

## News and Notes

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### International Developments

#### *More US Aid to RP*

United States Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger and his 18-man party composed of top US Defense officials visited the Philippines on April 7 and 8, 1986 to discuss with President Aquino and several high-ranking Philippine government officials issues affecting the US and the Philippines. Among them were the insurgency problem, the bases agreement and their offer of increased aid. Weinberger was the first member of President Reagan's cabinet to visit the Philippines since President Corazon Aquino's ascendancy to power late last February.

Since the Aquino government preferred to get more economic and budgetary assistance rather than military aid, Weinberger promised to work for this arrangement. President Aquino had impressed upon Weinberger that her country needs to create more jobs and that it is in the "area of economic reforms by which this administration could best be judged." Before his departure, Weinberger said that he expects the US Congress would increase its assistance to the Philippines.

#### *ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting in Bali, Indonesia*

Vice-President and Foreign Minister Salvador H. Laurel flew to Bali, Indonesia on April 28 to attend the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) special foreign ministers' meeting commemorating the 10th anniversary of the Bali Summit Meeting held in 1976.

In preparation for the ASEAN Summit in Bali, a standing committee meeting was held in the Philippines during the first week of April. The meeting was attended by ambassadors to the Philippines of all ASEAN member countries. As a result of the meeting, the committee would come up

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with a strong common economic stand like taking the lead in the war against trade protectionism.

A major issue that was tackled during the conference concerns the ASEAN's stand on the Kampuchean issue. The foreign ministers were inclined to support the compromised proposal of the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK) calling for the establishment of a neutral Kampuchean state administered by the tripartite CGDK and Heng Samrin and the two-phase withdrawal of the Vietnamese forces from Kampuchea.

Along with the economic problems besetting the ASEAN and Kampuchean proposal, other common problems and interests of the region were also discussed in the meeting by the six foreign ministers. These problems and demands would be presented to US President Ronald Reagan before he meets with other heads of industrialized countries in Tokyo on the first week of May.

#### *Export Development to Seek WB-IMF Funding*

Trade and Industry Minister Jose Concepcion, Jr. announced during the second week of May, the government's intention to seek financial assistance from the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (WB-IMF) for its export development program. The proposed product and market research studies was envisioned to help the export sector in identifying potential markets and their product requirements. Concepcion did not however indicate the amount that would be borrowed for the project. The Ministry of Trade and Industry designated the Bureau of Foreign Trade to undertake the product and research studies. The research findings would serve as input to the formulation of the ministry's export planning thrusts and strategies for the succeeding years.

### National Developments

#### *Major Changes in Labor Laws*

President Corazon Aquino announced sweeping changes in labor laws and regulations in the Labor Day celebration ceremonies held on May 1 at the Luneta grandstand. These changes include the revision of strike laws and the suspension of the Pag-IBIG Fund contributions. The President lifted the labor strike restrictions thus allowing workers to declare a strike on the basis of a simple majority vote rather than the former two-third vote requirement. Aquino also authorized the appointment of labor union representatives in all policy-making bodies of the government.

Likewise, Labor Minister Augusto Sanchez was directed by the President to hold a national tripartite conference which would formulate

a "Code of Industrial Hegemony" as agreed upon by the Labor Advisory Consultative Council and the Employers Confederation of the Philippines. The Code would provide the government a framework for designing programs and projects that would be beneficial to both workers and employers, President Aquino said.

Some of the policy pronouncements made by the President during the occasion were the promotion and protection of the workers' and employers' rights to establish unions of their own choosing with minimum government interference; allowing the union to ignore the 15-day cooling off period and to act immediately on specific cases of union busting such as dismissal of union officers; lifting the "one-union-one-industry" policy which would give the workers complete discretion to combine as they may deem fit and necessary; repeal of Letter of Instruction 1458 which allowed the management to replace striking workers who defy return-to-work orders; the pursuit of a policy of automatic certification election during the negotiation of a collective bargaining agreement where the majority status of the incumbent union is questioned; lifting of the 13th month pay ceiling for all rank and file employees; banning police forces from the picketline unless actual violence occurs; and, limiting apprenticeship programs to six months, among others.

#### *ConCom Delegates Named*

During the "Reunion of EDSA Heroes" on May 25, President Aquino named 44 of the 50 appointed delegates to the Constitutional Commission (ConCom) of 1986, leaving five seats for the political opposition and another one for the Iglesia ni Kristo. According to President Aquino, the delegates were chosen after her consultations with various sectoral groups, on the basis of their probity, nationalism and integrity. The appointed delegates include eight professors and educators, four former senators, six former ConCom delegates, three former jurists, three lawyers, three clergymen, two labor leaders, one film director, one student leader, one anthropologist, one ambassador, one former military official, two newsmen, one civic leader and one economist.

On the 26th, Aquino named five nominees from the opposition, one of whom was Alejandro Almendras of Davao del Sur who later withdrew because he will run for an elective position in the next local or national elections.

The ConCom is scheduled to meet on June 2 to start framing a new Constitution that would replace the provisional Freedom Constitution. On June 1, the appointed delegates to the commission elected Justice Cecilia Muñoz-Palma as President, Senator Ambrosio Padilla as Vice-President, Florida Ruth Romero as Secretary-General, and Roberto San Andres as Sergeant-at-Arms.

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### College Developments

#### *PSSC Discussion on Government Reorganization*

The Philippine Social Science Council (PSSC) sponsored a panel discussion on "Government Reform and Reorganization: National and Local Aspects" which was held on April 17, 1986 at the PSSC Center in cooperation with the Philippine Society for Public Administration. Faculty members from the College of Public Administration (CPA) presented their major recommendations to the Presidential Commission on Government Reorganization (PCGR). They were: Dr. Raul P. de Guzman (General Concepts and Principles in Government Reforms and Organization), Prof. Ma. Concepcion P. Alfiler (Government Reforms and Reorganization: Ethical Accountability Aspects), and Prof. Romeo B. Ocampo (Local Government Reforms). Dr. Amelia Ancog from the UP College of Law and Ms. Perla Segovia, Vice-President for Personnel of the National Power Corporation presented a paper on "Government Reforms and Reorganization: Structural Aspects." The panel of discussants included Minister Luis Villafuerte from the PCGR; Director Oscar C. Aniceto, Civil Service Commission and Datu Michael O. Mastura, President, Philippine Amanah Bank. Dr. Ledivina V. Cariño from the CPA introduced the panelists while Dean Gabriel U. Iglesias, also from the CPA, delivered the welcome remarks and acted as moderator.

#### *Symposium on Decentralization*

A symposium on "The Concept of Decentralization in Government" was held at the Local Government Center Training Room on May 24, 1986. This was sponsored by the Presidential Management Staff, De La Salle University, Economic Development Foundation and the UP College of Public Administration.

The panel of speakers was composed of the following: Dean Gabriel U. Iglesias (Regional Development), Prof. Romeo B. Ocampo (Toward Authentic Local Autonomy), Dr. Mariano Guillermo (Strengthening Local Government Units), Dr. Tereso Tullao, Jr. (Economic Considerations of Decentralization), Dr. Juan Francisco (Socio-Cultural Considerations of Decentralization), and Atty. Victor Sumulong (Political Considerations of Decentralization). About fifty participants representing the government, academe, labor, media, military, cause-oriented groups, urban poor groups, religious and political parties attended the symposium and actively exchanged views and ideas.

*Seminars on Public Administration Held*

Seminars on two different subject matters were held consecutively at the College of Public Administration on May 21, 1986. The first delved on the theme "Structure and Process of Funding Foreign-Assisted Projects: Innovation or Status Quo on Fiscal Management of Development Projects." The speaker was Prof. Alejandro B. Ibay while the discussants were Prof. Leonor M. Briones and Dr. Manuel A. Caoili, both of whom are faculty members of the College. Prof. Leonor M. Briones also served as a reactor in the second seminar which was on "The Merit System and Security of Tenure in the Philippine Civil Service in a Revolutionary Setting." The speakers were Dr. Napoleon S. Noveno, President, Career Executive Service Guild; Mr. Bayani Aquino, Personnel Officers Association of the Philippines; and Atty. Hermes G. Pelayo, President, Confederation of Officers Association of the Philippines.

Another seminar held during this quarter was on "Reflections on Development in China and Commentary on the Future of Public Administration/Public Policy Studies." The speaker was Dr. Robert H. Manley of Seton Hall University.

*Book on Bureaucratic Corruption Launched*

The book entitled *Bureaucratic Corruption in Asia: Causes, Consequences and Control* was formally launched on June 20, 1986 at the Gusaling Munti, College of Public Administration. Hon. Jovito Salonga, Chairman of the Presidential Commission on Good Government and Chancellor Ernesto Tabujara of UP Diliman graced the launching rites. The book is a collection of articles contributed by Ma. Concepcion P. Alfiler, Rance P. Lee, A.T. Rafique Rahman, and Ledivina V. Cariño who also served as editor. These articles are based on the comparative study of bureaucratic corruption in seven Asian countries namely: Hongkong, Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.