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10,000 FILIPINOS WIN \$1.2 BILLION FROM MARCOS

HONOLULU, FEB. 24 -- About 10,000 Filipinos who were tortured during the reign of former Philippine president Ferdinand Marcos were awarded \$1.2 billion in damages from his estate by a federal jury.

The same jury ruled in 1992 that Marcos was liable for human rights violations in his country between 1972, when he declared martial law, and 1986, when he was overthrown. Marcos died in Hawaii in 1989.

"Let this be a lesson to all dictators living today who think they will escape from justice that this will not be tolerated," said attorney Melvin Belli, who filed the original lawsuit on behalf of 21 plaintiffs in 1986.

Defense attorney William Johnson said the estate abhors torture and called the allegation that Marcos ordered abuses "incredible."

In the Philippines today, Marcos's widow, Imelda, told a news conference she does not have the money to pay the damages. The former first lady also said the court does not have jurisdiction over an entirely Philippine case, adding that Wednesday's jury decision was a "terrible precedent."

"I don't even have a home," Marcos said. "What are they going to get?"

Robert Swift, lead attorney in the class-action case, was confident his clients would collect at least some of the money. "We obtained an injunction in November 1991 that froze Marcos assets worldwide, and we know there are

\$410 million in assets in Switzerland," he said.

However, the Philippine government wants the same money, which it claims Marcos looted from the country's treasury.

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