

THE MARCOS REGIME IN THE PHILIPPINES

By MAN MOHINI KAUL*

PRESIDENT Marcos had been President for two terms when he declared Martial Law in the Philippines on 23 September 1972. His second term was to expire in December 1973, and under the provision of the old Constitution he could not stand for the third term¹.

Towards the end of the two terms, the country was in a critical stage. The gap between the rich and the poor had increased. In the Philippines where 75 per cent of the entire population is dependent on agriculture, old feudal modes of production continued side by side with "capitalist farming," mainly meant to produce a few cash crops needed by the United States and other capitalist countries.² Thus, the economy remained mainly agrarian, and more or less dependent on the United States market. According to Claude A. Buss: "Any serious diminution in Philippine exports to the United States might have disastrous consequences for the Philippine economy, and hence for the Marcos regime."³

Whatever little land reforms were introduced failed to relieve the misery of those who lived in feudal bondage. The failure was mainly due to the disinclination on the part of government officers to bring any change in the feudal set-up, obstruction to the implementation of these reforms by the land lords, and last but not the least, the sheer enormity of the problem.

Industrialization and domestic trade succeeded in enriching only a few. The population continued to increase at an alarming rate, while the GNP could hardly keep up with it. The expenditure of the government was more than its income, which only resulted in the diminishing of financial reserves. Foreign capital which is the mainstay of Philippine economy also "shied away." Hence, as the economic situation in the Philippines became dreary, social unrest followed.⁴

The First Family, however, continued to live in an extravagant style, unmindful of the mass poverty surrounding it. No wonder, Marcos and his wife were held directly responsible for all that was happening in the country.⁵ Actually, he had been in power too long and had failed to do anything for the common man.

All sections of the society were restless. The enlightened Filipinos were clamouring for a change in the system which had become corrupt over the years. The most active critics of Marcos were the students, who played an important role in activating the people by holding demonstrations and protest rallies and by going to remote *barrios* (villages). The most militant of the youth organizations was Kabataang Makabayan (KM) which took

*Dr. (Mrs.) Man Mohini Kaul is ICSSR Post-Doctoral Fellow at Himachal Pradesh University, Simla.

up the cry against feudalism, Fascism and imperialism.⁶ Marcos, in turn, alleged KM to be the front organization of the Communist Party of Philippines.⁷ Thus, in the months leading up to the proclamation of Martial Law, there had been an increase in the demonstrations against the government.⁸ Marcos further precipitated matters by holding elections in 1978 for a Constitutional Convention (Con. Con.) which was to draft a new constitution for the Philippines. The sceptics wondered how a change in the form of government was going to rectify the basic ills in the society. Soon a suspicion grew that the President was having a new constitution drafted only in order to prolong his stay in office, either through the adoption of an amendment permitting him a third term, or through a shift to a parliamentary system under which Mrs. Marcos could be the President and he the Prime Minister.⁹

Thus, a resolution, called the Rama Resolution, was introduced in the Constitutional Convention which sought to bar Marcos from becoming the Head of State under any form of government. This resolution was rejected by the majority in the convention which only served to convince the critics that it was under the influence of Marcos.¹⁰

Among the critics of Marcos, the most vociferous was ex-Senator Benigno Aquino Jr. (popularly known as Ninoy), the General Secretary of the now-defunct opposition Liberal Party.¹¹ According to many in the Philippines, he is the "most promising and controversial, young, politician to emerge from Central Luzon since the last war."¹² In 1971, Aquino at 39 was considered the likeliest successor to President Marcos in the 1973 elections.¹³ As an arch critic of Marcos and his wife, he delivered many speeches in the Senate critical of the First Family. In one of his speeches, he said: "I have risen at [the] risk of her [Mrs. Marcos] fury, because [the] country and [the] people demand they cease those wild Palace and Yacht bacchanalian feasts. . . . A voice must be raised to try and put a stop to the First Family's wasteful misuse of public money."¹⁴

Marcos in turn accused Aquino of tolerance of the Communists during the latter's term as Governor of Tarlac which is known as the hot bed of the Communists.¹⁵ A bombing incident in 1971 at Plaza Miranda, Manila, where the Liberals were holding a rally saw Aquinos' name being involved, along with the Communists, by the Government. In retrospect, it seems that Marcos who is known to be a shrewd political tactician, wanted to involve Aquino in a number of cases so that after the introduction of Martial Law, his arrest would not seem an act of vengeance. The following comments by Marcos in an interview reveal his disapproval of Aquino: "Senator Aquino, I think, will not be in any position to aspire for this highest position in the land until he can finish with all the cases that are being filed against him."¹⁶

As a prelude to Martial Law, Marcos suspended the writ of Habeas Corpus on 21 August 1971. The President justified his action by stating that it had become imperative to suspend the writ as the country was threatened

by a Communist revolution. According to him, the grave danger to the country had been confirmed by the bombing in Plaza Miranda. Even earlier, he had been harping on the Communist threat to the Philippines—which looked to many as an excuse to stay in power—and had repeated several times that he would not hesitate to proclaim Martial Law if the situation demanded it.¹⁷

After the suspension of the writ, it was not uncommon to see the following kind of observations in the Manila newspapers: “By a single stroke of the pen, President Marcos seriously curtailed civil liberties on which rests democracy. Martial Law and then military dictatorship—then chaos and violence would follow.”¹⁸

The last straw for Marcos was the rejection of his party at the Senatorial elections of November 1971, in which his candidates lost to the Liberals.¹⁹ True to the general speculations, President Marcos declared Martial Law on 23 September 1972 and detained many prominent leaders including Aquino. Giving the reasons for the imposition of Martial Law, Marcos stated:

Threat from lawless elements who are moved by a common or similar ideological conviction, design, strategy and goal and enjoying the active moral and material support of a foreign Power...who are staging, undertaking and waging an armed insurrection and rebellion to supplant our existing political, social, economic and legal order with an entirely new one whose form of government...and whose political, social, economic, legal and moral precepts are based on the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist teachings and beliefs.²⁰

Despite the Martial Law, the old problems continue for Marcos. The three basic problems which face him are related to the Communists, the Muslims and the American bases.

THE COMMUNISTS

The Communists in the Philippines have been known for a long time as Huks, the short form of Hukbalahap which came formally into existence on 29 March 1942, as the People's Anti-Japanese Army. The programme of the Huks in the beginning was limited to resistance against the Japanese and their Filipino collaborators and to bring about agrarian reforms. The leadership of the Huks during the War was not entirely Communist; it was thought in some circles that after independence, the Huks would work within the constitutional framework. Negotiations on this issue continued between the Huks and the government, but there was no concrete meeting point. Meanwhile, the Huk leadership was taken over by the Communists. It was later alleged that they had sought to overthrow the government of the newly-established Republic.²¹

The real threat to the government from the Huks, however, came in 1950, when Elpidio Quirino was the President. During his term, many corrupt people occupied important offices in the government. Graft, corruption and lawlessness was rampant at all levels in the country. The army was equally inefficient. With the growing unrest in the country, the Huks became even more powerful. Romulo, describing the situation in the Philippines, stated:

The dank odour of Red victory was in the air. The country was under siege. Quirino's party—the party in power was in hopeless disrepute. Army morale was so low that the soldiers were no longer interested in risking their lives for corrupt, lazy officers and politicians. The people, without whose support the Huks could not subsist, had all but lost faith in the democratic way of life. The Filipinos feared pillaging army units more than they did the Communist bands.²²

The establishment of the People's Republic of China in October 1949 made the threat from the Huks to the ruling class only graver.

The Huks could be suppressed only after Ramon Magsaysay was appointed Defence Secretary in 1950. His method of counter-insurgency was highly successful. He also encountered the Huk problem by going to the countryside and listening to the grievances of the people there. When he became the President, he did his best to remedy the grievances and succeeded in giving a clean image to his Government, which went a long way in weaning the people away from the Huks.²³

For all practical purposes, the Huk rebellion was over: most of the Huk leaders had either been killed or captured. The morale of the Huks was completely broken when the last of the Politiburo holdout, Jesus Lava, was captured by the Government.²⁴ On 20 June 1957, with the enactment of Republic Act No. 1700, known as the Anti-Subversion Act, the Communist Party of the Philippines was legally banned.

From 1962 to 1965, the Huks, still suffering from the government retribution, laid low. From 1966 onwards, however, there was, according to the government reports, a "Huk resurgence." It is held by some that the Huk violence increased in 1966 as a direct consequence of government's harshness towards them.²⁵ The other version is that the Huk movement had in fact remained under control and that it was the armed forces themselves who regularly came up with reports of renewed Huk activity every year, about the time when the military budget was due for consideration in the Congress.²⁶

However, by 1968 a new group of young Communists emerged under the leadership of Jose Ma Sison (a former University teacher), or Amado Guerrero, as he is popularly known. In 1964, he founded the Kabataang Makabayan and became mainly responsible for making the Filipino youth conscious of the problems of the country. Since then, the youth have never

lagged behind in expressing their views. The movement was of course mainly confined to the extreme Left.

The Communist Party was re-established by Sison on 26 December 1968 on the theoretical basis of Mao Tse-tung's Thoughts. An armed wing was also organized on the pattern of the Chinese Red Army, known as the New People's Army (NPA). The NPA was under the command of Col. Dante, who was also held in great awe and reverence by Filipino youth. The bible of the Leftists was the book by Sison published under the pseudonym, Amado Guerrero, in 1971. This book is a Maoist interpretation of Philippine history, and is especially critical of the Marcos regime. Sison condemned him as a "rabid puppet of US imperialism," who had outdone Macapagal in sending out Filipino mercenary troops to participate in the US war of aggression against Vietnam and Indo-China in general.²⁸

He also held Marcos directly responsible for the political and economic crises in the country, and reacted sharply to Marcos' oft-repeated decision to declare Martial Law. He wrote:

Confronted with the increasingly fierce opposition of the revolutionary masses, the Marcos puppet regime has harped on formally declaring martial law, notwithstanding the fact that it has wantonly practised Fascist terror in both city and countryside, especially so in the latter, where uniformed troops and their goon assistants vent their ire on the peasant masses.²⁹

Though the book had a great impact on the attitude of the youth towards the Marcos regime, anti-Marcos feeling had been present even before its publication. On 30 January 1970, demonstrators numbering about 10,000 students and labourers stormed the Presidential Palace. It was a day-long riot in which four students were killed and hundreds injured as a result of the police and army retaliation. This incident has popularly come to be known as the "Battle of Mandiola Bridge."³⁰ Until Marcos declared Martial Law, students continued to stage various protest demonstrations against him. The student movement for which Sison has been responsible was a new phenomena for the Philippines. However, the movement came to a halt with the declaration of Martial Law. Most of the student leaders were arrested, and force was liberally used wherever there was any opposition to the government.

Marcos was able to cripple similarly the Communist movement. Most of the leaders, like Jose Ma Sison, Commander Dante, and Sison's second-in-command in the party, Victor Corpus, were captured.³¹ The Communist movement has remained mainly confined to Luzon, though it is reported by the Government that it has made inroads into the south of the Philippines as well.

It will not be out of place to discuss here briefly how the Communist movement has affected Philippines foreign policy *vis-a-vis* the Communist nations.

When Quirino took over as President in 1949, it had been surmised that there would be some change in Philippines' foreign policy towards the Communist countries. He had expressed his desire to recognize People's China, which, however, failed to materialize.³² As already stated, the Huks working in close association with the Communist Party of the Philippines had created havoc during 1950, and the subversive tactics indulged in by China in support of the Huks were looked upon by the Philippines as a threat to its security.³³ This threat was heightened by the fact of People's China's proximity to the Philippines. Besides, the Philippine Government doubted the loyalty of the overseas Chinese in the Philippines who have often been accused of supporting the local Communists. With the coming of Magsaysay as the President, there was no question of any kind of relations with People's China. After him, Garcia and Macapagal too refused to recognize People's China. It was alleged during their terms that the Communist subversion in the Philippines had been financed by the People's Republic of China.³⁴

With Marcos in power since 1965, some amount of flexibility was evident towards the Communist countries. Though he remained strongly anti-Communist, he kept his country's options open regarding People's China and the Soviet Union. With the approval of the Foreign Office, Filipinos were even allowed to travel to People's China, the Soviet Union and other Communist countries,³⁵ which would have earlier been unthinkable. President Macapagal had even refused to allow the Soviet and the Yugoslavian basketball teams to participate in the IV World Basketball Championship held in Manila in December 1962.³⁶

Even though it was alleged that the mainland Chinese agents had been working closely with Huks, there was a growing realization in the Philippines that they had been more "Popish than the Pope." As one Filipino writer explained: "Whatever America did *vis-a-vis* China, we followed blindly; America shut herself off from [People's] China and China reacted similarly out of pique. And how did we react? Because America would not allow US newsman to visit China, we also banned our newsman."³⁷

By the time Marcos began his third term, he had established relations with People's China, the Soviet Union and other Socialist countries.³⁸ Complexities and changing patterns in the international situation contributed to the decision to have relations with the above-mentioned countries. Besides, the end of the Cold War and the US failure in Vietnam made an impression upon the Philippine leaders. They saw how the Americans had gone all out to promote better relations with the Communist world, and how, with the emergence of People's China as a world Power, President Nixon felt constrained to travel to Peking to befriend the Chinese.³⁹

At home, the Government's improved relations with the Communist countries is a hit at the Maoists who had been calling Marcos a US puppet. Marcos had a triumphant trip to People's China where he was given an audience by Mao, which he played up as showing that China was all out to

have relations with him. With the recent arrival of a senior Chinese leader, there is a growing speculation that China has "quietly agreed to stop assisting the NPA and to shelve the Spratly issue at least for the time being."⁴⁰

Notwithstanding all this, the Communist movement will continue to have a hold on certain sections as long as the grievances of the people remain. No show of force or success on the foreign policy front is going to change this. Land reforms that have been introduced after the imposition on Martial Law have yet to show dividends, and even though there has been a great show of wiping out the oligarchs, the Martial Law regime has created a set of new ones who are congenial to Marcos.

THE MUSLIMS

The biggest problem that the Marcos regime is facing today is that of the Muslims. Though the problem is a legacy of the past, it has become intensive after the Martial Law was declared. Marcos had ordered the people of the Philippines to surrender their arms, and the Muslims, who it is said, "would sooner give up their wives than their guns," have retaliated by attacking the government troops.⁴²

Initially, Marcos was not planning a hard line policy *vis-a-vis* the Muslim rebels, as is apparent from the Presidential Decree No. 95, which enunciated a policy of selective amnesty to the rebels.⁴³ Also, Marcos had announced projects to be taken up by the government for the development of Mindanao, and had made various other economic concessions to the Muslims.⁴⁴

At the same time, Marcos also had a meeting with the "old" Muslim leaders in Manila who came out in praise of Martial Law.⁴⁵ This indeed was ironical, for the situation in the south was entirely different from what Marcos was trying to project in Manila. The leadership of the rebels was in the hands of young Muslims like Nur Misuari who had been closely associated with Sison when they were both in the University of the Philippines. Therefore, the much publicized dialogue of Marcos with the so-called Muslim leaders was condemned by the rebels. According to them, they were in revolt not only against the "Fascist, discriminatory" Government, but also against their own old Muslim leaders who, they felt, had sold them for personal gain.⁴⁶

Once there was an open rebellion by the Muslims against the Martial Law regime, the armed forces of the Philippines launched an all-out drive against them. Keeping the magnitude of the war in the south in view, it would not be out of place to trace briefly the problem as it began 400 years ago to the present times. After all, as Leon Ma Gurrero states: "The friction between Muslim and Christian Filipinos ... can be more accurately described as an encounter between two communities with different traditions and rival economic interest, and suffering from different historical hangovers."⁴⁷

Islam came to the Philippines via Sulu in about 1380 and spread to the

other islands as well. In 1542, the Spaniards conquered Visayas and Luzon, but were unable to conquer Mindanao which remained under the Muslims. The rest of the Filipinos were converted to the Catholic religion by the Spanish friars who had accompanied the soldiers to the Philippines.⁴⁸

Thus, while the polarization between the North and the South began with the advent of the Spanish rule, further alienation between the Christians and the Muslims took place under the American rule. The Americans established a separate government for the Muslims in Mindanao, and it is this policy of "divide and rule" which many eminent Filipinos hold to have left its unfortunate repercussions to this day.⁴⁹

Once the Philippines became independent, the Christian-dominated Government introduced many short-sighted policies in its effort to assimilate the Muslims. The Resettlement Plan of the government was one such policy decision which has been responsible for aggravating the problem. Under this Plan, the Christian Filipinos from the densely populated islands of Luzon and the Visayas were encouraged to migrate to the sparsely populated south, with the result that the Muslims were reduced to a minority in many of the provinces where they were earlier in a majority. This influx has resulted not only in endless land disputes between the two communities, but also in the economic exploitation of the Muslims by the Christian businessmen.⁵⁰

It is not therefore surprising that the Muslims had been feeling neglected, and were suffering from many fears related to their status in the country. This restlessness ultimately led to a desire among the Muslims to secede from the Philippines, and in 1968, the Mindanao Independence Movement demanding secession was formally launched. Since then, there have been bitter clashes between the Christians and the Muslims. Fighting also broke out between the Muslim rebels and the government troops. During the period upto the imposition of the Martial Law, reports of massacre of Muslims by the army were common in the Philippine Press.⁵¹

By 1972, the Muslims had organised themselves into Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), organized on the pattern of the Palestinian National Liberation Front. The threat to secede now became real, as the MNLF movement was better organized under the leadership of Nur Misuari and had gained the sympathy of the Muslim countries.⁵²

The problem acquired a new dimension with the MNLF getting money and arms from Libya. In the Islamic Conference, Libya openly advocated stern measures against the Philippines.⁵³ Libya and Egypt sent a joint mission to the Philippines on 1 July 1972, to report on the condition of the Muslims there. The mission gave an adverse report stating that Marcos should stop the genocide of Muslims in his country. Marcos was fast finding the Muslim problem an embarrassment in his dealings with the Islamic countries. Any deterioration of relations, especially with the Arabs, would have seen the supply of oil stopped; two thirds of the Philippines oil comes from Saudi

Arabia, Kuwait and Abu Dhabi.⁵⁴ In addition, Marcos has to respect the sentiments of its two Muslim neighbours and fellow members of ASEAN, namely, Malaysia and Indonesia. Relations between Malaysia and the Philippines became somewhat strained after 1972. It was alleged that the then Chief Minister of Sabah, Tun Mustapha, was supporting the Muslim rebels,⁵⁵ and that many Muslim rebels were having their training in Malaysia.⁵⁶ Malaysian interference was seen by some as a means of pressurizing the Philippines to drop its claim to Sabah,⁵⁷ and Marcos was probably of the same mind when he announced on 4 August 1977, at Kuala Lumpur, that his country had decided to drop its claim to Sabah.⁵⁸

Improving relations with Malaysia and Indonesia have somewhat helped Marcos in his dealings with the Muslims. It was due to the efforts of Malaysia and Indonesia alone in the Islamic Conference that moderate resolutions were adopted on the Filipino Muslims which otherwise would have condemned the Philippines Government.⁵⁹ Both these countries are at the same time putting pressure on the Philippines to settle the Muslim problem for the sake of stability in the region. They, however, have made it clear that it should be done within the framework of the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Philippines.

Meanwhile, Marcos made an all-out effort to woo Libya, where Nur Misuari was staying after the Martial Law was clamped. Mrs. Imelda Marcos was sent to hold talks with the Libyan leader Col. Gaddafi. She succeeded in her mission by convincing Gaddafi that the Marcos regime was not practising genocide and had every intention to arrive at a peaceful settlement with the Muslims. As a result of this meeting, Gaddafi arranged for talks between the MNLF and the Philippine Government. On 24 December 1976, the two sides concluded a cease-fire agreement, which soon ran into difficulties on the question of its correct interpretation.⁶⁰

Talks were, however, again arranged in Tripoli in February 1977. No agreement could be reached as the MNLF wanted the southern Philippines to become a separate state to which the Philippine Government did not agree. The latter took the stand that the southern provinces could become one autonomous region if the majority of the voters in the region ratified it in a referendum.

Marcos went ahead and held a plebiscite in the south on 17 April 1977; as expected, the results were favourable to the Government. The Christian majority had voted against the establishment of an autonomous region. The plebiscite was boycotted by the MNLF, and the Islamic Conference too showed its disfavour by not sending observers. The plebiscite did not help in solving the problem for Marcos and many have wondered as to why he went ahead with it in the first place.

Since then, the cease-fire has been violated and armed conflict continues unabated in the Philippines. It is reported that 50,000 civilians have been killed since 1972 in the conflict in the south.

For Marcos, the insurgency has become an additional excuse to retain

Martial Law. After all, to quote him: "The Constitution provides that the President may proclaim a State of Martial Law or suspend the writ of Habeas Corpus when there is any invasion, insurrection or imminent danger."⁶¹ And this insurrection is going to continue for a long time to come, unless there is a genuine interest on the part of the Muslim countries to mediate honestly and not in an attempt to bifurcate the Philippines on the basis of religion.

THE AMERICAN BASES

Though the problem of American bases in the Philippines is not as serious as the two problems already mentioned—it has become a major irritant in the Philippine-US relations.

Till recently, the major determining factor in the Philippines foreign policy was the "special relations" with the United States. American global policy was reflected in the attitude of the Philippines. It was an ally of the United States, a member of the South-East Asia Treaty Organisation, was extremely hostile to the Communist aims, and had allowed several important American military bases to be set up on its soil.

The "special relationship" of the Philippines with the United States hampered the development of close relations with its neighbouring countries. Its various treaties with the United States did not also help in enhancing its image in Asia. The dispatch of non-combatant troops to South Vietnam under American pressure was considered contradictory to its often-repeated desire to be close to the countries of the region. For the same reason, Philippine foreign policy towards People's China had also been unrealistic.

From 1946 to 1969, Philippine foreign policy operated within the limits imposed upon it by the requirements of US foreign policy. It would, however, be unwise to conclude that it was controlled or directed by the United States, as it cannot be denied that there was a genuine coincidence of interests and shared attitudes between the Philippine ruling elite and the US Government.

What the Philippines is now trying to do is to change these close links with the United States. It is working hard under Marcos to project an Asian image by participating actively in Asian affairs. The Philippine confidence in the United States was greatly shaken by the Communist victories in Indo-China, and it was widely felt that the US bases in the Philippines were a security risk. The Philippines had realized that for both security and economic purposes, its destiny lay with Asia,⁶² and ultimately, it would have to get rid of its close association with the United States for the sake of stability in the region. After all, the Philippines had endorsed the ASEAN declaration which laid down: "... all foreign bases are temporary and remain only with the expressed concurrence of the countries concerned and are not intended to be used directly or indirectly to subvert the national development."⁶³

Even before Martial Law was declared, large sections of Filipino youth were becoming critical of the exploitative aspects of the US-Philippine relationship. The continued existence of the US military bases was considered to be a serious erosion of Philippine independence. Several other irritants had also accumulated which had resulted in a sense of estrangement.

The anti-American sentiment reached its peak during 1978, when the United States refused to support the Philippines in its claim to Sabah. The United States Government had stated on 19 September 1968, that it had no doubt about the legality of the arrangements under which Sabah had become part of Malaysia in 1963. It generated feelings of surprise and anger in the Philippines, and a section of the population demanded abrogation of the defence treaties with the United States. It was felt that the Mutual Defence Treaty was ineffective as the United States would not come to the help of the Philippines in case of open confrontation with Malaysia. This anti-American feeling coincided with the growth of a more substantial Asian nationalism in the country.

The Philippines had offered and granted bases to the United States, for a period of 99 years, under the Military Bases Agreement of 14 March 1947.⁶⁴ The then ruling elite of the Philippines considered this a necessary price to pay for the much-needed financial assistance and military security. It needed US assistance to restore its war-damaged economy. Later, the bases became an important source of income and employment for the Philippines.⁶⁵

Negotiations over the Bases Agreement have been going on through the terms of most Filipino Presidents. It appeared that at times the negotiations were used to extract more aid from the United States. According to Leon Ma Guerrero (an eminent Filipino diplomat), the Filipinos are aware that "American aid, whether military or non-military, whether by way of grants or by way of loans, has been less to the Philippines than in other Asian countries, which were either outright enemies of the U.S.A., like Japan, or uncommitted and indifferent to American policy objectives."⁶⁶

As the position stands today, there are two major American bases in the Philippines—the Clark Air Base and the Subic Bay Naval Base. In September 1971, the Sangley Point Naval Base was turned over to the Philippines which had requested its return. A new treaty is being negotiated to govern the use of the other two bases.

The interesting part is the hard line attitude adopted by the Marcos regime in these negotiations, when at the same time it has been stating that the military bases must stay. Marcos has been irked by the criticism of his regime by the US sources. He has been blamed by many Americans for violating the human rights, the upholding of which is the main emphasis of the Carter Administration. Besides, many of his opponents have been given asylum in the United States.⁶⁷ In fact, he has been openly alleging US interference in the internal affairs of his country.⁶⁸

However, his credibility is lost when one remembers that he was the

man who sent non-combatant Filipino troops to South Vietnam under American pressure, in spite of the fact that within the country public opinion was against the sending of troops.⁶⁹ Marcos in his enthusiasm has gone a little too far in his anti-American sentiments. After all, it was not in some bygone past that Marcos had stated that to counteract Peking's military conquest of Asia, Asian nations needed the help of Western countries, of which the United States was the only acceptable Power to the Asians.⁷⁰ As for Aquinos' CIA connexions, was not the great Filipino President Magsaysay supposed to have had them too? *The Time* magazine of 23 November 1955 reported: "It was soon no secret that Ramon Magsaysay was America's boy. For a time, US Colonel Edward Lansdale of the US Air Force took a desk in Magsaysay's Defence Office, became virtually his mentor and publicity man."⁷¹ Lansdale has been described by a Manila paper as "US Government's number one 'psywar' expert."⁷²

Whether Marcos is sincere in negotiating a respectable agreement, or is just trying his best to get the Americans to support his regime—time alone can tell. So far, agreement has been only reached on placing the Clark Air Base and the Subic Naval Base under Filipino Commanders.⁷³ No agreement has been reached on two basic issues, i.e., the amount of rental to be paid by the US Government and the question of criminal jurisdiction.⁷⁴ The last issue is the most delicate, as it involves the US Military personnel who enjoy extra-territorial rights. Many crimes have been committed against Filipinos by the US military personnel on these bases, but the Philippine Government cannot exercise any criminal jurisdiction over them.⁷⁵

SOME CONCLUSIONS

As seen, the earlier problems follow Marcos through his third term. The restlessness among the masses is growing and in spite of restrictions, one does often hear of demonstrations against Marcos in which even the priests and nuns have participated.

He has, of course, tried to give credibility to his government by holding a referendum in December 1977, in which the voters were asked to indicate if they wanted Marcos to continue as both President and Prime Minister after the convening of the Interim National Assembly. Predictably,⁷⁶ he got the approval, and as a next step, organized elections for the National Assembly on 7 April 1978. The Interim National Assembly will comprise 200 members. Thirtyfive of its members have been appointed by Marcos, while the remaining have been elected by public ballot. All important powers will remain with the President and the Assembly will not be able to enact any new laws without his permission. Also, it will not be able to lift the Martial Law.⁷⁷

No wonder, the elections were boycotted by leading Opposition leaders, except Aquino who felt compelled to take up the challenge squarely. As for the others, they have issued a sarcastic statement which declared: "Mr.

Marcos has become permanent President, Prime Minister, Chief Martial Law Administrator and one-man ruler, with absolute power to make and unmake laws. Not content with all his powers, his [Advisory Council] has now made virtually impossible for any non-Administration candidate to win⁷⁸ This was confirmed when no one from the Opposition won in the recent elections.

In conclusion, one can well say that President Marcos has taken too much on himself to be forgiven, should he find himself in the docks in the foreseeable future

June 1978

FOOTNOTES

- 1 Jorge M. Juce, *The Citizen and the Constitution* (Manila, 1970), p. 39. The Philippines has adopted a new Constitution which was promulgated in January 1973.
- 2 Amado Guerrero, *Philippine Society and Revolution* (Manila, 1971), p. 115.
- 3 Claude A. Buss, *The United States and the Philippines: Background for Policy* (Washington, D.C., 1977), p. 994.
- 4 For a critical account of the Marcos regime before and after Martial Law, see *ibid.*, pp. 46-97. Also see, "The Nations Economy" *Manila Chronicle*, Editorial, 29 January 1972.
- 5 The following view expressed in an editorial of a Manila paper reflected the feelings of many in the Philippines. It said: "It should have sounded ironic for the First Lady to be appearing with the promiscuous display of diamonds and wealth in the Iranian bash while her own people were groaning under the increasing burden of high prices and from the misfortunes of fortuitous causes." *Manila Chronicle*, 27 October 1971.
- 6 *Ibid.*, 2 February 1972.
- 7 Marcos made this allegation in an interview in "Straght from the Shoulder" T.V. Programme of Luis D. Beltran, Channel 11, 27th October 1971, Manila. A printed copy of this interview was given to the author by the Press office of the President.
- 8 The author was present in the Philippines from October 1971 to March 1972 and was witness to the anti-Marcos sentiments being expressed through protest marches, "Parliament of the streets", rallies etc.
- 9 Jose U. Macaspac, "Parliamentary Form Opposed," *Manila Chronicle*, 8 January 1972.
- 10 Lydia Mercado, "Marcos Out to Thwart Succession Veto", *The Asian* (Hong Kong), 17-23 October, p. 1.
- 11 Mischeel Duenas, "Aquino Sums up the Issues Against Marcos and the NPS," *Philippine Free Press* (Manila), 6 November 1971, pp. 4, 51.
- 12 Eduardo Lachica, *Huk: Philippine Agrarian Society in Revolt* (Manila, 1971), 9-213.
- 13 Rene Q. Bas, "Hara versus—Turtle Race for Nomination in Philippines," *The Asian*, 12-18 December 1971, p. 2.
- 14 Speech by Senator Benigno S. Aquinos Jr. Senator of the Philippines 10 February 1969. A copy of the speech was given to the author by the ex-Senator.
- 15 Lachica, n., 12, pp. 210-11.
- 16 "Straight From the Shoulder," n., 7.
- 17 For the views of Marcos on the suspension of writ of Habeas Corpus and Martial Law, see his book, *Today's Revolution: Democracy* (n. p., 1971).
- 18 Ernesto M. Macatuno, "The Resurrection of the Liberal Party" *The Sunday Times Magazine* (Manila), 7 November 1971, p. 27.

- 19 "The Rejection of Marcos" *Manila Chronicle*, Editorial, 12 November 1971.
- 20 Quoted in Buss, n., 3, p. 65.
- 21 For a detailed account of the Huks, see Lachica, n., 12. Also see Alfredo B. Saulo, *Communism in the Philippines: An Introduction* (Manila, 1969).
- 22 Carlos P. Romulo and Marvin M. Gray, *The Magsaysay Story* (New York, 1956), p. 104.
- 23 Onofre D. Corpuz, *The Philippines* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1970), p. 111.
- 24 Saulo, n., 21, p. 112.
- 25 Lachica, n., 12, p. 17.
- 26 Corpuz, n., 23, p. 112.
- 27 *Asia Week* (Hong Kong), Vol. 3, no. 48, 2 December 1977, p. 155.
- 28 Guerrero, n., 2, p. 102.
- 29 *Ibid.*, pp. 108-109.
- 30 *First Quarter Storm of 1970* (Manila, 1970), pp. 36-45.
- 31 *Asia Week*, n., 27, pp. 14-15.
- 32 Milton Walter Meyer, *A Diplomatic History of the Philippine Republic*, (n.p., 1965), p. 126.
- 33 Sheldon Appleton, "Communism and the Chinese in the Philippines"; *Pacific Affairs* (Vancouver, B.C.), Vol. 32, No. 4, December 1959, pp. 377-78.
- 34 *Manila Bulletin*, 23 September 1959. For the attitude of the Macapagal Administration towards communism, see Diosdado Macapagal, *A Stone For the Edifice: Memoirs of a President* (Quezon City, 1968), pp. 160-167.
- 35 *Manila Times*, 7 December 1962.
- 36 *Department of Foreign Affairs Review* (Manila), Vol. 4, No. 2, June 1963, p. 255.
- 37 Hernado J. Abaya, *The Untold Philippine Story* (Quezon City, 1967), p. 197.
- 38 For details, see Man Mohini Kaul, "Philippine Foreign Policy, Retrospect and Prospect," *India Quarterly* (New Delhi), January-March, 1977, pp. 33-46.
- 39 *Ibid.*, p. 42.
- 40 *Newsweek* (New York), 27 March 1978, p. 18.
- 41 *Ibid.*, 10 April 1978, p. 8.
- 42 Buss, n., 3, p. 76.
- 43 *The Republic* (Manila), 2 March 1973, p. 3.
- 44 *Ibid.*
- 45 Ernst Utrecht, "The Separatist Movement in the Southern Philippines", *Race and Class* (London), Vol. XVI, No. 4, April, 1975, p. 393.
- 46 Brian Phelan, "Spectre of Jihad", *Far Eastern Economic Review* (Hong Kong), Vol. 80, No. 19, 14 May 1973, pp. 29-31. For details see Man Mohini Kaul, "Muslims in the Philippines," *IDSJ Journal* (New Delhi), Vol. X, No. 1, July-September 1977, pp. 26-35.
- 47 Leon Ma Guerrero, *Prisoners of History* (New Delhi, 1972), p. 242.
- 48 Cesar A. Majul, *The Political and Constitutional Ideas of the Philippine Revolution* (Quezon City, 1967), pp. 96.
- 49 Lim Yoon Lin, Ed., *Trends in the Philippines* (Singapore, 1972), pp. 25-26.
- 50 *Manila Times*, 2 November 1971.
- 51 *Manila Chronicle*, 25 November 1971.
- 52 *Asia Week*, Vol. 3, No. 6, 11 February 1977, pp. 8-13.
- 53 Michel Leifer, "Talk on Philippine Revolt," *Hindustan Times* (New Delhi), 2 December 1976.
- 54 *Christian Science Monitor* (Boston), 28 March 1974.
- 55 *Asia Week*, n., 52, p. 12.
- 56 *Straits Times* (Singapore), 11 March 1974.
- 57 *Ibid.*
- 58 *Indonesia Times* (Djakarta), 5 August, 1977.
- 59 Rosihan Anwar, "Manila Revisited," *Asia Week*, Vol. 3, no. 25, 26 June 1977, p. 11.

- 60 "The Peace that Failed", *ibid*, Vol. 3, No. 11, 18 March 1977 pp. 11-13; Rosihan Anwar, "Concerned Onlooker," *ibid*, p. 13
- 61 Marcos, n., 17, p. 16.
- 62 *Hindustan Times*, 9 June 1975.
- 63 Republic of the Philippines, *Department of Foreign Affairs Treaty Series* (Manila), Vol. 6, No. 1, 1967, p. 190.
- 64 Text of the Military Bases Agreement is reproduced in *ibid*, Vol. 1, No. 2, August 1947, pp. 144-60.
- 65 Asian Development Bank, *Southeast Asia's Economy in the 1970s* (London, 1971), pp. 649, 650, 653.
- 66 Guerrero, n. 47, p. 21.
- 67 *Asia Week*, Vol. 3, No. 21, 27 May 1977, p. 10; also see *ibid*, Vol. 3, No. 37, 16 September 1977, p. 6.
- 68 *Ibid*, Vol. 4, No. 13, 7 February 1978, p. 7.
- 69 J.V. Cruz, "Marcos Should Tell U.S., Don't Drag, Us", *Manila Times*, 4 January 1966.
- 70 *Straits Times*, 9 May 1967.
- 71 *Time* (Chicago), 23 November 1955, p. 37.
- 72 *Manila Times*, 29 January 1966.
- 73 "News Review on Japan, S.E. Asia and Australiasia," *Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses* (New Delhi), December 1977, p. 690.
- 74 *Ibid*.
- 75 Guerrero, n., 2, pp. 125-126.
- 76 *Asia Week*, Vol. 3, No. 52, 30 December, 1977, pp. 11-12.
- 77 *Newsweek*, 20 February 1978, p. 6.
- 78 *Asia Week*, Vol.. 4, No. 5, 10 February 1978, p. 21.