

News and Notes

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International Developments

Sabah Issue To Be Settled

The Sabah issue remained unsettled since the announcement of the ex-Philippine President Marcos during the Association of Southeast Asian summit in Kuala Lumpur in 1977 that the Philippines would drop its claim on Sabah. However, through the negotiations arranged by the current Philippine Vice President and Foreign Affairs Minister Salvador Laurel, Malaysia welcomed the Philippine government's proposal to settle the Philippine claim on Sabah in Borneo Island. Malaysian government officials hoped that the settlement would pave the way for close relations between the two countries. However, Vice President Laurel did not specify the details of how the dispute could be resolved.

RP-New Zealand Relations

Since the Aquino government ascended to power, the New Zealand Prime Minister David Lange was the first head of state to visit the Philippines on March 29. Lange and Aquino's talks centered on the trade relations between the two countries and on technological transfer assistance being extended by New Zealand to the Philippines.

During their meeting, President Aquino pressed for a more balanced trade proportions which has consistently been lopsided in favor of New Zealand, primarily because of the Philippines' continued importation of huge volume of skim milk and other dairy products. Official figures covering the period from January to September 1985 showed that the country's import expenses reached \$19.5 million while our exports to New Zealand only totalled \$14.6 million. These figures presented a trade deficit of \$4.9 million for the Philippines.

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Both countries agreed to narrow down trade imbalance through liberalization of trade policies on the part of New Zealand and export diversification on the Philippines' side. Lange expressed his government's support for the Philippine recovery efforts. As an initial move, he gave a ₱ 5.5 million contribution for the United Nations' assisted projects in Negros.

National Developments

The February 7 Special Presidential Elections

The February 7 snap elections was administered by the Commission on Elections (Comelec) and the Board of Election Inspectors/Board of Canvassers. The Batasang Pambansa (BP) was mandated as the official body that would proclaim the duly elected President and Vice President. Incidents of massive vote-buying, harrasments, ballot snatching, manipulation of results and other election frauds were also reported. Even the observers from the US government denounced the widespread cheating that they have witnessed. Wide disparities were observed in the unofficial counts of the Comelec, National Citizens Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) the Media Poll Quick Counts and the BP official count.

Two days after the election, the COMELEC's computer operators staged a dramatic walk-out to protest the alleged manipulation of results. They noticed that the figures on their print-outs did not match the figures posted on the tally board, an incident that removed any faith vested on the COMELEC. After several days of counting, the BP produced its tally and declared that Marcos defeated Aquino by 10,807,179 votes to 9,491,716. The lawmaking body also proclaimed Arturo Tolentino, Marcos' running mate as the duly elected Vice President rather than Salvador Laurel of United Democratic Opposition's ticket.

The 1986 People's Revolution

The official count of the February 7 elections done by the Batasang Pambansa only proved a flawed electoral practice which kept the people high in spirit to achieve democracy, restore justice and human rights which eventually led to the collapse of the Marcos regime. From February 22-25, the whole world witnessed a peaceful transition of power wherein the Filipino people played an important role in toppling their long-time dictator and gave the presidency to the woman whom they believe won in the February 7, 1986 elections, Corazon Aquino.

It started on February 22 when Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile and Vice Chief of Staff Fidel V. Ramos, fearing that they would be arrested by Marcos' men, went on the air and told the public that they were resigning

from their posts and they recognize Aquino as the real winner. Sympathizing with them were Jaime Cardinal Sin and Butz Aquino, Corazon Aquino's brother-in-law who immediately appealed for people's support over the Church-run Radio Veritas. Thus the phenomenon of "people's power" came into existence. Thousands of Filipino people — men, women, young, old, students, professionals, clergy, businessmen, rich and poor — flocked to EDSA alongside the two camps, set up barricades, brought medical supplies, food, and hope to the rebel soldiers.

On the eve of February 22nd, Marcos exposed on a press conference Enrile's aborted coup. Aware of the growing number of people at EDSA, Marcos ordered General Prospero Olivas, chief of the Manila riot police to disperse the crowds. Olivas however, did not move at once and waited until after midnight and told Marcos that the number of crowd has gone beyond the capability of his men to disperse. Olivas' disobedience to Marcos was a result of a telephone campaign launched by the rebels. Desperately, Chief of Staff Fabian Ver, sent General Tadiar, the marine commandant, to lead the assault on the rebel camps. Tadiar's men, in tanks and in full battle gear, was faced by the people who cried, prayed and pleaded them to turn back. The rebels led by Col. Santiago's men were able to capture the government television station Channel 4 in the morning of February 24, while Marcos was giving a press conference. In the afternoon, negotiations between Enrile and the opposition began. One by one, the military officials disobeyed Marcos' and Ver's orders and eventually defected to the rebels side.

On February 25, Corazon Aquino was inaugurated as the new president of the Republic of the Philippines at the Club Filipino together with Vice President Salvador Laurel. She retained Enrile as her Defense Minister and promoted Ramos to a full fledged general and chief of staff. In the afternoon, Marcos did his last official act when he also took his oath as the duly elected President inside the Malacañang palace.

In Washington, Reagan recognized that Marcos has lost public support and the time has come for him to step down. The White House even threatened him to cut off all military aid if he used force against the rebels. Reagan publicly called on Marcos to resign since he can no longer prolong his regime by violence. All America could do was to offer a haven to the dictator. At 9:55, on the eve of the 25th, two US helicopters took the first family bound for exile.

The Aquino Cabinet

In her first press conference held on February 26 after having been inaugurated as the new president, Corazon Aquino announced the new

members of her cabinet. Defense Minister Enrile and Central Bank Governor Jose Fernandez were the only members who also served in the Marcos government but were retained, the rest were 16 men and a woman who supported her candidacy. The leftists described them as bourgeois but Aquino remained firm in her decision that these people would appeal to the international business community needed for economic recovery.

The following were the members of the new cabinet: Aquilino Pimentel (Local Government); Neptali Gonzales (Justice); Alberto Romulo (Budget and Management); Jose Concepcion (Trade and Industry); Jaime Ongpin (Finance); Lourdes Quisumbing (Education, Culture and Sports); Jovito Salonga (Good Government); Ramon Mitra (Agriculture); Luis Villafuerte (Government Reorganization); Rogaciano Mercado (Public Works and Highways); Ernesto Maceda (Natural Resources); Teodoro Locsin, Jr. (Information); Rene Saguising (Presidential Spokesman); and Joker Arroyo (Executive Secretary).

517 Political Detainees Freed

One of the first moves of Aquino as the new president of the Philippines was her issuance of a memorandum to Defense Minister Enrile on February 28 ordering the release of all persons who were detained by virtue of arrest orders issued by ousted President Marcos. These includes Presidential Commitment Orders; Arrest, Search and Seizure Orders, and Preventive Detention Action Orders. Among the most known political prisoners who were released were former Communist Party of the Philippines' head Jose Ma. Sison, alleged New People's Army Chieftain Bernabe Buscayno, alleged chairman of the National Democratic Front Horacio Morales, Fr. Edicio dela Torre and renegade soldier Victor Corpuz.

The President also restored the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus during the thanksgiving mass held at the Luneta Grandstand on March 2 where she proclaimed the cancellation of all presidential arrest orders and the prevention of arbitrary arrest and detention of citizens.

Local Government Revamp

The appointment of Aquilino Pimentel as the Local Government's Minister on February 26 led to the disruption of power in the local governmental level. Despite protests in several key cities, he replaced an estimated 50-60% KBL mayors and governors. This act of Pimentel was ignored in some places of the country like in Southern Mindanao where the people loyal to former President Marcos refused to heed the resignation order and barricaded the provincial capitol to prevent the newly appointed Governor Leonardo Suarion to hold office in place of Governor Primo Ocampo. Other

posts where the Marcos loyalists took over were in Digos, Davao Del Sur, Mati, Davao Oriental, and in General Santos City. Another protest made by various sectors was the appointment of Elizalde Diaz in the provincial government of Sorsogon. Resistance was also made in Makati, Pampanga, Olongapo and Lanao Del Sur.

Provisional Government Set: ConCom Created, BP Dissolved

President Aquino set on March 25 a provisional government and promulgated a "Freedom Constitution" which adopted the Bill of Rights of the 1973 Constitution and other fundamental laws safeguarding constitutional liberties. She also provided for the formation of a 50-member commission to draft a permanent constitution within 60 days hoping that the provisional constitution would be in effect for only 90 days. The Commission would draft a new charter which would be reflective of the ideals and aspirations of the Filipino people.

The BP which was also abolished on March 25, gave Aquino legislative powers until the ratification of a new Constitution. Abolition of the BP would mean an adoption of a one-man rule since it virtually gave her all the decree making powers in the country. She justified the abolition by declaring that the BP was the "cancer of our political system that must be cut out." Some of the major powers that was given to her were: a free hand to select the ConCom members; to amend, modify, or revoke all existing laws; the sole prerogative of effecting government reorganization measures; to determine the retention or removal of all elective and appointive public officials including all government employees; and to determine the date of all local and national elections after the Constitution has been approved by the people.

College Developments

Election Conference Held

A conference on "Power and Social Responsibility: Elections in Asia and the Pacific" was held on February 2-6 at the Philippine Social Science Council (PSSC) Center, Diliman, Quezon City. The conference was sponsored by the PSSC, the Philippine Society for Public Administration, the Philippine Political Science Association, the Division of Social Sciences of the National Research Council of the Philippines, and three units of the University of the Philippines, namely, the College of Law, the Department of Political Science of the College of Social Sciences and Philosophy (CSSP), and the College of Public Administration (CPA).

The participants from the different Asian countries such as Australia, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Japan, Malaysia, Nepal, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, South Korea, Thailand and the Philippines presented country papers and indepth case studies. The Philippine case study was a collaborative effort of various faculty members of the University of the Philippines, CPA and the CSSP.

From the College of Public Administration, Dr. Raul P. de Guzman presented a paper entitled "The Administration of Elections in the Philippines;" Dr. Ma. Aurora C. Catilo, "The Dynamics of Electoral Manipulation in the Philippines;" Prof. Luzviminda G. Tancango, "Bureaucracy and Democracy in the Philippines: Historical Analysis of the Nation and the Practice of Political Neutrality of the Civil Service;" and Dr. Gabriel U. Iglesias, "The Role of Citizen's Movement and Organization in Philippine Political Development and Elections."

The conference revolved on the role of electoral processes in political development as well as on the problems encountered in the administration of elections in the region. It was a result of a research project on the comparative study of elections in Asia and the Pacific carried out by the Eastern Regional Organization for Public Administration and funded by the Asia Foundation.

CPA Seminars

During the first quarter of 1986, the CPA conducted three seminars. The first was on "Quezon and His Business Friends: Notes on the Origins of Philippine National Capitalism," held on January 15, 1986. The speaker was Dr. Manuel A. Caoili, while the discussants were Dr. Bonifacio S. Salamanea from the Department of History, University of the Philippines and Prof. Jose P. Tabbada, from the UP-CPA.

The second which was held on January 17, was on "Political Neutrality of the Philippine Civil Service." The keynote address was delivered by Chancellor Ernesto G. Tabujara. The panel of discussants was composed of Chairman Jesus Borromeo (Civil Service Commission), Chairman Victorio Savelano (Commission on Elections), Dr. Irene R. Cortes (University of the Philippines), Director Ramon M. Casanova (Bureau of Lands), Dr. Napoleon Noveno (Career Executive Service Guild) and Mr. Jose Romero (Makati Business Club).

On February 17, the third seminar for the year was held, with Dr. Romeo A. Reyes as speaker. His topic was on "Official Development Assistance to the Philippines: A Study of Administrative Capacity and Perform-

ance." Prof. Leonor M. Briones of Commission on Audit and Mr. Edmund Duckwitz, Counsellor and Deputy Chief of Mission, German Embassy, acted as speakers.

Manipulated Election Book Launched

The book entitled *Manipulated Election* was launched on January 24, 1986 at the 1930s Hall, Admiral Hotel on Roxas Boulevard. The book was co-authored by Dr. Ma. Aurora C. Catilo, Josie H. de Leon and Eleanor E. Nicolas and published by Great Books Inc. It describes the electoral manipulation, particularly the use of public resources by the ruling elite in its bid to elicit political support for the acquisition and perpetuation of political power. It also seeks to document and analyze the use of manipulation in Philippine elections from the pre-martial law to the post-martial law period.

Participation in Training Course

Prof. Elena M. Panganiban participated in a six-week course on Urban Finance and Management held in Colombo, Sri Lanka from February 8-March 22, 1986. It was jointly sponsored by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements and the Economic Development Institute of the World Bank.

New Dean Appointed, Acting Director Named

After more than a year of vacancy, the deanship of the CPA was finally filled with the appointment of Dr. Gabriel U. Iglesias. He is the fourth dean of the College.

Professor Mila A. Reforma was appointed as the acting director of the Academic Program starting January 1 to June 30, 1986.