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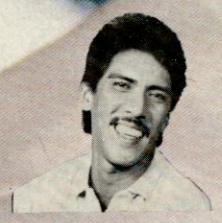


TITO SOTTO: FUNNYMAN IN CITY HALL

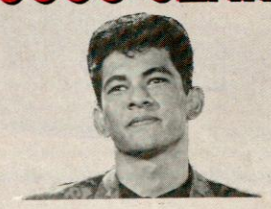
RAYMUNDO PUNONGBAYAN: VOLCANO MAN





CHARLES AVILA: COCO CZAR

GARY V.: FATHER, SON, HOLY MAN



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Philippine GRAPHIC
WEEKLY MAGAZINE



RUDY ALDEGUER

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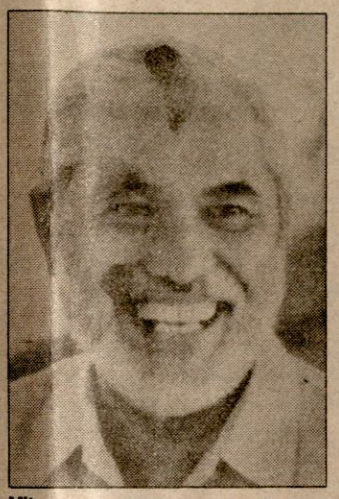
Publisher's Note

The resolve of Aquino political strategists to force the adoption of a constituent assembly and a quick switch to the parliamentary system is now public knowledge. Speaker Ramon V. Mitra and Senator Neptali Gonzales, president of the LDP, said as much in a recent Congressional Forum. Now, the opposition, speaking through Vice-President Salvador H. Laurel, detects in this scheme a secret agenda to perpetuate President Aquino and her cohorts in power.

Nobody, of course, will ever admit self-aggrandizement as the driving force for seeking political change. For all we know, Mitra, Gonzales and Peping Cojuangco deeply believe in the parliamentary system as a panacea of sorts for all the crises besetting the country.


Aquino


Mitra

They perceive the presidential system, as structured by the 1987 Constitution, as a source of unending policy deadlocks and stalemates, between the Senate and the House, between Congress and the President, and between both and the Judiciary.

These deadlocks are said to be inherent in a system where three co-equal but coordinate branches, the executive, the legislative and the judicial, perpetually check—and possibly checkmate—each other. Of course, these checks and balances were precisely what they said we missed during the previous regime. To generations brought up in the tradition of American-inspired freewheeling democracy, these are indeed the very hallmarks of a democratic government.

In the parliamentary system, the distinctions between the executive and the legislative blur. Theoretically, this means a Cabinet government. In practice, this has become in modern times a prime ministerial government. A Thatcher was in no way less powerful than the occupant of the White House. But it is true that, unlike in the presidential form, the Cabinet headed by the prime minister sits in the legislature. In fact, they are available to explain and defend their policies in open forensic combat whenever Parliament is in session.


Cojuangco

The advocates of the parliamentary system now say, however, that they lean more towards the French model, a hybrid of the two systems, than the pure Westminster model. This means a constitutional amendment will provide for more than just a symbolic president, like François Mitterand of France. There will be a prime minister who will run the day-to-day affairs of the government. In the French model, the president is popularly elected; the PM is elected by the members of Parliament.

Now Vice-President Laurel suspects the whole scheme is designed to get Mrs. Corazon Aquino elected as the first president of the parliamentary system. It is true she has said her valedictory to Congress. But under an amended Constitution, she is free to have her name entered in the ballot for the presidency. The Congress can have itself transformed into a provisional parliament even before the constitutional change is approved in a plebiscite. The Aquino coalition will maintain its present overwhelming control of the legislature.

Who will be the prime minister? Mitra is definitely the man to beat in this regard. This explains why he is moving heaven and earth to effect the constitutional change as soon as possible. The last hurdle is the resistance of Senate President Jovito R. Salonga. But both Mitra and Gonzales believe Salonga has begun to entertain the possibility of change with an open mind. Some senators may indeed welcome a switch to the parliamentary system as a way out of the corners into which they have painted themselves on the bases treaty.


Gonzales

What the proponents of constitutional change may not have factored into their calculations is how the Filipino people will react to this scheme. It will have the effect of stopping the presidential election, in any case as contemplated under the 1987 Constitution. The effective head of government, the prime minister, will not be chosen by popular vote, but only by a handful of elected representatives. If the effect, as Laurel alleges, is to perpetuate the present set of officials in power, the scheme might yet boomerang on its authors, and the results of the plebiscite may be a ringing slap on their faces.

There is nothing like consulting with the people first about the radical constitutional changes. They do not like to be taken for granted.

Juan P. Dayang

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The ghost of Lim Seng

Interface



BLAS F. OPLE

Few issues aroused as much passion in the Constitutional Commission of 1986 as the abolition of the death penalty. Ideologically it was linked to the larger pro-life issues, which had been won earlier with a thumbs down on birth control. Finally, the pro-lifers scored with an ambivalent victory by prohibiting the imposition of the death penalty under the heading of "cruel and degrading punishment," in Section 19 of the Bill of Rights.

What made it ambivalent was the grant of a reserve power to Congress to provide for exceptions. "Neither shall death penalty be imposed, unless, for compelling reasons involving heinous crimes, the Congress hereafter provides for it. Any death penalty already imposed shall be reduced to *reclusion perpetua*."

As the principal author of the Dangerous Drugs Act of 1991, Senator Ernesto F. Herrera built into his bill language providing for the death penalty for the manufacture and selling of illegal drugs. After the committee on constitutional amendments, codes and revision of laws acquired jurisdiction, its chairman, Senator Jose D. Lina, caused the death penalty clause to be dropped. On the Senate floor, Senator Herrera moved for its restoration. It was the Herrera amendment that set off the "life and death" debate in the Senate, on the death penalty issue.

Senator Rene Saguisag, the most eloquent opponent of the death penalty under any pretext, insisted on a full debate regardless of how long a time it took. Herrera believes the honest name for it is a filibuster. Saguisag takes the stand that the amendment "may send to the electric chair young men and women who may be the victims of 'planting' squads who 'find' in them a few grams of the subject drugs."

Saguisag added: "The bargaining position... of rogue cops will balloon overnight."

There is, of course, a legal maxim that the abuse of a law does not make it objectionable. But Saguisag and Lina are rightly concerned about reports that unscrupulous policemen routinely plant forbidden drugs to acquire leverage over helpless citizens, who must then pay to secure their freedom from malicious and arbitrary detention, not to mention the hassles of criminal trials.

The public opinion surveys, of course, lean heavily in favor of Herrera's adamant stand for the re-imposition of the death penalty. I saw one such survey for Metro Manila, Central Visayas and Northern Mindanao. Up to 85 percent were for the death penalty. At the opposite pole are the institutional objectors, including the Catholic Church and the Protestant churches of every denomination. Saguisag acknowledges the fact that numbers favor Herrera, but insists that he won't be influenced by considerations of "political correctness."

Public opinion sees the issue not in the abstract but in its concrete and horrifying forms: the Vizconde murders in Parañaque, where a mother and her two daughters were slaughtered, one of them also raped, by apparently drug addicts; two grade-school girls in Pangasinan being waylaid, raped and murdered by a drug-crazed tricycle driver; a boy high on drugs setting his own grandmother on fire after being denied a request for money, then wanting to end his own life because he could not contain his sense of guilt.

The statistics amplify these images a thousandfold. Up to 75 percent of all violent crimes in Metro Manila are drug-related, according to the Western Police District. Ninety out of every one hundred criminals examined by Narcom said they were taking drugs before they committed the offenses charged to them. An estimated 300,000 Filipinos of school age are victims of drug abuse; of this total, 145,000 are concentrated in the metropolitan area alone.

The sad state of our criminal justice system may be inferred from other statistics: while in Singapore the conviction rate for drug offenses is 95 percent, in the Philippines it is only 5 percent or less. Out of 14,000 arrests for drug-related offenses over a one-year period, only 376 court convictions were recorded.



The public may have little noted a strange occurrence recently, when the fiscals of Quezon City declared a strike against the police: they claimed policemen disappeared after causing the filing of criminal complaints. On the other hand, not a few fiscals and judges have been reported as having confabulated to downgrade drug pushing into plain drug use to permit the release of privileged suspects from detention to liberty under probation. Drugs also often mean corrupt justice.

All these trends show that the control of the drug menace is much more complicated than merely re-imposing the death penalty. There is no question that the criminal justice system is mainly responsible for the failure to stop the proliferation of illegal drugs. But again, few will blame Herrera for insisting that the death penalty be re-imposed now on the most glaring forms of drug dealing. At the very least, it is a way of society being able to say to itself that the drug menace has indeed reached unacceptable levels requiring extraordinary solutions.

Since January this year, no fewer than 28 suspected drug pushers were reported to have died in shootouts with law enforcement authorities. It is hard to unconvince some critics of the police that most of these have been plain executions. In the provinces, vigilantes teaming up with the police routinely dispose of suspected drug pushers. We seldom read about these in the newspapers. The point is that right now the death penalty is being applied to drug dealers, but in ways designed to circumvent the criminal justice system.

There is grandeur in the People of the Philippines scoring its own triumphs over evil, over drug dealing, in our courts of justice. The firing squad that snuffed the life out of the Chinese Lim Seng at the beginning of martial law was carrying out the order of a court: the exemplary value was so great that, by 1975, drug dealing had practically disappeared. Privately, we hear it said that police executions of drug dealers save the government a lot of costs in time, money and effort. This cannot mitigate the barbarism of these acts.

The death penalty, enforced through the courts, is something else. There are also numerous safeguards. There is a prescribed threshold of actual drug pushing, 21 grams in the case of shabu, for the maximum penalty to apply. There is, for one thing, automatic review by the Supreme Court. Persons below 18 years old are not covered, and neither are pregnant women. The President's pardoning power is always available. As Cardinal Sin told me, throughout the martial law period, he could recall not one death convict actually executed (except for Lim Seng) because the Church pleaded successfully for a reprieve.

As for me, I will not mind a few Lim Sengs being marched off for execution from time to time for the heinous crime of dealing despair and death to our youth through drugs. This will show, for one thing, that we can still make some tough choices, where necessary, in our mushy society. G

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COMMUNIQUÉS FROM PINATUBO

Do volcanoes have messages to deliver?

By C.P. FILIO

One letter to the editor of a certain daily has suggested that the current eruptions of Mount Pinatubo, which have inflicted severe damage on Angeles and Olongapo cities, could be our version of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. To be sure, the writer has some basis for his suggestion.

Even in the early Fifties, as a cadet at the Philippine Military Academy, I was ordered by my upperclassmen to count the bars and other bawdy places along MacArthur Highway in Angeles, Pampanga, while motoring from Baguio to Manila to participate in July 4th parades. I was astonished by the large number of such places. That formed my first impression of the "sin city" serving as the "Home of the 13th US Air Force."

This impression was confirmed in 1980 when I had the chance to study Angeles City—which ironically means "City of Angels." I then served as consultant to the Armed Forces of the Philippines chief of staff, who was co-chair of the Presidential Committee on Clark Area Development. After almost three decades, when the Philippine population had exploded from less than 20 to more than 50 million souls, the number of bars and other bawdy places—consequently the occasion for sin—in Angeles seemed to have increased proportionately. The number of American military personnel might not have increased very much in the post-Vietnam years, but the people dependent on Clark Air Base, including the so-called hospitality girls, certainly had. By virtue of the 1979 Military Bases Agreement, the Philippine flag was already flying on the base, while AFP personnel had become security guards for the US military in their "unhampered use" of the facilities therein. Our party of American and Filipino consultants were briefed by Philippine Air Force Colonel Nap Angeles at the Angeles Base.

Later in the same year, I was a member of a consultancy team that included Ping de Jesus, Bill Torres, Ernie Franco, Mon Cruz, and Ferdie Diaz (who was earlier with me in Clark). The team was organized by the Development Academy of the Philippines to help Mayor (the "Dick") Gordon of Olongapo City—"Home of the US Navy Seventh Fleet"—plan an IUD (integrated urban development) project for his "Fun City of the Orient."

Since the concept sounded like "sin city" to me, I suggested that we undertake a social-impact assessment to determine the implications of the theme to the moral values of the people. But I was told that the official government development policy was: "Never mind morality as long as there is money!" When I inquired where I might find that policy, I was chided for my naiveté. I was also told that policies need not be written: they are reflected in the actions of our decision makers. As a matter of fact, during that time, our girls were being advertised abroad in commercials which read or sounded like *"Ang sarap ng Pinay!/Ang sarap ng Filipina!"*—a variation of Jollibee's current *"Ang sarap ng PILIPINO!"*

Now, has this policy of "money before morality" changed? As a matter of fact, with Pagcor and the casinos, Cory Aquino has already institutionalized that tacit Marcos policy, notwithstanding the protestations of Jaime Cardinal Sin, as well as the televised Sunday masses of Father Sonny Ramirez!

Apparently, the letter writer cited in the beginning of this piece is very God-fearing. But he was perhaps mixed up with Genesis and Deuteronomy—the first and the fifth books, respectively, of the Old Testament. What should really concern us are the consequences of disobedience in Chapter 28 of Deuteronomy: "The Lord will send down duststorms and sandstorms until you are destroyed." Similarly, Chapter 26 of Leviticus—the third book—tells of destroyed livestock, ruined cities, and barren lands. It is Chapter 19 of Genesis that tells of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, because of their sexual perversions and other forms of wickedness: "Suddenly the Lord rained burning sulfur on the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah and destroyed them and the whole valley along with all the people there and everything that grew on the land."

The analogy of Angeles and Olongapo with the two "sin cities" in the Old Testament is farfetched. In the biblical accounts, duststorms and sandstorms would be sent "instead of rain." Moreover, the burning sulfur was direct from heaven; no volcano was involved. In the case of Pinatubo, rains are even causing mudflows as the ultimate curse. The God-fearing, as well as God-loving, among us, however, believe in the infinite power and wisdom of the Lord. He can accomplish whatever He wills with or without rains or volcanoes.

But does a volcano have a message to deliver to the people through its eruption—mild or wild? In ancient China, it was believed that it had. Governance was then considered a mandate from heaven—that is, a sovereign ruled his or her subjects at the pleasure of the gods, therefore, in perfect harmony with nature. Thus, the violent eruption of a volcano—in conjunction with the occurrence of a killer earthquake, cyclone, flood, or other natural calamity—was supposed to signify that the mandate had already been withdrawn, because of the extreme dissatisfaction of the gods with the incumbent regime. In other words, the message was: *Tama na, sobra na, palitan na!* Since a sovereign did not usually quit voluntarily, the people would take appropriate action—like a concubine murdering the emperor in his sleep—with the blessings of the gods.

Of course, there is Mount Vesuvius in the eastern shores of the Bay of Naples in Italy—the only active volcano on the European mainland. Its earliest recorded eruption in AD 79—i.e., by the Roman statesman Gaius Plinius Caecilius Secundus (Pliny the Younger)—buried the city of Pompeii in cinders and ashes. It also asphyxiated the Roman naturalist Gaius Plinius Secundus (Pliny the Elder), who had come to make a scientific investigation of the eruption. The picture *The Last Days of Pompeii*, which, ironically, was being shown in an Angeles moviehouse that fateful Saturday, June 15, when Mount Pinatubo erupted, suggests some moral decadence in the flourishing port city under the Roman Empire. Therefore, that eruption, in conjunction with an earlier destructive earthquake in AD 63, could be a punishment from God.

I grew up in volcano country—in Nabua, Camarines Sur, near the foot of Mount Iriga, where we could see Mount Isarog at a distance northwestward. In Bicol, the word *tuga* means to tell the truth; it also means to erupt.

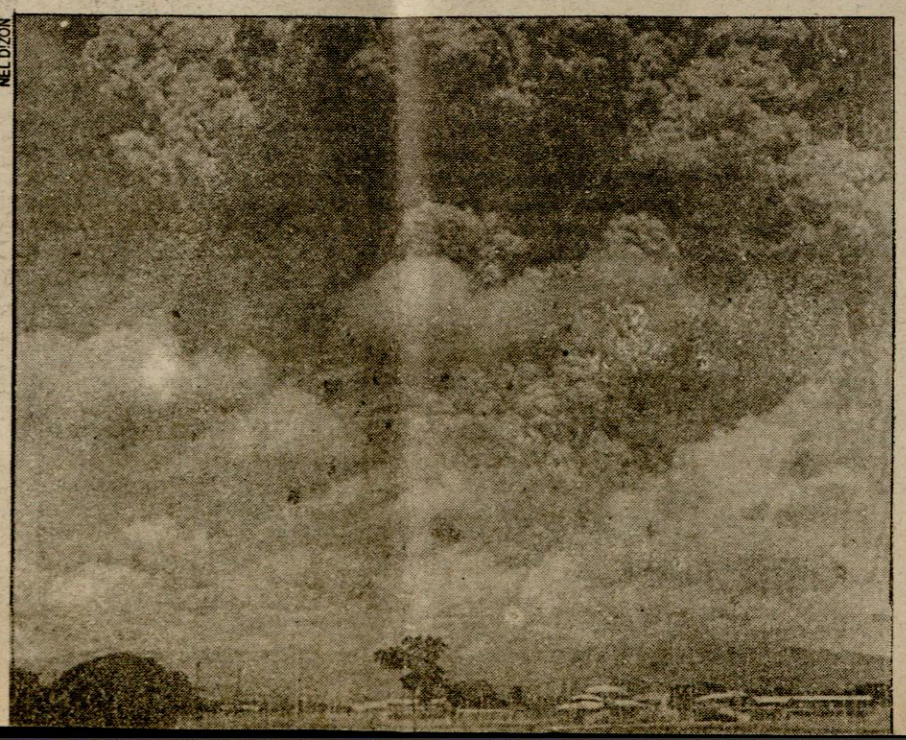
With the current eruptions of Mount Pinatubo, I remember those rustic days, more than half a century ago, when I was in the first grade. Since the Philippines was still officially under American rule, we were required to speak English once we were on the school premises; we would be punished for being caught using what was then known as the vernacular. Having seen Mount Mayon spewing flaming-red materials one early morning, a classmate of mine came running to our teacher and reported, breathlessly, "Ma'am, Mayon is telling the truth! Mayon is telling the truth!"

Thus, sometime in 1968, during the Marcos I regime, when there was a lot of official lying to cover up the Jabidah Affair, which resulted in the massacre of Muslim trainees and which could have brought the Philippines in armed confrontation with Malaysia, and to save the political stock of President Marcos, Mayon erupted mildly. Thinking that the volcano was "telling the truth," I wrote a short piece, which was published in *The Manila Times*, suggesting that perhaps Mayon was "showing us the way out" of Jabidah.

Again, sometime in 1984, during the extended Marcos II regime, when there was a lot of official lying to cover up the Aquino assassination, Mayon erupted wildly. So, I thought, here we go again, the volcano was "telling the truth." I then wrote a short piece, which was published in *Malaya*, suggesting that perhaps Mayon was "showing us the way out" of the Aquino assassination. Incidentally, it was the late Ninoy who, on the Senate floor, exposed Marcos's adventurism in the sinister Jabidah operations.

So, when Mount Pinatubo started erupting or "telling the truth," I thought that the long-resting volcano was finally "showing us the way out" of the military-bases impasse. In fact, it seems to have made up the minds of the Americans already—for better or for worse.

Like Mayon's tantrums, which might have something to do with official lies and cover-ups of the Marcos regimes, Pinatubo's eruptions may have something to do with official lies and cover-ups of the Aquino regime. But what kinds of lies and cover-ups—and worse, hypocrisies—may these be, that Mount Pinatubo persists in "telling the truth"? Moreover, Mounts Taal, Didicas, and many other volcanoes in the country are also threatening to "tell the truth"! G



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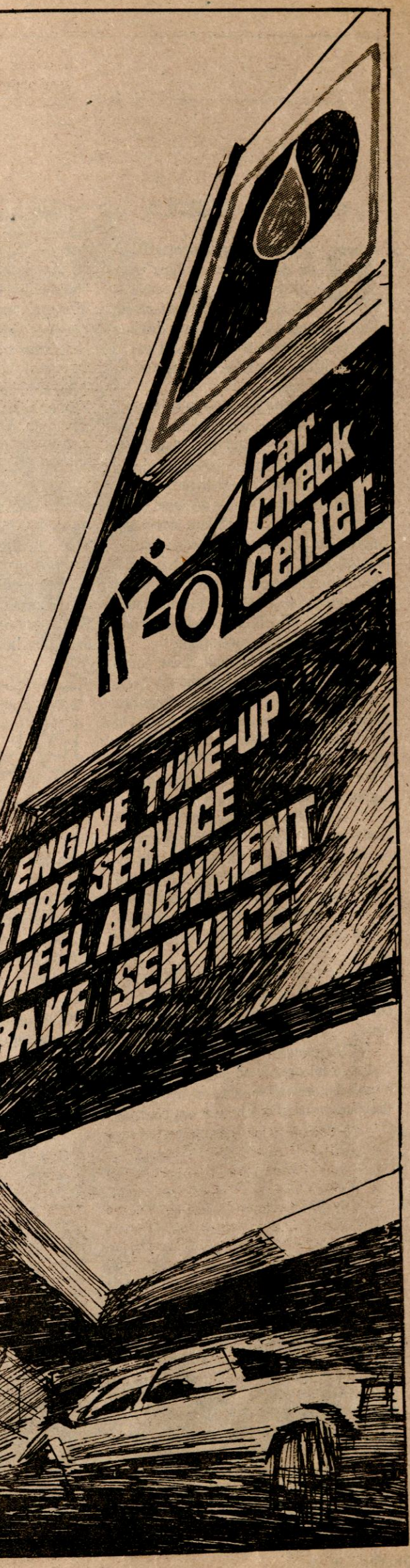


ONE MORE BOTTLENECK?

Like Cubao and Shaw, the Ortigas interchange currently under construction is likely to worsen traffic for the bus-riding public.

By ROBERTO VERZOLA

Because of a fundamental flaw in its design, the Ortigas interchange, now under construction at the cost of more than 300 million pesos, will, at best, have minimal effect on public utility vehicles. It will, at worst, make the traffic a lot worse for EDSA bus riders.

To understand the flaw in the Ortigas interchange design, you only have to take a look at the Cubao and Shaw Boulevard interchanges. These are perfect examples of badly designed interchanges.

Epifanio de los Santos Avenue, better known as EDSA, is a 12-lane artery that serves the periphery of Metro Manila's central business district. There is a six-lane northbound (actually, counter-clockwise) lane and a six-lane southbound (clockwise) lane. It is the major circumferential road of the metropolis.

Before the Cubao and Shaw interchanges were constructed, the six lanes per direction were all available to public buses, as well as jeepneys which used to be allowed to ply the highway. They were of course available to private cars too. Everybody had to go through the traffic lights and await their turn at the crossing.

The interchange design at Cubao and Shaw have the following salient features:

❑It separates the six lanes per direction into two: three lanes go through an underpass, and three lanes remain at level.

❑The three underpass lanes are high-speed lanes because vehicles do not have to wait before traffic lights.

❑The three at-level lanes are slow-moving lanes because vehicles have to suffer waiting before traffic lights just the same.

❑The interchange does not improve traffic at all on Aurora and Shaw Boulevards, because all vehicles on these roads that cut across EDSA have to wait before traffic lights just the same.

❑Whereas buses had six lanes per direction before the interchange was constructed, buses using the at-level lanes now only have three lanes instead of six. With three lanes instead of six available to buses, the Cubao and Shaw interchanges actually worsened the traffic for EDSA bus riders. This is borne by everybody's experience. It is not uncommon for a bus at Cubao or Shaw, to take 10 to 15 minutes just to cross the intersection. It is a daily aggravation that EDSA bus riders have to suffer due to bad interchange design.

❑To make matters worse, not all of the three EDSA at-level lanes at Cubao and Shaw are available to buses at that, because the buses have to share the three lanes with left-turning and right-turning private vehicles.

❑Some buses take the underpass instead of the at-level lanes. In this case, the bus riders who have to get off at the crossing are forced to walk several hundred meters to get there, another daily aggravation.

❑Private car owners who drive along EDSA get the best end of the deal. They have the three-lane underpass mostly to themselves, and they can cross the Cubao and Shaw Boulevard intersections in a matter of seconds.

In short, the Cubao and Shaw Boulevard interchanges, which cost hundreds of millions of public funds, did not improve traffic on Aurora and Shaw Boulevards. Instead, they worsened the traffic for EDSA riders using public transportation. They only improved the traffic for private car owners taking the EDSA route. A perfect example of a very expensive project that favors car owners and discriminates against bus riders.

What about the Ortigas interchange?

The Ortigas interchange design uses essentially the same design as the Cubao and Shaw interchanges, with slight variations.

When the interchange is completed, all private and public vehicles moving along Ortigas Avenue will have to suffer through traffic lights just the same. Traffic will essentially be as bad. The three hundred million-peso project is essentially useless to them.

Of the six lanes per direction along EDSA, three overpass (instead of underpass) lanes will be spared the traffic lights; the remaining three lanes at-level will have to suffer through traffic lights just the same, as well as be shared among public buses and right-turning private vehicles.

Because of this split, EDSA buses crossing the Ortigas intersection will only have three at-level lanes instead of the six they used to enjoy. Squeezed into three lanes, buses will have less room to maneuver. Add to this the waiting at the traffic intersection, and it doesn't take an expert to predict that traffic will become worse. One need only look at the predicament of bus riders who suffer daily through the Shaw and Cubao traffic intersections.

The Ortigas interchange will, in fact, add a third bottleneck to public buses, between the Cubao and Shaw bottlenecks. Should the buses decide to use the overpass to skip the traffic lights, they would have to force passengers to get on or off more than a hundred meters away from the intersection itself.

One wonders why the government has to spend more than 300 million pesos of public funds for a project which is useless to all vehicles moving along Ortigas Avenue and which will just create more aggravation for EDSA bus riders.

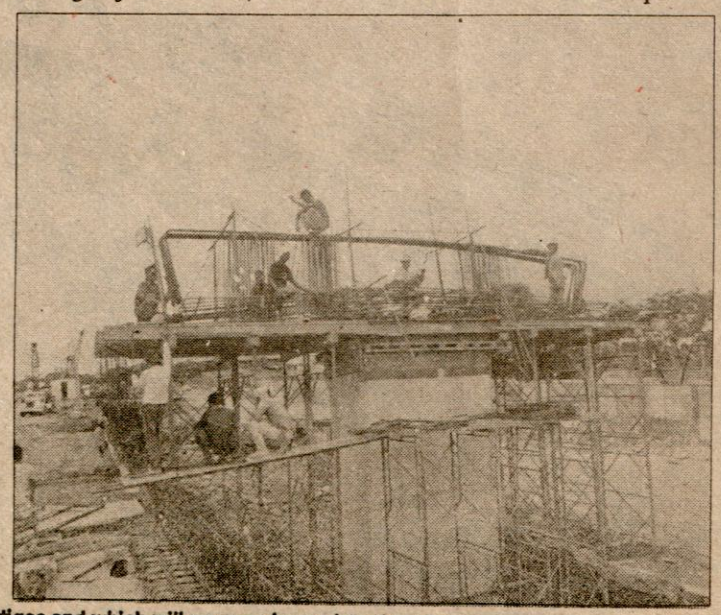
There is, by the way, an extra nice touch in the Ortigas design: special flyovers for private cars that are turning left from EDSA to Ortigas Avenue. This will enable the private car owner turning left from EDSA to Ortigas to negotiate the intersection within seconds.

So, presumably, the car-riding Makati executive who lives in the expensive Greenhills area can now leave his office and reach home with a lot of time to relax before dinner time.

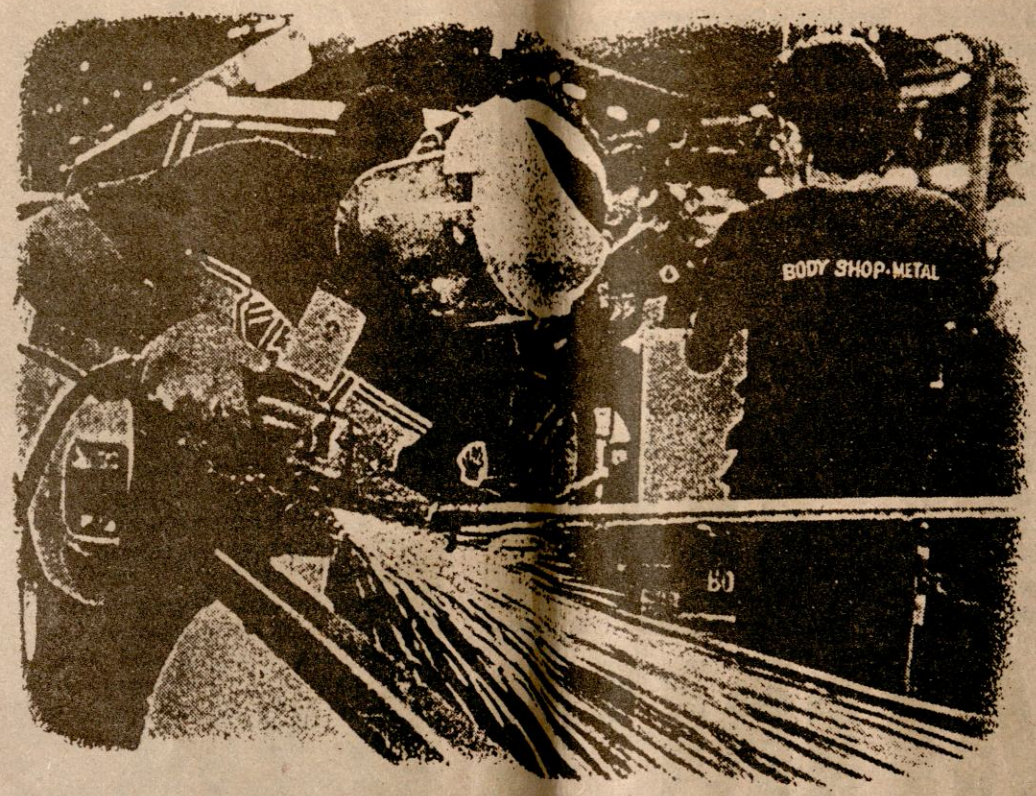
In the meantime, the bus-riding Makati employee who lives in middle-class Project 2 or Kamuning will have to suffer not only through the Shaw and Cubao intersections, but also the newly constructed "rich man's interchange" on Ortigas, thanking the fates if she gets home before her children are asleep. G

Photos by RUDY ALDEGUER





The government is spending P300 million of public funds for a project which is useless to all vehicles moving along Ortigas and which will squeeze buses into three lanes



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JUN SIMON'S 'METRO QUEZON'

By CESAR T. MELLA

Carlyle said it long ago: follow the man who can do something. In our time, that man could be Brigido "Jun" Reyes Simon Jr.

And why not? On April 18, 1986, he was appointed by President Aquino as the Officer-in-Charge of Quezon City. He was then 33, the youngest chief executive of the country's premier city since the time of its founding father, the dynamic late President Manuel Luis Quezon.

On February 2, 1988, Simon was elected mayor, and two years ago he was elected president of the City Mayors League of the Philippines. He was re-elected to the post last year.

A product of the 1986 EDSA Revolution, Mayor Simon, like Jose Rizal, Andres Bonifacio, Emilio Jacinto, and Apolinario Mabini before him, is proof that age is not a hindrance in the service of one's country and people. History is replete with dazzling legends of young Caesars crossing their Rubicons while old warriors hemmed and hawed.

Simon's brash and bold vision is rooted in what Lenin called "objective reality." The mayor is no romantic dreamer: He is a doer, a man of action. When Metro Manila literally drowned in that Friday flash flood last July, Mayor Simon begged off from a taping session and dashed to Balintawak in a borrowed tricycle. In the pouring rain, with the floodwaters swirling around him, he supervised over the monstrous traffic jam there because, after all, he is the leader, he is in charge of the city, and the callousness of some of his policemen must not be visited on the hapless taxpaying commuters and motorists.

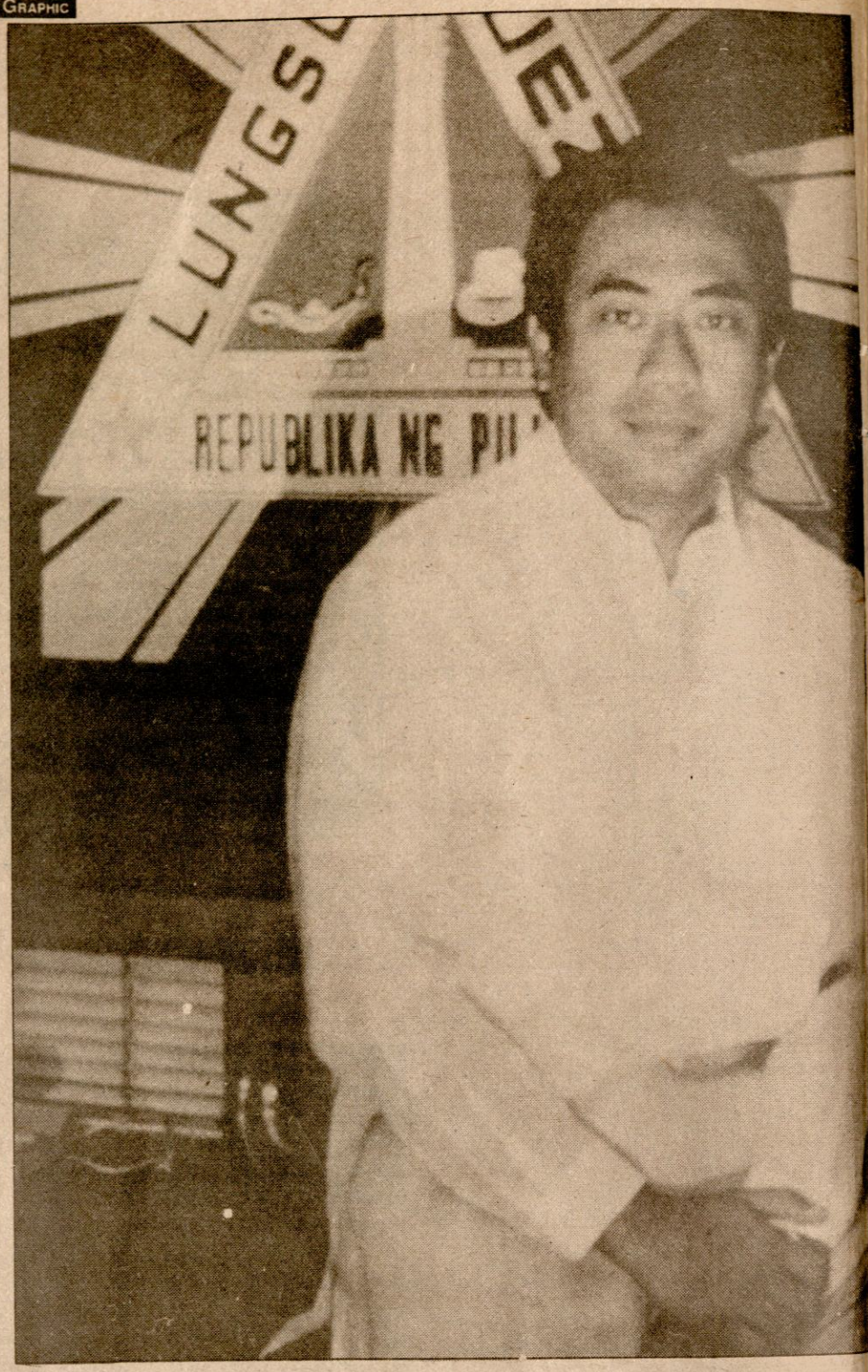
When Mount Pinatubo erupted, the mayor unhesitatingly proffered a helping hand to the panicky evacuees who had strayed into Metro Manila.

While Manila and Caloocan are neck deep in stinking garbage and decaying buildings, while Parañaque and Las Piñas wallow in crimes, Simon dreams of continuing his efforts to turn his city into a pristine metropolis from the pastoral wasteland that it was 52 years ago.

The mayor knows his city's history and its promise as a self-contained economic dragon of tomorrow. He knows, for example, that 25 percent of Metro Manila's land area is Quezon City, and 20 percent of Metro Manila's burgeoning population resides in Quezon City. So he is already dreaming up solutions for the bigger problems ahead: traffic jams, worsening pollution, and rampant squatting.

While he acknowledges that these problems go hand in hand with development and progress, he also notes that his city's growth is basin-like; it is all in the center and does not spread outward.

The primary reason why business and industrial establishments are reluctant to re-



Quezon City's young and dynamic mayor envisions a metropolis that includes the provinces of Rizal and Quezon but without the economic problems of Metro Manila.



The mayor (with Vice-Mayor Sotto) sees himself as a man of action



BIBO VENIDA

locate outside the city proper, says Mayor Simon, is the lack of telephone lines outside Metro Manila. Another problem is the policy of the Department of Agrarian Reform regarding agricultural lands. In the department's view, agricultural lands must remain so, regardless of the country's will to industrialize. And to think that industrialization, according to economist Alejandro Lichauco, can help eradicate widespread poverty in the nation.

Luckily, the new local government code allows for the conversion of 15 percent of agricultural lands into residential, business and industrial uses. With this, Mayor Simon is now ready to launch his brainchild: Metro Quezon.

Metro Quezon, according to Mayor Simon, is the proposed merger of Quezon City and the two provinces of Rizal and Quezon. The chief aim of this merger is the fast-tracking of the political, economic and social progress in these three local government units.

Principal advocates of this proposed confederation are the three chief executives of the three units—Mayor Simon, Rizal Governor Reynaldo San Juan, and Quezon Governor Eduardo Rodriguez.

San Juan and Rodriguez, says Mayor Simon, are attracted to the idea because of their dissatisfaction with their existing political groupings. The merger would mean that the three units would bolt from their present regional affiliations.

Quezon and Rizal would cede from CALABARZON, which includes the provinces of Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon. Quezon City would drop out of Metro Manila, which encompasses four cities and 13 municipalities.

Metro Manila is the "stillbirth of enterprising ideas," complains Mayor Simon. He points to the failure of the Metro Manila Authority (MMA) to lay down policies responsive to the needs of its constituency.

The Metro grouping delimits the government's service capability, because the MMA's emphasis on a strong central government only promotes the interests of millionaire financiers, rich traders and high-tech industries, according to Mayor Simon. "It has failed to make room for the workingman, for the economic interests of the have-nots, for political democracy, for local loyalties."

Rodriguez, on the other hand, observes that CALABARZON "cannot create the condition and climate for a long-term growth because it has failed to combine the interest of commerce with that of the farmers, the fishermen and the workers—the ones who should benefit most from the growth."

And San Juan, still hurting from the MMA's refusal to return the 11 towns and one city it had taken away from Rizal province during the Marcos years, says that the "over-concentration of similar activities in one area are attempts at success through conformity rather than diversity."

In the proposed Metro Quezon merger, each of the three local units will have specific roles. Quezon City, according to Mayor Simon, will be the financial hub and civic center. It will be the showcase of trading, banking and financial services, communications, postal and hotel facilities, restaurants and other food services, entertainment and shopping malls.

Rizal province, with its vast fishing grounds, abundant grazing land and generous soil, will be the food center.

Quezon province will be the seaport, since it fronts the Pacific Ocean. It will also be the site of an international airport and will aspire to become an international trading and finance haven.

As a political subdivision, Metro Quezon will have a governor, a vice-governor, and eight board members. It will be linked from point to point by the 60-kilometer Marikina-Infanta highway, cutting travel time from the present seven hours to only 50 minutes. Infanta will be turned into a "university city."

This is the long-term plan. For the short term, Mayor Simon proposes to divide Quezon City into four cities, each city having its own chief executive. Then he will invite San Jose del Monte in Bulacan and Marikina to join Metro Quezon. A 30-kilometer railroad will be built to link San Jose del Monte with Quezon City.

"[Transport] Secretary Pete Prado likes the idea," reveals Mayor Simon. "He promises to complete the entire system within six months if we can secure the right of way. But MWSS [Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System] administrator Luis Sison does not want the train to pass through La Mesa Dam in Novaliches."

Mayor Simon grimaces, saying: *"Laging may* sour grape. Sison makes a lot of objections to stall the project. *Nabaligtad ang mundo.* Instead of Secretary Prado objecting to the project, *si Sison ang naging problema.* He can't even deliver water in Quezon City. And his answer is stupid. *Wala rin daw tubig ang* MWSS. What kind of an answer is that?"

While waiting for the right moment to implement the railroad project, Mayor Simon and Secretary Prado are onto a new idea: a city train, carrying 300 passengers per car, that will use the city's existing roads.

Another vision of Mayor Simon is to make Quezon City the cooperatives capital of the country. In his provincial sorties as president of the City Mayors League of the Philippines, he notes the big markup of essential goods sold in his city over farm-gate prices for agricultural products and manufacturers' finished goods. The high retail prices of both agricultural and manufactured goods, says he, are caused by middlemen.

To ease the economic burden of his constituency, Mayor Simon has formed cooperatives all over his city, starting with the Barangay Retail Stores (BRS). With a seed capital of P10,000 provided by the city government, each BRS is manned by three or four persons, with the barangay captain of the area overseeing the operation.

All 70 retail stores established so far offer basic commodities at prices 25 to 30 percent lower than the prevailing ones. The scheme is made viable through a direct trade hookup with farmers' groups and manufacturers.

Explains Mayor Simon: "We do not wish to compete with small retailers who are themselves economically harassed like the majority of our people. Our objective is merely to influence and stabilize prices at certain levels."

The BRS is thus allowed to make profits—but only enough to defray overhead costs, including the salaries of those involved in it. The scheme works well in keeping the prices down and in providing livelihood to a good number of people.

In fact, the success of the BRS program has so encouraged the revolutionary young leader that he now plans to replicate it in the city's elementary and secondary schools, both public and private.

This time the parents-teachers associations will be tapped and provided with enough capital by the city government to make available to students school supplies such as notebooks, pad papers, pens and pencils—at lower prices.

In addition, the Quezon City Economic Development Board has been set up pre-



Simon (right) considers Metro Manila the "stillbirth of enterprising ideas"

cisely to establish linkages with foreign investors, particularly in Japan and China, and entice them to put up mini-industrial estates in the city. The estates are expected to generate up to 50,000 jobs.

Mayor Simon believes that "one of the primary social objectives of the government is the equitable distribution of wealth and the assurance of equal access to opportunities. I have, however, come to realize that without economic recovery and development, there is going to be no wealth to distribute. And I do not intend to equitably distribute poverty."

As for the mushrooming of squatter colonies in Quezon City, Mayor Simon wants the public to know that the problem remains unsolved not because of his administration but because of the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) which, Simon says, is the "coddler of squatters."

"I'm not anti-poor, just pro-order. Just because we're poor [is not reason enough] to steal. Being poor is not an excuse for committing crimes. We must have order. And as long as Mary Concepcion Bautista is chair of the CHR, we cannot have order," he laments. "Every time we try to do our job, she files charges against us. She says we cannot demolish squatter shanties without relocating them. But where are the relocation sites? She also says that we can only demolish those shanties that were built after July 19, 1990, the cut-off period sanctioned by the CHR. But how about those that were built before that date?"

Since May 1986 to the present, the city government has been demolishing 70 to 80 illegal hovels per week to rid the city of unwanted squatters. But the city's efforts are being thwarted by Bautista who has already filed 72 cases against the city's demolition teams and peace officers.

The only way to solve the squatter problem of the city, says Mayor Simon, is to replace Bautista. But she cannot be replaced, says the Mayor, because she's a constitutional officer. Not even President Aquino can do anything about it.

Mayor Simon claims, however, that his administration is lenient to squatters who have a right to be relocated. He cites barangays Payatas and Krus na Ligas where some 5,000 squatter families have been resettled so far under the Lupang Pangako scheme.

Moreover, Mayor Simon scuttles the public perception that mayors in Metro Manila tolerate squatters for their political survival.

"That's not true," says Simon. "[You only get their vote] when you can meet their demands, which are not reasonable. Otherwise, they'll vote against the incumbent."

Mayor Simon also rues the fact that he's being blamed for the sprouting of squatters along North Avenue, near EDSA facing SM City. He explains that the city government only rented out two hectares of the 24-hectare lot owned by the National Housing Authority (NHA), so the "policing of the remaining area is the responsibility of the NHA, not the city administration."

Hampered by legal impediments and the public's baseless condemnation of his stewardship, Mayor Simon nevertheless continues to flesh out his bold, innovative programs, adding to them the 11 important needs of the city's populace. These are housing, employment, cleanliness and sanitation, public morality, public service, the environment, political reconciliation, public health, peace and order, education and economic growth.

On October 12 this year, the 52nd anniversary of the founding of Quezon City, Mayor Simon will launch the "I Love QC" Movement. The movement hopes to institutionalize among Quezon City residents, homegrown and otherwise, 10 basic values that will make them love, honor, and respect their city.

In all his dreams for the city, Mayor Simon is guided by the immortal words of President Quezon who said: "I dream of a capital that politically shall be the seat of the government, aesthetically the showcase of the nation—a place that thousands of people will come and visit as the epitome of the future and spirit of the country, socially a dignified concentration of human life, aspirations, endeavors and achievements, and economically a productive self-contained community." G

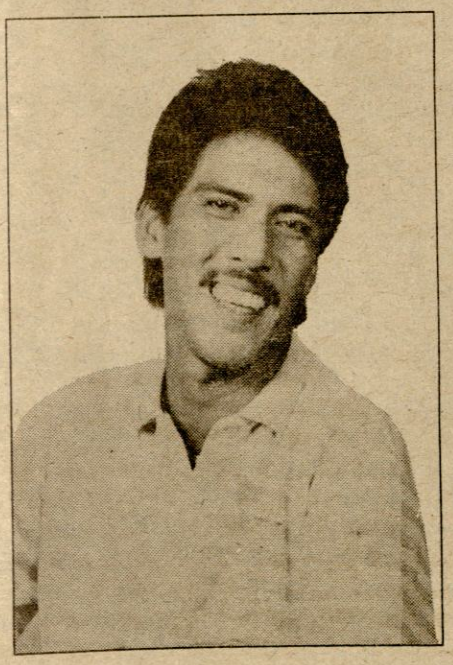
TITO VICE

Vicente Castelo Sotto III, better known as Tito Sotto, also known as Tito Vice on *Eat Bulaga*, is one of a few of God's children who have been blessed with a surfeit of talents. Lean, tall and good-looking, he's one of the country's top sportsmen (1984 international bowling champion), a songwriter, an award-winning composer, and now vice-mayor of Quezon City.

Although he is better known as an entertainer, this may be surpassed by his new role as a politician. His easy access to media, particularly television and film, gives him a rare and tremendous advantage over other politicians. In fact, it is to the media that Sotto attributes his overwhelming victory in the local elections.

"Que sera sera" is how Sotto sums up his attitude toward politics at the moment. "Entertainment is a vastly different field from public service. You may be successful in the first one, but not necessarily in the other. If it were merely a matter of selling a record, then it would be easier." The vice-mayor knows what he's talking about: he's the composer of the hit song "Magkaisa."

As early as 7:30 in the morning, Sotto's office is already swarming with callers. To an ordinary mortal, this may convey the impression that being a vice-mayor is difficult, what with all these people waiting to unload their problems on one's lap. Sotto just smiles and replies: "Not at all. My policy is to attend to them promptly and help them with their problems the best way I can. I learned this in showbiz."



Most of the problems people bring to Sotto are those that concern employment, medicines or hospitalization, police assistance, housing or rental problems, and drug addiction cases.

"Some callers merely need psychological help, a word of encouragement," he says. "A sympathetic ear is all they need."

Indeed, his experience as an entertainer has helped him a lot in his new job as public servant. Unlike other politicians who take themselves too seriously, Sotto is always ready with that winsome smile, that soothing pat on the back, that little joke or exchange of pleasantries that inspires self-confidence.

"I campaigned on a platform of sincerity in public service," says Sotto who won the number two post in Quezon City with the biggest margin ever in the history of the city. "I constantly have to remind myself of that promise."

But it seems he has never forgotten, because what could be a better reminder of one's public duties than attending the flag ceremonies at the city hall's grounds—which he does every morning without fail?

Since he assumed his post in 1988, Tito Sotto has already developed some kind of routine. After attending the flag ceremony, he would walk straight to Mayor Jun Simon's office at the second floor of the city hall, where the two would confer on the day's tasks. This usually takes an hour or so. Then he goes to his own office on the same floor to attend to callers, act on the complaints and needs of his constituents, or sign papers.

When he is free, he convenes the various committees he heads, such as the community livelihood committee, the health and environmental sanitation committee, and the anti-drug abuse and youth development coordinating committee.

In the afternoon of Mondays and Thursdays, Sotto takes time off from his committee meetings to preside over the city council's sessions.

Not every day, however, is a busy day for Sotto, and so during lunch breaks he still finds the time to co-host the noontime show *Eat Bulaga* at the Broadcast City. From there he drives straight back to city hall. Unless really necessary, Sotto says he will not give up show business. He has reasons for this. For one, the salary he gets as vice-mayor is modest—not enough to support the needs of his family. Also, his easy access to the media helps him in reaching out to people everywhere in Quezon City.

Just like in Manila, the vice-mayor of Quezon City presides over the sessions of the 24-member city council. This is Sotto's main job, but Mayor Simon gave him the additional job of heading the youth and sports development council, a carry-over from the days of Vice-Mayor Steve Sarino. The city government pays special attention to the youth because, besides squatting, drug addiction is one of Quezon City's more urgent problems.

"Most of the drug addicts in Quezon City are students and unemployed and out-of-school youths," Sotto points out. The council has discovered that most of these youths have turned to drugs because of parental neglect, idleness and others. "Our strategy is to organize the youth from all the 134 barangays of Quezon City and involve them in sports or livelihood projects to divert their attention from drugs," explains Sotto.

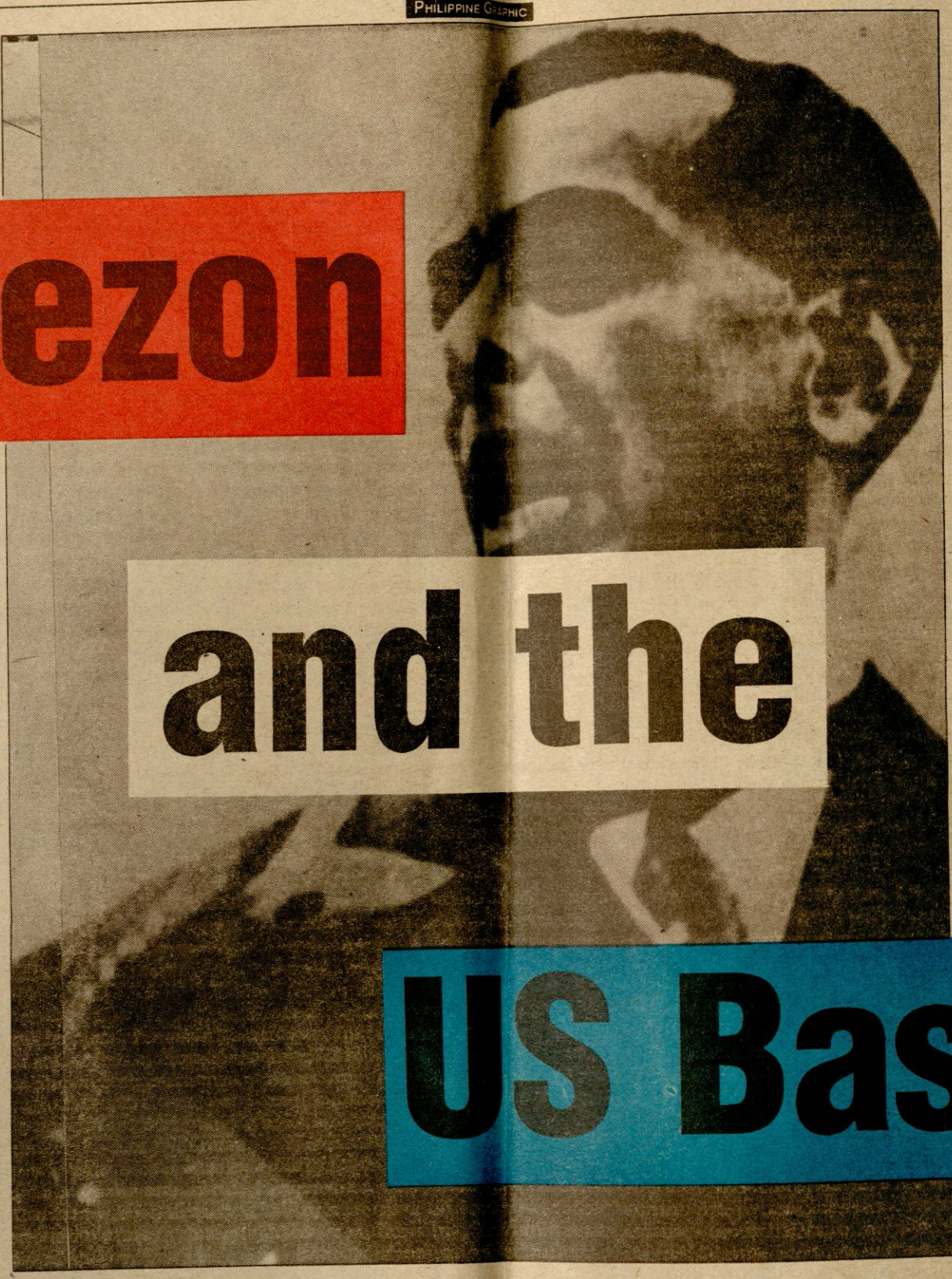
Sotto must have been successful in this, because Quezon City's anti-drug abuse campaign is now used as a model for similar projects in the other cities of Metro Manila. Most of Quezon City's youths are active in all kinds of sports—basketball, swimming, bowling, golf and boxing, among other sports. In fact, the city's sports program has become some sort of a talent discovery program. For instance, in boxing, several talented boys from Quezon City may soon fight in important national boxing bouts.

Wife Helen Gamboa, also a former television and film star, does not meddle in her husband's official duties. She and Mayor Simon's wife, Marivic, however, are involved in civic activities, particularly in the improvement of the city's parks and the care of streetchildren.

It is too early to judge whether Sotto, who comes from a family of politicians (his grandfather, Vicente Sotto of Cebu, was a senator whose brother was a congressman), will make a good vice-mayor. But it seems already clear during these past three years that Tito Sotto will excel in politics as he has excelled in the entertainment world.

NOEL F. DE JESUS

Quezon and the US Bases



The president of the Philippine Commonwealth did not kowtow to the Americans.

By MANUEL F. ALMARIO

If President Manuel Luis Quezon, the architect of our independence from the United States, were alive today, he would be against the extension of the stay of the US military bases in Philippine territory.

In 1933, as Senate President, Quezon campaigned for the rejection of the Hare-Hawes-Cutting Law which was passed by the US Congress and which promised independence to the Philippines in 10 years. The main reason for Quezon's objection was that the law contained basing provisions in favor of the United States.

The law was obtained largely through the efforts of Speaker Sergio Osmeña Sr. and Senator Manuel Roxas, whose team was then popularly known as the Os-Rox mission. In pushing for the approval of the measure by the Philippine legislature, Osmeña and Roxas argued that it was the best that could be secured from the US Congress under the circumstances.



NEL DIZON

Protesters march against the bases

History is now being repeated, and this is the same argument that is being advanced by incumbent President Corazon C. Aquino and her secretary of foreign affairs, Raul Manglapus, who headed the panel that negotiated the new bases agreement of 1991. Now, Quezon's modern counterpart, Senate President Jovito Salonga, opposes the new bases pact.

Quezon strongly disagreed with Osmeña and Roxas. He stressed that the provision which would allow the United States to retain portions of the Philippine territory as military and naval reservations was "inconsistent with true independence, violated dignity and was subject to misunderstanding" (*History of the Filipino People* by Teodoro A. Agoncillo, fifth edition.)

Many historians, including Agoncillo himself and Pulitzer prize winner Stanley Karnow, author of the book *In Our Image: America's Empire in the Philippines*, later claimed that Quezon opposed the HHC Law merely because he did not want his political rivals, Osmeña and Roxas, to claim credit for obtaining the Independence Act from the United States. If they got away with it, they would then overshadow Quezon and beat him to the presidency of the Commonwealth and the Republic afterwards.

They seem to imply that Quezon exaggerated the importance of and the possible harmful consequences of the bases provision to a nation that was then a-borning.

Through political sagacity and skill and strong leadership, Quezon convinced the Philippine Congress to reject the Hare-Hawes-Cutting Act. In November 1933, Quezon went to the US and lobbied for a

new independence bill, the Tydings-McDuffie Act, which was enacted by the American Congress without the offending provision. In 1934, the Philippine legislature overwhelmingly approved the Act, paving the way for the establishment of the Philippine Commonwealth as the transition government to "complete and absolute independence."

Quezon was ably aided in the campaign against the bases by Senator Claro M. Recto, who was then in the opposition as a "Democrata." Recto later chaired the Constitutional Convention that drafted the 1935 Constitution. He became the chief spokesman for Filipino nationalism after the death of Quezon and during the post-World War II years.

Quezon also got a boost in having the Tydings-McDuffie Act approved by the US Congress from then newly elected President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, a Democrat who disliked American imperialism and sympathized with the Filipinos' desire for independence.

In his autobiography, *The Good Fight*, Quezon related that when he spoke to the American president about the bases problem, Roosevelt "readily agreed that the maintenance of military reservations in the Philippines after the proclamation of the Philippine Republic would in itself make the granting of independence a farce."

According to Quezon, Roosevelt stated further: "After all, the American military force in the Islands is too small to protect the Philippines from foreign invasion, and after we have been in the Islands all these many years, it will be impossible to induce Congress to appropriate the necessary funds for the military defense of the Islands and the maintenance of an army of sufficient size to keep the enemy at bay."

Roosevelt's words proved prophetic. Scarcely 10 years later, the Japanese invaded the Philippines, and the American armed forces in the archipelago were indeed too puny to successfully resist the Japanese invasion.

But Quezon died before liberation came. His vice-president, Sergio Osmeña, succeeded him as President. Manuel Roxas, who, together with Osmeña, had procured the HHC Act, beat Osmeña for the presidency in the 1946 elections, and became the first president of the Second Philippine Republic (that of General Emilio Aguinaldo being the First).

Roxas now did what he had failed to do when Quezon was alive to frustrate him. He secured and signed a Military Bases Agreement with the United States in 1947. This Pact is now the basis for the presence of American military bases in our country, particularly in Subic Bay and Clark Field.

Events have proven that the question of American bases in the Philippines is not as inconsequential as some historians have claimed. The argument of Quezon and Roosevelt that the presence of US military bases in the Philippines would make its independence a "farce" is still being used by anti-bases proponents today.

The massive financial and military aid given by the United States to the Marcos dictatorship because of the bases, an assistance which prolonged the dictatorship and also the agony of the Filipino people, proved the artificiality of our independence with bases, as suggested by Quezon and Roosevelt.

Karnow relates in his book that Marcos blackmailed US President Lyndon Johnson into supporting him after Johnson injudiciously revealed to Marcos that the US was keeping nuclear weapons on US bases in the Philippines. "We had to submit to Marcos because of the bases," a Johnson aide told Karnow, a respected American journalist-historian.

"Successive administrations in Washington," writes Karnow, "primarily focused on the future of the Philippine bases, had flinched on exerting pressure on Marcos that might complicate new negotiations."

And then there was that fateful flight of the American jets from the US bases that turned the tide in the government's favor during the military coup attempt in December 1989 that almost toppled the Aquino administration. Is this "favor" or boon granted by the Bush administration to Aquino now being returned through the acceptance by the government of a bargain-basement compensation package for the extension of the US stay in Subic Bay?

At any rate, the question of whether or not to allow the Americans to maintain military bases in our country continues to divide our people sharply. Fears of another military coup attempt should the Senate refuse to ratify the new bases pact have surfaced. And even the local military brass have tried to influence the Senate by warning that the armed forces would be weakened by the withdrawal of the American bases.

Hence, President Quezon's prophecy that the bases presence would be "misunderstood" has become a reality two or three generations after his birth.

As we observe Quezon's 113th birthday on August 19, we should remember most of all Quezon's "fiery nationalism," which convinced the Americans that the Filipinos are worthy of independence and of respect. Quezon did not kowtow, like our present leaders and negotiators, to the Americans.

At one time Quezon stormed into the office of US Governor General Henry Stimson, who was blocking Philippine independence, and told him "most emphatically" that "if the United States retained the Philippines under the American flag and taxed our products entering the United States while keeping open the Philippine market for the free entrance of American goods, I would start a revolution against the United States."

Quezon recalled in his autobiography that Stimson smiled and said, "I would not blame you." Stimson then opposed the Timberlake Bill that would have mandated trade discrimination against the Philippines.



In a speech defending his stand against the HHC Act in 1933, Quezon declared:

"They say that it is arrogance to fight for our rights today because we are a weak people and we have to contend with the people of the most powerful government in the world, and they believe that the proper attitude that we should adopt is to obey all that they tell us to do and to receive all that they deign to give us regardless of the fact whether what they order us to do is good for us or not...

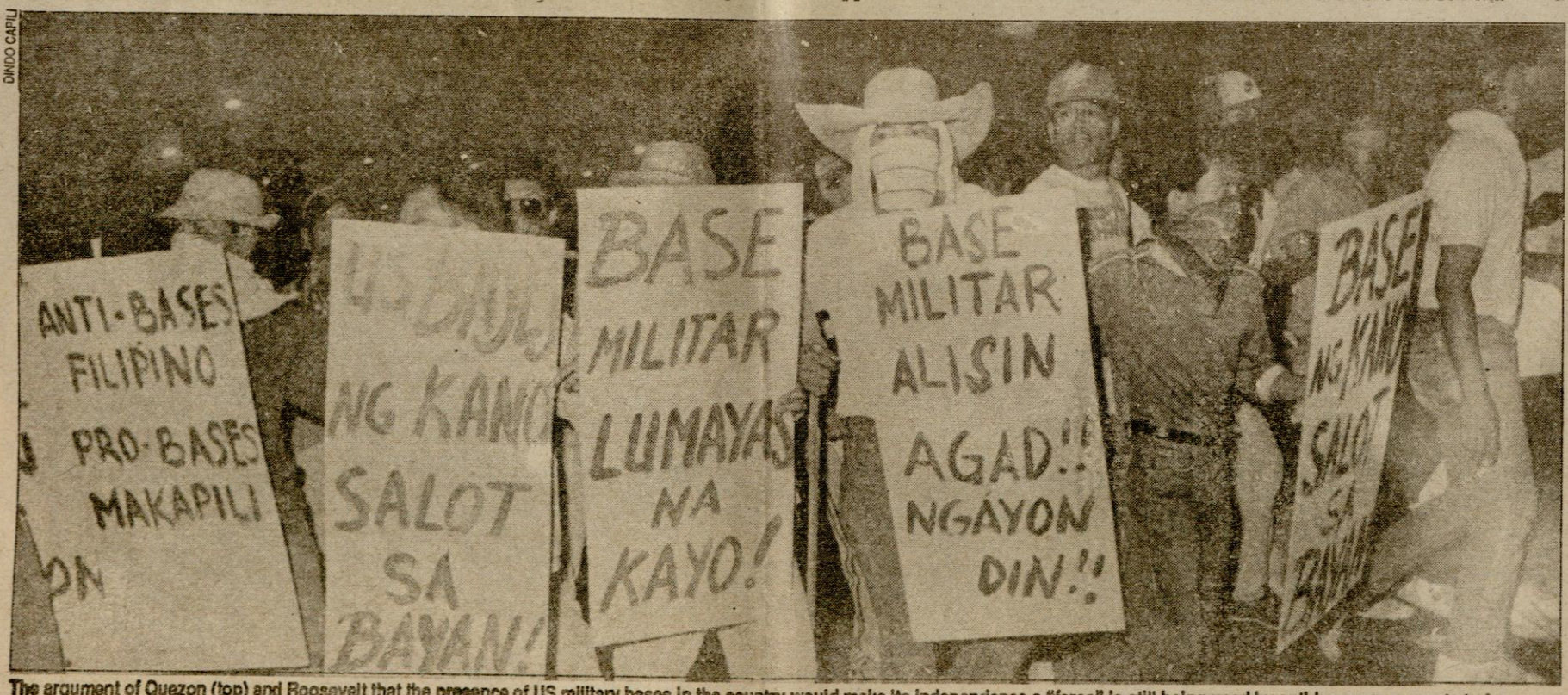
"Woe to the Filipino people, woe be to the Filipino people on that day when our politicians, our leaders of thought, our industrial, commercial, and agricultural leader should counsel our people: 'Obey what you are ordered to do and accept what they give you!'

"When that day comes, my dear countrymen, the time shall come to destroy the statue of Rizal at the Luneta, because that statue would then serve only as a proof of our degradation and of our treachery to the doctrines which he has taught us and for which he died."

Now when our present leaders are telling us to accept what the Americans are giving us because that is the best we can expect and get, when our fiscal officials are telling us to pay foreign debts, even if unjustly imposed on us by a dictatorship and conniving bankers, then perhaps it is time to do as Quezon advised.

But the Aquino administration has already started doing that by desecrating the shrine of Rizal at Fort Santiago in search of the buried Marcos stolen treasure. Maybe the Luneta monument will be next. G

DINDO CAPILI

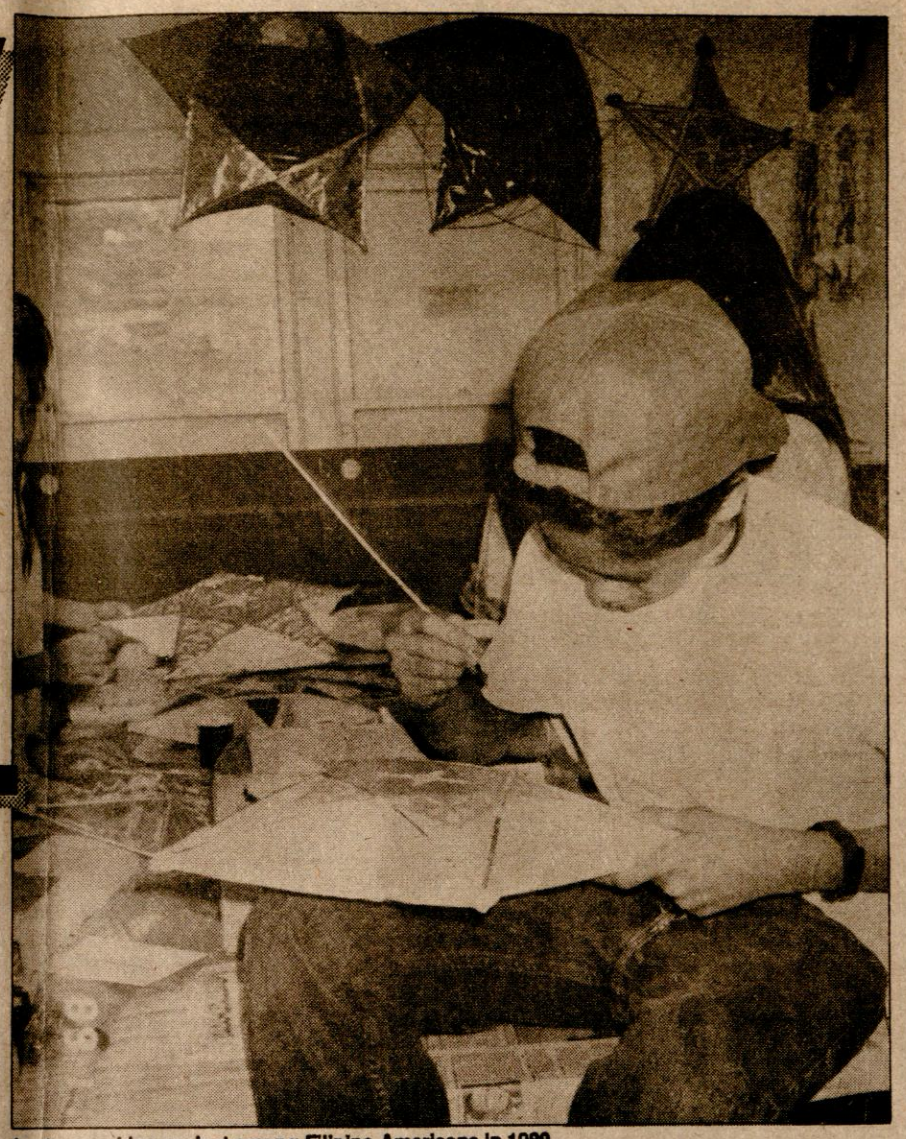


The argument of Quezon (top) and Roosevelt that the presence of US military bases in the country would make its independence a "farce" is still being used by anti-bases proponents today

By FE PANALIGAN-KOONS

PINOY KIDS' WAR IN L.A.

Gang members are known to start as early as nine, while still in grade school.



Lantern-making project among Filipino-Americans in 1989

Allen Ongchangco and Joe Navidad, counselors of Search To Involve Pilipino Americans (SIPA), a nonprofit, community-based organization helping Filipino-American youths in Los Angeles, California, sigh wearily. Their kids have been caught by the cops on a "G-ride," gang lingo for car theft.

To think they've both been working nearly nonstop—filling out volumes of forms daily, organizing parents' workshops—in a supreme effort to reach out to young Filipino members of disruptive street gangs in the state, in the hope that they could be made to realize that joining gangs is a waste of time, not to mention a risk to life and limb, and maybe then they would be convinced to stay in school.

The gang problem among young Filipino-Americans gets worse by the minute. According to statistics provided by Sergeant James Sully of the LA County Sheriff's Department, there are now 90 such groups in the county, 50 of which are hard-core police hazards. This marks a 20 percent increase from 1989, and indicates a total membership of three million. Three thousand of these are Pinoys.

Gang members are known to start as early as nine, while still in grade school. Adult gangs have all but disappeared, since the predominant age is 18 (although some gangs have members aged 40, who are called *veteranos*). These youth gangs began to proliferate in 1984, mostly formed by immigrants with criminal backgrounds. In fact, many of the hard-core group members brought over the names of their original gangs in the Philippines. Most of these groups are in San Francisco and the Temple-Rampart area in Los Angeles.

Filipino members tend to be flashier than most Asians, wearing the gang names tattooed on their arms, hands, chest, back, neck or legs. The tattoos, homemade, ally include the gang members' names, too.

Filipino gang members also burn themselves with cigarette, usually on the back of their hands, wrists, forearms or knee caps, as part of initiation and as a sign of loyalty and toughness.

A typical street gang structure by members is broken into: the hardcores, the affiliates, the peripheral and the cliques. The hardcores are the leaders, the most violent, streetwise and knowledgeable in legal matters. The level of violence the gang indulges in is determined by hardcores, who either participate in violent acts themselves, or push the other members to commit the crimes. They are usually respected by outsiders as well as by gang members.

Affiliates are those who associate with the group largely for status and recognition—wearing club jackets, attending socials—essentially to fulfill emotional needs. Peripherals move in and out of the group, depending on their interest in the gang's current activities. Cliques are groupings according to age or area of operation.

To join a street gang, a gang member is ordered to do a crime or "jumped in," a process akin to fraternity hazing. Members beat up the neophyte, sometimes severely, to test his courage and fighting ability. On the other hand, members who want to quit are "jumped out (also beaten up)."

Gang members have developed non-verbal communications consisting of "hand jive" or sign language, and codes or symbols called *placas*. A *placa* usually stands for the name of the gang or the name of a member (which is often affixed to the symbol for the gang name). When these *placas* are written on another gang's wall, or anywhere in another territory, it is taken to mean a challenge is being posed to the resident group's ability to defend its territory. Then a rubout (crossing out) takes place. Often, the result is a gang war.

Filipinos compare closely to Hispanics as gang members, especially where codes and symbols are concerned. In fact, many Filipino groups have Chicano members. Unlike the purely Hispanic and Black gangs, however, Pinoy groups tend to spread out. Sergeant Sully, who also helps run LA's Operation Safe Streets (OSS) says that Filipino gangs are harder to track if only simply because they tend to move from one city to another and often form new cliques to mislead law enforcers. In addition, Sully reveals that majority of the Filipino gang members are related, either siblings or cousins and that a great number are immigrants (as opposed to those born in the United States). He also knows of two gangs originally organized in Los Angeles and which have been recently put up in the Philippines.

The OSS, Sully says, hopes to prevent formation of street gangs. Since its launching in 1978, about 11 OSS teams have been put up in four sheriff station projects, throughout the county. Likewise, a state-funded program called Gang Awareness Resource Project (GARP) has commenced, providing a deputy investigator as a liaison between the OSS, school faculties, local business and parents.

"[Since] the power base of most gangs is in the schools, the GARP deputy informs the campus administrators and the parents about gang prevention. He is an expert in that area. He knows gang rivalries and alliances, and is well-versed in gang sub-culture," Sully elaborates.

The sergeant, however, does not believe that the solution to the problem of street gangs lies primarily in funding.

"One can't say that if counseling agencies are given $50 million, the problem will go away. What will make a lot of difference is the strong involvement of parents, schools and, in the final analysis, the entire community. I wonder why, for instance, when gang violence occurs in a Filipino community, the people generally don't say anything. Maybe they find it embarrassing; maybe they don't care. In any case, most Filipino parents are willing to work at getting their children back in the proper direction. That is, after the initial shock of seeing their kids in jail for gang-related crimes."

Modesto Ellano, program coordinator of SIPA and social worker with a master's degree from the California State Long Beach, who was himself involved with a Chicano gang in San Diego in the '40s and '50s, urges parents to reach out to other parents.

"Many Filipinos look upon their children who are gang members as statements of their failure as parents. Among the Asian-Pacific population, children have always been considered as much of a responsibility as a blessing and the family takes care of them as much as possible. But unlike in the Philippines where parents can count on their sisters, brothers or grandparents to look after the children, nobody watches the kids here. There is no supervision in the home. Most of the parents are busy striving to be economically successful and so many children become latchkey kids. At a young adolescent age, the kids become pleasure-oriented, a predilection which the gangs satisfy," Ellano says.

A Long Beach City College teacher who has been counseling families since 1976, Ellano likewise points out that parents need to understand that when the kids do not listen to them and are immersed instead in gang activities, their position as authority figure in the family is not automatically taken away.

"Parents have full authority in the Philippines. Here, children learn in school that if parents spank them, they can charge the parents with child abuse. So, the Filipino parents are at a loss. They should learn to negotiate with their kids in a win/win situation. For instance, maybe they can offer to give their children freedom in some things, as a reward for doing well in school. Here in the US," Ellano points out, "rugged individualism is the rule. The youth should develop a sense of independence for them to learn to make decisions."

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SIPA regularly conducts parent education workshops under both the deliquency prevention and substance abuse programs of the agency. This year, the youth service agency targets the strengthening of parental involvement in youth programs.

Meg Malpaya Thornton, SIPA director adds: "SIPA tries to reach young Filipino-Americans caught between two worlds, and show them what the alternatives are.

"A lot of our youths have problems in adjusting to society here. Even if they were born in the United States, they feel hampered by their being children of immigrant parents. This leads to conflicts between the parents and the youths. Even children of professionals could end up in gangs due to boredom," Thornton observes.

The stories of some youths whom SIPA are trying to help show the necessity of extending more assistance to these juveniles. Their names have been changed here, for their protection.

Christopher Jones, now 20, founded one of the gangs which extended its territory from the Rampart-Temple area to Pasadena and West Covina. He was only 15 when he started hanging around the Rosemont Elementary School. Most of the founding members, all into heavy metal music, decided to form a gang as a way to get together. Within a year, their membership had grown to 80. They would go to school to drink beer and do drugs.

"I got arrested only once, when we went to check out a birthday party in Carondelet. We were stopped by the cops. I didn't know that one of the two guys we had recruited had brought a knife with him. They brought me to jail. Because it was a weekend, I couldn't get a hold of any counselor. I didn't want to let my mother know, but there was no one else to run to. It was a sad moment for us. I felt so ashamed, and almost pitied my mother. I was 16."

Christopher used to ditch school and do a lot of drugs on weekdays. "I kept moving, changing schools, because I often failed. Drugs messed me up; it confused me and made me feel dead. Whenever I got home, I went straight to the shower to wash my face. I would see myself in the mirror and feel so alone. This year I'm clean. Now, all I want is to go to college."

Domingo has been a gang member since he was 11. He was recruited in school, by a gang that hung around the Sunset-Silverlake area. Now 15, he has left the gang.

"I had joined the gang because it was the 'in' thing. I had been very bored, and too young to understand. Of course, we jumped other gangs and did graffiti. I got caught vandalizing in school and that threw me into probation for six months, with 100 hours of work thrown in. For three months I cleaned the church and, for the last three, I received counseling. Being the youngest in the gang, I enjoyed all the crazy stuff. But I started getting paranoid. I always thought people were after me. I missed my freedom to walk around. You know, we would be stopped and searched for weapons and drugs. It wasn't the kind of life I wanted. It was very hard to jump out because everybody says if you did you were a wimp. But there's nothing like feeling independent and thinking and acting for myself,"

Guy, 14, and Dante, 15, go to school in Eaglerock. Their gang is now a network covering Buena Park, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Canada. Dante just got in this year; Guy was recruited last year. Three weeks ago, the two were caught riding a stolen car. Dante was punished by his stepfather and he wanted to run away, as he had done before.

Dante relates: "They [the family] didn't want to see me because of what happened. I had to call my friends to ask if I could stay with them. But my sister kept crying; I decided to stay because of her. Besides, I had ran away last year, and knew it was hard to be away from home."

After the arrest in the stolen car, Guy is now bent on getting higher grades. "My dad talked to me. My mom was crying. I had to have a serious talk with the whole family I planned to run away, too, but realized it was going to be hard. For now, I'm staying cool for a while."

At Eaglerock High, the kids are asked to write down their reasons for joining gangs, the results of gang involvement, their alternatives and strategies—all a part of the SIPA counseling sessions. One young mestizo insists, "It's [joining gangs] a reality.

Another SIPA youth offers a more enlightened point of view: "You have to fight for your freedom. Fun can be risky. No one stays young forever, so I want to live while I'm young and get along with my parents and do well in school. I owe this to my mom and dad. I want to grow up and know myself and be somebody, my way." G



Graffiti is not always harmless; sometimes they cause gang wars

Gary V as Father, Son, Holy Man



He has a mean side, he admits: 'When my sugar level is low, I sometimes shout at the kids and the househelp. But I always apologize later.'

PHILIPPINE GRAPHIC In Charge: EMMIE G. VELARDE

LIFESTYLE

By ELVIRA MATA

Random thoughts before, during, and while leaving (without finishing) *Images of Gary V* concert:

—When Gary V stages a concert, people watch.
—And they're early.
—So the concert starts early (only 20 minutes after the indicated time on the ticket; *de rigueur* is an hour).
—Does he usually open his concert with a Christian song? (Could be an opening prayer.)
—Gary V has been called many things, but sexy he's not.
—Why is that?
—Could be his costumes: A black jacket with shoulder tassels and white lace tucked under the vest. Another jacket with one sleeve in black-and-white checks, while the rest of the jacket is solid black. Who's his designer? Eugene Torre?
—Why ever does he wear things like that?
—But his voice...it's so wide-

ranging...from spirited to percussive (his words) to wistful. Amazing grace.
—His dancing, too. Light on his feet is an understatement; he flies.
—Just now, did he actually change the lyrics of "Best of My Love" to "You've got the best of God's love?"
—Quick, where's the exit?

The crowd at the Music Museum was enthusiastic and adoring. Onstage, between songs and Coca-Cola, Gary V spoke of his showbiz beginnings: His first appearance on television on the *Pilita and Jackie* show, the first time he sang and danced on *Penthouse Live!*, his first series of concerts at Tavern on the Square.

All three are defunct (they're no longer around) but Gary Valenciano is still very much so, and he's on top.

But let's go back to before the beginning, as seen through the lens of his father, Vic Valenciano, former president of the Camera Club of the Philippines. Tito Vic has agreed to exhibit his collection of photos of Gary V as a child, also at the Music Museum.

Father on photographing the son:

"Gary is the sixth child in a brood of seven. He had no one to boss except his youngest sister. He was always in the background, in the shadows. I took more pictures of his elder brother; they had a 10 year age gap," he relates.

"I never expected Gary to become a pop superstar. I never even imagined he had talent. I only realized it during the rehearsals of Kundirana [La Salle glee club, of which Gary was a member]. I said to myself, 'I think there is something here.' So I forced my entire family to go. Then I told all my friends, 'You have to see my son.' But I never thought he would reach these heights."

Now is the father's favorite stage of photographing the son. He has done Gary's posters. Pensive is his favorite pose.

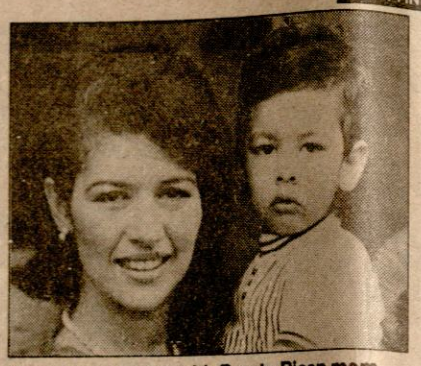
"I have so many shots of him dancing, singing, acting, jumping. But seldom can you catch him pensive."

The Museum crowd's favorite seems to be Gary at three, in the arms of his ravishing mom, Grimilda Santiago, a Puerto Rican. First runnerup is the photograph where the pop superstar makes faces.

"If he had not gone into singing, Gary would have been a photographer or a cinematographer," his father reveals. "Gary has made his own version of *Star Trek*. He did strange and wonderful things with inanimate objects using a video camera."

Gary recalls the rest of the beginnings himself.

"My audition song for Kundirana was James Ingram's 'Just Once.' When I started singing, I wanted to be a balladeer. I sang songs like 'One Hundred Ways' [also Ingram's], Barry Manilow's 'Somewhere Down the Road.'



Young Gary (right) with Puerto Rican mom

"Then I heard Al Jarreau. I never thought anyone could do those things. I liked it, but I didn't know I could do it. I just did. It's not scatting, it's more like ad-libbing, doing things one feels like doing. I guess that's the Latin in me," Gary says.

All of a sudden, there he was, all set to guest in then top-rating *Penthouse Live!*, hosted by Martin Nievera and Pops Fernandez before they became mister and missus. But what would Gary sing? He wanted to do Al Jarreau's "Love is Real," but at that time, there were no such things as over-the-counter minus-one tapes. To have one made would have been too expensive.

A friend, Juan Miguel Salvador (of Rage Band and a former Kundirana member), learned of his predicament and decided to help out. Juan Miguel's manager, Atek Jacinto, owned a very expensive voice eliminator. They used it to make an Al Jarreau minus-one for Gary. That solved the problem of what to sing. But how to move?

The night before his *Penthouse* appearance, his sister Gina (former *Penthouse* dancer) called from the States. Their conversation went something like this:

Gina: Hey, I hear you're coming out in *Penthouse Live!*

Gary: Yeah.

Gina: What're you gonna do?

Gary: This song of Al Jarreau—it's kinda fast.

Gina: How're you gonna sing that? You don't expect to do that song same way you do a ballad?

Gary: Well, I can sway left and right.

Gina: (Exasperated) Gary, you have to do what you feel is in your heart. Move! Do whatever you feel like doing.

And that was when the worm was born in Gary's body.

"I did what I felt like doing. I was very percussive. There were a lot of syncopated breaks in between, but I did it. When I went home to view the tape, it looked really good. And from that day on, I just did what I felt like doing," Gary says.

From here, it was just a small step to Michael Jackson's moonwalk. His stint at Tavern on the Square followed, then the records. The big leap came via his concert at Araneta, then ULTRA, then Araneta, then ULTRA, and so on, but that's history.

He is bent on becoming an international singer. The results of his forages in the States are still vague, but he has just recorded a 10-song album in Japan. Seven songs are in English, two in Japanese and one in Spanish. It will be released in Japan next year, and eventually in the Philippines.

The album, which he describes as mainstream hip hop, presents a different Gary V. Is he worried, that the less-than-hip Filipino *masa* wouldn't hop on to his new sound?

"People get more excited if Gary does something new," he says.

In the beginning, Angeli Pangilinan, Camay Girl and then a member of Music and Magic, was more popular than Gary V.

She recalls: "Everything I told him to do, he would do. I even asked our manager, Sandra Chavez, to listen to him sing during one of our rehearsal breaks. She was stunned. Now Gary is much much bigger than I ever was."

Angeli has since retired from singing.



Seriously, earlier in his career, Gary needed to be told what to do. Now that he has grown as an artist, he has his own ideas," continues Angeli, now Gary's wife and big boss of Manila Genesis Entertainment and Management Inc., producer of Gary's concerts.

How well do they fare as husband and wife, talent and producer? Rephrased—who's the boss?

"I am," Gary says. "Both in the office and in the house. If she's working late, I call her up and say, 'it's time to go home.'"

Does Angeli agree with everything Gary says?

Gary: No.

Angeli: Yes.

Do we detect marital dissonance?

Gary explains: "When it comes to marketing, which is Angeli's expertise, I leave all decisions to her. But when it comes to the concert, I choose which songs to sing. Although sometimes Angeli suggests that I sing a certain song. And I go, 'not that song again!' 'But Gary, it's a song that people want you to do.' So I sing it and true enough, people love it.

"We have minor arguments. We're human. We say what we feel. But in the end, we don't forget to come together in prayer," he says.

Angeli agrees: "Sometimes, we have creative arguments, which we always settle before we sleep.

"I am blessed with a husband who knows how to say sorry even when he's not in the wrong. He's very humble, which is not usual with guys, I think."

Hear! hear!

"But when it comes to children, Gary is the disciplinarian," Angeli reveals.

"In much the same way that we apologize to each other, we say sorry to the kids," Gary says.

A father who apologizes to his kids? With Gary, it's very possible. Does he have a nasty side?

"Yup. It has something to do with my diabetes. When my sugar level is below normal, I get irritable. It's really bad when my hand shakes so I can't even put the key in the lock of the car. I lose my temper. I shout at the kids, at the househelp. But I apologize later," he says.

Just as no Gary V concert is complete without a Christian song, we cannot possibly wrap up this piece on the pop superstar without mention of... God.

"If I had not accepted the Lord in my life, I'd really be *kalat*. I used to have a lot of insecurities. Will I ever get there? And now that I'm up there, how long will I last? I am not the captain of my life. The Lord is."

Pause for effect.

"God is the secret of my success."

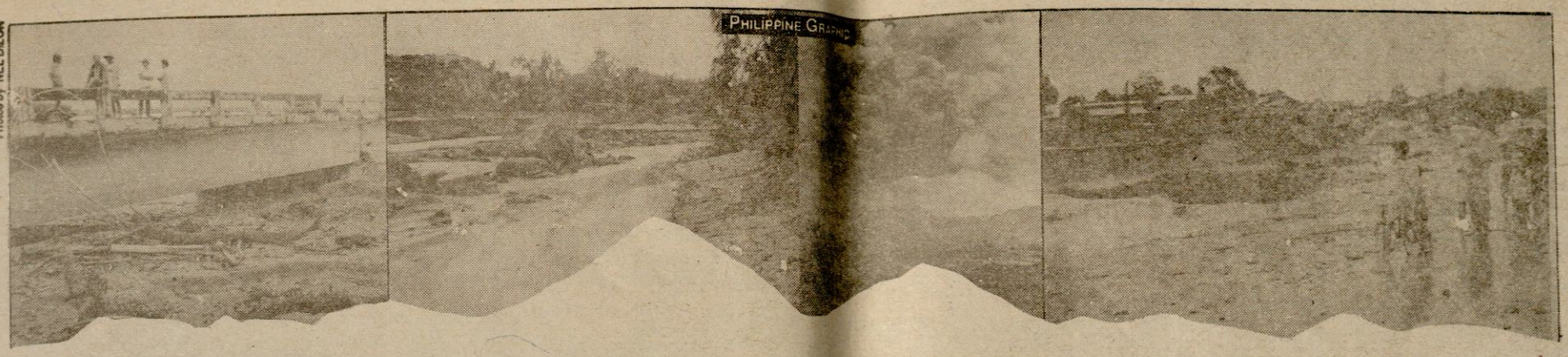
At the risk of sounding like a philistine, has Christianity done anything for Gary's singing? Although this isn't a requirement, most of the people he works with are Born-Again Christians. (*Images* guest Ray-An Fuentes is an avowed born-again. So is director Rowell Santiago, scriptwriter Freddie Santos, musical director Mon Faustino and even choreographer Uriel Policarpio.)

"It just happened. Besides, we work well together. As Christians, there is so much we can tell people, especially people looking for hope. And there are so many people looking for hope," Gary says.

His best friend and idol Ray-An adds: "We have seen music's tremendous potential to help those looking for answers in life. We use different kinds of music—like rap—to go down to the level of consciousness of the people. Like Jesus, who came down to our level because we could not reach God."

Gary agrees: "Christianity has enhanced our music. We give people hope. It's not hard; it's just a prayer away."

Amen. G



Photos by NEL DIZON

VOLCANO MAN

Phivolcs director Raymundo Punongbayan likes to keep his private life private, but Mount Pinatubo has turned him into a household word.

By ANDREA PASION and LARAH LAGMAN

He is bent over his table, working on a map that could only be that of Mount Pinatubo. On the map, yellow Stabilo ink indicates the trail of mudflow. He isn't wearing his glasses.

It's a rainy Friday morning at eight a.m. in the office of Raymundo S. Punongbayan, director of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs).

"Ano ang pag-uusapan natin ngayon?" asks the reluctant interviewee.

Punongbayan believes a man's personal life should remain just that: personal. His seven-page biodata contains two lines about his private life:

Birth: June 13, 1937; Tondo, Manila.
Civil Status: Married; 4 children.

But he obligingly supplies the missing words to his two-line private life.

Raymundo Punongbayan is a BS Geology graduate of the University of the Philippines and has a PhD from the University of Colorado. Where's the MA?

"I went straight for my PhD. I was allowed to do that by the university. *Nagkataon lang, noong kumuha ako ng* qualifying exams for MA, *tinanong ako*, 'Do you want to go direct to PhD?' *Sabi ko*, 'Yes.'"

Of course, it wasn't by chance that he was asked to go straight to his doctorate. That is just his modest way of explaining he qualified for a PhD right after his undergraduate studies.

"Geology is a course that I chose because it was something new then. I started college in 1956. Geology was a new program, and my assessment was that, if I took it, I had better chances of landing a job. And, of course," he adds as an afterthought, "I basically like science."

As a child, Punongbayan and his friends would make their own toys out of sardine cans. *"Alam mo naman sa Tondo, hindi naman masyadong marami ang hinahanap ng mga bata.* So *madaling maging* happy *ang isang bata sa Tondo.* You've got to innovate. *Bata ka pa, ikaw na ang gumagawa ng gusto mong gawin."*

Knowing what he wants is what keeps Phivolcs personnel on their toes. "I want to produce renowned volcanologists, for the simple reason that we have many volcanoes here. We only hear about Japanese volcanologists, American volcanologists. Why not Filipino volcanologists?" He goes on to say that volcanology is a field where Filipinos can excel, and laments the fact that too many go into law and business. Even if there are no volcanoes erupting or earthquakes shaking the country, Phivolcs people are kept busy doing research and fieldwork and charting maps.

There were rumored apparitions that supposedly foretold of the coming eruption. The scientist behind the desk cluttered with maps, agates and volcanic rock says of the rumors: "They are a reflection of the scientific level of education among Filipinos. *Marami tayong pamahiin.* This is one of the things I want to get rid of. We should talk more about scientific explanations rather than explain a phenomenon through legend."

The desire to know more is demonstrated every day in Phivolcs with director Punongbayan at the helm. He makes sure that work doesn't stop at the end of an eruption, setting the example himself.

An ordinary day for the Phivolcs director starts at 7:30 in the morning when he arrives at the office. The day is usually filled with project proposals, papers, programs to write for the institute, and map drawing. Sometimes a day in the office ends at 10 in the evening. "That's one thing I want to promote in the office," he says philosophically. "You're not time-bound. Working time is not eight to five." He goes to bed at 11, complaining that sleep is a waste of time.



"I basically like science"

His set view on time is matched only by his firm view on politics, which is: "Stay out of politics. *Kapag namulitika ka*, you cease being a scientist." He shakes his head to emphasize his words. With all the publicity he has been getting lately, maybe he should consider becoming a *puno ng bayan*. He laughs off the comment: "I just happen to be the director. *Pero ang nagtratrabaho, 'yong mga bata*, the men and women of Phivolcs. They too should be given due credit."

His tight schedule allows Punongbayan little time for his family. But he justifies this by spending "quality time" with his four children: Lourdes, Stauro (short for a mineral called staurorite), Ramon Enrico (a name made out of the initials of Raymundo Punongbayan and of his wife Evelyn) and Andaluz (from another mineral called andalusite).

He doesn't even have time for himself. The last movie he saw was *Easy Rider*, the Peter Fonda film made in the 1960s that made Jack Nicholson a star. During Punongbayan's UP days as chair of the geology department, he used to go to Trellis, a Quezon City restaurant, to talk and drink with friends. Now he contents himself with a beer or two, "to cap the day."

He espies a camera. The squeak of his chair signals his stiffening. Hurriedly, he puts on his glasses. "I usually wear my eyeglasses. That's how I should look. You should always show the ugly side." He laughs. *"Humanap ka ng pangit, di ba?"* The squeak of the chair is much louder when he leans back and folds his arms behind his head after he finds out the camera won't work.

The rain beats continuously on the roof outside Punongbayan's window. He takes a stick out of a pack of Winston reds, his second in the course of the interview. But he does not wet it, contrary to the story that for some unknown reason he licks the whole cigarette before lighting it. *"Hindi ko na ginagawa 'yon.* But I used to do it to slow down the burning."

In the course of the conversation, he mentions that he plans to write a book. In fact he has already written, together with some colleagues, a book about terms in volcanology for media practitioners. But due to the additional jargon that the Pinatubo eruption has brought into circulation, Punongbayan and company feel there is a need to revise the book before printing.

His third cigarette is already bitten at the butt. The coffee is half-drunk and cold. Calamity has made Punongbayan's name a household word, and many things have now been said about him. But probably the most interesting is what he has to say about himself:

"I'm a dreamer. If you dream, you have hope." G

ALTERNATE SETTLAER

FAITH THAT BEARS MIRACLES

By OPHELLIA SAN JUAN

Last July 26, the town of Taguig in Metro Manila celebrated once more the feastday of Santa Ana, or Saint Anne the mother of the Blessed Virgin Mary. On this occasion, a number of the miracles attributed by the townspeople to the gracious grandmother of Jesus who had been their patroness for 404 years were recalled, giving one cause to wonder at the faith that bears forth near-impossible happenings.

One of the most talked-about miracles in Taguig happened during the last days of the Japanese occupation of World War II. The menfolk were herded together under guard inside the church, preparatory perhaps to being killed. The barrio of Ususan was put to the torch, and those who attempted to save some belongings were fired upon by the soldiers. The people were certain that they faced doom from the Japanese military.

In the midst of their hopelessness, American troops suddenly arrived in the vicinity of barrio Bambang. Seeing the Japanese commander and a number of his soldiers aboard a banca, they fired upon and killed the group, thus aborting any dire plans they had for the town and its inhabitants. The Japanese soldiers, without their officer, fled and Taguig was "liberated."

The Americans' sudden arrival, according to accounts, was occasioned by a mother and her young daughter who fetched the troops from Upper Bicutan and led them to the town proper. The American soldiers, say witnesses, declared that the mother and daughter who talked to them had an uncanny resemblance to the images in the church of Saint Anne and her daughter Mary.

Other miracles experienced by Taguig residents were chronicled by a certain A. Enriquez.

During the Occupation years, too, some time between 1943 and 1944, Enriquez says, the barrio of Napindan was subjected to the dreaded *sona*. All the adult men were first brought to the Taguig Elementary School, where they were temporarily detained. After a week of torture, they were lined up in the schoolyard and a hooded informer, with only holes for his eyes, scanned their faces one by one. Several prominent townsmen were pinpointed by the informer as "guerrillas."

These men were taken to the Catholic church convent. One of them, Cosme Chacon, was among those imprisoned and tortured at the second floor of the convent. They were beaten up with heavy wooden clubs, and subjected to the infamous "water cure" (water being poured on the nose and mouth until the belly got bloated, after which they were sometimes stomped upon on the stomach). With a surfeit of suffering, Chacon could only think of the blessings of a relief from torture and freedom. He prayed for these, and asked the help of Saint Anne. Barely two hours afterwards, torture was stopped and they were untied. To their surprise, they were brought back to the elementary school building and were presently released. Cosme Chacon firmly believed this was due to his fervent prayers and great faith in Santa Ana. To this day, he remains a devotee of the saint, for whom he had an image made which participates in the town's pagoda celebration every July 26 and later is brought to Napindan for the evening's procession.

Ramon Doming, on the other hand, was kept in 1943 together with other *sona* victims at the old Airport Studio near Tutuban station. They were terribly cramped and uncomfortable in there, and Doming, who was married and had two children at the time, could not sleep one night thinking of his family. He then saw a mother and daughter approaching their prison quarters. Since he was the only one awake, he ventured to ask the duo about the purpose of their visit. To his surprise, the older woman called him by name, inquiring about his situation. She even touched his knee, Doming recounts, and bade him not to worry about his wife and children. By the grace of God, she said, they were all well and had enough food. "Just think that serving the country is a great and sacred work," she added.

Mother and daughter were then gone quite suddenly, and Ramon Doming remembered in a flash their patroness Saint Anne and her daughter Mary.

When Liberation came, the residents of barrio Napindan elected to celebrate a feast for Saint Anne in thanksgiving for the *sona* victims who came home alive. According to Arcadio Resurreccion, the chair of the festival committee, a mother and her daughter were among those who gave contributions. They handed him a 100-peso bill, but inexplicably asked that they be listed as having contributed P3. Resurrecion wrote *mag-ina* in the contributors' list since the two did not give their names. After this, the duo suddenly disappeared. When nighttime came and the committee counted the donations, the hundred-peso bill was nowhere to be found, but the money they had collected far exceeded the amount in the donors' list.

That year, the farmers' harvest and the fishermen's catch were consistently bountiful. Since then, Napindan celebrates every five years the thanksgiving feast, during which its residents fetch the old Saint Anne image from the town in addition to their own patroness icon. The barrio folk believe that the mother and daughter's giving of their contribution implied a gift of plenty—the rich harvest of rice, fruits and vegetables from their farms and the generous waters of the river which yielded fish and other marine products.



Santa Ana, mother of the Virgin Mary, protects this town from harm, and blesses the people with miracles big and small.

The blessings from Saint Anne also came in the form of miraculous conception for childless couples. Juan and Roberta Villanueva, for example, had been married for 17 years but no child had been born to them. The couple consulted one doctor after another, while *Aling* Berta made her devotions to Saint Anne, whose patronage of family life was well-known. She never wavered in her faith that she would soon conceive, and in due time this came true—she begot three sons. The boys became devotees of Santa Ana as well, as did their own children when they got married and started their own families. The Villanuevas believe that Santa Ana is the patroness of happy families.

Nicanor Tolentino was an employee of the Commission on Audit in 1955 when he met Domingo T. Briones of Tagum, Abra. Briones was then residing on Del Pilar Street in San Andres, Manila. The two discovered that they were married in the same year—1947—but Briones remained childless. Nick suggested that the Briones couple pray to their patroness in Taguig, Santa Ana. The Brioneses made novenas to Saint Anne and, sure enough, they were blessed with an offspring. Nick Tolentino's recruits became lifelong devotees of Taguig's patroness, for whom they offer masses every February and July, her feastdays.

Some other miracles ascribed to Saint Anne are a mixture of the terrifying and the quaint, at times amusing, ones.

Before the outbreak of the Second World War, on July 26, 1940, farmer-fisherman Florencio Q. Valencia of barrio Napindan decided to plow and plant his ricefield although it was the feastday of Saint Anne because all the other plots around him had been planted and his lot was encircled by the paddies of these. He got three men to help him (*bayanihan*-style) in the harrowing while several women planted seedlings on the adjacent furrowed land. His carabao panicked at something and ran madly, pulling the stunned Florencio along the muddied fields. By force of habit, because of his Catholic upbringing in Taguig, he called on their patroness in his hour of need. As he said "Santa Ana," his carabao stopped running and the people, who had thought he was dead, were able to minister to him. Since that time, Florencio Valencia had never worked on the field on a July 26; instead, he went to mass. He became a devotee of Saint Anne and even recruited others.

On December 7, 1956, then four-year-old Gertrudes Buenaventura of barrio Santa Ana went with her sister to Pasig to buy

things for their father, Leopoldo, who was to stand sponsor at a baptism. Tuding had come along because she wanted something to be bought for her, but as her sister and some other companions were at the stalls which sold baptismal clothes, Tuding somehow got lost. As her companions were searching for her, Tuding was also wandering around looking for them.

Tuding was to report later that a young girl approached her as she was walking thus and inquired where she was from. She said that she was from Taguig and her house was near the church. The girl proposed that they go home together, as she, the girl, was also from Taguig and lived near the church. As they were walking home, Tuding noticed that the girl wore many rings on her fingers and, out of childish fancy, asked for one ring for herself. The girl good-naturedly replied that she would ask permission from her mother first, as the latter should know if she would give away things.

They passed by Kalsadang Bago near Tuktukan, and parted ways in the vicinity of the church. Tuding came home to a very much surprised mother and grandfather who were informed by her that her companions were still in Pasig. When the latter arrived, they demanded to know who took her home and, in the course of their inquiring near the church, Tuding pointed out to them the image of the young Virgin Mary on the altar beside her mother, Saint Anne.

People then surmised that the Virgin accompanied Tuding (now Mrs. Mabasa) home because her father, *Mang* Poldo, was frequently among those who changed the clothes and carried the image of Santa Ana during processions.

Another Buenaventura from Santa Ana, Mrs. Nena Buenaventura, was buying cooking oil one day in 1958 at Tan Kee's store when the delivery truck of Perla laundry soap arrived. The soap bars had just been brought down when an elderly woman approached and bought a piece of soap. Upon being handed the merchandise, the woman smiled at the delivery man and said that she lived just near the church. For some reason which they could not comprehend, the delivery man and the people in the store, including Nena, followed her. She disappeared near the church and they could not find her anymore. All that was there was the image of Santa Ana, who bore a striking similarity to the woman who had bought the soap. The soap, incidentally, was found on top of her carriage. From that time on, the soap delivery man visited and prayed before Saint Anne every time he came to Taguig.

With disasters, Saint Anne could also be involved beneficially for the people of Taguig.

Some time in 1971, Mrs. Anita Morales of Napindan was visited by a mother and her daughter towards dusk. The two requested to be allowed to rest in the house for a while. Mrs. Morales gave them food and, in the course of their conversation, the mother said that residents of that locality would experience something unusual in the following week. After declaring this, mother and daughter thanked Mrs. Morales and bade farewell.

Thinking that the two might need some money, Mrs. Morales was going to give them P5, but they were no longer around when she followed them to the gate. Neighbors and passersby from whom Mrs. Morales inquired replied that they did not see any mother and daughter on the street.

Three days afterwards, a strong typhoon hit Taguig. Most houses of frail material were either destroyed or had their roofs blown away, but not the Morales house. According to Anita, they kept praying to Saint Anne while the storm was raging. As the wind and rain died down, people who were evacuating poured into the Morales residence until it was filled near to the rafters.

Only a few years ago, in 1987 to be exact, the July 26 feastday of Saint Anne was marred by inclement weather. The *pagoda ni Santa Anang Banak* traditionally started from the church in town and had a procession in Taguig River towards Laguna Lake. That year, the people noticed the storm approaching even as they left the church, but the fluvial procession went on. Then the people saw the ominous blackness of a strong tornado atop Napindan barrio. Amidst the screaming, a number of Napindan residents left the procession to hurry home. In the meantime, some oldsters shouted for the image of Santa Ana to be faced in the direction of Napindan. As they did this, the tornado disappeared, although it had already wrecked the asbestos factory of Doña Clara, now called Italit, Inc.

The devotion to Saint Anne (in Hebrew, meaning grace or blessing) started with the veneration of her qualities as an ideal mother and wife. She and San Joaquin had grown old without a child, a condition which the Jews considered a curse from God. San Joaquin, who was from the tribe of Judah and the lineage of King David, is said to have prayed for 40 days for an offspring, while Saint Anne likewise implored God to relieve her of this curse. In her old age, Saint Anne reportedly conceived the Virgin Mary.

The early Christians venerated Saint Anne. A church dedicated to her was built in Constantinople in the Sixth Century, while at almost the same time another church for her was constructed in Jerusalem where she had been born. Many other churches, chapels and organizations were later established in her honor.

The devotion to Saint Anne started in the West during the 8th century and spread wide in the 14th century. On July 26, 1584, her feastday was celebrated throughout the Latin church. Two of the most prominent churches dedicated to her are the Saint Anne d'Auray in Britain and the Saint Anne de Beaupre in Quebec, Canada. She was designated patroness of housewives and in 1623, she was said to have made an apparition to Ives Nicolazie de Kerenna near Auray.

Because of their close link to the life of the Blessed Virgin, she and San Joaquin became the models of married couples and ideals of exemplary family life. Coming from the line of David, from whom the Savior was prophesied to be born, they also symbolized in the Old Testament the waiting for the coming of the Messiah. Through their daughter Mary, they manifested the ultimate union of God with man. G

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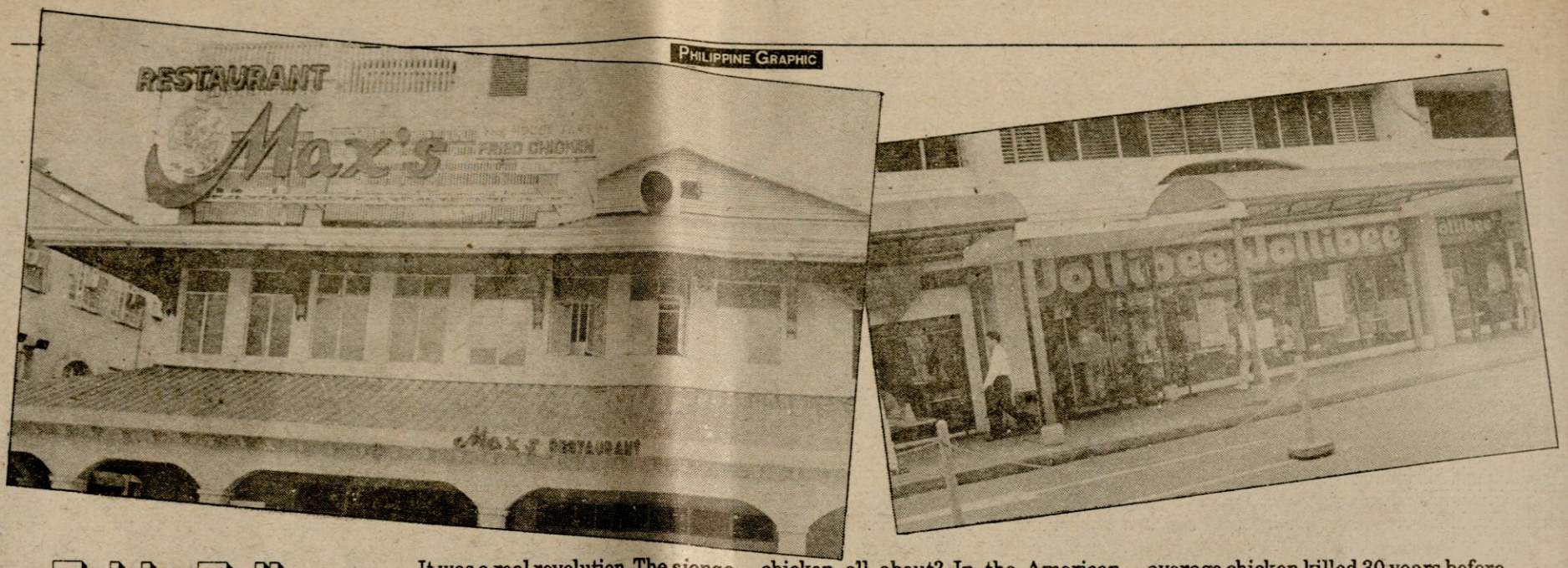

PHILIPPINE GRAPHIC

CHICKEN & CELEBRATIONS

Table Talk

By ARTURO R. JOSE

Back in the early Seventies, a chicken dinner in a restaurant was a big thing, at least to us lower middle class folks. Max's, The House That Fried Chicken Built, was the place to go. Around graduation time—late March or early April—the place would invariably fill up with children dressed to the nines, some with medals around their necks, their parents and family helping them celebrate another milestone in their young lives.

Other times, it would be a wedding or a birthday or a promotion for Dad. As always, it would be the standard half-chicken done to perfection, and a softdrink to wash it down. People's lives were marked with celebrations at Max's. Those were the days of innocence.

For nearly three decades, Max's was the premier restaurant serving purely chicken dishes. Their original branch near Roces Avenue in Quezon City has been there since the Sixties. My own baptismal celebration was held there in 1964. And just last year, a couple of friends of mine held their wedding reception there.

But time has caught up with Max's. The standard half-chicken with a roll and pat of butter became old hat, customers started looking for more. By the late Seventies, the balance was shifting.

In the South, particularly the cities of Cebu and Davao, the tenuous hold Max's had over the fried chicken market was being seriously threatened by restaurants like Sunburst, which served a breaded "American-style" fried chicken.

As the country entered the Eighties, fast-food companies like Kentucky Fried Chicken and others were taking over the market. Franchises, glass-walled and formica-topped, suddenly sprung up all over the city. The Filipino public switched from full-service restaurants and Chinese panciterias to fast-food centers promising efficiency and cleanliness, for food packed in layers upon layers of wrapping.

It was a real revolution. The *siopao* gave way to the hamburger. The stodgy old waiter gave way to smiling young college students chirping greetings each time a customer walked through the door.

With an aggressive advertising campaign backing them up, the new arrivals gobbled up the market.

Stung by these developments, Max's struck back with a campaign of its own by the middle of the decade. These new ads emphasized Max's long relationship with Filipinos, staking itself out as a "tradition." Focusing upon the breaded chicken favored by the new set, they asked, "Why are they hiding the chicken?"

By the time the Eighties was ending, the scene was even more lively as the giants like Jollibee and McDonald's began moving in. Jollibee's Chicken Joy was aggressively marketed, as was McDonald's Chicken McNuggets, a new twist in fried chicken.

On the other end of the spectrum, the *lechon manok*, which appeared around 1984, has proved to be more than just a passing fad. Around the middle of the Eighties, almost every streetcorner, it seemed, had a stand hawking *lechon manok*. Flavored with charcoal smoke and roadside dust, the *lechon manok* captured the Filipino imagination during those bleak economic times. One observer even quipped that the only reason Filipinos went for *lechon manok* was because they could not afford the real *lechon* anymore.

After that brief burst of the *gaya-gaya* syndrome, the business suffered its own shakedown, and soon enough only the big boys were left. Among these is Andok's, the ubiquitous yellow and red stalls which line major thoroughfares in the city. The *lechon manok* is here to stay.

What was this fascination with chicken all about? In the American presidential campaign in 1928, two years before the Great Depression clamped down in the United States, Herbert Hoover promised "a chicken in every pot."

But that wasn't the first usage of the phrase. It was even further back in time, during the reign of the French king Henri IV in France when he promised a chicken in every pot. Back then, a chicken dinner was a luxury.

But that was then. Adjusted for inflation, a chicken now costs just a third of what it cost 30 years ago. Ounce for ounce, it has become the cheapest source of animal protein.

Breeders have found chickens an ideal subject for experimentation. The average chicken killed 30 years before took about 17 weeks to reach full weight. Today, a chicken needs only seven weeks before they are ready for the slaughterhouse.

The feed conversion ratio—the number of pounds of feed it takes a chicken to put on a pound of meat—has tumbled steeply. Fifty years ago, you had to feed a chicken 4.2 pounds of feed before it put on a pound of meat. Now, the ratio is down to 1.7 to one and still dropping. The proportion for beef is 8 to 1, while pork goes about 4 to 1.

There is a price to be paid, however, for these scientific advances. The older the chickens get, the more flavor they have. But with the average eight-week chicken-growing period not enough, taste has to be sacrificed for cheapness. *The Economist* magazine has already chided the chicken industry for supplying "more pan-fried blandness more cheaply than ever before."

Given a choice among beef, pork, or chicken, any dieter would be well-off picking chicken. Served without the skin, chicken has only half as much fat as beef and only a third as much as pork. Moreover, chicken fat is only 30 percent saturated fat, the kind that boosts cholesterol levels and clogs arteries.

But it is important to cook the chicken without its skin on. Nearly half of a chicken's fat lies right in the skin. Chicken breasts come in leanest, followed by thighs, drumsticks, and wings. Wings are easily the fattiest with some 19 percent fat and 290 calories per 3.5 ounces compared to the eight percent fat and 197 calories from breasts.

Fast-food chicken, however, is a dieter's nightmare. Chicken dipped in batter and then deep-fried are all drenched in fat. Fast-food chicken gets some 62 percent of its calories from fat compared to 36 percent for regularly prepared chicken.

There's a revolution in taste going on and the battle for Filipino taste buds is surely not over. The average Filipino is still not too conscious about what the health effects of what he eats. It is still price and taste that affect his food decisions. As the Filipino consumer matures, however, the scene is expected to get even more interesting. G



Photos by RUDY ALDEGUER

The fast-food age has caught up with memories of dining out to mark milestones.



KUNG HINDI SELYADO...

DELIKADO

Dahil hindi mo masasabing ligtas ka sa ordinaryong manok na binili mo sa palengke, matapos pagpiyestahan ng langaw at mikrobyo.

Para sa maalagang ina, maniguro na sa Magnolia Chicken in Cut-Up Paks. Selyado at tamper-proof. Kaya garantisadong sariwa at protektado sa lahat ng mikrobyo. The best para sa kalusugan ng pamilya mo.

Huwag basta pumayag sa manok na hindi balot. Iwasan ang delikado. Piliin lang ang selyado... Magnolia Fresh-Chilled Paks. Wholes at Cut-Ups.

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Premium Quality
FRESH CHICKEN

MAGNOLIA FRESH-CHILLED PAKS

SELYADO-PROTEKTADO.....
SIGURADO!

A BOON TO BUSY HOUSEWIVES

The Instafood Corporation of the Philippines (IFCP), a newly established subsidiary of San Miguel Corporation (SMC), recently launched a new line of ready-to-eat quality food products that may revolutionize the eating habits of millions of Filipinos.

According to Herbie Rosales, IFCP sales and marketing manager, the new product is SMC's entry into the ready-to-eat food business. It answers the increasing public demand for convenient high-quality and value-added products which the mass base of Filipinos can afford.

Rosales said IFCP products are convenient for working housewives who may not have time to go to the market and cook their favorite dishes. The busy housewives will also find the products very helpful and handy to serve to unexpected guests or visitors.

The initial line of Instafood products is marketed under the brand name Magnolia Instameal. Magnolia helps position IFCP products as food of the highest quality by establishing a link with San Miguel's long tradition of product excellence.



Instameal, the secondary brand name, effectively communicates the ready-to-eat convenience concept clearly and quickly. This combination greatly enhances the product's chances of garnering strong awareness, recall, trial, and merchandising push. It will also optimize advertising and promotional efforts.

Magnolia Instameals are reasonably priced, ready-to-eat fully cooked meals made from premium quality Magnolia chicken and Monterey pork and beef. The products, which have a fresh and wholesome home-cooked taste, are flavored with especially selected local and imported spices and flavors.

Magnolia Instameal is initially available in four delicious dishes: special pork *adobo*, special chicken *afritada*, premium beef *caldereta*, and premium *paksiw na lechon*. These products are some of the most preferred and popular viands in Filipino households.

Premium products are harder-to-prepare dishes that are normally served on special occasions. Thus, premium products are available only in 200-gram pouches. The others are available in both 200-gram and 100-gram pouches.

Magnolia Instameal products are packed in retort pouches, considered a first in the local packaging industry. This state-of-the-art packaging technology, which requires a special type of equipment, enables the product to be stored up to one year without refrigeration. The pouches, which are made from several layers of flexible laminates, combine the advantages of the metal can and the plastic boil-in-bag.

The technology subjects all products to strict chemical, microbiological and controlled processing conditions without the use of preservatives, to assure the consumers of both safety and consistent quality.

The technology likewise provides the busy homemakers with excellent home-cooked Filipino viands that can be served on the table in just three minutes. Contrast this with the complete process of home-cooking which involves preparation, cleaning, mixing ingredients, cooking, and serving.

With retort technology, however, the busy housewife need not bother with these time-consuming chores. She just thinks about the *paghahanda* or serving which takes only three minutes before every member of the family sits on the dinner table. G

PROBLEM:
Tanghali.
Last 3 minutes
at darating na si Bobby
kasama ang tatlong kaklase
para mag-lunch at
trabahuhin ang school project.

DRESSING CHICKEN

The making of dressed chicken that is truly fresh, meaty and tender is a total process which involves hard work, detailed attention and lots of special care.

The process begins when the imported grandparent chicks, upon arrival, are promptly placed in chicken houses equipped with brooders which have been thoroughly cleaned, disinfected, and sterilized 7 weeks before.

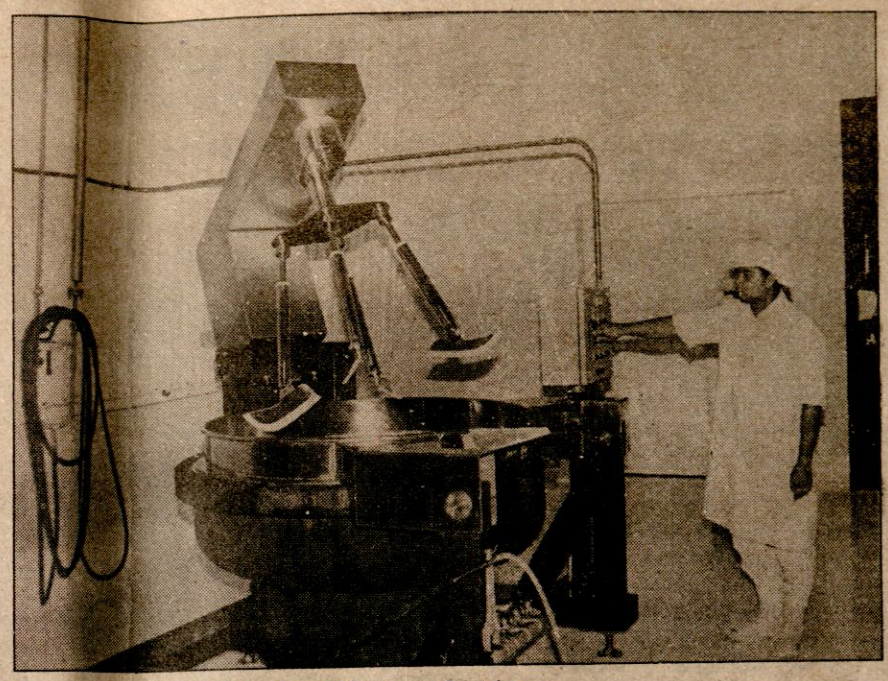
The chicks are then raised in poultry houses with insulated ceilings and foggers which spray mist to cool the chickens during unbearably hot weather. There are also ventilating fans to cool the chicken inside the houses. Even the drinking water is chlorinated to remove bacteria which may cause enteritis and diarrhea.

During the chickens' growing period, they are given 14 different vaccines to keep them free from contagious diseases, as well as feeding programs which vary according to the chickens' stage of growth.

Cleanliness is observed not only inside the chicken houses, but within the total farm environment, as well. The farm strictly observes a biosecurity program in which farmworkers and visitors are decontaminated by taking a bath, and vehicles are sprayed with disinfectant. Things brought inside the farm are, likewise, fumigated before entering.

Eggs laid by the grandparent chickens are picked promptly and frequently to get clean eggs which are free from chicken manure. The collected eggs are disinfected before they are stored in a refrigerated egg room, one day before an egg van brings them to the hatchery for hatching after 21 days.

The newly born parent chicks are then brought to the farms and raised in the same special way as the grandparents. The offspring of the parent chickens—the broilers—are sent as day-old-chicks to contract growers. The company sees to it that these growers have the proper housing, feeding, and drinking facilities. It also provides the growers vaccines, feeding and health care programs, and continuous technical assistance and extension services.



State-of-the-art technology at the IFCP plant in Canlubang

After they are fully grown and brought from the growers, the broilers are dressed in the plant using the most efficient, quality-conscious, and hygienic procedures.

Such is the painstaking process involved in the making of the premium-quality Magnolia Chicken, a process completed in the final packaging. Magnolia's fresh-chilled polyethylene packs preserve the quality process undergone by the product and protect it from unnecessary handling and exposure to harmful bacteria, especially in the marketplace. The tamper-proof packaging also makes the product easy to handle and assures the consumer that he or she is getting genuine Magnolia Chicken. G

SOLUTION:
New Magnolia Instameal.
The ready-to-eat ulam
with home-cooked goodness.



Ipinakikilala, new Magnolia Instameal.
Ang unang instant ulam made from premium-quality meats in convenient retort packs. It keeps freshness within, providing delicious-tasting meals without preservatives. No refrigeration needed. Just dip in hot or boiling water for 3 minutes and it's ready to eat. Makes an economical meal, too!

With four dishes to choose from--- Pork Adobo, Chicken Afritada, Lechon Paksiw & Beef Caldereta. Now available in leading supermarkets in Metro Manila.

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CHICKEN DIVINE REGINA

Ingredients:
Puff Pastry:
1/2 tsp. salt
6 tbsps. butter
1 cup all-purpose flour
4 eggs

Filling:
1/4 cup butter
1/2 cup mushrooms
1/3 cup all-purpose flour
1 cube Maggi chicken bouillon, dissolved in
3/4 cup water
3/4 cup Carnation evaporated filled milk
1 170 g. can Nestlé cream
1/4 cup chopped parsley
1/4 cup crumbled fried bacon
1 tbsp. sherry
Salt and pepper to taste
1/2 k. Magnolia chicken, boiled and cubed



Procedure:
Boil one cup water in a saucepan; add salt and butter. Remove from heat and stir in flour all at once, beating continuously until it forms a ball. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Place the mixture in a pastry bag and pipe out into pingpong-sized balls on a cookie sheet and bake at 400°F until golden brown. Cool and set aside. Prepare filling.

Heat butter in pan and sauté mushrooms until soft. Stir in flour and cook over low heat for five minutes. Stir in dissolved Maggi chicken bouillon and cook until slightly thickened. Add Carnation evaporated filled milk and Nestlé cream; blend well and heat thoroughly. Stir in half of the parsley, half of the bacon crumbs and sherry. Adjust seasonings. Pour mixture over cubed chicken and set aside.

Slice puff pastry in halves. Fill in bottom portion with 1/2 tablespoon of filling. Sprinkle top with remaining half of bacon and parsley. Replace top half of puff pastry. Serve hot.

Yield: 15 pieces

NOTE: Puff pastry may be substituted with ready-made vol-a-vent from pastry shops.



ROAST CHICKEN WITH APPLE BREAD STUFFING

Ingredients:
1 jumbo Magnolia chicken, about 2.5 kilos
2 tsps. Maggi chicken bouillon powder
1/2 tsp. marjoram
1/2 tsp. rosemary
1/2 tsp. thyme

Stuffing:
2 tbsps. butter
1 small onion, minced
1 stalk celery, minced
Giblets from chicken, cubed
2 slices cooked ham, cut 1/2" cubes
6 pcs. vienna sausage, cut 1/2" thick
7 slices loaf bread, crust removed, shredded and soaked in
1 170 g. can Nestlé cream
1 medium-sized apple, cut into 1/2" wedges

Gravy:
4 tbsps. drippings from roast
1/2 cup sliced button mushrooms
2 tbsps. flour
1 tsp. Maggi chicken bouillon powder, dissolved in 2 cups hot water
1 170 g. can Nestlé cream
1 tsp. salt or to taste

Procedure:
Wash chicken and drain thoroughly. Rub with a mixture of the next four ingredients; set aside if possible to marinate overnight (or at least four hours) inside the fridge.

Melt butter for stuffing. Sauté onion, celery and chicken giblets. Add in ham and sausage. Stir in soaked bread and apples. Pour in 1/4 cup of hot water then simmer for about five minutes.

Stuff mixture into the cavity of the chicken. Rub chicken with butter and wrap in foil. Roast for 1 hour, 30 minutes at 300°F. Unwrap foil in the last 30 minutes for chicken to brown, basting roast occasionally with drippings.

Get about 4 tbsps. of the drippings and transfer to a small saucepan. Sauté mushrooms then add in flour. Slowly pour in bouillon broth. Cook stirring constantly until thick. Add in Nestlé Cream then season with salt to taste. Serve with roast chicken.

Compliments of Nestlé Cream

Lolita's home again

Show Boulevard



BOY C. DE GUIA

The one and only Lolita Rodriguez, happily settled in a remote farm in California for quite some time now, is in town to fulfill a very special commitment—a starring role in a Filipino tele-movie for BBC (British Broadcasting Company) which will be shot here in its entirety.

This was supposed to be another "reunion job" for Lolita and Lino Brocka, a dear friend, her favorite director and the one responsible for her very rare film appearances.

More than a dream project, this was also meant to be the start of Lino's series of international assignments.

Written by Ricky Lee, the tele-movie is titled *The Family*, a docu-drama on environmental preservation set in the city and a fishing village. Taking over Lino's seat is another brilliant director, Mel Chionglo.

The other lead star of the tele-movie is Gina Alajar, who's being hailed as the next Lolita Rodriguez.

Interestingly, Lolita's last movie, *Paradise Inn* shown in the mid-'80s, was not a Brocka film (it was directed by Celso Ad. Castillo) but the late director had a hand in convincing the legendary actress to do the movie.

The formidable Lolita-Brocka tandem's last movie was *Ina Ka ng Anak Mo* where Lolita was pitted for the first time with another drama queen, Nora Aunor. (The two acting greats—plus Lino—won numerous awards for this single achievement.)

Now that Lino's gone, who could have convinced Lolita to go on with the BBC project?

"Nobody but herself," says George Santos, Brocka's long-time production manager who's now line producer of the *The Family* under his newly formed company, Manila Inter-Film Production (which specializes in co-production ventures). *"Kung tutuusin nga raw,* commitment *niya ito kay* Lino."

The Lolita-Lino "love-affair" began on the Raha Sulayman stage of Fort Santiago in the late '60s. A great fan of the actress, Lino came up with this bright idea of inviting Lolita and other popular moviestars to appear on the legitimate stage via *Larawan*, the Pilipino translation of *Portrait of the Filipino as an Artist*.

The two even became neighbors (they lived in a big compound) after the successful run of the play (which was staged again a few years later with a new cast). Lolita was among those who inspired Lino to go into film directing. The young, aggressive, revolutionary artist used to say in jest: "Only if you'd be my star, even if you're not box-office!"

Lino subsequently directed Lolita in two Lea Production flicks, the classics *Stardoom* and *Tubog sa Ginto*. Along with some friends and other business associates, they formed Cinemanila Corporation and made history via *Tinimbang Ka Nguni't Kulang*. After three more films for their company (*Tatlo, Dalawa, Isa* and *Lunes, Martes, Miyerkules, Huwebes, Biyernes, Sabado, Linggo* plus Mario O'Hara's directorial debut *Mortal*), Lolita decided to stay in the US.

Upon Lino's insistence, she came back to star with Charito Solis and Rio Locsin in *Ina, Kapatid, Anak* (which was written and designed by Mel Chionglo).

"I envy Lolit for so many reasons," Lino would say. *"Kahit na malayung-malayo siya,* I know she has peace of mind and she's happy. *Aarte lang siya* if she feels like doing it. *Kailan kaya ako magdidirek kung gusto ko lang at hindi kailangan?"*



Lolita with Christopher de Leon and Mario O'Hara in "Tinimbang Ka Nguni't Kulang"







Clockwise from left: Lolita with Nora Aunor and Lino Brocka in "Ina Ka ng Anak Mo"; with Charito Solis onstage in "Larawan"; Mel Chionglo takes over Lino's job

The actress, according to George Santos, hopes to have an ideal schedule of shooting so she can go back to her farm in due time.

But what if good offers come her way while she's here?

"I doubt it," quips George. "If ever, she will have to consider thinking about those offers after our shooting; *siguro, pag nakabalik na siya sa* States. *Ni ayaw nga ng* publicity. *Ewan ko nga kung nagbibiro si* Lolit *nang sabihing pag may mag-iinterbyu raw sa* set, *sasakay siya sa* first available flight *pauwi sa* California."

Very Lolita Rodriguez. Some think of her as aloof, elusive, unreachable, unapproachable, *suplada*, mysterious. But there's a better term to describe her: private. She's always been like this, Brocka loved to tell us, even during her younger years. While the rest of the gang (Gloria Romero, the late Rita Gomez, Nida Blanca, Charito Solis) were collecting Miss Friendship titles and honors, Lolita would stay in one corner to wait for the director's call.

For Mel Chionglo, being at the helm of *The Family* could be the biggest challenge in his entire career.

"It's more than a break and a job," he enthuses. "When George first talked to me about this, I didn't even have to think twice. I said, 'Yeah, of course, for Lino.' Now, I realize it's more than doing something for a friend and mentor and idol. It's, in fact, continuing what he started and in the process, I will have to carry certain responsibilities; or I myself will create those responsibilities. It's quite hard to explain."

Admittedly, Mel was nervous and excited at the prospects of directing Lolita. His only work experience with the actress had been in the film *Ina, Kapatid, Anak* as production designer and scriptwriter. Even if they became casual friends on the set, that's no guarantee for an ideal professional partnership.

"I'm not a bit worried," he says at last with a knowing smile. *"Sa mga kuwento pa lang ni* Lino *noon, gustung-gusto ko na si* Lolit, not to mention our brief acquaintance and occasional encounters, courtesy of Lino, of course. Also, I have always admired her talent. I'm sure we will learn a lot of things from this new experience." G



PHOTO BY RUDY ALDEGUER

At Large



GILBERT PEREZ

FDG and the French connection

Fashion may at times be flighty and frothy but this is not necessarily true of fashion designers. Aware of the present economic conditions exacerbated by the spate of recent natural calamities, the Filipino Designers Group (FDG) has opted to forego its annual fashion show. Instead, members Cesar Gaupo, Noli Hans, Bubum Melgar, Mike de la Rosa, Inno Sotto, new members Gregg Centeno and Loretto, and lone female member (and president) Lulu Tan Gan have unanimously decided to sponsor a young designers' competition which will select the Philippine representative to the 9th International Competition for Young Fashion Designers in Paris on December 18 of this year.

The FDG annual show, in which the fashion statements of its members are showcased, has often been described as every year's "fashion event."

"The present situation calls for us to be low key," says Tan Gan, FDG president. "Right now we're more interested in this project that promises long-term benefits for the industry."

The competition is held yearly by the Association pour l'Organisation du Concours International des Jeunes Createurs de Mode, with Air France as cosponsor, to select a scholar for the schools of the Chambre Syndicale de la Couture Parisienne. This is the first time the Philippines is taking a shot.

Candidates from the Philippines, said the FDG, should be currently enrolled in any of the locally accredited fashion schools. Each prospective participant should submit his entry form to any FDG member, and be prepared to design and sew the garments by him/herself—five sets of outfits (complete with accessories) suitable for traveling in motor vehicles, planes and trains. Local judging by the FDG is set September 23.

Up to five candidates will be selected by the FDG after a preliminary and final screening prior to actual competition to be held in Paris in December. The official Philippine finalists will enplane to Paris via Air France and will be accompanied by members of the FDG, who will act as mentors.

The Paris competition will be judged by a jury of well-known professionals in the field of fashion, headed by Jacques Mouclier and assisted by Olga Saurat. Celebrities who may also act as jury members are Christian Lacroix, Jean-Louis Scherrer, Kenzo, Louis Feraud, Olivier Lapidus, Paco Rabanne and Sonia Rykiel, as well as fashion critics and members of the press.

At stake during the 9th International Competition for Young Designers are the Grand, Silver and Bronze awards. Grand Prize winner receives a certificate, a trophy from Air France, a scholarship of 20,000 francs (US$3,000), an Air France ticket for an inter-continental flight, a prize from sponsor Brothers Sewing Machines, and a one-year scholarship to the schools of the Chambre Syndicale de la Couture Parisienne.

Silver Prize winner gets a certificate, a trophy from Air France, a scholarship of 15,000 francs, an Air France ticket for an inter-continental flight and a sponsor's prize courtesy of Brothers Sewing Machines. The Bronze Prize awardee will receive the same except that his scholarship will be worth 10,000 francs.

One participant from each country will also receive a scholarship, the Air France trophy, the sponsor's prize and a scholarship of 5,000 francs.

The jury may also opt to award a special prize which consists of the option of taking part in a training program offered by the Printemps Stores at the Printemps Style Office.

FDG: Marlon Cruz of Ilorka, Inno Sotto, Mike de la Rosa, Lulu Tan Gan, Jennifer Peña of Air France, Cesar Gaupo, Noli Hans, Loretto, and Vera Isberto of Graphistudio

TINGKEBAN

Indonesia, the world's largest archipelago, is comprised of over 13,000 islands. It is impossible to remember them all by name, except perhaps for a few major ones like Sumatra, the second largest island. Here, remnants of ancient Hindu civilizations have been found. There is also Java, one of the most densely populated areas, whose soil is extraordinarily fertile. But to the traveler, particularly from the West, the island of Bali stands out as the most famous of all. It is the seat of Hindu-Balinese religious and artistic life. It is also Indonesia's foremost tourist destination.

Over 300 ethnic groups make up the nation's population of 175 million. Hindu and Islamic influences are very evident in the Indonesian's repertoire of song, dance and music as well as drama.

Located south of the Philippines, Indoñesia is rich in tradition, much of which bears strong similarities to the Filipino's very own. Symbolic meanings are attached to colorful rituals. One of them is the Tingkeban. This is a ceremony that takes place during the seventh-month pregnancy of a woman. It is believed that the *seventh month* is the precise period when the unborn child becomes a complete human being.

Both sets of families representing the husband and wife preside during the ceremony, along with *seven* sponsors (corresponding to *ninangs*), significantly the most respectable if not prominent in the community.

The seven each take part in pouring scented water made from seven flowers, over the head, shoulders and other parts of the expectant mother's body wrapped in a *sarong*. They use a dipper. Prior to this, several items are gathered, said to symbolize the following: a needle to produce a sharp memory, thread for long life, a mirror for the ability of self-correction, a comb for tidiness. The seven flowers express hope that the child attains fame in adulthood. The significance of selecting respectable *ninangs* is to ensure the child's respectability in society.

For this consideration, seven distin-



Ita Chandra Rajasa (seated) receives her first "shower" of water from Mrs. Pacita Manglapus as "relatives" watch



Chandra Rajasa (seated at foreground) slips coconut from the top of his wife's sarong to slide downwards as other ladies, including Anna Soerakoesoemah (right), assist



The "expectant" parents (standing at right) and Hardani Edy Sutrisno, holding tray with sweets wait for guests to approach and partake of sweets.

guished ladies were picked to be the *ninangs* of the local celebration. They were Madame Hartati Soewarso, Pacita Manglapus, Zorayda Tamano, Sheila Platt, Evangelina Macapagal, Baby Puyat-Reyes and Sonia Lee.

Once again, the number seven plays a significant role. Seven different *kain* or *sarong* are displayed for the expectant mother to select and fit. It is believed that this ritual will cause the unborn child to experience pleasant days throughout the remaining weeks in the womb.

Norry Margaretha Mangindaan, who acted as master of ceremonies at one



Mrs. Pacita Manglapus (sixth from left) poses with members of the Dharma Wanita (Indonesian Womens Association) some of whom played the role of Indonesia's respective heroines and wore regional costumes. They also sang a repertoire of Indonesian and Pilipino songs.

recent Tingkeban, explained to the guests that these rituals are all symbolic, and while some expectations will not come to pass, they are still performed in the spirit of tradition. One other ritual revolves around a coconut. The outer skin has the name of Allah (God) carved on it. Following the "shower" the expectant mother stands up, allowing the coconut to be slipped from the opening of her *sarong* at the top, sliding downwards. This act expresses a hope for the expectant mother to have smooth delivery. This same coconut is then hacked in half. If the water spurts out, the child will be a boy. But if the water merely spills over, the child is bound to be a girl.

A salad or *rujak*, consisting of seven kinds of fruit and edible roots that are cut and mixed, ensures that the child will mix well in society. It is also a reminder of the origin of man and his inevitable return to the soil. The *rujak*, similar to the *halo-halo*, is served with light cakes. Tradition has it that the guests "buy" these snacks and refreshment from the expectant mother. Pieces of red-roof tiles called *kerewent* are used as tokens for money. More buyers will mean an increase in the child's prosperity.

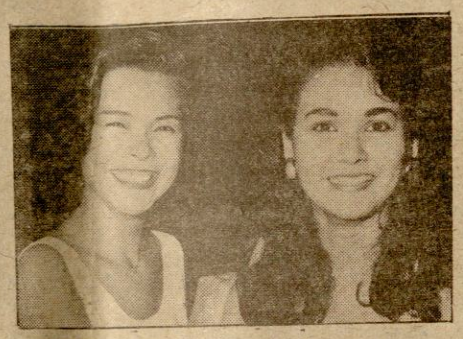


Jun Valenton and Mayenne Carmona

SURPRISE "ASALTO"

The surprise birthday *asalto* for socialite Mayenne Carmona plotted by her closest friends Becky Garcia, Geena Zablan and Jun Valenton at swinging Kudos Disco turned out to be one helluva gig.

How the trio kept it from Mayenne was everybody's source of wonder. Another party hosted by another disco one full week in advance had made



Maricar Mendoza, Marilou Bendigo



Carminia Pavia and son



Charlie Carmona, Leah Orosa

Perlita Reyes, Chito Antonio, Vina Mercado and Cecille Limjoco



Mayenne think that that was it.

Arriving from dinner, Mayenne saw familiar faces at Kudos. But then, she thought, this was how Wednesday nights really were at Kudos. It was only when each guest started greeting her that she realized she was the evening's honoree.

In the party were lovin' couples Henry and Jojo Zabarte and Herman and Gina Jane Gray, former Karilagan model Maya de la Cuesta, dusky beauty Cristina Bautista and bosom friend Evie Costa, always-together Maripaz Godinez, Cynthia Castañeda and Maribel Dario, actor John Gaddi and Sonny Tanchanco, former beauty titlists Marilou Bendigo and Maricar Mendoza, talented designer Lulu Tan Gan who was surprisingly not in her signature knits, porcelain ladies Carminia Pavia, Maureen Feeley and Maryann Ojeda, Charlie Carmona and constant date Leah Orosa, men-about-town Raffy Rufino, Philip Tuazon and Bruno Vergnes and recent arrivee from an extended stay in the US Bobby Formoso who shared a table with banker Arthur Antonino and Tito and Maryann Salcedo.

Also warmly greeted that night was charming lady Vina Mercado who was likewise celebrating her natal day. Along with hubby Luis, she brought her dinner guests from Oscar's—Chito Antonio, Randy and Cecille Limjoco, Giovanni Sanna and Oscar and Perlita Reyes.



Allan Cosio

COSIO: VIGOR OF ABSTRACTS

Allan Cosio, a Pollock-Krasner Foundation awardee and prize winner of the 1986 Baghdad Biennale, mounts his solo exhibition of new abstract paintings at the Brix Gallery in Makati August 16 to September 4, 1991. The works for exhibit numbering only about a dozen, have been culled from a whole series of abstractions in acrylic executed on large-scale formats. The resulting works show a more vigorous output of Cosio's, after almost three years of working on a variety of materials and approaches in his painting styles. Bold brushstrokes, thick impastos and rapid gestural movements of the brush characterize these new works of Cosio.

Allan Cosio has held several solo exhibitions here and abroad since he first started painting in 1978. In between his painting and sculptural concerns, Cosio also tried his hand at tapestry design, producing a number of huge works. His experiments with assemblages, weavings and sculptural designs utilizing mats, bark, burlap, capiz, shells and other indigenous materials have given Cosio eminence in Philippine contemporary art. Aside from pursuing his career in the visual arts, Allan Cosio has held a number of important positions in the past. Among them: president of the Art Association of the Philippines, president of the Art Foundation of the Philippines, consultant for the yearly Metrobank Painting Competition and an active member of the famed Saturday Group of Artists. His works are currently in the collection of the Pacific Star Nauru, Magsaysay Lines Inc., Manila Pavilion Hotel, PCIB Makati, Bank of Philippine Islands Makati, Soriano CIA, among others.

Brix Gallery is at 116 Aguirre Street, Legaspi Village, Makati.

PEOPLE ARE TALKING ABOUT...

...RJ Bistro-Makati's, Manila's "tower of rock 'n' roll power," fifth year anniversary. It featured a big open house party preceeded by a motorcade of vintage cars around the Ayala Center. Capping the celebration was a Battle of RJ Bistro Bands.



Wilson Go



Dyna Souls Band: Band of the Year

Winning the popular vote as Band of the Year was the Dyna Souls. Other groups who competed in the exciting musical showdown were the Wakadoos, Memo Band, Love Beat, Mind Benders, and the Retro Band. Also performing were RJ Productions's new talents like the all-girl band Pretty & Pink, Father & Sons, rap sensation Denmark who did his hit, "Luningning," Mico and the rap group called the Bass Rhyme.

Climax of the show was the performance of the "main man" himself, Ramon "RJ" Jacinto and the New Riots who reprised some of the numbers that they did in their recent very successful coast-to-coast tour of the United States...

...Equinox, the ultimate discotheque, and its new and interesting details to their Executive Hour from five to 10 p.m.

Starting August 12, the country's top showbands and entertainers will be gracing the stage of Equinox in Pasay Road, Makati, to liven up the after office hour doldrums.

Monday-Wednesday-Friday slots are reminiscing time via the invigorating sounds of The Dominoes Band. Its '40s nostalgia revived for the '90s entertainment. Tuesdays and Thursdays are reserved for humor. Wacky Wilson Go of *Sic O' clock* fame brings the house down with side-splittin' spoofs of personalities like Joe Concepcion and Cardinal Sin. Sharing the limelight with him is magician Nap Perez performing tricks á la Copperfield.

Concocted by marketing wiz Ernest Gonzaga, the Executive Hour at Equinox renders a whole new meaning to the working men and women of Makati's early nights. See you there!...

...Red Ribbon Bakeshop and its newly reinaugurated branch on Timog.

Guests of honor who cut the ceremonial ribbon were TV personality Loren Legarda, best-dressed lady and top-selling Rustan's designer Criselda Lontok, society's toast to Lambada, Becky Garcia and *palangga* co-host of *Oh No, It's Johnny* Maurice Arcache. Father Manny Guazon officiated the blessing rites.

The Red Ribbon management team of Richie Tiutan, (president); Danny Moran (executive vice-president); Tessie Moran, (VP-food management); and Romy Mercado, (VP-special projects) welcomed the special coterie of guests like Brazilian Consul Alexey Van der Broocke who escorted Becky G., Scott Singelton from Texas, Tony





Ramon "RJ" Jacinto

"Passages" by Iya Fernandez-Lehva

PASSAGES

Paris-based painter Iya Fernandez-Lehva presents her latest drawings and watercolors in "Passages," a one-woman exhibit at the Artist's Corner of Hotel Inter-Continental Manila.

Fernandez has produced a wide body of work in various media dealing with a full spectrum of subjects. These include intensely personal and affecting drawings, watercolors and prints of Venetian canals and palazzos, Parisian and Florentine street scenes, French and Filipino interiors, nudes, mother-and-child themes, and exuberant still-lifes of flowers and found objects. Her highly-original pieces are marked by an insightful simplicity of lines and a knowing use of color punctuated by a disarming whimsy.

Fernandez graduated from the University of the Philippines College of Fine Arts in 1978, from which she proceeded to Florence to take up further studies in museology. She lives in Paris with husband Gilles Lehva and daughters Tatiana and Katia.

"Passages" runs from August 15 to 30



Red Ribbon: Brazilian Consul Alexey Van der Broocke; Danny Moran, EVP-Red Ribbon Bakeshop; Becky Garcia; Criselda Lontok; and Loren Legarda

and Bessie Legarda with grandson Lance, Dave Villanueva from the US Wheat Association, and Mr. and Mrs. Gus de Leon.

Noted photo artist Wig Tysmans with wife Carol and daughter Patricia, exchanged pleasantries with Annie Sarthou of Luz Gallery and noted TV director Demet Velasquez. Meanwhile Dean Jose Joya with the able staff of UP College of Fine Arts professor Dodo Defeo, Eric Catipon and Jay Lozada enjoyed the sumptuous buffet prepared by Makati Skyline.

Fashion designers and models who came in full force included Randy Ortiz, Marden Iglesias, Rudy Fuentes, Marina Benipayo, former PMAP prexy Dennis Abesamis, John Borromeo with Meya Aquino.

Other well-wishers were interior planners Filaine Tan and Jeanne Wee, Marie Pantoja, couples Paul and Weena Almendras, Raul and Reena Caringan, Iboy and Rosette Pinga, Chut Santiago and Monina Tan, Tessie and Rolly Macatangay.

All the guests were so happy, everyone brought home a box of their favorite cakes.

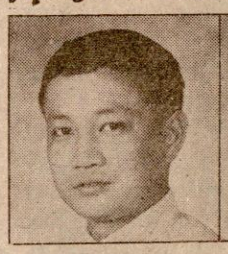
With the phenomenal success of Red Ribbon, expansion plans in other prime locations in Ayala Center and SM Megamall are being finalized....

...Popo San Pascual, who was named by the Cultural Center of the Philippines as one of its 13 artists of 1988. Popo takes flight once more with his fifth one-man show entitled *Modo de Volar* at Finale Art File, August 13 to 24.

Popo San Pascual



...the recent appointment of Alvin Koh Relleve as new Human Resources Development manager of Systems Technology Institute. Prior to this Relleve was also the chief of Owlie Company, STI's promotional ware division. The 33-year-old BS English graduate of the University of Santo Tomas worked in Manila Bank, Greenhills before joining STI in 1988...



Alvin Koh Relleve



Ross de Leon

...the proposal accepted by Systems Technology Institute from the Malaysian Institute of Management to put up a computer education training center in Malaysia. TCSS manager Ross de Leon met with STI's Asian partners during a four-day business trip to Malaysia. Malaysians were oriented on STI operations by De Leon, 30, a St. Louis University, Baguio civil engineering graduate. With slightly modified computer courses, Malaysia will soon be another site for STI, the largest computer education center in Southeast Asia.

...incidentally, STI led by top computer executive Edgar H. Sarte, has decided to forego the much-awaited lavish celebration of its eighth anniversary this year. Part of the usual exorbitant expenditure allotted for the occasion has been donated to the victims of the Mount Pinatubo eruption. Mats, blankets, medicines, and basic staples were given to Olongapo, Tarlac, Angeles City and San Fernando residents through the STI training centers in the said disaster areas. G



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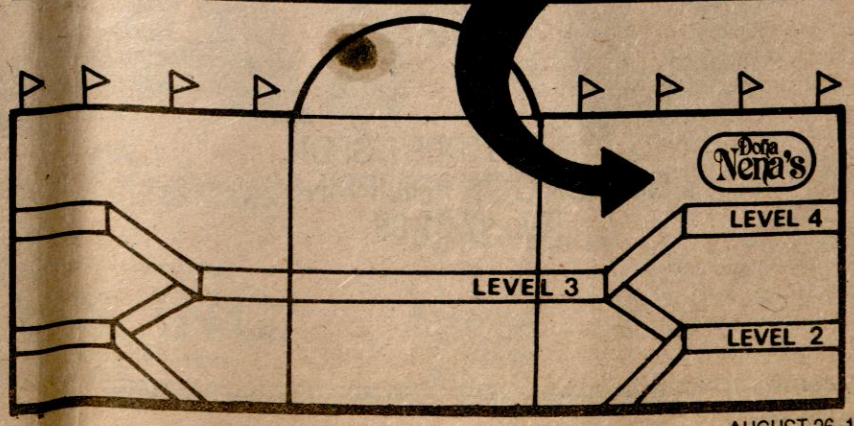

THE CALENDAR

Starting August 13, every Tuesday and Thursday night, tour operators, hotels and local residents with foreign guests to entertain can now take them to a Makati-based cultural dinner show.

Fiesta Mondragon, featuring the Metropolitan Theater Cultural Dance Group, is a 45-minute contemporary interpretation of Philippine culture through dance and song. Thirty-five dancers and singers will warm the hearts of both local and foreign guests.

The thrust of *Fiesta Mondragon* is to be able to give the foreign visitor a taste of that "fiesta" feeling. This is achieved through the colorful setting created by food stalls with clay pots full of traditional Pinoy cooking, mock vendors offering native delicacies, real sampaguita and *balut* vendors (you pay extra), *bibingka* and *kakanin* stands and a cool array of local beverages.

The venue of *Fiesta Mondragon* is the Ballroom of Mondragon House at Gil J. Puyat Avenue, Makati. Priced at P400 per person plus taxes, one can enjoy a Filipino feast of food and culture in one evening. For more information or reservations, please call the Banquet Office, telephone number 818-1506 ext. 242.

*

The Thomas Jefferson Cultural Center (TJCC) invites the public to view a major exhibition from the United States Information Agency (USIA) titled "Mind and Matter: New American Abstraction," which will run at the Metropolitan Museum of Manila from August 21 through October 6.

Sixty-five works on paper created in the abstract idiom by 21 artists highlight the rich variety of expression and energy currently found in American art. Paintings, prints, collage, drawings and mixed media works composed through various modernist canons make up the exhibit, which will be open to the public from Tuesdays through Saturdays, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The museum will also host supplementary lectures by highly respected local artists led by Nestor Vinluan, Rock Drilon and Sid Hildawa.

For details, please call the TJCC at numbers 818-5458 and 818-1650, or the Metropolitan Museum, 50-52-71 and 59-44-83.

*

The Philippine Orchid Society cordially invites the public to the opening of its 1991 Mid-year Orchid and Garden Show, titled "Parangal kay Mama Purita" to be held at 4 p.m. on August 29, 1991, Thursday, at the Park Square II-Carpark, 2nd level (beside Landmark and Makati Supermarket), Metro Manila. The event boasts 50 commercial booth selling orchids, ornamentals, garden tools and equipment, orchid books, horticultural chemicals and more.

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Big, big savings, weekend cooking demonstrations, and exciting raffle draws await shoppers in SM's Annual Home Sale from August 1-31, 1991.

Customers may avail of a 10 percent discount on regular items, and 20-50 percent discount on selected merchandise at the SM Home Centers in Makati, Sta. Mesa, and Megamall and the Home Departments of other SM stores.

Moreover, every P300 minimum purchase entitles one to a raffle stub and a chance to win one of six La Germania ranges. Raffle draw will be on September 14, 1991.

*

Corruption in the Palace of Justice is, in the words of those who are presenting it—the UP Portia Society and the UP President's Committee on Culture and the Arts—as timely and relevant in the Philippines now as it was in Europe when it was written by Italian poet and playwright Ugo Betti. The timeliness perhaps holds true for every era in history, as corruption has not ceased to rear its ugly head in even the most placid society, but the relevance is especially noteworthy as the Philippines looks to the courts as the last bastions of justice.

The story of *Corruption* begins with the death of a rich and powerful man inside the Palace of Justice, an unusual place for such a man to have died in. It is suspected that one of the judges has been bought off. An investigation is launched in order to find the one errant judge. One by one, however, each of the judges confesses to being guilty. Soon, only one judge is left, and he is made the new chief justice. But he, too, confesses eventually that he is guilty.

With this provocative situation, *Corruption* goes on to expose the decay of justice in human hands. Lloyd Samartino, in his first stage appearance, plays the chief justice. The other judges are Spanky Manikan, Edwin Decenteceo, Joaquin Jose Aranda, Raul Regalado and Gilbert Braganza.

Adriana Agcaoili portrays the chief justice's young daughter whose innocence and complete trust in him make her fight valiantly for his honor.

The adaptation of the play was done by Dr. Jonathan Malicsi, a professor in the linguistics department of the University of the Philippines and chair of the UP President's Commitee on Culture and the Arts. Dr. Malicsi is also a stage actor and singer. Jonas Sebastian directs.

The play runs in two venues: the Philamlife Theatre, from August 16 to 18; and the Malcolm Hall Auditorium of the UP College of Law from August 23 (two and six p.m.) to 24 (10 a.m., two p.m. and six p.m.) and 25 (10 a.m. and two p.m.). G

TO CONTRIBUTORS

All articles submitted for consideration must be typewritten double-spaced. Articles typed single-spaced or with one-and-a-half spacing are candidates for rejection. The same goes for carbon copies, fuzzy photocopies and articles typed on onion-skin paper.



TOBACCO RESEARCH FACILITY OPENS

The National Tobacco Administration (NTA) recently opened its new Industrial Research Department (IRD) laboratory building at the NTA Central Office compound on Panay Avenue, Quezon City.

The NTA, which also celebrated its fourth anniversary on July 24, envisioned the new research department to cater primarily to the needs of the tobacco industry. Its services will focus on the evaluation of physical and chemical properties of all types of tobacco. Facilities and equipments designed for this purpose were acquired by the NTA in order to keep pace with the quality assurance procedures in the industry. The IRD services the following: leaf grading/training, smoke test, product assurance, product development and analytical procedures.

NTA administrator Edilberto Cariaso said that the laboratory will work closer with tobacco manufacturers and other institutions on industrial research geared toward national development. (C.D. Trinidad)

WRITING MANUAL NOW AVAILABLE

The Health Action Information Network (HAIN) has published *Writing Clearly*, a manual for Filipino writers and editors in English. Written by Mari Roberts, a British volunteer who worked with HAIN from March 1987 to December 1989, the 58-page booklet uses samples of "Filipino English" from the media and gives tips in clear and effective writing.

Writing Clearly also offers suggestions on how to do away with verbose writing, as has been the penchant of many Filipino writers. It also explains basic rules and other writing techniques and contains chapters on jargon, including those being used by physicians.

The manual is available at P25 each (P30 post-paid). For your copies, call 97-88-05 or visit HAIN at #9 Cabanatuan Road, Philam Homes, Quezon City.

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Close Encounters with Celebrities



THE DECLINE OF THE HORROR MOVIE





(11th of a Series)



By JOSE QUIRINO

"I never call them horror movies. I call them shock films because their main value is to shock and, if they can horrify in the process, then you have a bonus."

This was William Castle, the enterprising producer of shock photoplays during the 1950s and 1960s, explaining his ideas about horror movies. A producer-director of gimmicky horror films, Castle actually dared lay hands, figuratively speaking, on the audience in *The Tingler*, released in 1959. I can never forget this film where Castle himself appeared at the start of the movie to warn the public that, in cases of extreme terror, a scream might save a moviegoer's life by relieving the tension. "That is why," he unctiously declared, "I advise you to scream when necessary to save your sanity."

In the film's climactic moment, selected members of the audience were subjected to mild vibrations from electrically wired seats in the house. This gimmick was later abandoned in subsequent screenings because, according to Castle himself, some spectators actually developed mild heart conditions "because this movie is a real shocker."



Clockwise from above: Richard Donner, Anthony Perkins, Vincent Price, Bela Lugosi

Anyway, I interviewed Castle in Hollywood in 1965. An interested bystander in that interview was Chona Trinidad, who was also a guest in the studio and who's now a columnist for the GRAPHIC. When I told Castle that, unlike Hollywood, which has a limited number of bogeymen (Dracula, Frankenstein's monster, the Mummy and the Werewolf), the Philippines has an infinite variety of ghouls and specters (from the *dugang* and *al-allia* to the *multos* and *kapres* and *tikbalangs* of the Tagalogs; from the *banig* and *kumaw* of the Gaddangs; to the *aswangs* of the Visayans; and the *saitans* of Mindanao), Castle said: "I must go to Manila one of these days to make a terrific shock film there."

Aside from his tingling seats, Castle gave horror movie lovers insurance policies ("for your loved ones in case you die from fright") to mobile skeletons in *The House on Haunted Hill*, 1959; *Homicidal*, 1961; *Mr. Sardonicus*, 1962; *The Night Walker*, 1964; and *I Saw What You Did*, 1965; and *Rosemary's Baby*, which he produced but which was directed by Roman Polanski in 1968.

Polanski, who also directed other controversial films like *Repulsion*, *Cul-de-Sac*, and *Knife in the Water*, suffered the worst tragedy in his life when his pregnant wife, the lovely actress Sharon

Tate, was hacked to death along with three friends by Charles Manson and his gang in 1969.

In 1974, when Polanski came to Manila to promote one of his films, newsmen were warned not to talk about the murder of his wife, a very painful subject for him. I decided to concentrate my questions on his classic horror film, *Rosemary's Baby*, about a young woman (Mia Farrow) forced by her husband (John Cassavetes) into an unholy arrangement with a group of devil worshippers. I asked him if he had any childhood experience that had made him specialize in shock movies.

"As a child in Nazi-occupied Krakow [the Polish city, also the birthplace of Pope John Paul II]," Polanski recalled, "I saw both of my parents arrested and taken to concentration camps. My mother died in Auschwitz and I never learned what happened to my father. I was small as a child and was a favorite whipping boy of neighborhood bullies. I received such a terrible beating in one fight that I had a steel plate fitted into my skull."

In her book, *Scandal*, Janet Street-Porter noted that after marrying Sharon Tate, "Polanski returned to his old ways; cruising for girls in Hollywood and showing video films of him and Sharon making love to guests at their parties. Sharon was unhappy with Roman's behavior, particularly his fascination with very young girls."

It was this fascination that led to his arrest in March of 1977 at the Beverly Wilshire Hotel in Los Angeles. He faced six charges, including child molestation, sodomy and furnishing dangerous drugs to a minor. The girl involved was just 13, and the offenses were alleged to have taken place during a photographic session in Jack Nicholson's house when Roman was taking the girl's picture for a magazine.

Jack Nicholson himself starred in a 1980 horror flick, *The Shining*, directed by Stanley Kubrick. In a previous chapter, I talked about my interviews with Nicholson in the 1960s when he made two films in Manila.

Two of the actors who've portrayed Count Dracula are George Hamilton and Klaus Kinski. Hamilton first came to Manila in 1979 to promote his movie, *Love at First Bite*, where he portrayed the Transylvanian count. He kept returning to Manila after that because he became a close friend of First Lady Imelda Marcos. When Imelda became a widow, there were rumors that she and George would get married, a rumor vigorously denied by Dean Antonio Coronel, Imelda's lawyer who told me recently: "Imelda, after the death of the President, has had only one love—love of country and countrymen."

When he guested in my *Seeing Stars* TV show in 1979, I asked Gorgeous George (an appellation given by the late gossip columnist Sheilah Graham) about his romance with Lynda Bird Johnson, daughter of President Lyndon B. Johnson. "Lynda Bird was a very good friend," he said.

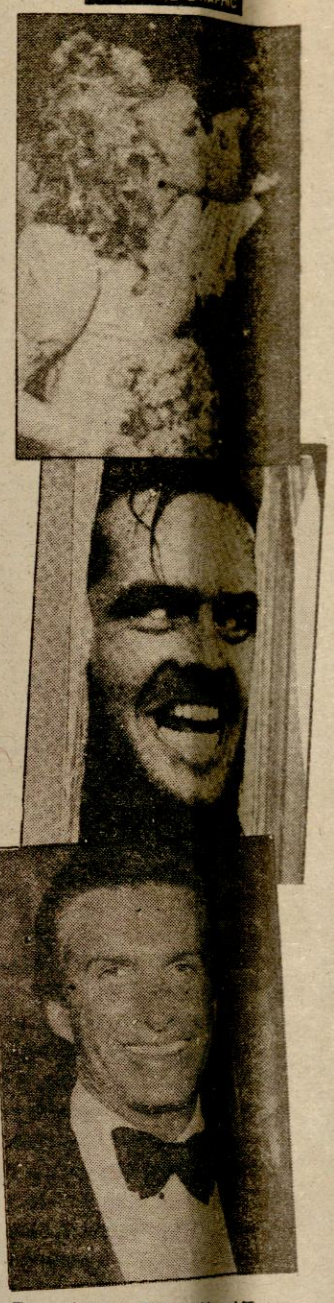
Asked about columnist Graham's allegation that George was courting Lynda Bird for publicity's sake, he said: "That's Sheilah's main defect. Although the late Louella Parsons also gossiped about the stars, she knew where to draw the line and never hit below the belt. I pity Sheilah because she's a very unhappy woman."

I asked him why he decided to play Count Dracula in his own production of *Love at First Bite*.

"To me, Count Dracula is the most fascinating figure in horror literature," he said. "But did you know that there really was a Count Dracula, the 15th century ruler, Vlad Tepes, often called Vlad the Impaler, after whom novelist Bram Stoker fashioned his Count Dracula? In fact, Dracula is derived from the Romanian word for devil or dragon."

In a recent *Newsweek* article, John Borrel reported about the ambivalence on the part of Romanian authorities on how to deal with the Dracula myth that could become the basis for a leading tourist attraction. "The uncertainty," he wrote, "was compounded by former dictator Nicolae Ceausescu's reluctance to allow more than passing reference to the vampire count for fear that he would be likened to a vampire."

In 1973, *The Exorcist*, based on William Peter Blatty's novel about possession, started the trend for a welter of possession movies like *Exorcist II: The Heretic* and *Exorcist III: The Legion*, among others, in the same manner that the 1976 release of *The Omen* spawned a series of flicks about the return to earth of the Devil. I've interviewed three of the principals of *The Exorcist* (writer William Blatty, Linda Blair and Max von Sydow) and the director (Richard Donner) and principal star of *The Omen* (Gregory Peck).



From the top: Polanski and Tate, Jack Nicholson, George Hamilton, Linda Blair, Klaus Kinski



"*The Exorcist* was based on real events," author Blatty told me when I met him in 1971 at the lion-filled residence of actress Tippi Hedren in Los Angeles. At the time, the movie had not yet been made so I did not ask a lot of questions about it.

But I had a long interview with Linda Blair in August of 1986 at the Manila Hotel where she was billeted for two days.

"I went through hell in that movie," she recalled. "What is ironic is that all the other possession films that followed *The Exorcist* were caricatures of the original. I was much abused as Regan, the girl possessed by the Devil. But that was only a warmup to the controversy created by my next role—that of a wrongly imprisoned girl brutally raped by other female inmates in *Born Innocent*, released in 1974."

Born Innocent, where Linda bared her ample physical charms (she had blossomed overnight, it seemed), elicited a chorus of protests: first from the Lesbian Feminist Liberation Group, and then from the mother of nine-year-old Olivia Niemi, who filed an $11 million suit against NBC, that claimed her daughter was sexually abused with a softdrink bottle by three girls and a boy who told the police they were inspired by the shower rape of Linda Blair they'd seen in *Born Innocent*."

Any list of the world's top movie bogeymen will automatically include Anthony Perkins, star of *Psycho* and its film sequels, and Vincent Price, who celebrated his 80th birthday last May 27.

Perkins, in an interview with this writer in Las Vegas arranged by top Las Vegas columnist Forrest Duke in 1984, said: "Did you know that the critics at first almost unanimously condemned *Psycho* because they found it revolting? Later, however, they grudgingly acknowledged the unique touch of Alfred Hitchcock as a horror specialist. The movie became so successful at the box-office that it inspired a lot of imitations."

Perkins reprised his Norman Bates role in Psycho II and III. "Unfortunately," he admitted, "there's only one Hitchcock who, I understand, made *Psycho* as a joke, in the spirit of seeing whether he could get away with its nastiness."

Horror specialist Vincent Price told me in a 1970 interview on the set of *Scream and Scream Again* (co-starring fellow horror experts Peter Cushing and Christopher Lee): "Did you know that I almost drowned during the 1939 filming of *The Tower of London* when Basil Rathbone and Boris Karloff threw me into a deep vat of wine?"

"People remember me for my nasty roles in horror films but are unaware that I've been on stage since 1934," he continued. "I'm also an art collector who acts as a commentator in art shows. Frankly, my acting stints in horror movies were the easiest ones. My favorites were those films based on the works of Edgar Allan Poe like *The Raven* and *The Fall of the House of Usher*."

Only recently, Price was featured in America's *Star* magazine where he told Hollywood reporter Angela Fox Dunn: "I'll be born again as a dog owned by someone like me. I think things come through prayer and sincere desire."

Before I forget, my close encounter with movie villain Klaus Kinski, one of those who've portrayed Count Dracula, occurred in the International Film Festival at the PICC. Kinski insulted every newsman who was present at his press conference by refusing to answer any question. He countered every query with "I don't need to answer that question because you can find it in my biography."

The trouble was, we could not find any published Kinski biography. How could such a nasty guy like Klaus sire a sweet and innocent thing like Nastassia Kinski?

As a veteran viewer of horror films, I find today's shock movies inferior to yesteryears'. Today's horror flicks rely on violence and gore and prosthetic makeup. I prefer photoplays based on the themes of such horror specialists like Horace Walpole, whose novel, *Castle of Otranto*, set the style for the spook literature in the 18th century; Anne Radcliffe, a genteel woman who dreamed up shivery romances that won her the title Queen of Terror; Mary Godwin Shelley (wife of the poet), author of *Frankenstein;* Edgar Allan Poe, who wrote *The Fall of the House of Usher* and other diabolical classics; and Bram Stoker, creator of Count Dracula.

(Next Week: Why James Bond has become unpopular)

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT
THE COCONUT INDUSTRY


NEL DIZON

USING OUR COCONUTS

The coconut industry today enjoys the distinction of being the number one industry in the country. It reigns as the top dollar earner, raking in one third of our total dollar receipts in merchandise exports.

As the backbone of an industry so vital to the national economy, the coconut farmers deserve all the support they can get so that their interests are at all times protected. To do this, their position in the industry must be strengthened.

They must, for example, be assisted in finding ways to increase farm production and income. The marketing of their products must be rationalized, and they must be afforded social benefits.

HISTORY. The development of the coconut industry began in 1642 when Spanish Governor-General Salvador Hurtado de Corcuera decreed the planting of coconuts in the yards of Filipino homes. The coconut was to be used to produce oil for cooking and rope for galleon rigging.

The Philippines first exported copra in 1895, then coconut oil in 1906, followed by copra meal in 1913, and desiccated coconut in 1922. Later, these were joined by cocoshell charcoal, activated carbon, and cocochemicals. These seven products now comprise what are considered as the country's traditional coconut exports.

Coconut oil (CNO), which is the major product of the industry, is extracted from copra, the dried meat of the coconut. The second major product is desiccated coconut (DCN), which is the peeled white meat of the coconut cut into small shreds and dried under rigid hygienic conditions. The Philippines is the world's largest producer of desiccated coconut which is mainly exported to the US.

Copra cakes and meals, derived from the residue of oil extraction, are the third major coconut products. They are primarily exported as animal feeds to the European Economic Community (EEC). A fourth product is coconut shell charcoal, used directly for fuel in smelting and as raw materials for the local activated-carbon industry.

At present, 20 million Filipinos depend upon the industry for livelihood. A total of 3.25 million hectares are planted to around 410 million coconut trees yielding some 12 billion nuts annually.

ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTIONS. Approximately 19 percent of total Philippine coconut products is channeled to the domestic market, while some 81 percent is exported, providing for 70 percent of international requirements for coconut products.

Coconut, unlike its peers in the agricultural sector, has successfully transcended its traditional uses, claiming even an important role in the growth of several other industries.

But in spite of the magnitude and resilience of the coconut industry, there exist some serious problems.

PROBLEMS. Coconut production seems to be on a downtrend. From a total land area of 3.4 million hectares planted with coconuts in the early Eighties, hectarage has been reduced to 3.2 million hectares in 1988 and to 3.1 million hectares in 1989, or a loss of almost 112,000 hectares in one year, or about 307 hectares per day.

Although the Philippines is the world's largest producer and exporter of CNO, its share in the oils and fats market has declined due to the use of products other than coconut oil, competitive and subsidized pricing of rival oils, supply reliability of competing oils, and protectionist measures of importing countries.

Again, the country has long depended on traditional markets (the USA and the EEC) for its traditional products. As a consequence, the coconut industry is easily affected by protectionist measures of these export markets like the campaign against tropical oils by the American Soybean Association (ASA) and the imposition of stricter limits of aflatoxin levels in copra and copra meal by the EEC.

Low domestic consumption of coconut products is another factor. Between 1988 and 1989, domestic consumption declined by 8.68 percent. The biggest decrease was observed in the consumption of CNO, estimated at 11.60 percent. In the aggregate, domestic consumption accounts for merely 19 percent of total coconut production.

Records show tumultuous fluctuations in copra prices. As a consequence, income from coconut production can hardly be ascertained. The sad plight of coconut farmers is aggravated by manipulation in prices as manifested in the slow reaction of prices in the farm level whenever there are increases in international prices and the quick reaction at times of price declines.

CREATION OF THE INDUSTRY. In 1940 the National Coconut Corporation (NACOCO) was created to "promote the growth and development of the industry." The Philippine Coconut Administration (PHILCOA) replaced NACOCO IN 1954.

In 1964 the Philippine Coconut Research Institute (PHILCORIN) was created to "monitor, evaluate and conduct researches on the coconut."

Finally in 1971 the Coconut Coordinating Council (CCC) was created to "supervise, coordinate and evaluate the implementation of the coconut self-sufficiency program of the government."

But these agencies lacked a singleness of purpose.

The creation of the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) through Presidential Decree 232 in 1973 represented an initial step toward the integration of the coconut industry. The PCA took over the powers and functions of the PHILCOA, the PHILCORIN and the CCC.

The PCA is governed by a board of directors, presently composed of seven members (including its chair), who are all appointed by the President.

The chair, as chief executive officer, sees to the faithful execution of board policies, while the administrator, being the chief operating officer, manages the day-to-day operations of the authority. Complementing these officers are six deputy administrators, each overseeing a major service component, namely: (1) the Agricultural Research and Development Branch; (2) the Industrial Research and Market Development Branch; (3) the Administrative and Finance Branch; (4) the Corporate Planning Office; (5) the Public Affairs and Government Industry Liaison Office; and (6) Field Operations Branch.

To take charge of effective program and project implementation at field levels, the PCA has installed eight regional offices headed by regional managers, and 63 provincial offices, each headed by a Provincial Coconut Development Officer who supervises a number of Municipal Coconut Development Officers.

To ensure effective service delivery, the PCA operates three Agricultural Research Centers and a Coconut Development Center which cater to the needs of the PCA's field personnel and program beneficiaries.

The Davao Research Center undertakes research on agronomy and crop protection, the Zamboanga Research Center on breeding and coconut wood utilization, and Albay Research Center on cadang-cadang malady and tissue culture.

PLANS AND PROGRAMS. The PCA, aware of the vast opportunities for growth and development of the industry, has formulated a 10-year Philippine Coconut Industry Development Plan (PCIDP) to provide the direction and pace of development for the industry's continued viability. The PCIDP aims to expand uses and develop markets for coconuts and their by-products; increase productivity; enhance product competitiveness; encourage diversification of processing



activities; intensify agro-industrial research and development; and upgrade the quality of life of the farmers and their families.

In line with the national goals, the PCA has evolved programs addressing various problems of the industry.

For domestic market promotion, products are identified through market research survey. Promotional materials are also printed and distributed to create consumer awareness.

For foreign market promotion, the program includes market research and analysis, country-commodity profile assessment, promotional materials dissemination, trade fairs and missions, and the holding of international seminars on coconut quality and availability.

For trade market assistance, the program provides the industry's clientele timely and accurate market information, market development, and the intricacies of coconut trading.

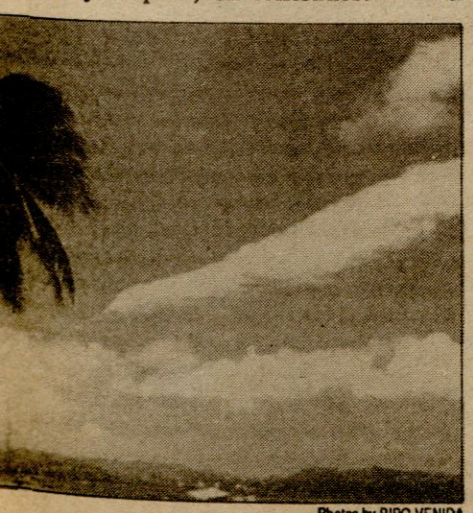
For product competitiveness, the program adheres to established coconut product quality standard, including the PCA-UK joint project on aflatoxin control which aims to improve the quality of copra and copra meal.

INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT. In recognition of the capability of small farmers' organizations to act as prime movers of the industry, the PCA has evolved as one of its primary concerns the Small Coconut Farmers' Organization (SCFO).

The SCFO is geared to develop an organizational framework for the efficient delivery of credit and extension services, the expansion of livelihood opportunities, and the promotion of institutional development.

A CALL FOR SUPPORT. In light of the problems now besetting the coconut industry, PCA administrator Charles R. Avila calls for stronger measures and more aggressive efforts from both the government and private sectors to realize the industry's enormous potentials. He says that the industry is a complete engine for economic growth that contributes significantly to the country's dollar earnings and provides employment to millions of the population.

"The sheer magnitude and importance of the coconut industry merit the strong and concrete support of every Filipino," he concludes. G



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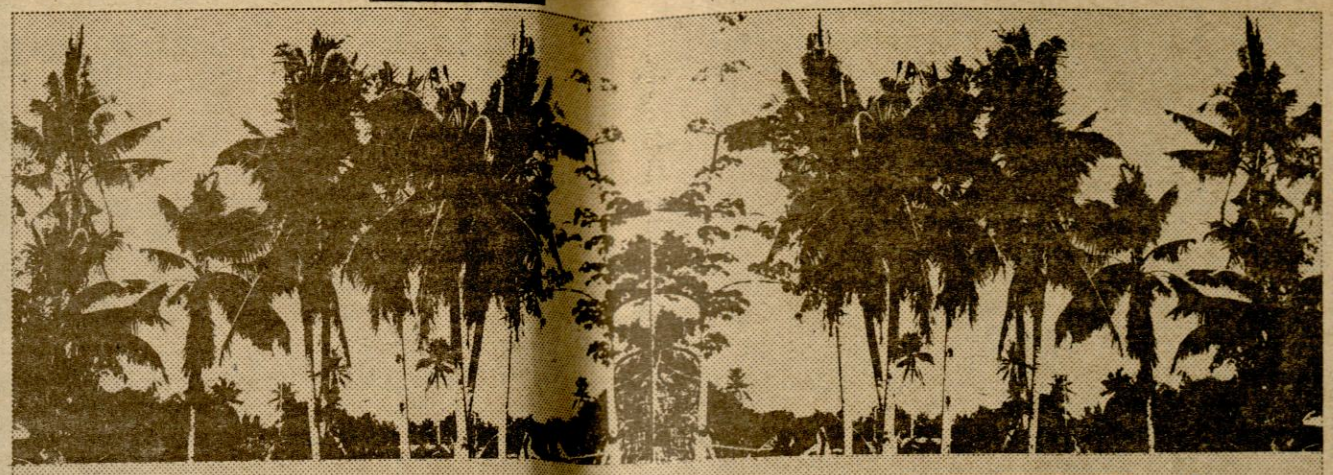


CHARLES R. AVILA AT THE HELM

By CESAR T. MELLA

Charles R. Avila, the new administrator of the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA), was born in Tanauan, Leyte, on May 10, 1945. He is the first son and third child of Eugenio Magno Avila and Elinor Perez Roberts.

Appointed to the position January this year, replacing Fred R. Aldaba whose temporary appointment as PCA administrator expired December last year, Avila brings to his job a wealth of hope for the troubled coconut industry. His three decades of active participation in rural development and social action can help him propel small coconut farmers into the mainstream of a promising but neglected industry.

A man of many gifts, Avila roamed the world for 26 years as an exile from Marcos's oligarchic regime and a seeker of his own Holy Grail in keeping with his commitment to free the oppressed masses from the bondage of poverty and social inequity.

From 1968 to 1980, he pursued in nonformal modes his studies in development, economics, political science, mass communications, history and philosophy of law, rural sociology and comparative religion from various learning institutions in different countries.

A former seminarian, Avila has a bachelor of arts (major in classical studies, minor in languages) and a master of arts in social philosophy (*magna cum laude*) degrees from the Divine Word Seminary. His masteral dissertation, entitled "Ownership: Early Christian Teaching," was simultaneously published by ORBIS of New York and Sheed and Ward of London in 1983. Hailed as a landmark study in its own field, the book is now used either as a reference material or textbook in many countries around the world.

Other works by Avila include "Tanikala", written in Pilipino and Cebuano; "Land for the Cities of Asia," "The Filipino in the Seventies," "Peasant Theology," "Readings in Ideology," and "The Case for Small Town Development: Tanauan, Leyte."

Avila is also a polyglot. He is conversant in Spanish, Greek, German, French, Italian, Bahasa (Indonesia/Malaysia) and Thai. This is aside from English, Tagalog and other major Philippine languages.

While in the seminary, Avila got involved in the Church's rural development and social action efforts. In the Sixties and early Seventies, he was the prime mover of the Federation of Free Farmers in his capacities as national secretary and vice-president, fighting for the farmers' legitimate demands for access to land and other food-producing resources and for the necessary package of service, including credit, technology and marketing outlets and structures.

From 1969 to 1971, he was part-time special lecturer in agrarian reform and rural development at the University of the Philippines, Ateneo, Maryknoll, San Beda, Saint Scholastica, Saint Joseph, and the Asian Labor Education Center.

Through the years, Avila has become an expert on the problems of agrarian reform and rural development by directly involving himself in the education and organization of all the subsectors of the peasantry, including tenants, lessees, owners-tillers, landless farmworkers, homesteaders, logging concession workers, and small fishermen and landowners. He has likewise acquired expertise in all kinds of croplands—rice, corn, coconut, sugar, orchards—for both domestic and foreign markets.



PCA's Avila

Abroad, Avila was consultant to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization for Asia and the Pacific; researcher at the Institute for Food and Development Policy in San Francisco, California; and organizer of the Bangkok-based Asian Cultural Forum on Development and Asian Nongovernmental Organizations' Coalition chaired by Dr. Dioscoro Umali. He was also lecturer at various institutes in the USA, Mexico and Taiwan.

As a researcher, Avila assisted authors Francis Moore Lappe and Joseph Collins in the writing of the bestseller *Food First*.

At present, Avila is consultant to the United Coconut Planters Bank, national adviser of the Countryside Economic Development Program (CEDP), and founding chair of the nongovernmental Leyte Economic Foundation.

Politics also runs in his veins. Avila is currently deputy secretary-general of the Lakas ng Demokratikong Pilipino (LDP).

And before he joined the government as a career executive, Avila was elected mayor of his hometown in 1988. As the town's chief executive, he emphasized to his constituents the necessity of understanding the production-to-marketing cycle of project implementation.

"I resigned as mayor because I want to reach out to more people in their struggle for a more humane and abundant life in our society," says this young technocrat who's for accelerating the economic development of the country

No doubt the PCA is in good hands under the leadership of Charles R. Avila. G

THE HIDDEN COSTS OF 'CHEAP' ENERGY

By J.R. ALIBUTUD

They say it's cheap, but it isn't. Coal, produced locally and burned in plants to generate electricity, is the cheapest way to satisfy the Philippines's power requirements, its proponents say.

In its environmental impact statement submitted to the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB), the National Power Corporation (Napocor) claims that "the unit cost of power generated from coal is cheaper than that for oil [by P0.3067 per kilowatt-hour]."

In addition, the utilization of coal for electric generation does not entail the use of scarce foreign exchange, as in the case of oil, since sufficient coal is produced locally and does not have to be imported.

Strictly speaking, the easily quantifiable economics of coal-fired generating plants makes excellent sense. But, as always, there's no such thing as a free lunch. The hidden costs such as environmental degradation, increased health care expenditures, and lost employment eventually pop up somewhere down the road.

All these considerations have come together in the controversy surrounding the continued operation of the Calaca I coal-fired thermal power plant and the proposed construction of the Calaca II power plant in Matchinan (San Rafael), Calaca, Batangas.

Calaca is some 85 kilometers south of Metro Manila and lies on the edge of Balayan Bay. Despite its proximity to Manila and the existence of National Highway Route 17 nearby, the scene is rustic. The majority of the people there earn a livelihood through farming and fishing.

The Calaca I power plant is designed to produce 300 megawatts (MW) of electrical power under full-load conditions. The plant's boiler will consume an estimated 205 tons of coal an hour, or approximately 1,795,800 tons of coal a year. The coal will come primarily from the Semirara coal mines located on an island in the town of Caluya, Antique. Semirara has the second largest known coal reserve in the Philippines, with a proven reserve of 43 million tons and the probable reserve of 100 million tons.

Since the projected total consumption of coal over the expected 20-year life of the Calaca plant is only 35.92 million tons, the proven reserves at Semirara will be more than sufficient to fuel the plant. What's more, the coal supplies can be cheaply transported by sea from Antique to Batangas, a distance of only 250 kilometers.

The people of Calaca had consented to the construction of the original power plant, anticipating that it would bring progress to their sleepy town. The Napocor study itself had noted that the unemployment average in Calaca was over 50 percent.

But the Calaca townsfolk were to be sadly disabused. Last February 8, 1991, the Municipal Council of Calaca passed Resolution No. 91-12, "strongly opposing the proposed Unit II (Calaca II) in view of our sad experience with the existing Unit I which has created havoc in our town and has displaced almost the entire residents [sic] of a nearby barangay, San Rafael."

Among other things, the people complained that:

"1. The very foul odor of the sulfuric wastes stored in the open disposal area is unbearable.

"2. The potable drinking water from artesian wells had been polluted by wastes coming from the open disposal area.

"3. The fly-ashes are all over the houses of the residents in the nearby area.

"4. Countless persons have been afflicted with respiratory diseases.

"5. Our agricultural lands are not as productive as before."

On April 16, 1991, Calaca Mayor Abdon Casanova sent a petition (signed by 536 of his constituents) to the EMB opposing the construction of Calaca II. The petition said that not only have yields from their farms decreased, even the fishing in the Balayan Bay had soured. The petition also said that the power plant management had not installed the necessary antipollution devices. The petitioners also took to task the plant's practice of not giving preference to the people of Calaca when employment opportunities arose.

Harold Hubbard, a senior fellow at the Resources for the Future based in Washington, DC, wrote in his article "The Real Cost of Energy":

"The burdens that a kilowatt-hour of electricity imposes beyond its stated price are what economists call externalities: costs borne by people who are not parties to the transaction that imposes them. For more than two decades, environmental economists and ecologists have been struggling to identify and to measure the external costs of energy production and consumption. Meanwhile, conventional economics and current market policy ignore externalities, effectively setting their cost at zero.

"Ignoring environmental and social costs leads to what social scientist Garrett J. Hardin called the 'tragedy of the commons.' Market forces lead inexorably to the overuse of underpriced goods. Indeed, Hardin has charted the progress of civilization in terms of the internalization of costs formerly viewed as external.

Coal may save us some of those scarce foreign reserves, but we may have to sacrifice the environment and our health.



BIBO VENIDA

Tolentino

"Lengthy and painful processes have internalized the cost of labor [by the abolition of serfdom], the cost of raising and educating the labor force [first by free public education and now in many countries by maternity leave and child care], and the cost of workplace safety [by worker's compensation and insurance benefits]. Today chemical and thermal wastes generated by industrial processes—and energy production in particular—pose a new challenge for internalization."

Hubbard points out, however, that calculating the actual cost of energy is no simple matter. The nature and amount of costs are difficult to quantify.

"The health effects of air pollution is an important added cost of power generation and consumption, but it is difficult to set exact prices for increased lung disease for senior citizens or lead poisoning among urban schoolchildren," Hubbard adds.

The whole thing becomes even more intractable when you begin to consider things like crop losses, or the destruction of natural habitats or even of aesthetic values.

Last October 1989, the Office of Conservation and Renewable Resources of the US Department of Energy (DOE) conducted studies on the external cost of electric power.

It found out that no energy technology is completely environmentally benign. For example, solar power technology, which makes use of photovoltaic cells to generate electricity, might seem to be the cleanest and least-disturbing manner to generate electricity but the manufacture of such photovoltaic cells involves large quantities of hazardous materials, and the disposal of such materials which contain toxic elements like arsenic and cadmium also takes its toll on the environment.

The choice then boils down to the electric-generation process that is ultimately *least* damaging. It was found out in another study that when the costs of all quantifiable externalities have been internalized, the most expensive options were nuclear plants and coal-fired generators—they had costs of some two or three times more per kilowatt-hour.

It was also found out that some solutions to existing environmental problems such as the installation of air scrubbers to remove sulfur emissions from coal-fired plants were tantamount to barking up the wrong tree. The cost of the scrubbers and their maintenance were significantly more than if the plant just burned low-sulfur coal in the first place.

How do we balance the needs of the community in Calaca with the needs of the nation as a whole? For the past two years, periodic power shortages have hit Metro Manila and the greater part of Luzon Island. Industry has suffered and small consumers have been inconvenienced. Estimates of loss from such power outages have been pegged as high as two billion dollars a year.

As of the moment, the pace of energy development programs have been lagging behind the demand for power. At this rate, Filipinos have nothing to look forward to but brownouts all their lives. The choice of a coal-fired plant was simply the Napocor's response to the government directive to shift energy production to non-oil energy sources. This shift is important because it helps reduce our dependence on imported oil.

But if we continue with whole-scale energy development, it will be communities like Calaca who will have to pay the price.

Sixto Tolentino Jr., head of the Environmental Impact Assessment Group, says that in his experience as a planner, "one group has to be sacrificed."

He says that industries and manufacturers have to learn to include environmental costs even before their project reaches the investment stage. Planning a project independent of its environmental impact could turn out to be very costly because the companies would have to conform later if an environmental compliance certificate (ECC) is to be issued.

In the public hearing conducted last April, the various groups involved agreed to form a multisectoral group with representatives from Napocor, the townspeople, government agencies, and nongovernmental organizations. The multisectoral group will conduct studies and spend time in the area, and will then come to a recommendation whether or not the construction of Calaca II will be allowed. The recommendation will carry great weight in the eventual decision process which the secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) will manage.

The Napocor and the townspeople have come to the compromise that the continued operation of the Calaca I plant will be allowed if the Napocor installs all the needed antipollution devices. But the people have remained adamant about the scrapping of the plan to build the second unit.

And so, the situation at Calaca has come to an uneasy peace. That is, until the multisectoral committee issues its recommendations.

Ovarian tumors

House Calls



ERNESTO V. BENESA, M.D.

A perceptive reader expressed some concern that this space has yet to take up—"in the highly informative manner 'House Calls' has been discussing various medical topics of general interest"—what she correctly considered as "the very significant subject of ovarian tumors." She is obviously one of a still small number of women who manage to keep themselves sufficiently informed regarding the statistically supported assertion, for one, that the risk of developing ovarian new growth does not appear to spare any particular age category. And even more important, the other emerging statistical evidence shows that ovarian cancer is fast becoming the leading cause of death from all gynecologic malignancies. Indeed, these two epidemiologic factors should be ample reasons for a more vigorous public health information and counseling strategy directed at this complex disease entity.

Accurate established figures on the incidence of all ovarian neoplasms are lacking chiefly due to the fact that classification and even definition of what constitutes true ovarian tumor growth vary among authors and from one medical center to another. Fortunately, figures are available for the more essential considerations like the distribution of ovarian new growths by age, the relative incidence of benign to malignant growths, as well as the proportionate importance of so-called risk factors for ovarian malignancy. A ready knowledge of risk factors for the disease has been shown to be of great value in enhancing early detection and more successful outcomes of therapy.

In a 10-year retrospective study made by Dr. Paul Koonings and others, published in the *American Journal of Obstetrics & Gynecology* in 1989, 861 patients with ages ranging from seven to 80 years had ovarian tumors diagnosed by operation. Overall, the review revealed that 75 percent, or 650 of the 861 ovarian neoplasms, were benign and consisted mostly of serous cystadenomas, mucinous cystadenomas, and the benign cystic teratomas (more commonly called dermoid cysts). These benign cystic tumors were seen mostly in the 20- to 29-year age group, and found least commonly among the age group of 60 to 69 years old. On the other hand, 180 cases which were primary malignant new growths (21 percent of the reviewed cases) showed a manner of distribution increasing with age: from only four percent within the 20- to 29-year age group, to 49 percent of the cancer cases seen among the 60- to 69-year-old patients. The remaining four percent of the patients in this study had what are referred to in gynecologic practice as the ovarian neoplasms of "low malignant potential" mainly due to their rather low tendency to spread beyond the ovary and invade adjacent tissues or other organs. Because of this characteristic feature, indicated therapy safely allows greater room for more conservative surgery as may be desired in the individual case. The more common examples, for the reader's acquaintance, are dysgerminoma, granulosa- and theca-cell tumors, and arrhenoblastoma.

For purposes of simplification and more useful knowledge on the part of lay readers, it should be sufficient to classify all ovarian neoplasms under three groupings (instead of the highly complex classification in clinical practice), namely: (1) benign tumors, more popularly referred to as ovarian cysts; (2) primary malignant tumors of several types, of generally solid consistency, with the common designation of ovarian cancer; and (3) metastatic new growths, with the source of invasive cancer cells usually located in the breast, uterus or gastrointestinal tract.

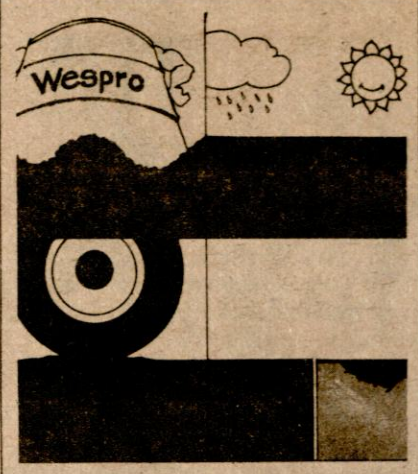
As a general rule, the benign tumors are of a cystic character, varying in size from a few centimeters to enormous cysts that virtually fill up the abdominal cavity. Except for the appreciation of a gradually enlarging mass in the lower abdomen, the condition may remain symptom-free over an extended period. The most frequent complication is "twisting" of the cyst on its pedicle, causing severe abdominal pain and the development of gangrene when arterial blood supply gets cut off. Other possible complications are the rupture of the tumor, pressure effects on intra-abdominal organs, and the so-called "tumor praevia" or blocking by the tumor of the presenting part of the fetus during labor. Except for the cautionary rule against elective surgery for an ovarian cyst during the first trimester of a coexistent pregnancy, surgical removal is the only treatment in these conditions. But the smaller new growths should always be differentiated from the so-called *functional cysts* of the ovary which generally require no intervention of any kind.



Three principal factors may be considered responsible for the generally poor prognosis and treatment outcome in ovarian cancer. First is the often insidious nature of the condition which, except for the presence of a mass as in the benign tumors, can remain symptom-free (with regular menses and no abnormal discharge) up to the time when invasion to surrounding structures (with bowel and urinary symptoms, or fluid in the abdominal cavity) has occurred. Second, unlike the more commonly encountered malignancies in the breast and uterus which by their accessible location and symptomatology allow for simple screening and early-detection methods, ovarian malignancy is diagnosed by much more elaborate procedures, often that of the major abdominal operation itself, performed after the condition may have become less amiable to a complete extirpation of the cancerous mass. The third factor is the relatively rapid growth and early invasiveness inherent in almost all the different types of ovarian cancer as shown by several investigative studies. This may also explain the rather high recurrence rate of tumor regrowth following initial surgery without adjuvant chemotherapy.

Finally, it will be important to cite the *risk* and the *reduced risk* factors for ovarian malignancy in general. As stated, the risks increase with age and are highest in the older age groups that include women past the menopause stage. The risk are also high among those with a positive familial history, a history of having had stillbirths, breast cancer, and hypertensive diseases. Reduced risk factors may be said to "protect" women who are in their younger years (below 40 years), have given birth to more children, and breastfed them. Thyroid gland disease, diabetes and bronchial asthma are conditions statistically related to lowered risks for ovarian carcinoma although the reasons for such protection are not clear.

Although the high technological advantages of ultrasonography and the other scanners, the new immunologic identification of cancer antibodies and other "cancer markers" in the blood, greater expertise in the use of chemotherapy and irradiation modalities, as well as advanced surgical techniques may, indeed, have bolstered the fighting resources we have against cancer in this new decade. But the battle to improve prognosis and patient survival rates in ovarian malignancies may have to rage a little longer. And constant awareness on the part of women at risk cannot be overstressed. G



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THE 'WAR' IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

By ROMMEL R. CORRO

The natural resources have taken a heavy toll in this former US Pacific colony, and concerned environmentalists are trying hard to match petty politics with bionomics.

Nearly six years of political confrontations under the Aquino administration oftentimes have overshadowed the pressing need to confront urgent challenges.

And these challenges have something to do with interrelated subjects such as galloping population figures, land distribution, famine, energy, the environment and inflation.

What appears to be the most vital issue today, however, is the unabated devastation of the environment, and despite the availability of scientific, technological and economic means to confront this problem, the state seems helpless.

It is obvious that one of the reasons for the government's inutility in countering the disastrous effects of ecological imbalance is the unabashed political bickering, frequently accompanied by violence.

In view of the rapid depletion of Philippine forests, local authorities have recognized the need to reverse the tide of migration to the ecologically critical areas where an estimated 17.5 million of the more than 60 million Filipinos live.

About seven million of these upland residents are residing in forest lands where, according to Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Fulgencio S. Factoran Jr., "we must introduce environmental enhancement and protection programs as well as environmentally sound livelihood technologies."

Officials are apprehensive over the fact that rapid forest denudation, with an annual one-meter-deep erosion of at least 100,000 hectares, has resulted in a loss in productivity of P11 billion every year.

And the recent long drought has destroyed, as of mid-February this year, more than P1 billion worth of crops or 206.064 metric tons of rice and corn in 176,505 hectares in 15 provinces, according to agriculture sources.

Yet the politicos apparently are more concerned with the forthcoming presidential elections than nature's wrath which could invalidate altogether whatever gains the May 1992 electoral contests may achieve.

But optimists see a ray of hope in this badly battered part of the world still reeling from a series of disasters ranging from earthquakes and rampaging floods to droughts and volcanic eruptions.

Among those who believe they can turn the tide of environmental destruction are executives of the DENR, Caltex Philippines Inc. (a multinational corporation involved in the production of oil and oil products), and the Dallas (Texas)-based Institute for the Study of Earth and Man (ISEM) of the Southern Methodist University.

Reliable sources reveal that for research and development alone, Caltex is funding a P13.6-million program for what it calls "on-farm use" in four communities, starting with an Ilocos Norte town. This project is in cooperation with the DENR's Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau and the ISEM.

An agreement entered into by Caltex president Francis Ablan, DENR Secretary Factoran and ISEM vice-president Ben J. Wallace provides that "the primary goal of the project is to facilitate research and development of multipurpose tree species within the context of the whole farm or farming system such that results of the work will contribute to the regeneration of the forests of Asia (especially the Philippine Islands), enhance the variety and number of tree species in and around the farm, and improve the quality of life for the farming men, women and children of the region."

The launching of the program, scheduled for July 18 in Manila, stresses the policy of the state "to ensure the sustainable use, development, management, renewal and conservation of the country's natural resources..."

According to Benjamin Singanon, assistant to the Caltex president and environmental specialist coordinator, the ISEM has the expertise needed to execute such a project, after which "we'll go into full-scale reforestation." The... would require additional funding.

He said in an interview that they're working out "something compatible with the practices," including the slash-and-burn routine, of the farmers, adding that this would require the introduction of certain species of trees suitable for their livelihood.

Wallace, who is also the university's board chair and a professor of anthropology, stressed in a separate interview that he has come here "without any preconceived ideas" in the implementation of the five-year research and development plan.

"We tend to forget that farmers also are experts," said Wallace. "We are going to utilize their knowledge. We are going to import certain species of trees only if it's necessary."

This, he added, is in line with Caltex's social commitment by fully supporting the country's development programs on environment and natural resources. G

Crossword Puzzle

RENE MARCIANO

ACROSS

1 Fish sauce
5 Essential oil
9 Pageantry
13 Baby carriage
17 Israeli dance
18 Eat
19 Dies ——
20 Launder
21 Mideast VIP
22 Leave out
23 Solar disk
24 King-toppers
25 — Barker
26 Dullard
27 Print units
29 Modifies
31 Mention
32 Shakespearean villain
34 Practiced one's trade
35 Small rock
37 In the know
38 Unseeing
39 Behold
41 Amore
42 Monster
43 Scratch
44 Rotating gear
45 Exist
46 Bundle
47 Vestige
48 Donned
49 Share
51 Cost
52 Sofa
53 Falls behind
54 Ox stomach
55 Female horse
56 Consecrate
58 Disables
59 Progenitors
62 Inlets
63 Merits
64 Vigil
65 Be sick
66 Land units
67 Self-reproach
68 Neck hair
69 Brit. princess
70 Mus. note
71 Polishes
72 Incantation
73 Performed
74 Nirvana
75 Booty
76 Pismires
77 Flower arrangement
79 Posed
80 Nova
81 Interjection
83 Rage
84 Harem room
86 Singing voice
88 Charles Lamb
90 To sheltered side
91 Judge's robe
92 Diving bird
93 Seedlike part
94 Fondles
95 Headliner
96 Easy stride
97 Barracuda

DOWN

1 Attention-getter
2 Type of hill
3 Silkworm
4 Type of rifle
5 Worship
6 Clock
7 Blackbird
8 Macerate
9 Mus. instrument
10 Table scraps
11 — West
12 Fine
13 Covered with alloy
14 Sped off
15 Asseverate
16 Clutter
27 Suffix: native
28 Self
30 Thin mark
31 Bedspreads
32 Regarding
33 Dined
34 Location
35 Strike with open hand
36 Railbird
37 Malicious stare
38 Invigorate
39 Zhivago's lover
40 Presage
42 Shade trees
43 Tight holds
44 Treaties
46 Captures
47 Cuts
48 Telegram
50 Russian news agency
51 Etch
52 Challenge
54 Follows
55 Fabricate
56 Heathen deity
57 Ital. money
58 Servants
59 Intense feeling
60 Prong
61 Toboggan
63 Spent projectiles
64 Desire
67 Trot
68 Cow bleat
69 Female performer
71 Schedules
72 Drunkard
73 Miscellany
74 Amer. poet
75 Mudflow
76 Expiate
77 Cloak
78 Chest sound
79 Heroic tale
80 Cease
81 Brit. river
82 Defer
85 Period
86 Everyone
87 Gambling game
89 Cut off

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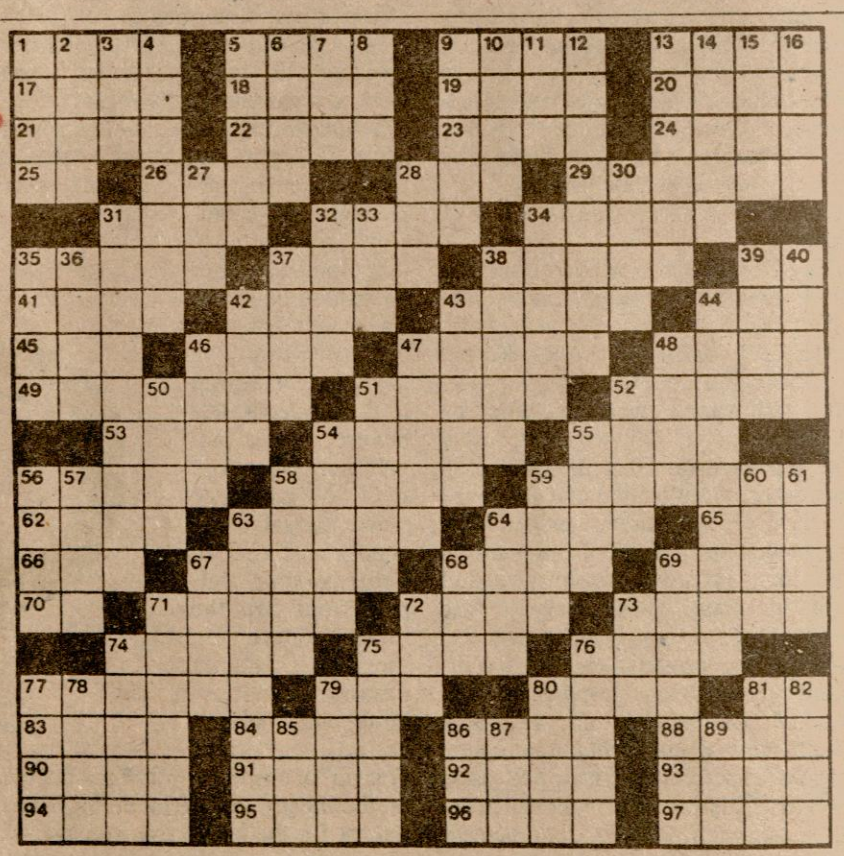
Last week's answer



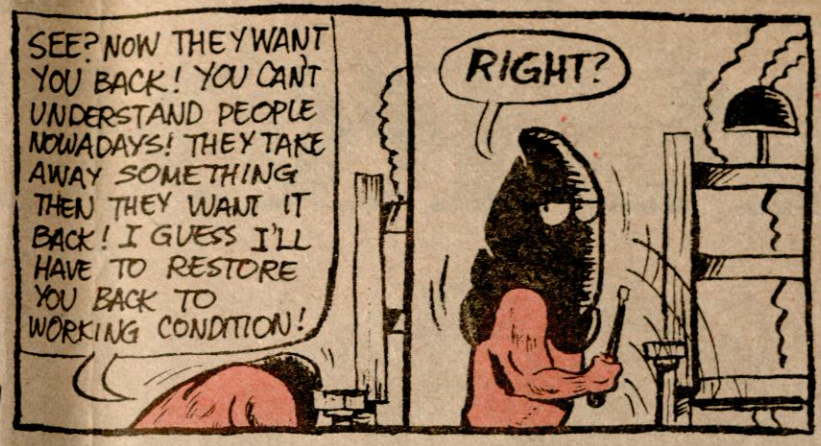
SOLUTION NEXT WEEK

SCENARIOS

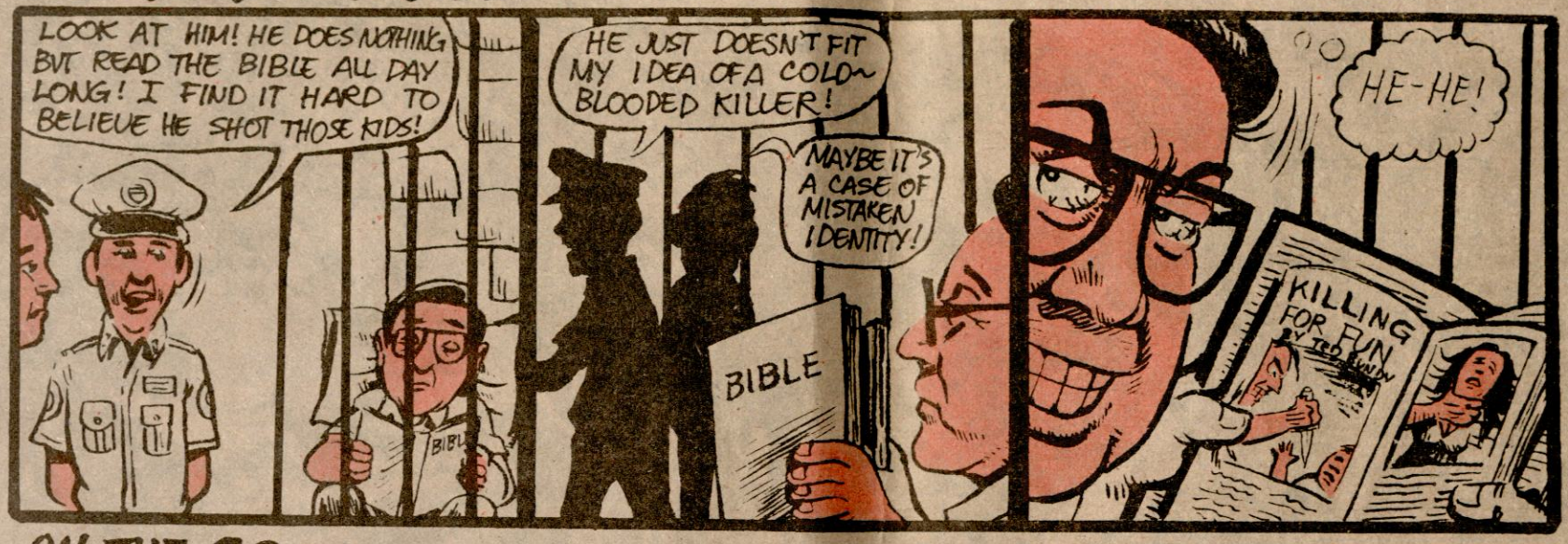
RENE ARANDA

Death Calls

BY RENE ARANDA '91



THE SON OF A GUN

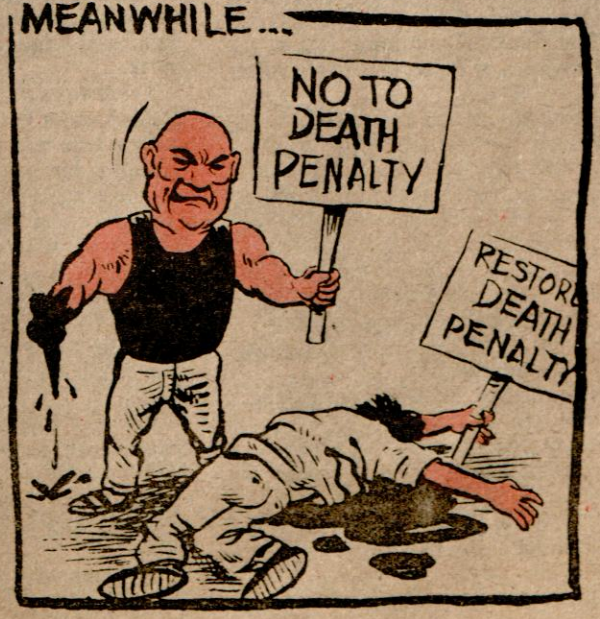


ON THE GO

DEATH WISH



MEANWHILE...



A POLITICAL

Politics is oratory and handouts



Fiction by V. BRIGOLI ARMAMENTO

Abu Fah slipped into his underpants and then pulled his trousers over them, his feet now planted on the sandy shore of the stream. He then put on his checkered polo shirt. While his hands were fumbling with the buttons, he heard a boy's voice with laughter in it.

"Revolution... Revolution...." the little boy said, without raising his voice; and he laughed.

The child was wet and naked, standing at the edge of the stream, the clear water rippling at his feet. On his body some drops of water glistened under the midmorning sun. Carefully, he climbed up the rock that jutted out. He stood on its top, looking big and tall, his head seemingly touching sun and sky, his body partly hiding a distant mountain. "Revolution," he said again, his hands outstretched.

Abu laughed, his laughter rippling like water in the stream.

The boy's mother, taking a bath, scooped up water from the stream with her cupped hand and splashed it at her son. "Shut up, Talio!" she barked, her face flushed. "Don't joke about such a thing."

The boy held his little peenie and pissed.

"If you utter those words again, Talio, I'll whip you," said the mother, tightening the cloth around her body just a little above her breasts. She began sloshing through the water that soon climbed to her waist.

"My little boy is just giving us a warning, it seems," a man remarked, his right hand fingering a mole on his right cheek.

There were few people bathing and fetching water that morning. An old woman who had shed her dress was wrapping her body in a piece of frayed cloth, baring her limp wrinkled breasts. Two girls in bathing suits were wading through the shallow stream, their feet making white splashes, their hair tossing rivulets of water. A man and a woman were filling their bamboo tubes with clear water from the spring nearby, their bamboo containers pillowed on stones.

Abu Fah, one of those who had just taken a bath, darted a glance at the man with the mole on the right cheek. "Abdul," said Abu, "the men are probably waiting for us now. Let's get going."

The man with the mole nodded, "Okay."

The two men went up the riverbank and walked along the river; Abu Fah, ahead, Abdul, behind. They were following the footpath that stretched like a ribbon under the coconut trees.

Ahead of them, a group of men huddled in the shade of a big mango tree. The two men joined the group. Some men surrounded Abu Fah and talked all at once.

"Mr. Fah," said a tough-looking fellow, "it seems the people can't wait for the result of this coming elections. They're mad at some corrupt public officials."

"Many of us can hardly eat thrice a day while the rich wallow in luxury," another man put in. "So we want the humanization of our laws so the poor and the rich may have almost equal opportunities."

"Yes," another one butted in, "that constitutional provision which says we have `equal job opportunity' must be implemented. As of now, members of the rich influential families have an advantage over the poor in landing government jobs because the poor can't help the politicos."

"It's time we showed those corrupt public officials we're disgusted with their apathy and neglect!" Abdul raised his voice. It was his little boy who had said 'Revolution' at the edge of the stream earlier.

"Quiet, quiet, I implore you!" said Abu Fah, raising his right hand, palm down. He was the tallest man in the group. "Now look," he went on, "violent means to achieve a noble end can't be justified. It'll needlessly spell disaster throughout the country."

"Besides," said a burly middle-aged man, "you can't put an end to corruption by booting out of office all dishonest public servants, it's a kind of chronic disease caused by amoebas called *homo beastialli.*"

"What's that disease called, Leo?" Abu asked, creasing his forehead as he fastened his gaze at the burly middle-aged guy, "*homo beast—?*"

"*Homo beastialli,*" Leo repeated, his eyes twinkling. "Our public officials are incurably suffering from such bestial disease. That's why many of them are grafters and jugglers."

"I agree with you, Leo," Abu Fah put in. A frown sat on his craggy face. "It's disgusting to hear of their shady deals using public funds."

"It's because they've employed both 'erictanization' and trickeries," Jose remarked. He was a big tough-looking fellow. Mischief twinkled in his eyes when he spoke the word *erictanization.* "Not all of them, of course," he added.

"That's why I've lost faith in them," commented Leo. His one hand dug into a pocket of his khaki pants and it came out with a pipe. "We want them to be honest both in the public service and in

GREENHORN

and two masked killers.

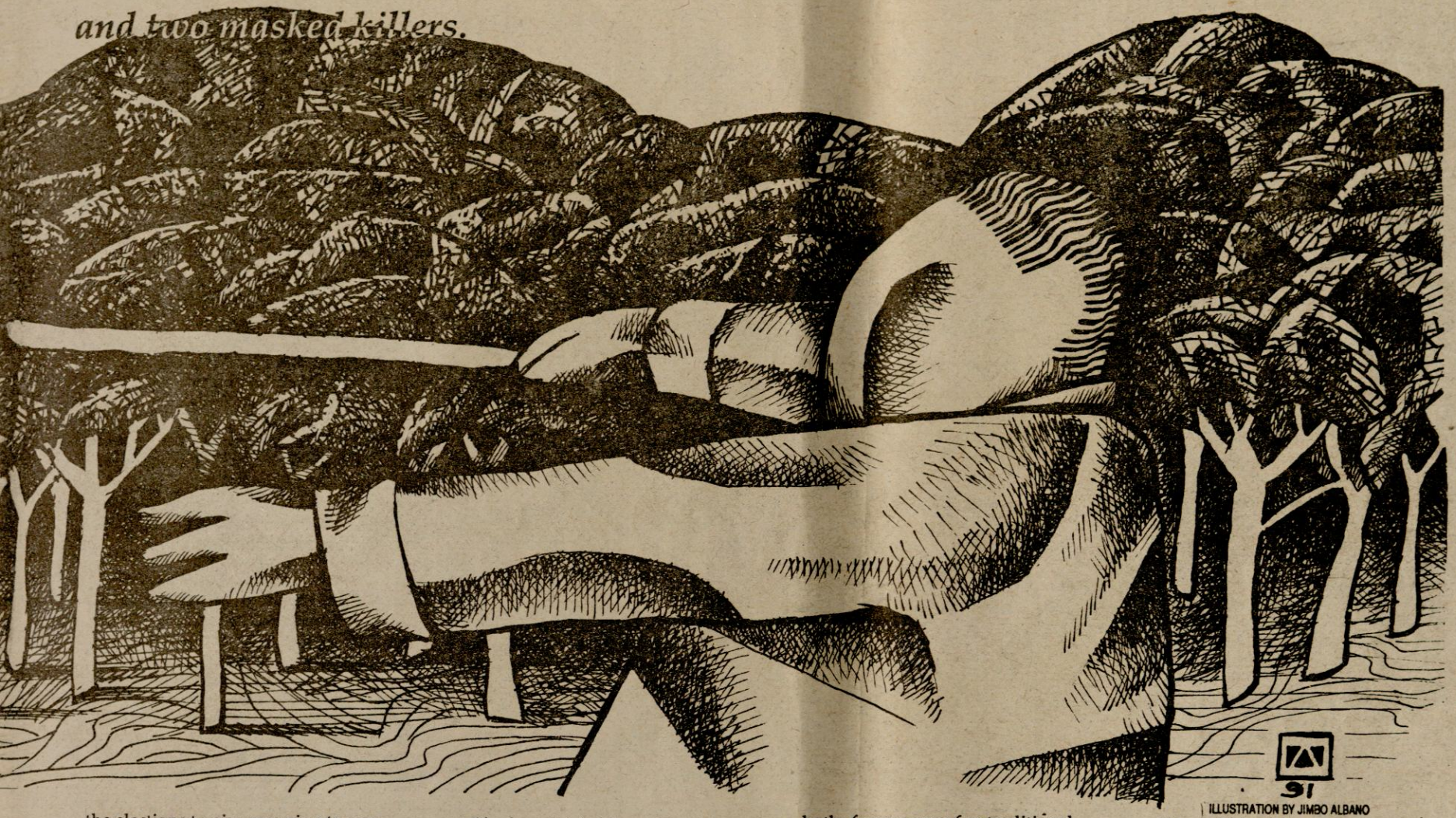


ILLUSTRATION BY JIMBO ALBANO

the elections to give meaning to our democracy."

"To give meaning also to our Christian way of life," Abu Fah said. "Good Christians ought to be loving people who shouldn't look upon their wealth as theirs alone. If they have more than their needs, they should share with others."

"Most of our legislators are Christians but they live in luxury, watching the poor suffer," Jose commented. "Some of them have mansions here and mansions there, but their employees can hardly afford to own a small house due to their meager earnings."

"That's un-Christian," concluded Abu Fah.

"It's why we demand a change," said Abdul, fingering again the mole on his right cheek.

"Mr. Fah, we really need social, economic and political justice," interrupted another man in the group.

"Let's use force," Abdul urged

"As I've said, whatever end is achieved through violent means isn't justified," Abu Fah pointed out. "The best thing to do is to punish every corrupt elective official at the polls."

"If he employs fraud and terrorism to win," Jose asked, "what shall we do? If he—"

"Don't entertain such an idea," Abu cut him short. "But if he resorts to fraud and terrorism, it'll be the greatest mistake in his life."

"A nice mistake that makes him win," Jose remarked dryly; his laughter tore through the fresh morning air.

"Let's skip it," Abu said. Then he raised his voice: "My good friends, you've come here to hear me announce the revolt I told you about. It's a political revolt that'll prove whether or not we have genuine democracy for the rich and poor."

"Come to the point, Mr. Fah," Jose urged.

"Now listen," said Abu Fah, thinking to surprise his good friends. "I've decided to file my candidacy as a representative for our district despite my poverty. Many have said that a poor guy who runs for an elective position is out of his wits. That I'll find out."

"You want to be a candidate under what party, Mr. Fah?" Leo asked.

"I don't need any party," said Abu, "for it's useless. A lot of politicans are like frogs, leaping from one party to another. I'd like to find out how people react to my offer to introduce many great reforms for their own good. Furthermore, it's a test whether we have real democracy."

"Our people aren't yet politically mature," Leo said. "They won't go for an independent candidate."

Waving his right hand aside, Abu spoke: "That I'll find out myself. It's why I call my offbeat move a political revolt. If I win, you'll be proud that a native of this barrio and your pal could be the forerunner of untraditional politics."

On the afternoon of the day after Abu Fah filed his certificate of candidacy, a farmer visited Abu's humble home in the barrio. Wearing a big smile on his face, Abu shook hands with his visitor, who wore a frayed sombrero and soiled pants with rolled-up bottoms.

The farmer eased himself onto a bench and began flattering Abu Fah. As he lavished praises on the candidate, the farmer jiggled his right leg. Clearing his throat, he changed the topic.

"Mr. Fah," said the farmer, his hand pushing back his sombrero and scratching his head above the forehead, "I'm going to campaign from house to house in my barrio for you. But you see, I've got a problem."

"What's your problem?" queried Abu Fah. "Guess I can help you solve it."

"It's why I came, thinking you could help me. Anyway, it's only the thousand pesos I need from you for my farm, so I can go on campaigning."

Abu tried to smile; he didn't want to offend his prospective political leader. He called his wife who was then taking her nap. He told her to bring the money the farmer had asked.

A plump woman with a lean face stepped out to the little porch where Abu and his visitor were conversing. She thrust some crisp bills to her husband who handed them to the farmer.

The farmer profusely expressed his thanks. He was widely grinning when he rose to his feet, baring a missing tooth. "I know you're the wealthiest man in this barrio and you'll become much richer in less than a year after you get elected," the farmer said as he went down the stairs.

"Perhaps by barrio standards we're rich," Abu's wife told the farmer. "But there's no wealthy family in our barrio."

Abu Fah kept silent, but his mind was saying, *What you think is wrong, for I don t seek elective position to get rich.* But he couldn't say it to the farmer.

Before the farmer had crossed the yard, a slatternly woman ambled over, with a child clutching at her untidy skirt. The woman didn't come up to the porch. She just stayed at the foot of the stairs, glancing up at Abu Fah.

"I don't have to go upstairs, Mr. Fah," said the woman, "but I need your help. My husband is sick and the *herbulario* tending him needs one hundred pesos."

Abu gave a sign to his wife who went inside and returned with the money. Abu went downstairs and gave a hundred-peso bill to the woman with the child.

"Thank you, Mr. Fah," said the woman. "I'm glad you're a candidate."

"But don't think a candidate's house becomes the office of Social Welfare," Abu's wife called out to the woman.

After a while, three young men and a young woman came to Abu's house. They sank down on the bench on the porch.

"Mr. Fah," said one of the young men, "I'm representing my barrio. The members of our basketball team need a ball."

"My barrio also needs one," echoed the other young fellow.

"I came to represent my barrio, too, Mr. Fah," another young man spoke.

"My organization—'Dakit Girls' Softball Team'—needs a softball," the woman said.

"Pacita," Abu said to his wife, "go get a notebook and list their names, addresses, and those things they want."

Abu's wife came back with a ballpen and a notebook. She jotted down the information.

"I'll personally deliver those things you need as soon as I have them," Abu promised, smiling and thinking how stupid were rural folk to equate election campaign with handouts.

Shortly after they had left, two middle-aged men climbed the wooden steps. One of them wore a *tikug* hat; the other was hatless, wearing long unkempt hair that had the tendency to curl. Abu Fah recognized the man with the hat; he was the barrio captain of Takay.

"Sit down," Abu told his visitors. "What can I do for you, gentlemen?"

Taking off his hat, the barrio captain smiled. He said: "My friend here is one of the councilors of Lungaob. Our two barrios need just one carabao and a sledge."

When Abu Fah glanced up, he saw the puzzled look on the face of his wife. He, too, was bewildered with these so many demands from the voters. To hide his resentment, Abu forced a smile and said to his wife, "Pacita, take note of those things they need." And to the men he said, "As soon as I have a carabao and a sledge, I'll deliver them to you. I'll ride the carabao to your barrio."

When the two men had left, Abu Fah, a political greenhorn, stretched his limbs and yawned. "Oh, they're making it hard for a poor candidate. If I can't give what they need, I'll lose their votes."

"It's why we have only 'democracy of the elite' in our country," Pacita told her husband. "The poor and the rich candidates for the same elective office don't have an equal chance to win. Election is a contest to buy votes, directly or indirectly."

"Okay, Pacita, we'll sell our house and lot so we'll have campaign funds for my candidacy," Abu shrugged.

"We'll be homeless and still you won't win, Abu," Pacita said gloomily "I object to your idea."

Abu Fah was startled.

Pacita was always amenable to his ideas; she had never opposed him.

"Why?" Abu stared at his wife. "Don't you realize it's necessary for us to raise funds for my election campaign?"

"I know it, Abu. But even though we sell our house and lot, we can't have enough cash to make you win."

Abu frowned. He approached his wife, circled an arm around her waist and drew her toward him. He kissed her.

"Never mind if we lose property," Abu hissed. "As long as I win. I'd like to show honesty in public office and I'd like to introduce many reforms for the good of the masses. Besides, I'd like to prove that we have real democracy."



"Abu," Pacita said calmly, "our democracy is only in the Constitution. It's not implemented. To implement it, we need an election code that can provide the poor and the rich candidates equal chances to win. As of now, a rich candidate has tremendous advantages over the poor."

"We can have that equal chance," Abu said softly. "Besides, don't you know that others consider us wealthy?" He was smiling, for he knew he was joking.

"That farmer, who lives in a hovel, called you 'wealthy' because he needed a favor from you," the wife said. "You know that we own only this house and lot. If we sell, we would have only about three hundred fifty thousand pesos. Rich politicians are spending millions of pesos to win. But three hundred fifty thousand pesos, where does that get you?"

Abu Fah shrank back in bewilderment. Pacita wiggled out from her husband's arms. The two had conflicting ideas.

That night, they didn't eat their supper. Abu Fah crawled to his bed quietly, just as his wife curled up in bed on the other side of the wall in the same room.

Shortly after, there were knocks on the door; first, the sounds were almost inaudible. Soon voices were shouting, calling out Abu's name.

Neither Abu nor his wife answered.

"Mr. Fah, wake up... Wake up, Mr. Fah!" The voice was loud and urgent. "We've got some terrorists for you to hire. They don't ask much."

Abu Fah swung his feet off the bed and, without slippers, tiptoed to where his wife lay.

"Pacita..." But his whisper was drowned out by another shout from outside.

"Mr. Fah... Hey, Mr. Fah! Aren't you a candidate?"

"If you are," said another voice, "then open the door. We're going to help you if you want to win."

"We will terrorize your political foes if you pay us a small sum," a new voice said.

"You what?" Abu asked.

"Oh, c'mon... You heard what I said," replied the same voice.

"Go to hell!" Abu snarled. "Bullshit!"

In the afternoon a week later, Abu Fah went to the outskirts of town. Unlike the traditional politicos surrounded by bodyguards and leaders, Abu Fah was alone, walking on the dirt road, holding a stick in his right hand.

At length he heard horses' hooves clop-clapping. Abu looked back over his shoulder and saw two masked riders: one was armed with a homemade gun; his companion, with a knife. The two masked men alighted from their horses in front of Abu.

"You're a miserable candidate walking alone on this road with nobody to protect your life from us," the man with the gun said.

"What do you mean?" Abu asked.

"Pardner, he is asking me," the man with the gun said, looking at his masked companion. He was bigger and huskier than the other. The muscles on his arms bulged as he held the gun, pointing its barrel at Abu Fah.

Abu looked at the two masked men with a puzzled squint. "What's this? I can't understand you."

"You will understand it later," spoke again the man with the gun, moving one step backward, half-dragging his right foot on the dirt road. His leather shoes were old and worn out, wanting repair. He made a sign to his companion.

The other masked man opened his knife, its blade glinting in the sickly glare of the late afternoon sun. He held it firmly in his hand, facing Abu Fah and flashing glittering eyes at him. Abu had only a stick in his hand to defend himself if attacked. He looked around. There were no people other than the three of them: Abu standing on the road before the two masked men, while their two horses waited for them. Overhead, a small flock of crows were flying in the sky; the black birds were crying, calling their names.

"*Kawawa* [a pity] you walk alone," said the masked man who held the knife as if he was going to thrust it. He moved menacingly toward Abu. The man with the knife had long frowzy hair not covered by his mask. "You have no bodyguards?" He laughed. His laughter was mirthless and sarcastic.

"I'm poor and can't afford to hire bodyguards," said Abu Fah. He moved backward, his stick poised in his hand; he moved as if he wanted to use the stick to parry off a knife thrust.

"You are at our mercy," the man with the gun said grimly. "We can kill you right now if we like."

Abu felt a faint shiver pass through his body. Fright clutched his heart.

"Do you know why we are after your scalp?" said the man with the gun. He kept prodding it at Abu.

"I don't know," replied Abu Fah.

"Bad for you to know," said the other masked man. As an afterthought, he added, "No use."

He closed his knife and slipped it into the pocket of his denim pants. Abu remained rooted where he stood, the tension inside him had eased somewhat. He regarded the two masked men as political devils.

"You candidate *ngayon lang?*" the guy with the knife asked in pidgin English.

"Uhuh," Abu nodded, poking a finger into his well-combed hair, scratching his head.

"Too bad," remarked the man with the gun, its barrel still pointing at Abu Fah.

"What do you mean by 'too bad'?" Abu asked. "You want me to withdraw?"

"Too late," said the man with the gun, shaking his head. He stood at the edge of the road, his hulking shadow thrown across the ditch where the grasses grew thick and green. "Too late, for you hurt a rival who thought you could be one of his leaders."

"So what do you want from me?" inquired Abu.

"Your life," the fellow with the gun calmly said, laughing a little. But the laughter was dry and ominous.

"If you do it to me, you're going to murder both a candidate and democracy," Abu said, hoarse voice tense and tight.

"Ha, ha, ha!" The man holding the gun laughed. His laughter was vulgar and satirical. "Democracy... Murder... We do not know what you are talking about." He laughed again.

"We no politicos," the other masked man said. "Democracy—we no understand."

"We are goons!" exclaimed the man with the gun, as though he was proud of it. "And money... Oh, we are its slaves. Ha, ha, ha!"

The other masked man laughed also. His one hand slid into the pocket of his denim pants and came out with the knife. He opened it, its blade glinted in the sickly sunlight.

Looking at the man with knife in his hand, Abu Fah creased his eyebrows into a heavy frown, his ears listening to his heart pounding. In a quivering voice he said, "A killer isn't fit to live."

"Shaddup!" snarled the man with the knife, its blade thrusting out dangerously.

With fear already gripping his heart, Abu took a step backward, his eyes on the white blade of the knife, his face taut. A gust of wind rumpled Abu's hair and shook the shrubs nearby.

Suddenly the masked man with the knife leaped at Abu and plunged the white blade into Abu's face. Abu ducked to avoid being hit on the head, but his right arm was caught by the blade when he attempted to parry the knife with the stick. The stick fell from his hand, his face now twitched with pain, his arm bleeding.

"I do not need to shoot you," the man with the gun said. "I'll just let my pal finish you off with his knife." He laughed sarcastically again. "Your rival who hired us ordered me not to shoot if it could be avoided."

"Yes, only knife to kill you," said the man gripping the knife.

He thrust his weapon into Abu's breast and quickly pulled it out as fast as he had plunged it. Blood gushed out.

Abu Fah thought of feigning death. So he screamed weakly, spun around and toppled down limply, face downward, kissing the dirt road. He jerked his legs once and then lay still.

"Dead," announced one of the goons.

Abu Fah heard the clatter of horses' hooves on the road growing fainter and fainter. Hearing no more sound, he slowly got up to his feet and, his left hand on his bleeding breast, cursed politics and democracy.

A low groan escaped from Abu's mouth as he trudged up the road. He spotted a cogon-roofed house in the distance. G

3 POEMS
By Val de Villa Fajardo

BETWEEN THE YEARS

At certain pauses in the calendar
At certain distances between the seasons
On afternoons gilded in guilt
Might not a mind declare its freedom
from years of wilderness in the womb
question the silence of sullen old men
deride the doubtful importunings of the sun?
The leaves have lost their luster
Dark as boughs blackened by a storm
Dark as wounds on the wings of a dead firefly
(Just like the detritus of a dream.)
And I analyze with the vengeance of an assayer
the tiny whorls of age on my skin
leaping like agitated living particles
passing through the small spaces
between love and lust
between the sundering of light
and the soldering of darkness
between the loins and the brain
O how fatal to the memory
The death of a shadow.

A LOST ANTHOLOGY

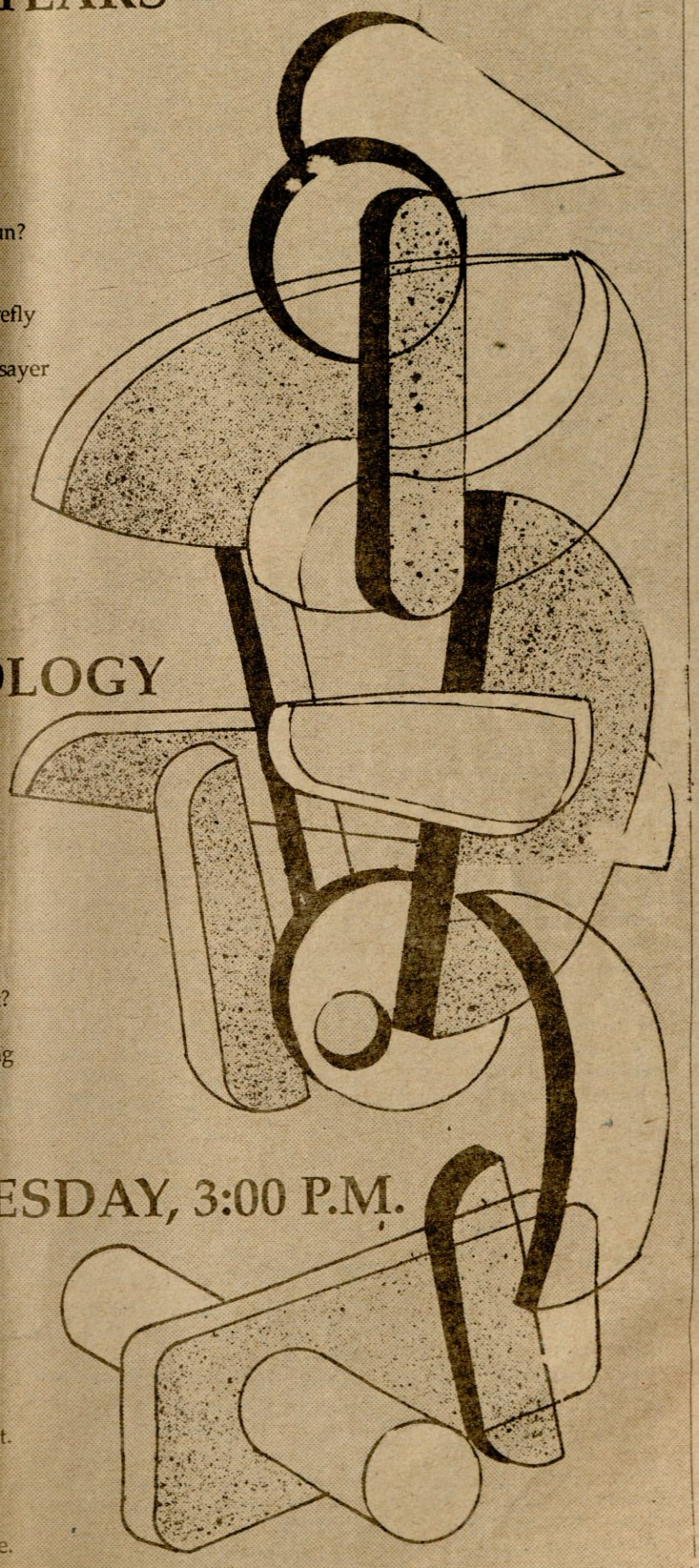
Searching the cracks of our faces
for a glimmer of the last fading light,
we meet again as prodigal voices
from a lost anthology.

With the sharp sense
of duelists, we fence with our intentions:
Did we plan to probe our lives
under the crucible of conviction?
Are we enjoined by conspiracy or accident?

We spread out on the mesa of remembering
the gnarled raisins of the years.
Each secret cove, each wrinkled knot
Speaks of an ancient, dark whisper.

CUBAO, WEDNESDAY, 3:00 P.M.

Here defined is the loneliness
of the swell of heatwaves
throbbing like ashy, corded veins.
In this district of the heart
days explode with the smell of cordite,
and afternoons take a long time to die
just like a stubborn memory out of the past.
Sitting like a monolith of an exile,
barricaded inside a heartland cafe,
I nurse the odor of clean metal
from the wayward steam of the huge kettle.
Even now, in this spurious hour,
I cannot explain why summer
slays my faithless ardor.



Survival strategies

By MARIO P. CHANCO

"The winds of change," said an African nationalist, "blow over all continents. Yet so few of us recognize the signs; fewer still, it must be said, know where they lead. And hardly one will say *why* the winds have come. Either they do not know, do not recognize, the stage of developing transition under which their countries labor. Or they are afraid to voice their fears. The scripts in their hands do not match the living scenario."

Today men and women of all persuasions wonder at the magnitude and the complexity of changes taking place all over the nation. At what stage in the whirling vortex of global history does the Philippines now lie? Let's look at some weather signs.

In many Philippine provinces, in coastal or interior communities that lie literally under the shadow of giant aircrafts plying their trade all over the world, another Philippine ghost from the past is surfacing. It is called barter. It is a trade practice satanically frowned upon by the "hard" money men who prescribe global, financial and monetary laws. But to increasing numbers of Filipinos (and of Asians, Africans, Italians, South Americans, Eastern Europeans, etc.), barter, regardless of whether one lives inside or outside the formal economy, underground or aboveground, has become not only unavoidable but inevitable.

So what has the reappearance of barter among individuals, among communities and nations, come to mean? Is it part of the pattern of change now convulsing the world?

"The hard money rules, the quixotic value-relating system between life's necessities and their shiny, chromium-plated industrial and financial counterparts, continue to push great masses of people outside the modern mainstream," says a University of the Philippines social scientist. "As long as those dictated conditions exist, both barter and the underground economy will continue to thrive."

A top UP psychologist, now on leave to handle a peasant survey for multinational aid agencies, cites the peasant-workers' Survival Congress in Quezon City last April 30 as a paradigm for anyone wishing to divine the rate at which the waves of change are changing both countryside and urban centers in the Philippines:

"Look at their agenda for survival. From beginning to end, their program for 1991 and beyond betrays not only the arrival of a fourth, but maybe a fifth, sixth or even a seventh wave of change. Perhaps this is the real thing. And frankly, I am scared, for them and for the country. The world, let alone the present or future generations of Philippine governments, is not going to sit idly and let them take over."

In Pugad Negro, a middling Manila street lined with caked, dirty-white *accesorias* of the type seen in Filipino movies of the '40s and '50s, another small symptom of coming change can be seen. In this depressed area, what the Makati matrons condescendingly call their "dirty kitchen" is just that—dirty. Dirty, unglamorized by roofing other than an occasional torn plastic sheet nicked with cuts, bruises and bumps, Pugad Negro's dirty kitchens fulfill a strictly utilitarian purpose. That's to give the harried working class housewives more bed space for family or boarders to snatch a minute of rest or sleep, or to mercilessly propagate their species.

Nonconventional lifestyles and systems are among the signs of the new wave of change washing over the country.

But in Ka Tonyang's neighborhood, her dirty kitchen has acquired a status not equaled even by the linoleum-and-tile outdoor cookhouses of the Makati *biglang-yamans*. Three times a week, a decrepit passenger jeepney from a Cavite upland farm dumps a sack of shelled green coffee on her doorstep at the amazingly low price of P30 per kilo—P1,500, more or less, for the load. Commercially roasted, this coffee sells anywhere from P60 to P90 a kilo. But even downbeat coffee drinkers today have time only for the insipid "instant" brands, and this kind sells, believe it or not, at an equivalent price of P370 per kilo!

In her dirty kitchen, Ka Tonyang steams her green coffee 30 minutes to remove 95 percent of the caffeine, dries the beans, and roasts them in an ugly iron *kawali*. Using an ordinary corn grinder, or river stone mortar and pestle if the customer demands a finer brew, Ka Tonyang emerges from the fray with fragrant, sweet-smelling decaffeinated coffee, which she sells, she shyly admits, on a "can afford" basis.

"Ang may kaya, sinisingil ko ng husto," she says. But schoolchildren with only pennies to spare can get a thick glass of this delicious, fragrant coffee on a "best efforts" basis. And she looks the other way when some kids, hungrier than most, tip the evaporated filled milk can over longer than required.

For the "instant" fanatics who claim they have no time to fool around with coffee brewed the way our parents and grandparents used to brew it, Ka Tonyang has a new, home-made invention. It's a piece of ordinary raw cotton strung out over a wire frame, much like the ordinary coffee strainers of old. Ka Tonyang's coffee is spooned into a cup, the cotton filter is placed on top, and very hot water is poured inside. The result, Ka Tonyang



told me, over my second cup, is that *"kung mayroon kayong biyenan, malamang matatadyakan ninyo sila sa sarap ng kape ko."*

The other consequence, needless to point out, is that when humble Filipinos like Ka Tonyang begin discovering new ways of exploiting economic needs, they can be depended upon to start exploiting them.

In Malolos, Bulacan, inside the capitol compound, a small restaurant caters to news correspondents and friends of Joey Munsayac, an idealistic media man. There are other places like it all over the Philippines. And today, for all we know, they could be hosting an open discussion on how the politics of the future should be handled.

Joey Munsayac himself had his fling with politics and didn't like it; surprisingly, he says the only way to reform it is to bore in from the inside; next year he's coming back for more.

Enjoying a lunch of strange new greens and shrimp, Munsayac introduced me to organizers of Sanduguan, a peasant group chaired by Benjie Cruz. Benjie's charter members took their oath in blood when they organized years ago; today they are living witnesses to the fact that peasants can survive. In their network are 29 cooperative rural banks, with 15 more coming before the end of 1991. And—guess what—they have a national political arm as well.

It is called the Farmers' Party, and as early as November last year, which was when I dropped by to look up Joey Munsayac, peasant groups from Luzon and the Visayas were traveling over the rice and peasant-rich provinces of the main Philippine island. I asked them, what for?

"To listen mostly," said Ka Ely, member of Celing de Guzman's huge Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Association. *Wala pang pulitika.*

"Nakikinig lang kami," said a companion, a board member in a northern province *Sanggunihan.* "Of course, if they mention personalities, we discuss their merits with them."

The third man said, "Well-informed *silang lahat, kahit ang mga namumundok."* He added, *"Kundi ang radyo, ang mga NPA ang nagbabalita sa kanila."*

I asked the team leader what the peasants thought about the candidates.

There was a pause as he looked at his companions.

"Understand, we are only reporting what we have heard," he said.

"What did you hear?"

"The people are apathetic about the entire national political situation," the team leader said. *"Wika nga nila, pare-pareho iyang lahat.* They are all the same. Once elected in office, between paying their political debts and building up manpower and resources for the next elections, *wala na daw po silang panahon para maglingkod sa taong-bayan."*

"What do you intend to do?"

"Pinag-aaralan po namin," said the man. "We are studying the situation. But in the meanwhile, we make do with what we have. If government aid comes, fine, we accept it. As Cory Aquino said in 1986, *kung bayaran kayo, tanggapin ninyo.*

'Tapos, iboto ninyo ang talagang nais ninyo."

"There will be a local Survival Congress in Isabela next month," the second man said. *"Ngunit alam na po namin ang pag-uusapan diyan."*

"I think what they are trying to say is that, how the political system works needs to be changed," broke in Joey Munsayac. "The candidates are not that important. If the delivery of democracy to the grassroots succeeds, no politician can be elected without respecting the rules."

South of Manila, another opportunity presented itself to learn how the countryside, for all its isolation from the cities, expects to be wooed by the new wave of presidential hopefuls.

It was past noon when we finally struck the narrow stretch of paved highway past Calamba, going into the pseudo-urban university town of Los Baños, Laguna. Two small clouds nuzzled the peak of Makiling. The heat shimmering from the roadway and the rusty tin can-like roofs of the houses along the roadsides had a damp, heavy effect on breathing.

Then traffic tangled tighter than coils of wire spring torn askew by a fall. An hour passed, with stalled cars moving less than 20 meters. I got off our car and peered into the distance. I saw the obstruction immediately: two funeral corteges were passing each other over a small bridge.

There was nothing to do while the corteges untangled themselves from the bridge, so I struck up a conversation with a vendor of yellow corn. The procession moving away from us, she confided, was for the young son of a Ka Imo, who farmed half a hectare on the Batangas side of Mount Makiling. The one headed toward a big Manila memorial park was for a wealthy landowner from Bay, whose son Renato was a manager for a big multinational firm in Makati.

The rich man had had a fatal stroke at a *despedida* for someone going off to a mumbled address in Sacramento, California. The young boy had died wading through a paddy field surrounded by 220-volt wire fence set up to keep hungry field rats from eating the crop.

"He was the 15th victim since June last year," the vendor said.

"Has the case been prosecuted?"

The vendor shot an incredulous look at me.

"It was settled out of court, like all the others."

"What happened to the electric fences?" I asked. "Were they torn down?"

The vendor sighed. "They're still there," she told me. "People die every day. Those who survive have to eat. The fences improve their eating chances."

I went to this little barrio of Lubao, Pampanga, standing against the open sea, with the fishing port of Orani asprawl against it, to see how a tiny community made up of 400 registered voters and their listed dependents was dealing with its survival problems. The barrio is jerry-built on a spit of filled earth from an abandoned fishpond. It looked poor but pretentious; when we arrived, nine sturdy fishermen were performing major work on the chapel, which faced the landing.

In this barrio, as in many others in the area, there are no land connections, and water, supplies, every last bit of food except fish and shrimps, has to be hauled in by boat. A barrio councilman summed up the situation tersely: "We need work, livelihood, drinking water. But the big fishpond owners are retrenching. Some of us scrape the river bottoms for shells, to sell to fishponds at P50 per can. But the shells are running out."

A grizzled old fisherman said the shellfish scraped provides food to shrimps, crustaceans and other river life, which are the "seed" of all fishpond owners. High tides bring the shrimps and fish into the ponds, but as their food supply is scraped off, that means fewer marine life enters the fishponds. Eventually, this scraping completes what the big alcohol fermentation plant five towns upstream from this barrio doesn't kill.

Going back in the same motorized banca late in the afternoon, I sat across the bow from a middle-aged Filipino priest who kept sneezing all throughout the trip back to Orani. At a bend in the river, a large roofed motorized banca loaded with high speed sewing machines and other garments-making tools sliced the river, sending off waves that rocked our boat.

"That's the third cottage industry closed down in two barrios here since last December," the priest said, as though addressing an audience.

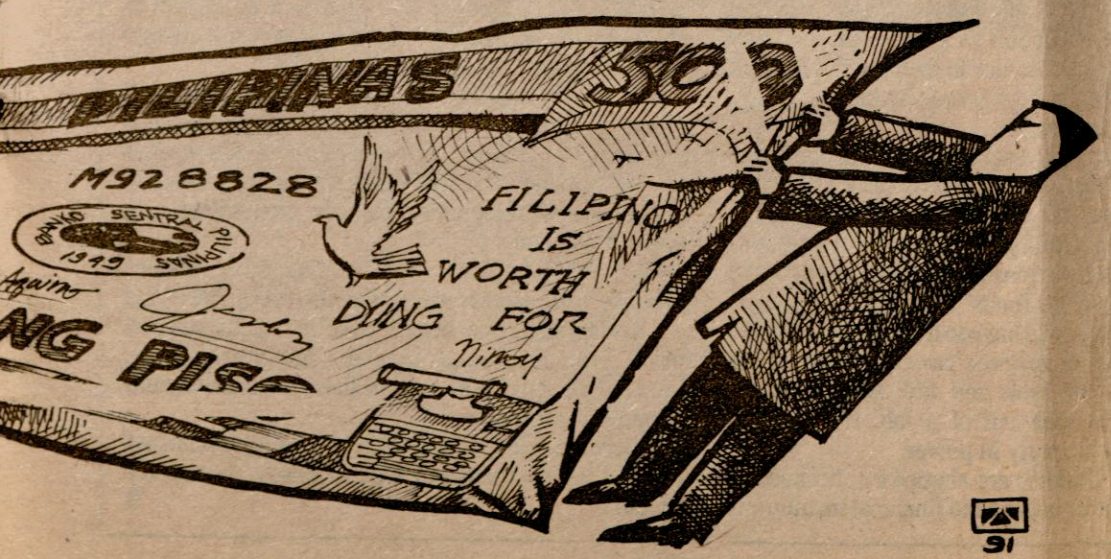
"Their contractors in Quezon City said it couldn't be helped. The big textile industry Mafias, who used to launder their smuggled textiles by buying into struggling garment companies, now want it all. First they foreclosed or sheriffed their way past their contractors. Then they began picking up the subcontractors they had persuaded to join with their contractors—for a song. *How* do they do it? They own mayors, governors, congressmen, executive officials, judges, police, the whole works. How do they get away with murder? But they get away with it."

Back in Metro Manila, snatches of the wire service interview with the African nationalist came back to me. I tried to paraphrase them as he had said them, but could only come up with this inadequate translation.

"In some cases, the nationalist discovers, such changes have been known to come about as a result of sweeping military, political or economic conflict—perhaps a combination of two or three. Whatever the cause, the results become the equivalent of a fourth wave, not the kind so admired in intellectual frigid zones, but a wave of real populist change.

"Now, a point in time comes when, after having tried fire and sword, western-style democracy and its accompanying demagoguery, mass publics become convinced someone has been leading them up the garden. They realize that only two options can possibly redeem them from their wretched condition. The first must escalate the past violence experienced; the second, historically, might avoid that. It will seek instead to undermine the status quo by introducing populist changes not recognizable even to the social scientist, but comprising such unmistakable configurations, as to make them acceptable to their clients.

"Fire and sword, unfortunately, may eventually have to be resorted to, once the populist formulas accepted by the people are deemed by them to be in danger of diminution or dilution. The lucky nations are those who recognize early on what the winds of change bring them, and why. The unlucky are those who ignore the signs and spit in the teeth of the gale." G



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The high cost of elections

Annotations



ADRIAN CRISTOBAL

Everybody talks about the high cost of elections, but, like the weather, nobody does anything about it. I do not remember a time when no one complained about the high cost of running for office, not even in Manuel L. Quezon's time. As a matter of fact, the complaint then as now was that only rich people could really aspire to elective office. And even while many poor people got elected now and then, it was always with the support of the moneyed class. The poor man's candidate was some rich men's protégé.

This meant that even the best politicians, unless they were rich on their own, were hostages to the wealthy. But if they were rich themselves, they were also hostages to their own fortunes. The sum of it is, whether they spent their own or other people's money, the costs had to be recovered one way or another. The unimaginative and unscrupulous resorted to graft and corruption; the more imaginative to legal means, like legislation, policies, and concessions favorable to vested interests.

However, this is not always as dark and sinister as it seems, unless politics is by itself dark and sinister. There are rich people who sincerely believe in the probity of certain politicians: they give without any thought of return. It's sufficient that there is some protection, or just proximity to power. Vanity is no less a powerful motive than greed. Some industrialists I know simply like the ideas of an upcoming politician, and they show their appreciation with material support. In addition, rich relations give their share.

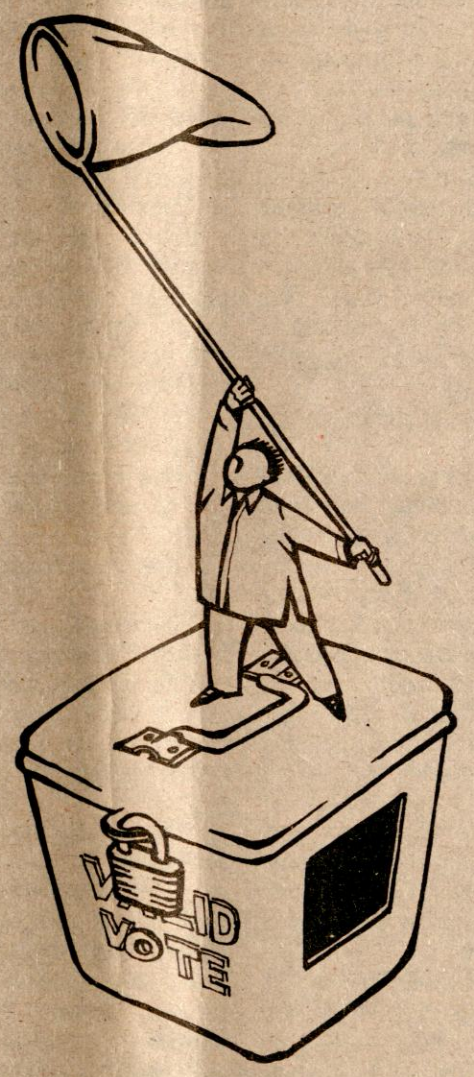
By and large, however, "political investment" must be recovered. An inexhaustible source is the well of privilege and patronage. They come in blatant (condemnable) and subtle (unnoticed) ways. It's the former which demeans, degrades, and distorts the political order.

There has not been a shortage of expressions of outrage at election spending and its consequences: plunder, graft and corruption in government. Laws have been passed to limit campaign spending. No one takes them seriously. The expulsion of then Senator Raul Manglapus for overspending is an isolated, even idiotic, case. It takes an egregious kind of ineptitude to be caught guilty of overspending.

If anyone is serious about the inflationary spending in election campaigns, why is it that no one bothers to inquire into the sources of individual and party funds? Why is it that the first thing asked by the public about candidates is whether they have the money, not to mention organization (which also means money), to finance their candidacies? Of course, money is needed for the obvious expenses—organization and propaganda—but the tendency is to believe that the candidate with loads and loads of cash has the edge. Political workers, and segments of the electorate—the "undecided" who make a difference—resent it when campaign funds do not get to them—and in profusion. Some media people also judge the "seriousness" of candidates according to their war chest.

Some candidates are poor or have insufficient funds, but their reputation makes them probable winners. The political parties come to their assistance. In every case, the incumbent president and the presidential candidates supply them with funds. The obvious question is where the presidents and presidential candidates and the political parties get their money.

Opposition candidates get theirs from personal and institutional sources which believe in them and at the same time believe that what they have dispensed will be recovered a hundredfold. Administration candidates rely on new and old allies, plus inevitably graft and corruption.



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But this is a subject shrouded in hypocrisy. The Bureau of Customs and the Bureau of Internal Revenue are always mentioned as sources of graft and corruption. The hypocrisy lies in the public judgment that there are a lot of corrupt people in these agencies, each one lining their pockets at the public's expense.

However, the truth is that individual grafters, those acting on their own, are either dismissed or grounded. Those who thrive are those who work profitably within the System. That System exists for the aggrandizement of the party in power, the government of the day, which is thirsty for funds "for the party." Otherwise, the incumbents will have to dig into their private assets. A customs or revenue commissioner, along with lieutenants and rank and file, who does not understand this is soon out of a job. He is of no particular use for the party in power.

The BIR and Customs are singled out because of "tradition." But other offices and financial institutions of sufficient size are involved. Those who are damned are grafters who go on their own. Those who have the sanction, who are given quotas, stay on. That's the reason they are protected and exonerated in advance, for while they get rich themselves, it's only incidental to the fact that they are raising funds for the good of the party in power.

In government circles, raising money for the party is not considered graft and corruption. It is just realism, however insane that realism is. The party and incumbent officials have financial obligations: to bodyguards, hangers-on, constituents with rental, funeral, and other personal economic problems. They have to spend money for gifts, flowers, meetings,and conventions. A Midas who has to shoulder all these expenses—expected of them, no doubt—will soon end up in a pauper's grave. Official allowances are not enough, so allowances are increased; they still are not enough. Where does one go if one wants to stay in power?

It can happen that the electorate sometimes punishes the corrupt and replaces them with the incorrupt who still have to commit their crimes. The charade goes on and on. An electorate which places a value on campaign spending invariably gets leaders who learn the value of having money. And lots of it.

There's nothing that can be done about it. It's in the System. Hypocrisy is king.

It should strike us that among the advanced and recently advanced democracies, it's only in the United States and Japan that there are complaints about the high cost of elections. And it's their system that unearths the biggest scandals. With one exception: crooks are caught and punished; at least, they resign from office. But in parliamentary systems such as one finds in Britain, France, and Germany, candidates do not complain about the high cost of election. The party spends for them but the party sources its funds from institutions in a transparent way.

This leads one to conclude that the American presidential system has nothing to teach us about limiting election spending and thereby eliminating systematic graft and corruption. But the British parliamentary system has something to teach us about limiting election spending. However, there has to be a change in the system.

I hear an objection. Isn't the Japanese form of government a parliamentary system? It is. But its laws do not put a limit on election spending. The American way and the parliamentary system have been grafted onto each other. Still, it must be noted that the incestuous relationship between business and politics aggravates the problem. Again, it's because the party must have funds by hook or by crook. In this regard, people are as much to blame as government, for they tolerate, even expect, candidates to rely on money for victory. The situation won't change unless the electorate changes its attitudes.

Perhaps the Supreme Court may be the instrument of change. By insisting on the constitutional provision of synchronized elections, the Supreme Court has made it very costly for presidential, senatorial, and congressional candidates to win elections. That's the agony of national candidates. Good.

Let them find other ways of winning, for no amount of money will ensure their election next year. But this is only a calculated hope. For all we know, candidates will spend fortunes beyond anyone's imagination. The winners will also try to recover these fortunes beyond anyone's imagination.

Unless we change the System, it will just go on and on until it self-destructs and, with it, destroys the country as well. G

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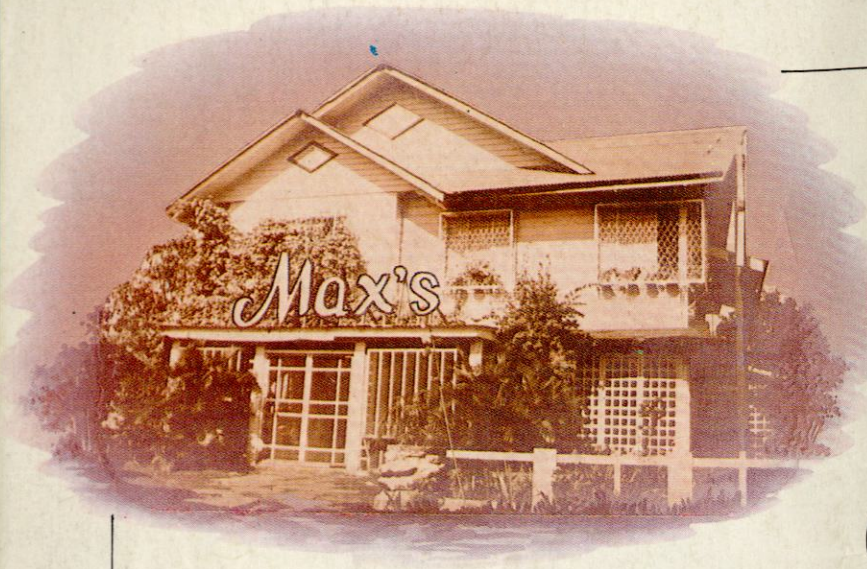

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