKAS

September 30, 1992

Dear Friends in Australia,

Greetings of PEACE and HOPE in a seemingly hopeless situation! It is two months now since we arrived. Sorry that we could not write to you immediately. Much as we wanted to communicate, pressing circumstances overwhelmed us.

Upon arrival, we were met by a strong typhoon that induced "lahar" (volcanic mudflow) and flash floods destroying roads, bridges and houses in Central Luzon specifically our homeland, Zambales. We were stranded in Manila for a week as roads were impassable. Our families anxiously awaited our return. They knew we were already in Manila.

On the 8th day, the three of us had to brave crossing rivers six feet deep and float on a tire interior so as to reach our home in Botolan. We could not carry all our gifts to LAKAS as we foresaw a long walk before reaching our place, but we made sure we had with us the chocolates for the children. After almost a day's trip under rains and flood, finally we reached home. It was a joyful and tearful reunion after four months away from community and home. In the midst of the storm, we were welcomed with a social program. Of course they were very interested in our sharing. Our maps, posters and pictures were ready.

Thanks God, our new Community whom we named: "LAKAS PAMAYANAN NG PINATUBO" (LAKAS PINATUBO COMMUNITY) is safe from lahar. However, when it rains, we are isolated because the river separating us from the town becomes impassable. The danger that we are facing now is Mt. Pinatubo's second eruption as predicted by the Philippine volcanologists.

Ben and Alice distributing seedlings.



We will still be affected by volcanic debris like ashes and pebbles which will be spewed out by the volcano. We hope it will not be that strong as to destroy again our houses and farms. If this will happen, we already have a designated place in another town going north where we can evacuate to a school building and hopefully go back after the ashfall is over. But if it is raining hard then we cannot evacuate. We will pray for a strong wind to disperse the ashes.

As usual, our hope remains alive. LAKAS never lost hope in the midst of seeming hopelessness. The dark forecast makes us sad and fearful but does not deter us from working for our future.



Transporting seedlings across the river in a tyre inner tube.

As this is being written, our new village is shaping fast as we try to make a semblance of our homelands in the hinterlands of Mt. Pinatubo. We are now creating a forest here. In the midst of heavy monsoon rains, we keep on tilling our lands, planting varied crops, fruit trees and hard wood. When the river is not so deep, we dare float our seedlings: bananas, coconuts, coffee, etc. and transport them to our side. We are using SALT (Sloping Agriculture Land Technology) or contour farming as a method. We feel good that now we are again part of the land. Our children are happy as they work on the land, they are again part of production. We had already harvested some of the crops we planted last year and enjoyed eating our staple food - sweet potato.

We hope this gives you an update of our situation. Again, thank you so much for your solidarity with us. Thank you too for the love and concern you showed us when we were with you. We will never forget your kindness and generosity. We (LAKAS COMMUNITY) are strong and we are able to stand on our feet because you made us strong. You inspire us to be hopeful because we feel your loving support. We know you are there.

In the struggle,
Ben Jugatan, Palawig Cabalic, and Sr. Menggay, FMM.

(Continued on Page 14 •)

LAKAS

(• Continued from Page 13)

Accompanying this letter is a 16 page report, "On the Activities of Palawig Cabalic, Ben Jugatan and Sr. Menggay in Australia, Brazil and United States - March 21 to July 18, 1992".

On March 21, 1992, Ben, Palawig and Menggay began their speaking tour of Australia thus: "After experiencing a culture shock at the huge amount of food served in the plane compared to the lack of food in the evacuation centers at home, we landed in sunny Brisbane."

"We feel we are luckier than most Australians as we have travelled to all the states of Australia. In all the states our objectives were fulfilled, albeit in different degrees. The issues that we were concerned about from economic, political and socio-cultural, were discussed (with) a varied range of audience: from adult illiterates to little graders to secondary school to post graduates and professionals. From non-believers to believers, from non-political to highly politicized audience, to indigenous and non-indigenous alike."

In their reflections on Australia they say they were overwhelmed by the progress of science and technology and saddened by man's subjection to machines and his job insecurity that goes with it. They envied the old age pension plan but sympathized with lonely aged people.

They saw no militarization in Australia but noted that Aborigines are victims of "death in custody". They saw marked discrimination against Aborigines by the Whites: "Racism is rampant." They discovered the similarities of common struggle for land, life and culture. They experienced the wide gap between first world and third world countries.

From May 25-30, Ben, Palawig and Menggay attended the World Indigenous Conference of Environment, Territory and Development at Kari-Oca Village, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Participants included 400 leaders of Brazil's 180 Indigenous Nations, 125 Indigenous Peoples from other countries, 100 non-indigenous people, plus media. The KARI-OCA Document embodying Indigenous Peoples' culture, beliefs, laws, principles on environment and territory was signed by all Indigenous participants. It also discussed at length the Indigenous Peoples' concept of development. A committee was chosen from this conference to present this document at the Earth Summit (UNCED).

"While we were talking in the conference about environment, care for Mother Earth, every now and then we could hear the mining explosions in the nearby mountains."

The Global Forum (the Non-Government Organisations' counterpart of the Earth Summit) lasted

from June 1-14 and was attended by over 40,000 people from some 200 countries. "There were a lot of good speakers in the Earth Parliament, one of them Paulo Freire, the hero of our literacy program. We were so excited to meet him and share our literacy expertise coming from his methods."

The Earth Summit (UNCED) ran simultaneously from June 3-14. Our LAKAS trio felt it was a good beginning, that the World is getting aware of the plight of Mother Earth but poverty and militarization were not discussed in relation to environment and a pragmatic approach to development was taken.

"It was unnecessary lavish expenditure... a show window of governments to impress the World that they are pro-environment. Rio de Janeiro is the sad victim of this lavish drama... to paint a good image, street children, beggars, sidewalk vendors were maltreated, others were killed by the police. Lavish infrastructures were put up at the expense of Rio's poor."

From June 17-21, they were part of the Spiritual Unity of the Tribes GATHERING OF THE EAGLES in Black Hills, South Dakota, USA. Over twelve hundred Indigenous Peoples came together to pray for the unity of all Indigenous Peoples in the World, to thank the great spirits of our Ancestors for the many blessings given to us, to call on our grandmothers and grandfathers to guide us in our efforts to save Mother Earth, to call on the great Spirits to help us stop all forms of injustices, human rights violations, oppressions, killings, etc. and give us PEACE! PEACE IN THE WORLD!

"Time is allotted for the elders, men and women, to speak. Young leaders are also given time to speak. We spoke at the young Indigenous leaders assembly. There was cultural exchange so we also shared our cultural dances. Our sharing touched on the Indigenous issues in our country: economic, political and socio-cultural."

If you would like a copy of the LAKAS report, send \$2.50 to QLD PASG for copying & postage.

LEANDRO L. ALEJANDRO FOUNDATION

(• Continued from Page 4)

A House for Alternative People's Arts and Culture

DALUYAN is the name chosen for what is still a vision - a center providing venues for promoting culture - a gallery for visual art, a library/bookstore specializing in works of Filipino writers, a crafts store for indigenous products, a viewing room for films, a licensed theatre to feature alternative and people's music and performance. The Foundation is currently working with cultural artists to realize this vision.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' CONSULTATION ON ETHNOCIDE PARTICIPANTS ARRESTED AND STILL DETAINED

Sixteen workers of NGOs (Non-Government Organisations) and representatives of people's organisations were illegally arrested, detained and harassed as they were about to start the second day's session of a meeting of the *Indigenous Peoples' Consultation on Ethnocide* on August 23, 1992.

7:15 AM -- MILITARY men in civilian clothing surrounded the conference rooms at the Pahn Swimming Resort in Parang, Maguindanao, refusing to identify themselves as they took video footage and photographs of the participants, ransacked their rooms and confiscated belongings.

At gunpoint, the Consultation participants were herded into a jeepney, guarded by military vehicles and motorcycles with armed uniformed and plainclothes men, to be driven 15 km. to Camp Brig. S.K. Pendaton.

In the Camp, they were photographed again and several men in plainclothes, who refused to identify themselves, took turns in conducting tactical interrogations. The military continued to hold them incommunicado for 33 hours during which time their right to legal counsel was denied.

The next day the 16 were taken to the Provincial Jail to be charged by the Fiscal (magistrate). Afterwards they were granted an audience with Gen. Tibucio in the presence of the Fiscal, his assistant, the military, some media people, nuns, and their relatives.

On the third day of their detention, the 16 were allowed to meet with their lawyers. Their arrest was branded by the lawyers as illegal since no search warrant nor warrant of arrest was presented when the military seized materials at the resort, nor when the victims were detained at the military Camp. They demanded the immediate release of their clients.

The *Indigenous Peoples' Consultation on Ethnocide* is a nationwide consultation on the situation of the indigenous peoples of the Philippines. The session at which these illegal arrests were made, aimed to come up with a situationer on the Lumad peoples for presentation to President Ramos for action. It also hoped to draw up program proposals to deal with the displacement of Lumad communities due to the government's counter-insurgency campaign; the massive deaths that ensue when they are caught in cross-fire; the extinction of their culture, and other matters. The consultation was sponsored by the Lumad Development Center Inc. (LDCI), an NGO based in Cotabato City working for the preservation of the Lumad people's rights and culture.

THE 16 VICTIMS ARE STILL IN CUSTODY

Task Force Detainees of the Philippines (TFDP) in Cotabato City is co-ordinating the campaign for their release, **Task Force 16**. Support for the campaign has already come from Bishop Narciso Ticobay of the

Episcopal Diocese Southern Philippines, Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates (PAHRA), Lumad Mindanao, Subanen Union of Lumad Organizations, and Lumad Development Center Inc.

Please send your assistance to Task Force 16, c/- TFDP, Rm. 305, Usman Manpen Bldg., Magallanes St., Cotabato City, Mindanao, Philippines.



IN THE FIRST 100 DAYS

SINCE President Ramos assumed office on June 30, 1992 some welcome moves have been the release of some political prisoners and the repeal of the anti-subversion bill (RA 1700) which outlawed membership in the Communist Party of the Philippines, its armed wing the New People's Army and the National Democratic Front. Initial contacts have been made by government with leftist and rightist groups to discuss an amnesty program and possible peace talks.

But other moves by the Ramos administration are more worrisome. Proposals include a re-introduction of the death penalty, compulsory military training for students, a national identification card system which reeks of the "big brother" syndrome together with the deployment of military intelligence officers in each government department and agency to improve "national security". In the meantime, military operations continue unabated in the countryside. The deadline to gain "strategic control" over insurgency has been extended to December, 1993 and the proposed military budget has been expanded considerably, including that for the infamous CAGU's (Civilian Armed Forces Geographical Units). It is estimated that more than 600 political prisoners still languish in jail on criminal rather than political charges which disqualifies them from the proposed amnesty.

From: *Justice and Peace Info Bulletin* Sept. 1992
Ecumenical Movement for Justice and Peace

Philippines Australia Solidarity Group Queensland welcomes membership of individuals who support the struggle of the Filipino peoples for independence, freedom and democracy. Members and subscribers are of diverse background including Filipinos and non-Filipinos. PASG QLD has close links with Filipino community organisations in Australia, the Philippines, and the Asia-Pacific region. We receive information from a wide range of Philippine NGOs and can provide resource material, slides and videos as well as speakers.

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.

MARAG (• Continued from Page 5)

Five men, led by Warlito's brother, went to Bolo. However, as they arrived, they saw a number of soldiers still at the riverbank where the incident took place. In fear of being seen and killed, they retreated quietly. Determined, they returned the next day with 4 more men and found Warlito in a gruesome state. His face was beyond recognition for his eyes, nose and brains had been strewn off.

The men found and collected empty bullet shells, a camouflage cap and a straw sack inscribed with 17th IB (Infantry Battalion) near the body. They found Warlito's balangay (boat) cut in half and the couple's provisions for their fishing trip (rice, coffee and sugar) were missing. Aside from their food supply, their cooking wares, blankets, fishing net, bolo, and P300 cash in Warlito's pocket were also gone.

Warlito's father sadly informed the Mission participants that the couple went out to gather fish purposely for this scheduled mission. He did not blame the Mission for the death of his son, but pointed out the fact that every time a mission leaves Marag Valley, the military goes on a rampage. Warlito was murdered only two days after an earlier mission left the valley.

JOIN PASG QUEENSLAND OR SUBSCRIBE TO ITS NEWSLETTER

- ☒ Would you like to know more about P.A.S.G. QLD.? Please let us send you a copy of our Aims and Objectives and Constitution.
- ☒ Contact us if you would like to know about organised exposures with non-government peoples' organisations in the Philippines.
- ☒ Cash donations for solidarity work are always greatly appreciated. Please let us know if you wish to contribute to a specific project.
- ☒ SUBSCRIBE to the Newsletter. \$12 for 6 issues by post in Australia. (a portion of your payment covers the cost of complimentary copies to other groups in the region.)
- ☒ Join PASG QLD - the annual \$22 membership fee includes 6 issues of the Newsletter. We hold regular monthly meetings in Brisbane.

WRITE TO:

The PASG. Co-ordinator, PO Box 174, St. Lucia Qld. 4067
or PHONE (07) 891 5877

On October 16, Warlito was buried under his eldest brother's house where three of his children also lie in peace. The youngest died of measles complications in 1990; his 9 year old son died in a land mine explosion in 1991; his 13 year old daughter and her two companions were massacred on their way home from gathering food in March this year ambushed by military. *(Tang Ladia / Northern Dispatch -- Nov 6, 1992.)*

KASAMA ...means companion or comrade

A gruelling schedule of conference, visitors, studies, exams, and some personal life has caused this issue to be compiled as a double. We are looking forward to the Year of the World's Indigenous Peoples to be even busier. We will send you other publications if we are unable to compile an issue of Kasama.

Thank you to the many people who assisted the recent tours of our visitors from the Philippines. Thank you for the solidarity you are demonstrating with our struggle. Thank you for caring.

Thank you Rigoberta Menchu Tum for the inspiration you bring to our cause.

If undelivered please return to:

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P.O. Box 174
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