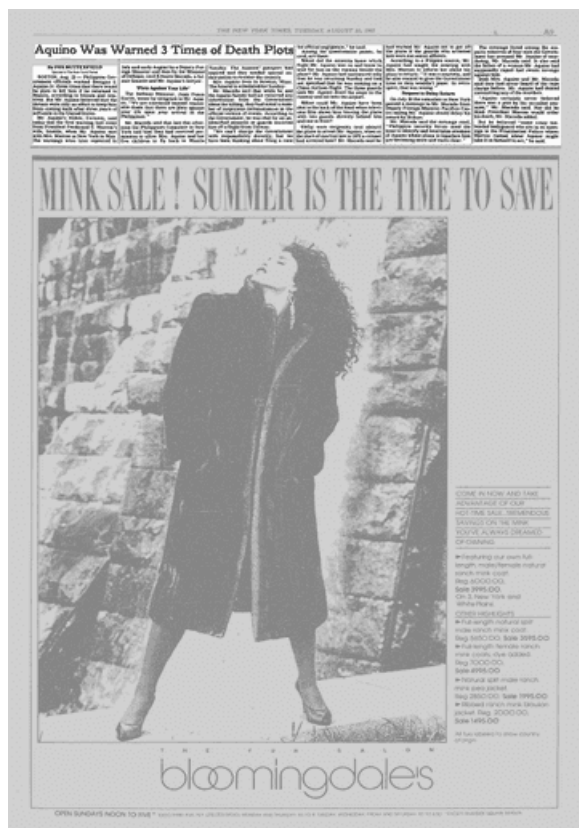


# AQUINO WAS WARNED 3 TIMES OF DEATH PLOT

By Fox Butterfield

Aug. 23, 1983



See the article in its original context from  
August 23, 1983, Section A, Page 9 Buy Reprints

New York Times subscribers\* enjoy full access to  
TimesMachine—view over 150 years of New  
York Times journalism, as it originally appeared.

**SUBSCRIBE**

\*Does not include Crossword-only or  
Cooking-only subscribers.

## About the Archive

*This is a digitized version of an article from The Times's print archive, before the start of online publication in 1996. To preserve these articles as they originally appeared, The Times does not alter, edit or update them.*

*Occasionally the digitization process introduces transcription errors or other problems; we are continuing to work to improve these archived versions.*

Philippine Government officials warned Benigno S. Aquino Jr. three times that there would be plots to kill him if he returned to Manila, according to friends and relatives. But Mr. Aquino believed that the threats were only an effort to keep him from coming back after three years of self-exile in the United States.

Mr. Aquino's widow, Corazon, said today that the first warning had come from President Ferdinand E. Marcos's wife, Imelda, when Mr. Aquino met with Mrs. Marcos in New York in May. The warnings were later repeated in July and early August by a Deputy Foreign Minister and then by the Minister of Defense, said Ernesto Maceda, a former Senator and Mr. Aquino's lawyer.

### 'Plots Against Your Life'

The Defense Minister, Juan Ponce Enrile, wrote by telegram to Mr. Aquino, "We are convinced beyond reasonable doubt that there are plots against your life upon your arrival in the Philippines."

Mr. Maceda said that late this afternoon the Philippines Consulate in New York told him they had received permission to allow Mrs. Aquino and her five children to fly back to Manila Tuesday. The Aquinos' passport had expired and they needed special authorization to re-enter the country.

Mrs. Aquino lives in Newton, Mass. The funeral is scheduled for Sunday. Mr. Maceda said that while he and the Aquino family had not received any information from the Government about the killing, they had noted a number of suspicious circumstances in the official version of events. According to the Government, he was shot by an unidentified assassin as guards escorted him off a flight from Taiwan.

"We can't charge the Government with responsibility directly, but we have been thinking about filing a case for official negligence," he said.

Among the questionable points, he said, are these:

- How did the assassin know which flight Mr. Aquino was on and know to wait for him on the runway beside the plane? Mr. Aquino had announced only that he was returning Sunday and had not specified that he was coming on a China Airlines flight. The three guards took Mr. Aquino down the steps to the runway and not into the airport.
- How could Mr. Aquino have been shot in the back of the head when television film shows him leaving the plane with two guards directly behind him and one in front?
- Why were sergeants sent aboard the plane to arrest Mr. Aquino, when at the start of martial law in 1972 a colonel had arrested him? Mr. Maceda said he had warned Mr. Aquino not to get off the plane if the guards who arrested him were not senior officers.

According to a Filipino source, Mr. Aquino had sought the meeting with Mrs. Marcos to inform her about his plans to return: "It was a courtesy, and he also wanted to give the Government time so they wouldn't panic. In retrospect, that was wrong."

### Request to Delay Return

On July 20 the consulate in New York passed a message to Mr. Maceda from Deputy Foreign Minister Pacifico Castro saying Mr. Aquino should delay his return by 30 days.

Mr. Maceda said the message read, "Philippine security forces need the time to identify and neutralize enemies of Aquino whose plans to liquidate him are becoming more and more clear."

The message listed among the suspects relatives of four men the Government has accused Mr. Aquino of murdering, Mr. Maceda said. It also said the father of a woman Mr. Aquino had supposedly raped had sworn revenge against him.

Both Mrs. Aquino and Mr. Maceda said they had never heard of the rape

charge before. Mr. Aquino had denied committing any of the murders.

"Aquino certainly never believed there was a plot by his so-called enemies," Mr. Maceda said. Nor did he think President Marcos would order his death, Mr. Maceda added.

But he believed "some crazy hot-headed bodyguard who sits in on meetings in the Presidential Palace where Marcos ranted about Aquino might take it on himself to act," he said.