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Justice for Elma Young

by Emere Distor

March 8 - Forty people picketed in front of Beenleigh Magistrates Court to protest against the murder of Elma Albaracin Young, the pregnant 42 year-old Filipina nurse whose body was found dumped in Munruben on February 21.

The first court appearance of Elma's husband, Senior Police Constable Paul Young, was on International Women's Day. The case was adjourned until the 4th of July on request of his lawyer. He will appear again in Beenleigh Magistrates Court when it is expected that he will enter a plea.

Elma Young was the 14th Filipino woman migrant violently murdered in Australia since 1980 and the fourth recorded victim in Queensland. The three men accused of murder in Queensland were convicted and are all serving life sentences: David Mathieson for drowning his wife Teresita Andalis in 1980 who he had insured for nearly \$3 million; Antonio Juan Curado for murdering Nenita Westhoff and her husband in 1987; and Bruce James Hughes for bashing to death the deaf and mute Filipina, Mila Wills, a year ago.

A committee called "**Justice for Elma Young**" was created to monitor the case and inform the Filipino and Australian community of the violence perpetrated upon Filipino migrants and other women of non-English speaking background (NESB) communities.

The monitoring committee was patterned after the committee initiated by the Centre for Philippines Concerns-Australia Brisbane Branch (CPCA-QLD) for Mila Wills last year.

"**Justice for Elma Young**" is an ad-hoc umbrella organisation of individuals and community groups pursuing justice for Elma Young and other victims of domestic homicide particularly against women of NESB communities. One of its aims is to recommend implementation of legislation on domestic violence.



Elma and her daughter Amanda during happier times.

As part of its build-up campaign for the next hearing on July 4, the committee held a workshop titled "Getting to Know Our Issues" in April. Twenty-five people, mostly from NESB communities, attended the workshop facilitated by the Migrant Women's Emergency Support Services, Brisbane Migrant Resource Centre, and CPCA-QLD.

The first part of the workshop focused on domestic violence in cross-cultural marriages involving NESB women. The second session was on the patterns and commonalities among the deaths and disappearances of Filipino women and their children in Australia.

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STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST FILIPINO WOMEN

Brisbane community forum
6pm Friday, 27th May 1994

Justice Place, 84 Park Road, W'gabba
(near Park Road train station)

Speaker: Melba de Guzman-Marginson,
National Co-ordinator, Centre for Philippine
Concerns Australia (CPCA)

Australian Government Aid Project to Mindoro: UPDATE

Following up the cover story from Richard Wootton in the Jan/Feb '94 issue of *KASAMA*, we print below Gordon Bilney's response to our letters and Rev. Wootton's update on the farmers and Mangyans who are trying to educate the Philippine and Australian governments about appropriate development and international aid.

**From: the Office of the Minister
for Development Cooperation and
Pacific Island Affairs**

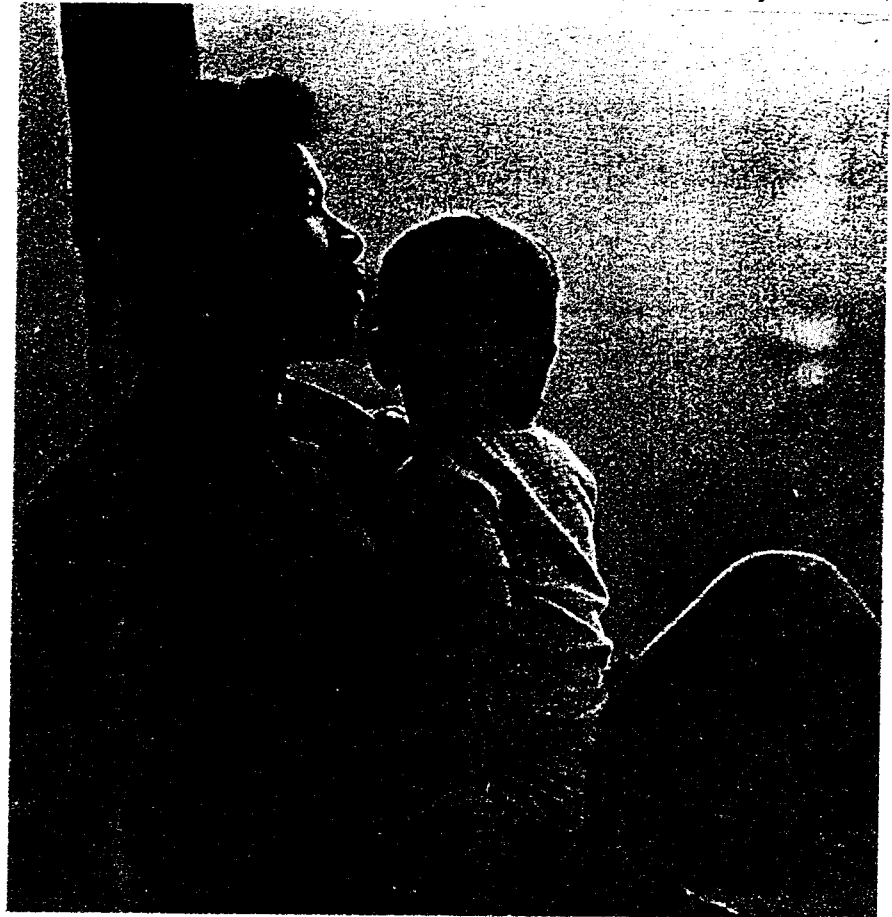
25 February 1994

I refer to your letter of 24 January 1994 addressed to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator Evans, concerning the possible eviction of farmers from land at the Mindoro College of Agriculture and technology, one of the institutions proposed for assistance under the Agricultural Technology Education Project (AGRITECH) that Australia is supporting in the Philippines. Your letter was passed to me as the Minister for Development Cooperation and Pacific Island Affairs.

I appreciate your concerns and am glad to provide some clarification. To begin with, the project has not commenced full implementation and I can assure you that no project personnel are stationed at the Mindoro College. The Australian-assisted project will not in any way involve the removal of farmers from college land. AGRITECH is designed to help strengthen the resources and programs of eleven Philippine agricultural colleges, by training college staff, improving curricula, providing essential equipment and funding income-earning projects and scholarships for poor students. The Mindoro College was selected as one of those eleven institutions because it has good development potential and serves a poor, isolated region where well-trained farm advisers and farmer leaders could do much to enhance the wellbeing of local communities.

It is my understanding that the college land where the farmers are settled is not required for AGRITECH project activities. Australia has certainly not been a party to any dealings about their occupancy rights. During the project planning process the

Photo: Jean Cador - *Philippines Un Pays Au Pluriel*



Australian International Development Assistance Board (AIDAB) became aware that there were differences between the Government and some farmer groups about the latter's occupancy claims, a situation which is common in the Philippines. However, as negotiations to resolve these were ongoing, and the College otherwise merited assistance, its inclusion in the project was left open pending completion of the current Project Implementation Study.

I agree with your suggestion that it is inappropriate for Australian aid to be associated with an institution where a dispute of this kind is occurring, even though it is entirely unrelated to proposed Australian aid inputs. I have therefore decided that AGRITECH assistance to the Mindoro College should be suspended, subject to review if and when sufficient evidence is provided of satisfactory resolution of the land occupancy issue. We would also require requests from the various farmer groups that the project should proceed. It is a pity, however, that this situation will put in doubt the provision of much-needed educational assistance to the general farming population of Mindoro Oriental province.

Thank you for your interest in this social justice issue.

Yours sincerely,
Gordon Bilney, Parliament House,
Canberra.

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AUSTRALIAN AID: MINDORO

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From: Rev Richard Wootton, Asian Development Foundation

March 1994

The effect of our letter writing and the actions of Hon. Gordon Bilney, Minister for Development Cooperation and Pacific Island Affairs, has won an interim victory.

Information we have received indicates that the issue of the land dispute in Mindoro has occasioned a high level meeting being held between the Ministry of Education and the Australian Embassy. The Secretary of Education (which is equivalent to an Australian Minister) has been made aware that the Philippine Government has twelve months within which to resolve the dispute. They have requested that written statements from the farmers and indigenous people be required as evidence of a resolution to the dispute. Until this time all funds and further development at the Mindoro College has been suspended. We have also been informed that a verbal statement has been made that should any forced evictions occur in the interim the project will be terminated permanently. In this regard the actions taken by Hon. Gordon Bilney are very commendable and have already resulted in indications that government officials are willing to negotiate more humanely and responsibly with the local farmers and indigenous people.

While the Australian Government has since made it clear that not all the land under dispute is required for the continuation of the project but only a small portion, the College administration still appears determined to gain control of all the disputed land. Hopefully their interest in the continuation of the Australian project will prove greater than their interest in obtaining the land.

The farmer and Mangyan (indigenous) organisations have developed alternative proposals on how they might be a part of the development of the College if they are given full legal title to their land. They are suggesting that, given full legal title to the land, they would agree to their farms being used as active sites for the implementation of agricultural technology. In this way both they and the College would benefit.

They are also asking that they have the opportunity to meet with representatives of the College and the Australian Government in a dialogue where:

- 1) they are not being threatened and intimidated;
- 2) they have full and free access to information on the scope and intention of the Australian-Philippine project;
- 3) they have a right to determine their role in the project;

4) there is a serious intention of the Government to consider their right to full legal title of the land.

While an initial victory has been achieved, we still need to maintain some pressure and it would be very helpful if you could respond as soon as possible to Mr Bilney's reply. Your letter may like to include:

- Commend the Hon. Gordon Bilney on the action he has taken and suggest that as a result there is now a real possibility of a just settlement with the farmers and indigenous people being achieved.
- Suggest that you are in full agreement with the development of the Mindoro College but that such development at the expense of justice is unacceptable.
- That you are aware that the local farmers and indigenous people are not opposed to the development of the College on the condition that they gain full legal title over the land they now occupy.
- That the local farmers and indigenous people have exciting and creative proposals as to how they might be a part of the future development of the College.
- That the farmers and indigenous people seek a dialogue on the issue of the land and the College development, but under the conditions mentioned above (refer to points 1 to 4).
- That you have since learnt that not all the land is required for the development of the college. However, this has consistently been the reason given by the College administration for the current eviction of the occupants of the land. Thus the Australian Government has been deeply implicated in the injustice being perpetrated.
- That a meeting of responsible personnel from the Australian Embassy who were willing to listen responsively to the concerns of the local farmers and indigenous people may be a positive way of clearing the disrepute that has come to be attributed to our Australian Government in the mind of the local people.
- Suggesting again that you support the action of the Minister and that you are in full accord with his decision to suspend assistance to the College until a just settlement can be reached with the local occupants of the land.

Thank you for your support in the struggle of the local farmers and Mangyan who are keenly aware that there are people in Australia who understand and support their struggle for land and life.

For further information contact: Rev. Richard Wootton, Asian Development Foundation, 130 Little Collins Street, Melbourne 3000. Tel: (03) 654 2747 or Fax: (03) 650 7019.

By Kathleen Maltzahn and Chat Garcia

This article is reprinted with permission of the authors from *Women in Action* 2&3/93, the magazine of Isis International-Manila.

"Pssst, Wanna get yourself a Filipina bride? Soft-eyed, innocent and guaranteed to be a virgin?"

Ken Morgan, 64, married three times and father of six, has done just that, and as far as an Australian newspaper describes below, is now helping other lonely men find their Third World virgin of virtue. **"Virgins do not smoke, take drugs, gamble, or drink too much!"** his book, *War of the Sexes* announces: **"This book explains how to marry a female or male virgin from overseas - where to find them - how to meet them - how much it costs to bring them here - and how to overcome immigration delays."**

Mr. Morgan was a 57 year old lonely guy when, on holiday in the Philippines in 1986, he met his present wife Cory, then a shy, 19 year old Filipina. **"It was love at first sight,"** recalls Mr. Morgan proudly. **"Because of the way they're brought up, they [Filipinas] expect to put more into a marriage than they'll get out of it."** He's not big on feminism by the sound of things.

It's not all easy sailing, however, so Mr. Morgan has a reminder for his readers: **"Let's not forget though that 'personalities' are involved, so you will perhaps need to reform some of your bad habits."**

Every facet of the search for a spouse is covered by the big question, 'How much will it cost you?' The book provides the clue: **"You will need about A\$3,000 or maybe a bit more - mainly for airfares. It's not a lot of money compared to what you can earn in twelve months, only the cost of a lousy second-hand car, really."**

War of the Sexes is of course extreme, but it builds upon an established practice of selling Asian women in Australia, where, ever since Mail Order Bride agencies were banned in the Philippines, Australian shops sell catalogues that publish 1,000 inch-by-inch photographs of potential Philippine brides and their vital statistics: height, weight, complexion, hobbies and home-loving qualities.

The phenomenon of Australian men seeking wives from Asia, mainly the Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia and some Pacific countries, is an undeniable trend. Currently there is an estimated 20,000 marriages between Filipino women and Australian men. In 1988-1989, females constituted 84% and 83% of spouse and fiancée arrivals from the Philippines and Thailand respectively, and women from Fiji, Indonesia, Vietnam, Sri Lanka and Malaysia registered from 65% to 69%.²

Introduction agencies, pen pal systems and sex tours initially served as the major means of introducing Australian men to Asian women, particularly in the Philippines. During



Graphic: Grace de Jesus-Sievert in *Women in Action* 2&3/93

the 80s, networks of marriages increased and now liaisons are being arranged through friends and relatives. However, introduction agencies still continue to advertise "Asian ladies seeking relationships or marriages". Filipino women's groups have also reported the existence of introduction agencies specialising in Filipino women. Fees for services of these agencies vary widely. However, for as little as A\$20, one can avail of an agency's mailing list of 500 Filipino women.

With Thailand, there is a heavy emphasis on sex tours where men find partners through brothels, bars and massage parlours. A new source in Indonesia has emerged in the last three years - Kupang in West Timor. The operation of an oil rig in the area has made it a destination of men on leave. Bars and brothels have sprung up in Kupang. The women who work there are "poor village girls with little education."³

The experience of migrant fiancées or spouses in Australia is often punctuated by violence. While Ken Morgan may suggest that his lonely men may have some 'bad habits' needing to be worked on, it is overwhelmingly the women who are expected to adjust, adapt, give way.

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MAIL ORDER BRIDES

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Asian and Pacific women are perceived as poor and docile, and men seeking to marry them consider that they are "doing them a favour" by saving them from poverty. Consequently, failure to conform to the expectations of passivity and weakness meets a violent response. Asian and Pacific women who leave their husbands are said to be using the man to get a passport, or to scheme away his money. This hostility is an extension of the man's sexism towards Australian women, but has the added layer of racism. Welfare workers for migrant women are overloaded with cases of women who become victims of domestic violence. Women's refuges constantly cope with a large number of Asian women leaving their Australian partners and seeking temporary accommodations. There are documented cases of women, especially from Thailand, who have been forced into prostitution by their spouses.

A practice that has stemmed from these inter-racial marriages is serial sponsorship, where Australian men sponsor a succession of women as fiancées or spouses. Current Australian immigration policies do not put a limit on the number of fiancée or spouse sponsorship permissible for an Australian citizen or resident. Welfare workers have documented cases of men sponsoring women as fiancées or spouses, sexually abusing them and then abandoning or divorcing them before going on to sponsor another woman and repeating the cycle.

Women who are abandoned before legally being married to their sponsors either have to leave voluntarily or are forced to become illegal migrants to avoid being deported. Australian immigration regulations require all fiancée visa holders to marry within 3 months of their stay in Australia. Overstayers become illegal migrants and can be deported. The immigration department has deported women who were victims of domestic violence and sexual abuse despite intervention by women's groups and workers. According to social workers, some men have sponsored up to eight women, while it is not uncommon for men to have sponsored three. Exact figures are however difficult to obtain as the Department of Immigration refused to provide information.

Serious concern has mounted regarding the prevalence of serial sponsorship because of the accompanying sexual abuse and other forms of violence. In a study by the Australian Immigration Department on serial sponsorship, 80 out of 110 cases involved domestic violence.⁴

Internationally, Asian women, and increasingly Pacific women too, are being seen more and more as brides, domestic helpers and prostitutes. For example,

the public stereotype of Filipino women as 'brides' has perpetuated an image of "modesty, timidity, docility, devotion to family and domestic life, and at the same time sexual willingness". In Australia, this stereotype has also been extended to other Asian women.

These perceptions have been fuelled by the increasingly racist attitudes in Australia surrounding Asian migration. At a time of severe economic recession, Asian migration is seen as a major cause of Australia's economic difficulties, despite clear evidence that migration in fact stimulates the economy.

Asian and Pacific women's response to both the overt and subtle violence they experience has been, however, far from passive. At this stage, it is generally Filipino and Thai women who have been able to make organised responses, reflecting their longer history in Australia as spouses and fiancées. Public campaigns, with considerable media coverage, have focussed on the issues of violence, sexual abuse, media sensationalism and stereotyping of Asian women, sex tourism and the bride trade. Most recently, media has picked up the Filipino community's high profile campaign to achieve a Government general inquiry into all murders of Filipinas. With the support of the women's movement, and in particular a Feminist Lawyers group, there is optimism that the campaign will be successful.

The most recent victory, however, involved Mr. Morgan himself. Filipino women in West Australia denounced *War of the Sexes* for its "brutal attacks on the values and integrity of Filipinos" and critiqued the Philippine Consulate's planned co-sponsoring of the book launching. Within days, Filipino women and their supporters had stopped the launching, forced the Consulate to dissociate from promotion of the book, and prompted Philippine ambassador Rora Tolentino to protest that the book, "disregards human respect and dignity, especially of women". Mr. Morgan was unable to find another place to hold the launching of the book. But while the *War of the Sexes* is out of circulation, the battle of Asian and Pacific women against the daily realities of racism, sexism and violence goes on.

Notes:

1. "Morgan's Guide to Brides of Virtue", *The West Australian* (newspaper), 2.20.1993.
2. Kaminskas and Smith, "Brides or women? - Female Filipino Migration to Australia" paper presented at the Second National Conference of the Australian Women's Studies Association, Melbourne, 25-27 September 1990, p.3.
3. Iredale, R.; Innes, J. & Castles, S. "Serial Sponsorship: Immigration Policy and Human Rights" Centre for Multicultural Studies, University of Wollongong, p.26.
4. Iredale, R. et al, p.30.

The authors, Kathleen Maltzahn and Chat Garcia, work for the Centre for Philippine Concerns Australia.

Profiles of Political Prisoners

JUANITO

ONE day in 1989, all Manila newspapers carried the headline "Colonel James Rowe killed by NPA hitmen." An American career soldier, specializing in anti-insurgency activities, previously active in Viet Nam, Rowe belonged to the Joint U.S. Military Action Group (JUSMAG). This organization assured U.S. influence with the Philippine military. To oppose JUSMAG or the presence of U.S. bases in the Philippines was sufficient reason to be branded a communist and to be summarily executed.

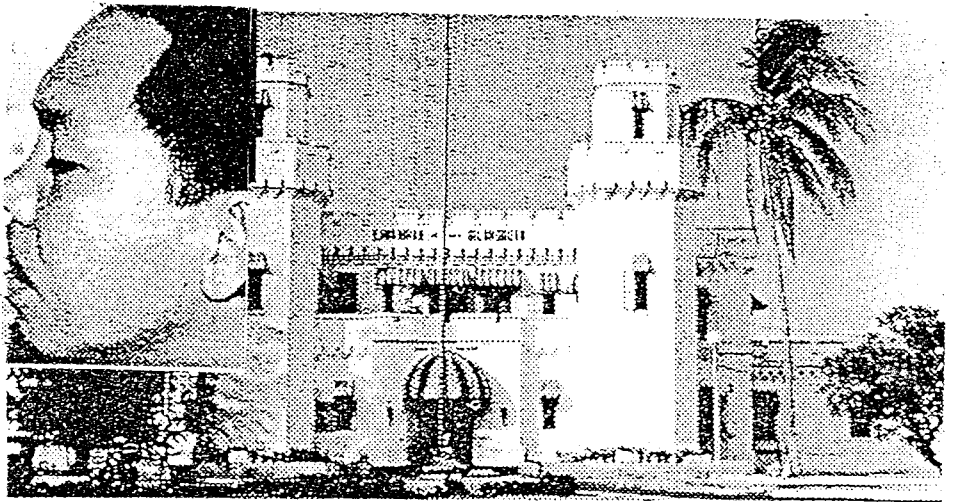
When American authorities demanded the speedy investigation of the killing, the Philippine government quickly obliged and this is the story of Juanito.

August 27, 1989, 6:30 in the evening. On the southern island of Mindanao, Juanito, a 25-year old bachelor, had boarded a passenger jeep on his way to church. Suddenly it was blocked by a vehicle loaded with armed men. "A hold-up," Juanito thought, but the men grabbed him, bound his arms and legs, blindfolded him and threw him into the back of the van. It was the way it is done with pigs on their last trip to the slaughterhouse.

All throughout the night and the next day, Juanito was interrogated, beaten and choked by different shifts of men. They tried to force him into confessing that he was the triggerman in the Rowe murder. This continued until Juanito lost consciousness. A few days later, Juanito was presented to the press as a prize catch. He was subsequently condemned to serve a life sentence in Muntinlupa, the huge penitentiary south of Manila, housing 8,000 inmates.

It did not matter much what Juanito had done. The fact was that he belonged to a suspicious breed. He was one of 10 children of a poor corn and coconut farmer. All the children helped out in the fields. Planting and harvesting took priority over schooling. Two of Juanito's brothers died in accidents and one was killed in 1982 as a guerilla fighter. Juanito considers his brother to be a martyr in the struggle for justice. Besides farming, his father is a part-time pastor of the United Church of Christ. Early in life stocky Juanito joined protest marches demanding land for the tillers.

When Juanito was 15 years old, he went to work for two years in a shoe factory after which, for eight years, he peddled tapes, radios and textiles in the



ON BOTH SIDES of Prison Walls

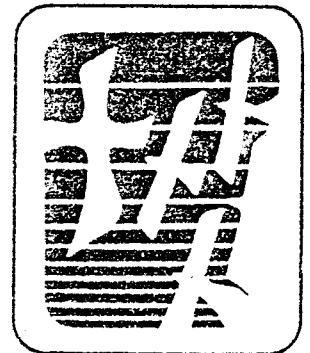
turbulent settlements of gold rush areas. There, teams of men dig the ore from tunnels which, especially during rainy season, tend to cave in and bury numerous screaming fortune seekers. Of every 10 sacks of ore, only three remain with the diggers, six go to the owner of the tunnel and one to the military positioned at the entrance. But together with his wares, Juanito peddled the idea of social justice. Rowe's death was a perfect alibi to get rid of this nuisance.

When President Ramos assumed office in 1992, it looked as if Juanito would soon be released. In Ramos' effort to project himself as a peacemaker, the President seemed to favour the idea of amnesty for the more than 500 political prisoners. But from the U.S. embassy came the stern warning that those convicted of murdering Rowe should in no way be released nor their sentence shortened. For Juanito, prospects of a conditional pardon are bleak.

- by Jeff Demyttenaere

The author, Jeff Demyttenaere, is a member of VOLENS, a Belgian organization for international solidarity, and has been doing socio-pastoral work in the Philippines since the early sixties. He is currently a volunteer worker of Task Force Detainees of the Philippines.

This profile is originally published by Philippine International Forum as *STORIES* no.3, 1993. PIF is a network of people of various cultural backgrounds committed to the Philippines and its peoples as they struggle for life and self-determination. *STORIES* nos. 1,2 &3 are available by post. Send US\$15 (US dollar cheques only please) to: PIF, P.O. Box 512, Cebu City 6000, Philippines. Telefax: (63-32) 21-29-68.



My FAMILY in the International Year of the Family

HELLO. My name is Melissa Lucashenko. I am a Bundjalung woman, and I stand on the Aboriginal land of the Jagara people.

Well, the United Nations has declared this the international year of the family, and I suppose it's not terribly surprising that already, by March, there's a good deal of evidence to suggest that 1994 will in fact be the international year of the Homophobe. How quick the establishment figures have been to attack any voicing of alternative views, views that don't fit into their neat preconceptions of what international "families" should be! I don't intend to dwell long on the hurts that lesbian women and gay men and *their* families will be experiencing this year as those attacks continue - firstly because I am not really able to speak for other people, and secondly because I think that most in the gay community will be genuinely unsurprised by the homophobic majority. But the deep hurt caused by those attacks will still be there, and that comes into what I want to say about families more generally.

When I sat down to write this I went to a dictionary to see what it said a family was, and the brief definition in the Oxford was: "household, set of parents and children or of relations." Which I suppose means that what determines a family in the world of dictionary compilers is basically genetics - a very limited definition.

I doubt that all Migloo* people hold to that, certainly Murriss don't. Our old people will laugh at that idea. Most people here will probably know that the Aboriginal way of relating is different to the European way; and that means that Aboriginal families are different to white families and also different to the extended families of the other ethnic groups. Our families are different traditionally and they are also different today as a result of colonisation.



Frontline Female: a Black nurse

How are indigenous families different traditionally? Well, most obvious is that Aboriginal people lived in large extended family groups. These extended families though would be different from today's extended families because they would make up almost all of the human universe to their members. In other words, the family would not be a *part* of your world, but almost your *entire* world. A child would grow up knowing not only her biological mother and father, but knowing her uncles as fathers and her aunts as mothers. She would be likely to spend much time with her grandmother and great-grandmother. Her father would more than likely live in the men's camp, and see her rarely. His relationship to her would be common knowledge,

but her mother's brothers would be far more important in her life. Nearly everyone she knew or met would be a blood relation. This is important, because it means that she would have an intricate and detailed knowledge of her relationship with every person she came into regular contact with.

The concept of "stranger" to a traditionally raised Aboriginal child must have been something like the concept of "foreigner" to modern Australians. Imagine that! Imagine a world where meeting a stranger was an event, a novelty. Imagine the happy situation where you shared similar values with all your neighbours, and your teacher was your grandmother, your grocer was your mother and uncle combined, your grandfather and grandmother were the police presence, doctor was your auntie, and so on and so forth. Imagine those relationships embedded in a Dreaming which gave a real and coherent spirituality to everyday life. Imagine that family enmeshed in a Law that confirmed your place in the world as a valuable person, and protected you from harm to a much greater extent than this dysfunctional society's Law, and which gave to you symbols of the natural world as affirmation of your place.

Within traditional Aboriginal life, it might interest you to know that rape was sometimes punished with death, and at the least with ritual spearing. Child abuse was very rare because children had a wide range of people to draw on for support and safety, and because of the restriction of living practices which make such abuse easier. These are just a few of the ways in which traditional indigenous families have worked for Murriss in the past.

Aboriginal families today are nearly all touched by the process of colonisation to varying degrees. Our families are still different to yours today because although we live in a

This speech was addressed to the rally of about 800 who gathered on March 12 in Emma Miller Place, Brisbane to celebrate International Women's Day. Thank you Melissa for reproduction permission [some editing for space-Ed.]. Speakers from CPCA and Qld PASG talked about the incidents of violence, disappearance, and murder stalking Filipino women and others of non-English speaking background in Australia. Also, in support of the Asian comfort women, the rallyists were asked to put their signatures to a petition. Carrying these three *Frontline Female* soft-sculptures by popular Brisbane artist, Rachel Apeft, the rallyists marched to Musgrave Park to relax with stalls, entertainment, lots more speeches, and time to share causes and concerns.

white-dominated capitalist world, our histories are vastly different, and affect the ways we relate. Our families are still huge, though not as tightly knit and exclusive as before white settlement. The first thing Murris talk about with each other is, Who are you? Where are you from? - which is our way of establishing our family relationships. This questioning will continue until both parties have the information they need to place each other in their mental universe of Murri families and tribal groups. My extended family was split up some time ago by the New South Wales government so I have only a vague

Frontline Female: an Asian cleaner



idea where I belong in that understanding, but I know that regardless if ever I get that vital information about my background, I still have dozens upon dozens of relations somewhere in the east coast of this country.

Probably the main thing about Aboriginal families is that no matter who you are, or where you come from, there is a place for you somewhere. No-one is absolutely cast out on the scrap heap of our world. I don't mean a place physically. By 'place', I mean that every person has a deep intrinsic value, regardless of their age, or gender, or skin group, or country, or degree of disability or whatever.

When our old people were too weak to walk, they were carried on the backs of those with the strength to do so. Babies born with disabilities were not put to death, but usually taken into the tribe as full members with special needs. No-one is more scorned in Aboriginal culture than the person who rejects her family ties. This is human rights in the fullest sense of the term. You are a human, therefore you are as important as me. There is a place for you that no-one can take away, not even death. After death, that place in our collective memories will be there, with your name still on it.

This means that the Aboriginal definition of family is far from genetic. Our way of seeing families derives still from that world view where there were no strangers, modified to suit an urban lifestyle where about 99% of the people about us are unfamiliar and often hostile.



Frontline Female: a Suffragette

In an Aboriginal understanding, my blood family is still my family, but only one component of it. My unknown Bundjalung relations are another part of my family. I have a family relationship with every Aboriginal person I meet, though of a different sort. And because my family is not genetic, but based on relationships with real human people, my family contains those closest to me. My Aboriginal daughter has my white brother for her uncle. Debbie there is my sister. These are not things I say lightly. Family to us still has connotations of struggle and survival in a difficult environment. Family is a strength and a security and a Law. It means that my house is the house of all my family, my food is the food of everyone I hold dear, because families can only be meaningful when they are the most important thing in your life. A family that is second to anything else, is not, in my view, a functional family.

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My FAMILY in the IYF

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There will no doubt be a lot of rhetoric spoken this year about how the family is central to Australian life. That, not to put too fine a point on it, is bullshit. If the family was central to life in mainstream Australia, then the economic and legal systems would be vastly different. This country serves people, and families, only very marginally. Where do people figure in the macro-economy? As units of labour, often unemployed. Where do people figure in the retail sector? As consumers, easily lied to and poisoned with dangerous goods unfit for our consumption. Where do people figure in the legal system? As tiny unimportant voices which are slotted into the hierarchy at an (in)appropriate spot.

We live in a social system that tells us that material goods and competitive achievement are the Good Life. This is a social system designed to produce only machines and monsters. We can live without luxury goods. We can live without beating down our friends and neighbours to climb above their miseries. But ask yourself, what can't you live without? Ask yourself, who are the people, those living warm-blooded humans, that are central to your existence? And when you have answered that question, then you will know beyond any doubt, that you have defined your own family.

[In her poem] The Aboriginal people Judith Wright is talking about were Bundjalung people, my great-great grandmothers and grandfathers. *Niggers Leap New England*, is a poem about my family, but what I said here today has been meaningless unless you understand that the whites who drove them to their deaths are in some way a part of me also.

In this, the International Year of the Family, my family is large, and my family is precious to me, but beyond that, there is a place for everyone I meet in my world. Human beings are infinitely precious, a fact which modern urban industrial life can often make us forget. No-one is expendable. Children are not expendable. Migloos* are not expendable. Women of non-English speaking backgrounds are not expendable. Even my brothers, with all their faults and failings, are not expendable. All people are precious - and although I am an Aboriginal woman, with a special place in my heart for black women and feminists of all persuasions, no amount of colonialism can make me forget my human values, and make me forget to claim all people as my people.

* Migloo(s) - White(s)



In December Anthony Brown for 4ZZZ Radio News interviewed Emere Distor, Coordinator of the Centre for Philippine Concerns Australia - Brisbane Branch

Anthony: Filipino women are the ethnic group hardest hit by cases of domestic violence. How many Filipino women have been murdered in cases of domestic violence since 1980?

Emere: Since 1980 there were reported 15 Filipino women who were victims of violent deaths and disappearances. (*Research to date shows: 14 women have been murdered, 3 women and a child are missing, 4 children have died, 2 women died in a mass suicide, 1 woman died suspiciously in a fire.*) And it's really disappointing to think that we are suspecting there may be a lot more given that some cases are unreported.

Anthony: Do you know why this is happening?

Emere: We are linking these problems of violent deaths and disappearances to several reasons and one of them is serial sponsorship. If you would note, a good definition of serial sponsorship was given by Justice Elizabeth Evatt. She says that serial sponsorship is a process whereby a man sponsors a woman from another country to enter Australia as a spouse, de-facto or fiancée whom he will live with for a certain time then terminate the relationship only to repeat the process once more with another or a series of women. So there are lots of risks involved with serial sponsorship. In fact during the past five years, concerned groups from the migrant communities, like the Centre for Philippine Concerns Australia, and some of the government agencies have been expressing their alarm over reports where these men place these women in relationships marked by violence and abuse and, in extreme cases, force the women into the sex industry. And since most of these women came from non-English speaking countries, their vulnerability is great as far as communication is concerned. More so, they are likely to be unfamiliar with their legal entitlements. As a fiancée a woman is granted only a 3-month temporary visa and if she does not marry at the end of this time she will be deported. This has been going on with some unfortunate victims of serial sponsorship.

Anthony: So, the men are able to hold over the women the fact that if they don't remain in the relationship or obey these men, they can get them thrown out of Australia?

Emere: Yes, that's true, and it is also necessary to know that serial sponsorship victims were women from poor countries like Philippines, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Fiji, and other over-exploited nations. The practice of serial sponsorship is so widespread that a serious social

Serial Sponsorship and Violence Against Asian Women

examination is required to determine its causes and preventative measures. Given the prevalence of violence in this kind of sponsorship, it ought to be seen as part of a broader problem which is the sexual exploitation of Asian women by men from rich countries like Australia, Germany, and Japan.

Anthony: Do you think serial sponsorships are rife in Australia?

Emere: Oh yes it is. Currently, the Philippines is ranked 7th as a source country for migrants and around half the Filipinos arriving here are spouses or fiancées. As a proportion of all women marrying an Australian resident sponsor, Filipino women, at 18 percent, appear to be the largest single group participating in cross cultural marriages with Australians.

Anthony: What sorts of relationships do these women find themselves in?

Emere: Unfortunately there are cases like Mila Wills, a deaf-mute Filipina who was murdered in Brisbane last April. They've entered into a relationship and they've turned out to be a victim of murder or violence, and this is very unfortunate.

Anthony: Can you tell me something about the Mila Wills case?

Emere: Mila Wills was the deaf and mute Filipina who was bashed to death by an Australian man with whom she had been living for two years. The man accused of the murder, Bruce Hughes, was found guilty of a violent and brutal killing and the jury had obviously rejected his claim of provocation and so, he got life imprisonment.

Anthony: Are you satisfied with that?

Emere: We are pleasantly surprised. But unfortunately, not all victims of violence in Australia could actually get this kind of sentencing. Of the cases of Filipino women murdered in Australia, most of the persons accused of the killing were either set free for lack of evidence or convicted of manslaughter. We are really happy that this man got a life sentence.

Anthony: What do you think needs to be done to stop this high incidence of domestic violence against Filipino women in Australia?

Emere: In the case of possible solutions, we have expected that the government would restrict introduction agencies. These agencies have been banned outright in the Philippines with significant criminal penalties attached to this law. In Australia there has been some discussion of the possible regulation of agencies but, although there was Federal support for this, most states declined to take action. Another option is to change Australia's regulations - to prevent men from being able to sponsor women as fiancées or spouses when there is a reasonable degree of risk that abuse is likely to occur. Two avenues in fact are suggested. One is a restriction that could apply to men with criminal records of violence or apprehended violence orders and another is the screening of all men. They should be required to reveal their records, personal and criminal records alike. This is where the privacy act is a hindrance.

Anthony: Are you disappointed that nothing has been done or not enough has been done?

Emere: Well, not enough has been done. Although, I think it is fair to say that the government of Australia is cooperating with migrant groups to go into possible solutions.



Illustration: *Women in Action* 2&3/93, Isis International - Manila

GREENPEACE

SOLIDARITY IN ACTION

Australian Toxic Waste Shipment to the Philippines Blockaded

GREENPEACE protesters successfully blockaded a shipment of Australian toxic waste which was to be exported to the Philippines under the guise of recycling.

On March 12, protesters padlocked themselves to two containers filled with waste lead batteries on Fisherman's Island at the port of Brisbane while two Greenpeace climbers unfurled a 15 metre long banner from a crane which read: "STOP TOXIC TRADE".

Greenpeace spokesperson, Phyllis Campbell, said the export of lead batteries to Asia is allowing Australian companies to avoid the higher costs of disposal at home under stricter environmental standards. "These lead batteries are being melted down in factories which provide no protection of workers and freely pollute waterways and poison villagers. In Asia workers crack waste car batteries open with their bare hands often spilling the lead contents over themselves," she said.

The export of lead batteries from Australia to less industrialised countries is part of a much wider global toxic trade in scrap metals, plastics, and computer junk. Metal scraps, including slag from refining operations, contain arsenic, cadmium and mercury, while plastics and computer junk produce dioxins and other carcinogenic compounds when burnt during reprocessing.

Australia and countries such as the U.K., Germany and the USA have been exploiting a "recycling" loophole in the Basel Convention, the international law controlling the toxic hazardous waste trade. According to the UN Environment Programme, 98% of the 400 million tonnes of waste produced each year originates in OECD (Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development) countries.

In 1993 alone, Australia exported a total of 13,293 tonnes of lead acid battery scrap. Over 60 per cent of this total was sent to the already over-exploited, less-industrialised countries in Asia. In particular, the Philippines received more than a third of Australia's 1993 export of lead battery scrap. This export also contravenes Philippine law. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources of the Philippines ruled in 1991 that under RA6969, "the importation of waste batteries which are considered as hazardous materials is not allowed".

The environment, however, won its latest victory on March 26th when the European Union Council of Ministers in Brussels brought all EU countries in line to

support the ban of all hazardous waste exports, including those destined for recycling, beginning December 31, 1997. The only parties left opposing the ban were Australia, Canada, and Japan. The United States, which is not a party to the Convention, also worked actively to undermine the proposal.

Greenpeace hastened to point out that the EU countries' ban will not come into effect until the end of 1997 and warned industrial countries that its vigilance will not waver.

TFDP TURNS 20

Vows to Continue Human Rights Advocacy Towards Year 2000

TASK Force Detainees of the Philippines, a pioneer human rights NGO in the Philippines established by the Association of Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines in 1974, turns 20 this year bannering the theme: *Gearing towards the year 2000 for human rights, genuine peace and people-oriented development.*

As a human rights watchdog to the government, Sr. Crecencia Lucero, Executive Director, vowed, "TFDP shall continue its mandate of protecting the rights and promoting the legitimate interests of political prisoners and other human rights victims as governments come and go."

From a few religious and lay volunteers led by Sr. Mariani Dimaranan, still chairperson of the organization, the TFDP responded to the increasing incidence of political detention during the Martial Law years and rendered legal, spiritual and material assistance to political prisoners and their families. As the situation worsened over the years, the organization broadened its scope of work to include victims of involuntary disappearances, salvagings (summary executions), and tortures and expanded its services like documentation, research, information, campaigns and alliance building.

For its pioneering efforts in human rights work in the Philippines, the TFDP was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1986, and in 1990 it was awarded an honourable mention by the UNESCO for its outstanding human rights education activities.

With its network of regional and unit offices in almost all major parts of the country and its partners in different parts of the world, the TFDP continues to carry out its mandate in the light of its vision of a society where there is equality, social justice and human rights are fully enjoyed and respected.

Artemio A. Dumlao/PHRU/Northern Dispatch.

CHINESE IN THE PHILIPPINES:

From Segregation to Success - part two

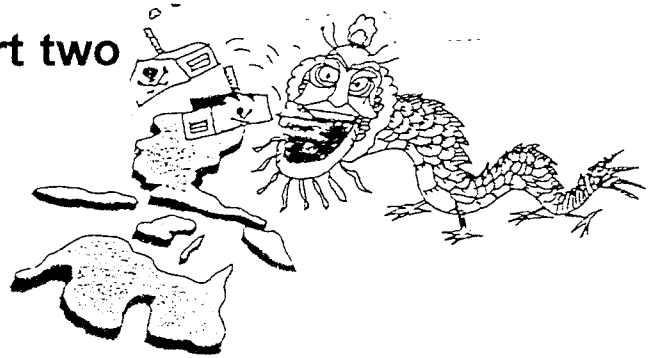
by Emere Distor

LEVELS of antagonism between the Chinese and the Indios throughout the centuries varied from offensive name-calling to serious riots. The Indios called the Chinese 'baboy instik' (Chinese pig) while 'hoan-a' (barbarians) was how the Chinese described the natives. The Filipino-Chinese relationship further deteriorated when hostility towards the Chinese burst out into violence, notably the Quiapo riot in 1924 and the San Pablo riot in 1931. The Quiapo incident started when a newspaper "Ang Watawat" carried unfounded stories about the killing of 80 Filipino students in Shanghai. Inflamed by the news, natives stoned Chinese stores and mobbed Chinese residents. In San Pablo, a dispute started between a Chinese Sari-sari store owner and a Filipino customer which later developed into a fight. The fight attracted a mob that later looted and burned Chinese stores in retaliation.

The Chinese in the Philippines at the eve of the 19th century lived with an atmosphere of hostility and insecurity. This situation aroused the national consciousness among Chinese migrants to withdraw from all but commercial involvement.

The liberal American regime provided the Chinese an arena to stage their campaign of patriotism by establishing institutions that promoted their "Chineseness." Greater identification and defence for self-protection were the two main lines espoused by the Chinese communities in the archipelago. Their budding nationalism revived the concept of China being the *Chung-kuo* (Middle Kingdom) surrounded by relatively inferior races. Bonded by such belief, they have shown their strength in many different ways.

To impart their own cultural values among their children, Chinese schools were put up all over the islands. In 1914, the creation of the Philippine-Chinese Educational Association under the auspices of Don Carlos Palanca expanded and supported the existing Chinese school by raising funds from Chinese businessmen. Being a prominent Chinese merchant himself, Don Carlos Palanca was able to convince these men to impose a two per cent increase in their internal revenue taxes to be used for the maintenance of the said schools. In 1920, the contributions amounted to P75,000 and the year after, the tax assessment of two per cent was raised to four per cent to boost support.



Among Chinese merchants, the most effective way to show their strength and influence was the establishment of a Chinese General Chamber of Commerce in 1904. The main purpose of the group was to be in closer and constant contact with merchants from China and overseas for "mutual information and cooperation." Composed of wealthy and influential Chinese merchants, the group likewise proved to be an effective weapon in protecting their economic interests. In 1905, the chamber led a boycott campaign against American products after the American government passed the Chinese Registration Act limiting the number of Chinese labourers' migration to the Philippines. Since the leading importers of American commodities were Chinese, the boycott decreased American production and market share in the island. With such an impact, the Americans sought the help of the Chinese government to halt the boycott. Nonetheless, the effect continued to be felt until 1907.

The organisation of the Chinese, however, was not limited to economic matters. It was very apparent that participation extended to politics as well. Prior to the 1911 Revolution in China, Philippine Chinese were actively working towards the downfall of the Manchus by raising funds for Sun Yat-sen's group. Prominent merchants like Dr Tee Han Kee gave special performances at the Manila Grand Opera House to raise revolutionary funds. The play's leading character was Sun Yat-sen portrayed by no other than Tee Han Kee. When Peking had capitulated in early 1912, Chinatowns in Manila raised the flag of the New China Republic in jubilation.

When Nicholas Roosevelt remarked in 1927 that the islands would fall into the hands of the Chinese if the United States withdraw from the Philippines, leaders like Manuel Quezon, Sergio Osmeña and Manuel Roxas quickly denied such a misconception. Contrary to the belief of being a menace, these leaders saw China as a country which could protect other Asian nations once emancipated.

Continued on Page 14▶

CHINESE IN THE PHILIPPINES

◀ Continued from Page 13

With China's experience of foreign domination, it was very likely in a position to help forward the independence of sister nations like the Philippines. In solidarity with the Chinese people, several hundreds of Filipinos expressed their desire to be enlisted in the Chinese army to fight the Japanese during the Manchuria crisis in 1931-32.

The principle of nationalism since the beginning of the 30s was very apparent to both nations. Chinese were working to free China from the shambles of political opportunism while Filipinos were working for the islands' independence from America. But as it turned out later, this principle of solidarity was broken when economic interests began to surface. When the Commonwealth Republic was established in 1935, the surge of nationalism was overwhelming. The nationalistic strain was evident in the Constitution which replaced the "people of the Philippines" to "Filipino" in its preamble connoting that those persons racially Filipino are the true people of the country. With the introduction of such phraseology in the constitution, even the Chinese mestizos who were born in the Philippines were excluded.

In 1934, a group of prominent Filipino businessmen founded the National Economic Protectionism Association in a bid to control Chinese domination of the Philippine economy. As an offshoot of economic protectionism, legislation to eliminate the Chinese from retail trade and other industries was proposed, but it was later opposed by the Chinese community. The opposition was based on factors that the ousters would not only affect the producers but the masses as well. One Filipino historian could only remark, "apparently, God and history have willed that the Chinese would remain a permanent fixture in Philippine population and that they would continue to be an enduring factor in Philippine economy."

From the 1950s to the 60s legislation to nationalise the Philippine economy was enacted. The Retail Trade Act, the Anti-Dummy Law and the Nationalisation of Rice and Corn Law were triggered by the government's Filipino-First Policy. Another legislation that affected the activities of the Chinese in the Philippines was the Supreme Court ruling "that a child born in the Philippines of an alien father and a Filipina, is born of alien parents and is an alien." With such status the child could not legally own land nor even a plot where he or she could build a house.

In the late 50s, the Chinese were constantly under fire. The establishment of the Peoples' Republic of China under Chairman Mao Tse-tung scared the

Catholic inhabitants of the Philippines of the possibility of ideological leak from the Chinese mainland. At one time, Chinese schools were suspected as breeding grounds for communists and as venues for developing loyalty of young Chinese to China rather than the Philippines.

The remarkable economic performance of the Chinese is undeniable among Filipinos today. They may only constitute 1.4% of the population but their positions in Philippine trade and industries are enviable. According to a study, 33.4% of the top manufacturing firms and 43.2% of the top commercial firms are Chinese-owned. Many believe it may be higher since it is difficult to determine the precise number because some of them are naturalised Filipinos, thus, technically falling under the category of Filipino businessmen.

In the society as a whole, surnames like Cojuangco, Palanca, Sycip, Tan, Yangco, Osmeña and many other products of intermarriages are synonymous with wealth and power. The generation of Chinese in the Philippines today has gained the reputation of their ancestry, although most of them have assimilated into the Filipino culture as compared to their forbears who maintained cultural loyalty to China. In 1987, the Philippine economy was surprised by another upsurge of Chinese investment. The Board of Investment reported that Taiwanese (although islanders, they are definitely Chinese) investment leaped to P186 million in 1987 and skyrocketed to P2.3 billion in 1988. A well known Taiwanese investor in the Philippines is the Tan Yu Group of Companies headed by Emilia "Bien-Bien" Roxas.

Under Roxas, the group launched a 15-year P500 billion development plan called Asiaworld City which will rise on the 173 hectares of reclaimed land in the Manila Bay area. What made the Tan Yu Group advantageous over other Chinese investors is that members of the Tan Yu family hold dual citizenship. Thus, being Filipino citizens, they can hold 100 per cent of company shares and at the same time enjoy the incentives given to foreign investors.

Indeed, Chinese planted the seed of commerce in the Philippines centuries ago and are now harvesting the fruit of their labour. They were hated and pitied but, eventually survived countless antagonisms and through diligence, frugality, cleverness and luck, they turned out to be the victor of the economic race. Of course, much to the dismay of many.

Part one of this article was printed in the Jan/Feb '94 issue of KASAMA.



by joi barrios

From *Ang Pagiging Babae ay Pamumuhay sa Panahon ng Digma*
(To Be a Woman is to Live at a Time of War),
Babaylan Women's Publishing Collective, Institute of
Women's Studies, St. Scholastica's College, Manila.

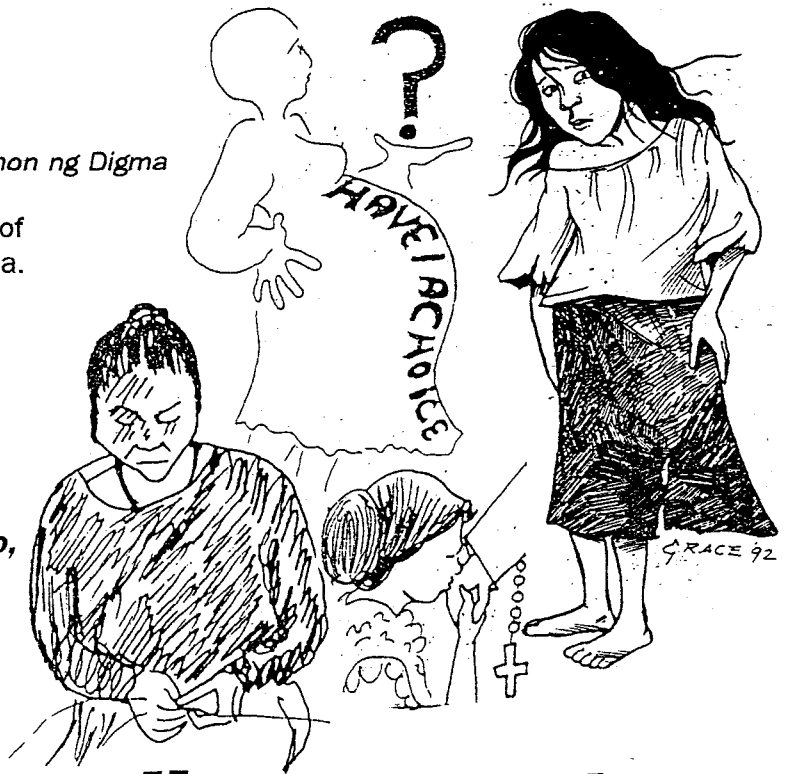
kasalo

Ang babae ay hindi kaning inihahain
sa mesa ng matrimonya,
Iniluluwa kapag mainit at takot kang mapaso,
sinasabawan ng kape sa umaga
kapag ikaw ay nagkulang
at itinatapong tutong
sa kanyang pagtanda.

Ang babae ay hindi kameng
dinuduro at kinikilo,
ginigisa ang laman sa iyong mga pangako,
nilalaga ang buto sa iyong pagsuyo,
at ginagawang chicharon ang balat
upang maging pulutan.

Ang babae ay hindi halayang
panghimagas sa iyong kabusugan,
Inumling pampatulak sa iyong katandaan
o putaheng nilalaspag tuwing may handaan.

May tiyan rin siyang kumakalam,
may sikmurang kallangang mapunan
at pusong dapat mahimasmasan.
Kasama mo siyang nagtatanim ng maisasalng,
katuwang na naghahanda
ng almusal, tanghalian at hapunan,
kaharap at kasalo sa kinabukasan.



dinner partner

A woman is not rice
served at the table of matrimony,
disgorged when hot and you fear
the scalding,
diluted with coffee in the mornings
of your want,
discarded when burnt in her old age.

A woman is not meat
fingered and weighed,
flesh sauteed in your promises,
bones boiled in your wheedling,
and skin crisp-fried for your appetizer.

A woman is not dessert
you eat when satiated,
a cool refreshment in your old age,
a course devoured during parties.

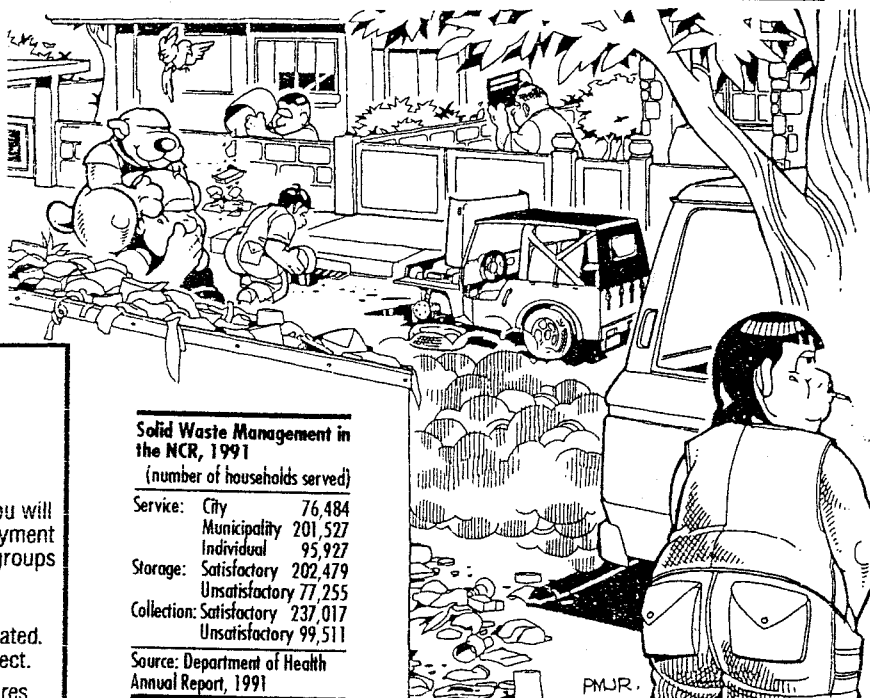
She has her own belly that grumbles,
a stomach that needs to be filled,
and a heart that needs affection.
With you
she gathers food,
prepares the meal,
and shares the same table of tomorrow.



Air Pollution Monitor (Average [and maximum] level of suspended particulates) (in $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$)							
	1987 [max]	1991 [max]		1987 [max]	1991 [max]		
Valenzuela	286 [396]	257 [389]	Pasay	173 [330]	
Navotas	150 [311]	Paranaque	98 [294]	143 [508]		
Quezon City	124 [284]	167 [292]	Las Piñas	109 [198]	107 [174]		
Ermila	165 [291]	188 [329]	Notes: 'safe' level = 180				
Pasig	81 [185]	187 [373]	* $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ - micrograms per cubic meter				

Source: The Philippine Environment in the 1980s, DENR

Cartoon by Pol Medina Jr. and Tables from 1993 IBON Survival Calendar

**Solid Waste Management in the NCR, 1991**

(number of households served)

Service:	City	76,484
	Municipality	201,527
	Individual	95,927
Storage:	Satisfactory	202,479
	Unsatisfactory	77,255
Collection:	Satisfactory	237,017
	Unsatisfactory	99,511

Source: Department of Health
Annual Report, 1991

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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.

KASAMA ...means companion or comrade

Despite the small turnout at the Palm Sunday Rally for Peace in Brisbane this year, organisers are determined to plan for 1995.

On April 20, the Murri community mobilised a national rally and march protesting against Deaths in Custody and non-implementation of the Royal Commission's recommendations.

Four Triple A Murri Radio celebrated its first birthday in April by extending its broadcasting time to 24 hours! Congratulations. Thanks for the great music, news, community discussions, information, and for reading our notices over the air.

This issue includes a brochure about the UCA 1994 Tour to the Philippines. Bookings are still available.

PLEASE NOTE OUR NEW CONCESSIONARY RATE IN BOX ON LEFT

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Page 1 - photo: Albaracin family.

Page 7 - graphics: PIF STORIES no.3, 1993.

Page 13 - Graphic from IBON Facts and Figures Vol XIII No.11

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