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NO WAY FOR IMELDA



MRS. MARCOS



SALONGA

By PHILIP LUSTRE

There is virtually no way the First Lady, Imelda Marcos, widely mentioned as a potential president, would win in the next elections, a survey conducted in Metro Manila recently showed.

The opposition, on the other hand, stands a good chance of toppling the Marcos government, the International University Foundation concluded after conducting a random survey involving 1,000 Metro Manila voters.

Metro Manila has an estimated population of 8 million out of the national population of 53 million.

Mrs. Marcos turned up in the 15th slot among 25 probable presidential bets.

A united opposition, the survey said, will earn 63.8 per cent as against the ruling Kilusang Bagong Lipunan's 30.15 per cent with 5.64

per cent undecided.

The survey group, headed by former Constitutional Convention delegate Emmanuel Santos, however, said that a fragmented opposition would give President Marcos a narrow victory.

The respondents when asked directly who they will elect gave President Marcos 13.88 per cent with four opposition candidates following him closely.

Former senator Jovito Salonga came in second among the individual choices with 11.71 per cent;

Agapito "Butz" Aquino third with 11.49 per cent; Cory Aquino fourth with 10.48 per cent and former senator Salvador Laurel with 10.19 per cent.

"The message of Metro Manilans is loud and clear. The opposition leaders must come to their senses, get united or face the loss of a grand chance to take over Malacanang," said the Santos survey.

Talks of possible snap elections to be held before 1987, possibly this year,

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Aquino trial judge quits

One of the three judges assigned to the Benigno Aquino murder trial was replaced yesterday at his request, because he is related by marriage to a general accused in the case, officials said.

Justice Conrado Molina of the special court that is to try the case was replaced by a judge from another division of the tribunal, they said.

Mr. Molina's aides said a niece of his was married to Deny Custodio, son of Brigadier General Luther Custodio, the most senior of the 17 people accused as principals or direct participants in the assassination.

A total of 25 military men and a civilian led by Armed Forces Chief General Fabian Ver, who was charged as an accessory, were indicted Wednesday for the August 1983 murder.

Their trial starts Friday and a unanimous vote by the three judges is necessary for a conviction or acquittal.

If they are not unanimous, two more judges are to be brought in from either of the two other divisions of the court. A simple majority is then enough for a verdict.

Meanwhile, a third detention center refused to accept 23 of the accused military men, earlier ordered jailed by the court's presiding judge, the Philippine

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RP: Asean's 'sick man'

JAKARTA, Jan. 28 (AFP) — The Philippines is the "sick man" of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and this must now be viewed as a "problem" for the whole association, the Jakarta Post said in an editorial today.

"The increasing destabilization of the nation's political and economic fabric must now be viewed as a problem not just for the Marcos regime, but to the five other countries in the association as well," the English-language paper commented.

The Jakarta Post expressed concern at what it called the increasing instability of the government of President Ferdinand Marcos.

It said that the indictment of Armed Forces Chief General Fabian Ver last week for covering up

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Baguio tragedy

No lead yet in twin slay

Baguio City police yesterday theorized there were at least two to four persons who attacked and killed an Australian missionary and his American wife in their home Saturday night.

But they still could not say who did it.

Police arrested a local resident yesterday but freed him shortly after he was found innocent.

Michael Schelling, 35, and his wife Janice Synstien, 28, were found by a fellow missionary in a pool of blood at their ransacked apartment.

Their two young children were crying unharmed in an adjoining room after the Saturday killing.

The victims were identified as members of Youth

With A Mission (YWAM), a group that holds bible-study sessions and helps the poor in Baguio.

Their bodies had numerous lacerations apparently inflicted by long knives, and bloody footprints indicated there were two to four attackers who took money and valuables.

Both victims carried Australian travel papers, the police said.

Their children, Melissa Gene, 2, and Jonathan Michael, five months, are to be taken to the United States by their maternal grandmother who arrived yesterday, members of the mission said.

Pakistani envoy sees 2 hostages

Moslem rebels allowed an Islamic diplomat yesterday to see an American and a German hostage held for 71 days on the island of Jolo but refused to release them, saying the envoy who came to receive them lacked "written authority."

Both John Robinow of New York City and Helmut Herbst of Munich, Germany, whom a friend had described as "young men looking for what to do in life," had full beards and appeared to be in good

(Page 2, please)



Three youths who were among those who participated in protest actions on Recto yesterday scamper to safety as they are pursued by a truncheon-wielding riot-police. (Alex Baluyut)

Charges readied against strikers

Two metropolitan police districts are set to file charges today against some 80 strikers and sympathizers, mostly students, arrested in yesterday's violence-racked jeepney strike.

The charges which will be filed before the fiscal's offices in Manila and Quezon City range from tumultuous disturbance to illegal possession of explosives, WE-Forum learned this morning.

Most of the suspects were picked up in separate incidents at the height of the dispersal operations launched by elements of the Manila and Quezon City police districts shortly before noon yesterday.

At least 22 persons, including six policemen, were injured in sporadic pillbox-throwing incidents and separate clashes between the lawmen and the strikers.

Earlier, Manila policemen arrested four students in Sampaloc for alleged possession of pill box bombs. They were reportedly with a group of drivers who were allegedly forcing other drivers to join the strike when they were nabbed.

Arrested were Jose Lesaca, Ponciano Resuena, Eric Malanan and Juanito Pabuna.

In the commercial district of Cubao, police

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INSIDE

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PRICE WATCH



This public service column on prices of selected food items is based on reports of WE Forum's roving reporters. Our market for today is Munoz market in Quezon City.



Item	Price (Per Kilo)
Beef	P59.00
Pork	42.00
Chicken	36.00
Bangus	27.00
Tahong	12.00
Cabbage	12.00
Ampalaya	10.00
Tomatoes	8.00
Potatoes	8.00

PALAPAK

By BOBBY BURGOS

Badge of honor

The action of Manila Vice Mayor James G. Barbers commending two Manila policemen following the arrest of Norman Guerrero, the vice-mayor's nephew, is a rare gesture these days when persons close to the gods usually berate or taunt the lawmen who are simply doing their job.

In his letter of commendation addressed to Patrolmen Benjamin Tamayo, Jr. and Everett Aroboleda of the Manila Police mobile patrol division, Barbers said, "any person claiming to be my relative, whether true or not, who violates the law should be apprehended if circumstances so warrant, for it should be an inflexible principle that no man is above the law."

Even during his tenure as superintendent of "Manila's Finest", Barbers always saw to it that the law was applied to those who violated it regardless of who they were. This is one reason why the Manila police has maintained its badge of honor and integrity among the police departments in the country if not in the entire Asian region.

At about 2 pm last Jan. 21, our police reporters Joy Taller and Jun Lopez saw a young vendor at Liwasang Bonifacio hand over P20 to an occupant of a white police wagon with body No. W-238.

After the police van had left, the two reporters asked the vendor why he gave the policemen money and were told the P20 was his daily "fee" to be free from arrest and harassment. The same policemen also collects from other vendors doing business at the Liwasang Bonifacio. Whatever happened to the much-ballyhoed anti-vendors campaign of City Hall?

Why do motorcycle cops swarm like flies near the North Harbor area and both approaches of the Del Pan bridge? Cannot the traffic chief assign them to other streets where bottlenecks are regularly encountered by motorists and commuters? There is no traffic mess to untangle in this area. What gives, huh?

There's an apartment on M. Adriatico near the Manila Zoo in Malate where my informant tells me girls of varying shapes, and ages, are seen any time of the day or night going in and coming out of the place with male partners, mostly foreigners. The house is definitely not a hotel or boarding house, my informant swears. Some policemen have also been observed frequenting the place. Ano kayang kapalpakan ang meron dito?

Homo kills lover

A homosexual stabbed his 25-year-old lover dead then tried to hang himself inside his room in Bagbag, Novaliches at around 5:20 p.m. yesterday.

Stabbed to death was Gavino O. Cereza, a vendor of 2555 Leonor Rivera St., Quezon City. He sustained multiple stab wounds on different parts of the body.

Initial investigation by Pfc. Wilfred Borbonia of the homicide section of the Northern Police District disclosed that the suspect, Felipe Villaseñor, of 595 San Jose compound tried to hang himself after killing Cereza but the post where he tied the rope broke because of his weight.

Pfc. Borbonia said Villaseñor then panicked and fled his

house. Several witnesses said the suspect was bleeding because of rope wounds in the neck.

Villaseñor left a suicide note admitting the murder and giving the conditions of his burial. His note also mentioned who would inherit his house.

Part of the suicide note read: "Ipanalangin ninyo sa Diyos ang aking kaluluwa at patawarin ako sa aking nagawa. (Pray for my soul to God and forgive me for what I have done.)"

"Huwag ninyo kaming pabayaan at paghiwalayin ni Gavino at pagsamasamahin ninyo ang aming mga buto at juwi doon sa Bicol kay Mamay. (Please don't separate Gavino and me; join our bones and bring them to mother in Bicol)." — Edgar Nem Singh

After 30 years WHY THE DEMOLITION?

By MARICHU LAMBINO

"Squatters," are always the last ones to know why they are being evicted.

Today, strike force teams of the Metrocom and the U.P. Police Force are scheduled to hit the U.P. campus again, try to break the barricades in Pook Ricarte, and demolish the houses, after failing last Jan. 24.

Even Resty Reyes, leader of the Alyansa ng Katatagan sa Paninirahan sa UP (AKUP) can't quite figure out why their houses are being demolished after more than 30 years, and upon whose orders — the National Housing Authority (NHA) or the UP administration?

Although the notice of eviction came from the UP administration, residents say that NHA officials and the Metrocom are the ones seeing through all the operations.

A spokesman of the Alyansa ng mga Kabataang nasa Komunidad-UP, Louie Cabrera, related their forced eviction to the plight of squatters on Commonwealth Ave. and the area around the Batasan. He said that there is a certain radius in Quezon City covering these areas which the local government wants to clean up in order to make Quezon City a favorable seat of government institutions and ministries. Aside from the

Batasan, several government institutions are located in Quezon City like the Metro Manila Commission, Bureau of Internal Revenue, National Housing Authority, Ministry of Agriculture, Bureau of Land Transportation, Government Services and Insurance System, Social Security System, National Media Production Center, Philippine Coconut Authority, not to mention the Philippine Heart Center, Lung Center, Lungsod ng Kabataan, etc.

He also observed that the area seems to be a strategic place to put up a commercial complex, as prompted by rumors that there have been deals with a certain business tycoon to do this.

UP President Edgardo J. Angara stated that they wanted to build students' dormitories here. But UP Student Council chairman Ma. Lourdes V. Almazan countered that "There are many vacant lots on campus, why choose an area occupied by residents for more than 30 years?"

Reyes offered the explanation that the eviction is one of the fiscal measures of the UP administration because some 40 per cent of the residents who are non-UP personnel avail of the UP facilities like electricity

and water. He also cited a recommendation of the Angara-created Management Review Committee to turn the campus into a Harvard-type university by having only students and teachers residing on campus.

Officials of the Metro Manila Commission on the other hand said that Flexi-homes will be built in this area.

This has made the residents on alert for more than three months now. The barricades of Pook Ricarte residents, put up last Oct. 15, 1984, are the longest running for the urban poor sector of Metro Manila.

A bloody confrontation almost ensued last Jan. 24 when some 40 anti-riot units armed with .45 revolvers tucked in their waist and four others carrying baby armalites, backed up by some 30 members of the UP Police Force, charged at them. A negotiating team headed by former Con-con delegate and lawyer Teofisto Guingona averted this even while one of the cops pulled a gun in retaliation when residents hurled rocks at the charging cops.

The residents know better now. They have sealed the five entrances to Pook Ricarte and are ready to "defend them to the death."

Oil truck hijacked

Five men armed with handguns hijacked an Isuzu light truck carrying motor oil in cans and boxes at around 12:45 p.m. yesterday in Del Monte, San Jose, Quezon City.

Lorenzo V. Carasig, 27, driver, and Augusto Lejada, truck helper, said the suspects followed them on board a green Toyota Corolla with plate number NTR 737.

Upon reaching P. Tuazon St., the suspects put on a siren and cut them off, Carasig said. He added that two of the men armed with .45 guns asked them to get off and forced them inside the waiting car.

Carasig said two more of the hijackers got off and boarded his truck with plate number SFA 504 after taking his keys.

The driver then said that the remaining robbers brought them to Roxas Blvd. where he thought they would be killed but fortunately the robbers just left them there.

In another development, a 50-year-old driver of the Angel Jose Transportation and Brokerage, celebrating his birthday yesterday was stabbed dead by his co-employees inside the company's compound.

CRIME CLOCK

The arrest of 120 strikers, including directors Behn Cervantes and Lino Brocka, and injuries to 22 others including an intelligence chief of the Metrocom and 6 policemen of the Northern Police District topped yesterday's crime tally.

Three fires broke out in Manila yesterday, the first one occurring at around 12 a.m. in Paco where a man identified as Domingo Abarillo was found dead with a gag on his mouth and with his hands tied behind his back.

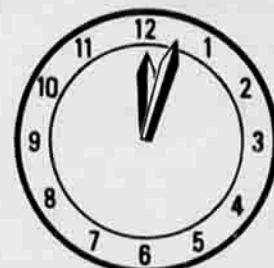
The second fire occurred in Tondo at 11:45 a.m. and the last one at 8:45 p.m. which burned an office of the Ministry of Public Works and Highways.

Three buses burned, one each in Tondo, EDSA near Malibay, and the other in Paranaque.

There were three missing persons listed in the Northern police district, with one Emelita dela Cruz, 16, reported to have been abducted by a certain Socorro Fernandez at around 10 p.m.

At around 3:30 a.m. an unidentified man with stab wounds in the chest, abdomen and right side of the body was reported to have died on arrival at the Quezon Memorial Hospital.

A hijacking of a motoroil cargo truck was reported at



12:45 a.m. while a shooting incident which killed a security guard and seriously wounded a bus conductor in Loyola Heights entered the police logbook at 8:20 p.m.

In the Western Police District, a man was found dead on Recto Avenue with ice-pick stab wounds on the right side of the body at around 1:30 a.m.

At around 4:10 a.m., Filemon Lising, a barangay tanod of Tondo, was stabbed dead by three unidentified men.

Another security guard was killed at around 6:35 a.m. inside the Bible Baptist church and the offices in the building were ransacked by the robbers.

In the Southern Police District, a snatching incident at 10:30 a.m. was reported to the Makati police. At around 3:30 p.m. one Vicente Ocampo Jr., 56 was found hanging by the neck inside his room in Pinagkaisahan.

— Edgar Nem Singh



An army trooper stands guard at the main gate of the strike-bound YBL Transit Corporation compound in Novaliches, Quezon City as employees, including drivers and conductors, went on strike this morning. The strikers, members of the Bigkis ng Pagkakaisa ng Mga Manggagawa sa YBL, decided to go on strike after the management failed to give their 13th month and holiday pay.

Pakistani

(From Page 1)

condition. Journalists accompanied Pakistani Ambassador Aftab Ahmad Khan, saw but were not allowed to talk to the captives.

Robinow, in his 20s, and Herbst, in his 30s, who had disappeared Nov. 19, were guarded by scores of armed rebels at a camp of the Moro National Liberation Front near the town of Indanan.

"Take care," a Moslem sultan negotiating with the kidnappers told Robinow after the two were led out of a small hut.

"You also take care of things," said Robinow in the only words heard by journalists with Khan, 61, who said he was representing the 43-nation Islamic Conference in hoping to receive the hostages.

The rebels had demanded a

representative of the Jeddah-based Islamic organization be sent for the turnover in a rebel camp on Jolo island.

"We want to disprove the claim by the government that our revolution is a thing of the past. Our revolution is a thing of the present," said rebel leader, Al Habsi, 28.

More than 700 armed rebels, some carrying grenade launchers and other heavy weapons, lined a road just a half hour outside the provincial capital of Jolo, leading into the camp clustered around small huts under coconut palms.

Habsi claimed the rebels control most of Jolo outside the cities but declined to give the number of rebels on the island.

The rebels brought both Robinow and Herbst out to see the ambassador, Moslem negotiators and journalists, but did not allow any questions. They confiscated photographers' film but later returned it on the condition it not be given to the Philippine military.

Charges

(From Page 1)

arrested three persons who allegedly exploded homemade bombs when the police forcibly broke up the human barricade put up by the strike sympathizers.

Northern Police District Superintendent Brig. Gen. Alfredo Lim identified the suspects as Dominador Resurreccion, Rhony Laigo, and Roger Pedis.

The strike organizer, Alliance of Concerned Transport Organizations (ACTO) claimed some 350 strikers and their sympathizers were arrested in the strike points in Metro Manila.

The effect of the drivers' walkout became visible at noon yesterday as

mobile groups of the strikers set up sporadic barricades on critical points across the metropolitan area.

The strategy of the strikers paralyzed temporarily the transport system in areas like Pasig, Marikina, Cubao, Taguig, Muntinlupa, Tondo, Navotas and Malabon.

The situation returned to normal at 4 pm following the dismantling by the police groups of the strikers' barricades along the major traffic routes.

ACTO however vowed to continue with the protest action until their demands are met.

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Photo/Mike Yabut

Beyond the 'First Quarter Storm'

By ROWENA O. CARRANZA

The Philippine student movement celebrated last week International Youth Year and the 14th anniversary of what it calls the "First Quarter Storm" — the first three months of the year 1970, when the entire country was wracked by a series of massive student-led demonstrations.

Student organizations held various symposia on school campuses all over the country, integration programs with workers and the urban poor, pickets in front of the U.S. embassy and the JUSMAG (Joint U.S. Military Advisory Group) office, and a rally at historic Mendiola Bridge from Jan. 21 to 26.

Born in the angry 1960s, the Philippine student movement appeared to have disintegrated when martial law was imposed in 1972, with its leaders arrested, and, in some instances, killed.

But it came back with a vengeance in the mid-1970s, with new leaders, new programs, and a new militance.

The 1980s saw the students once more in the forefront of the huge urban protest movement. This is probably why Education Minister Jaime Laya recently described Filipino students today as perpetually

shouting and railing "against the heavens like King Lear," although he doubted whether their leaders know, or can read, Shakespeare.

Whether they read Shakespeare or not, the students, however, have made quantum leaps not only in their campaign for reforms inside the campus but also in confronting national issues.

The year 1984 has brought the student movement to its most advanced level of struggle since World War II, according to the movement's leaders. It has surpassed the levels achieved during the First Quarter Storm.

In 1984, the student leaders point out, there was an average of four mass actions every month, organized or participated in by students. During the First Quarter Storm, the average was only two per month.

Secondly, the leaders point out, the protest actions last year assumed regional or nationwide scope, as students — often with other sectors — waged coordinated mass actions.

In Pampanga, Cebu, Metro Manila and Mindanao, students have been successful in repeated city-wide and province-wide boycotts of classes to protest tuition fee increases. Students

of the University of the Philippines (UP) in Manila, for example, were twice able to postpone the implementation of a government plan to increase tuition fees by 169 percent.

Thirdly, they explain, the student movement has taken more defiant forms of struggle. There have been campus barricades instead of mere calls for boycott. Students have also revived historic Mendiola Bridge as a protest venue, and were the first to successfully rally at Manila's Liwasang (plaza) Bonifacio, after several violent dispersals of multi-sectoral rallies here by military and police units in July and August last year.

It was the students, too, who held the first protest rally ever staged at Plaza Miranda (Manila's central square) since the declaration of martial law in 1972.

Since the 1960s, militant students have developed into propagandists for social and cultural change. But with their increasingly important role in the Philippine protest movement, they have emerged as a potent political force as well.

At present, there are four major student organizations of national significance: the

League of Filipino Students (LFS), a mass organization with more than 10,000 members in 135 school chapters nationwide; the College Editors Guild of the Philippines (CEGP), an organization of campus writers with more than 200 member publications; the Student Christian Movement (SCM), an organization of Christian youth which advocates the theology of liberation; and the National Union of Students in the Philippines (NUSP), an alliance of student councils. All these organizations have merged into a grand alliance to advance the struggle of the student sector — the MAKABAYAN or *Maga-aaral at Kabataan para sa Kalayaan ng Bayan* (Youth and Students for National Freedom).

For 1985, the students are preparing to intensify and broaden not just the student movement but the whole mass movement. Many of them may not read Shakespeare, and their English may be, as Mr. Marcos once remarked, "inelegant," but they are already capable of helping shape the history of the entire country — no mean accomplishment for a movement that began with a handful of students demonstrating against U.S. intervention in Philippine affairs in the mid-60s.

PEOPLE'S FORUM

The jeepney strike: was it a wise move?

"Okey sa akin ang strike. Kasi, pinapaalis kami dito sa Taft at gusto nila kaming ilapat sa secondary road na sira naman at mahirap daanan."

"Para sa akin, nasa gobyerno pa rin natin ang pagkukusa para ibaba ang presyo ng gasolina, pamasaha at mga bilihan. Pero ang strike ay parang pressure iyan para gawin niya ito. Kailangan, sumama ang lahat ng driver sa strike."

— Angistal Munos, 39, jeepney driver

"If the jeepney drivers' demands are to be taken seriously, they should make the strike a concerted effort. The strike would certainly benefit all the drivers but I noticed that only a few of them joined."

— Jun Bernabe
business executive



Bernabe

"Dapat ay matagal nang nag-strike kaming mga driver. Pero tiningnan namin kung ano ang gagawin ng Pangulo sa aming mga kahilingan. Ibinaba niya ang presyo ng krudo pero balewala rin dahil doble-doble naman ang pagtaas ng presyo ng mga bilihan. Kaming mga driver ang nagkakarga ng deficit."

— Leo Natividad, 21 jeepney driver



Pacheco

"Hindi ako pumasok ngayon hindi dahil wala akong masakyan kundi dahil sasama ako sa strike ng mga tsuper. Dapat magkaisa ang lahat ng Pilipino para labanan natin ang umiiral na sistema ng lipunan. Pagkakaisa ang kailangan nating lahat."

— Yolanda Polintan
Factory worker

"I think the best solution here is for the drivers and government authorities to dialog so that no serious rifts would divide them. That way, they won't hurt the commuters."

— Mang Pepe
Storeowner



Mang Pepe

"Bakit kailangang mag-strike di lalo kaming kawawa. Wala kaming kikitain. Lalo na ako na de-pamilya. Kailangan, pumunta tayo sa Malacanang para makipag-usap sa Pangulo na sana ibaba na niya ang presyo ng krudo sa halagang talaga namang dapat."

"Hindi rin ako ganoong pabor sa strike."

— Lito Angeles, jeepney driver

Notorious campus snatcher nabbed

By EDGAR NEM SINGH

A notorious snatcher preying on International School students in Makati was arrested by the police as he was waiting for another victim near the school.

Vincent S. Diaz, 19, of 6111 Albert St., Poblacion, Makati, was positively identified by Dominic Griffith, a 15-year-old high school student of IS, as the one who snatched his 12-inch Italian gold chain yesterday.

Griffith said that around 10:05 a.m. after buying cigarettes for his brother at the 8090 wine and liquor store in Makati Avenue, Diaz came at him from behind and grabbed the necklace which was prominently displayed on his chest and ran towards Imelda Avenue.

This was witnessed by the store owner, who refused to be identified for security reasons, and who told Griffith to wait a while because he would call some of his friends in the police.

Soon P/Cpl. Arsenio B. Fernandez Jr. and Pfc. Armando Diola of the Makati police arrived and together with the store owner and Griffith they patrolled the area.

They spotted Diaz, who was easily identified by his green shorts and bandaged left eye, waiting at a store near the school. The detectives immediately pounced on him.

At first, Diaz tried to deny the charges but when con-

fronted by the witness and the complainant, he broke down and admitted his guilt and said that he did it upon orders of a mastermind who had several other snatchers working the area.

After Diaz was brought to a cell at the Makati jail, this reporter approached him and asked where he hid the necklace or if he passed it on to an accomplice.

In between sobs, Diaz said he was only doing the snatching jobs for a certain Caloy Capco who threatened to kill him if he would not pay the P200 he owes him.

Diaz said he hid the necklace on a flower pot in front of the Insular bakery in P. Burgos St. for Capco to pick up.

This reporter immediately informed Pfc. Romeo S. Ramos of the theft and robbery division and together with the suspect, store owner, Diola and Fernandez, we proceeded to the area and found the necklace hidden under the plant's leaves.

Pfc. Ramos said Griffith confided to him that numerous snatching incidents had occurred near their school but some of the students didn't file formal complaints.

The detectives said they will not stop until the alleged mastermind is arrested which will lead eventually to the capture of the other snatchers victimizing the students.

Metro Manila Round-up

By OUR ROVING REPORTER

CAES becomes a political drama

The PTA officers of the Cecilio Apostol elementary school in Caloocan City last Thursday took the unprecedented step of protesting the decision of Caloocan RTC Judge Alfredo Gorgonio by marching to the Supreme Court, picketing it and handing to Chief Justice Enrique Fernando a letter denouncing the judge and his decision.

The judge had just dismissed the PTA's complaint for the rescission of the contract between the city and Gotesco Investment, Inc. leasing the school's 2.3-hectare school site to Gotesco and for the commercial establishment to erect a P200-million commercial complex on the land.

Instead of asking for a reconsideration of the judge's decision first, and, if denied, appealing the matter to the high tribunal, the PTA officers picketed the Supreme Court and then gave their letter-complaint to the chief justice.

The people of Caloocan are watching keenly developments on the case which has turned into a political football between Mayor Asistio, Jr., and the opposition.

All motorists and commuters passing along Quezon Avenue in Quezon City, in front of Sto. Domingo Church, specially on Sundays and church holidays, have their dander up because jeepneys wait for passengers at the pedestrian cross line. Motorists and commuters sometimes wait for as long as 10 to 15 minutes for the jeepneys to pick up passengers. Fuel is wasted and tempers are frayed.

The Traffic Operations Center of the MMC should take heed.

In Pasay City, Mayor Pablo Cuneta is negotiating for the acquisition of two big parcels of land where thousands of families are squatting — the 2.3-hectare tax-delinquent lot of Florencio Lim, where 2,500 families live; and the one-hectare land on Taft Ave. seized from Jap. firm during World War II and now administered by the Board of Liquidators.

Cuneta wants to acquire both properties to be developed by the city government and then resold at cost to the squatter-occupants.

Property owners in the four cities and 13 towns are urged to secure their copies of the new tax declarations over their estates so they will know their new assessments and the amount of realty taxes they will pay starting this year.

If the owners believe the new assessed valuations of their lots and buildings are too high, they should ask their assessors for reconsideration.

Manila has sent demand letters to the Meralco to pay real estate tax delinquencies on its many properties in the city. City Treasurer Anthony Y. Acevedo has computed Meralco's tax arrears at over P28-million. On the other hand, Manila still owes Meralco P31-million in unpaid electricity bills.

The Quezon City government faces another financial scandal — this time by the striking public school teachers. To Mayor Adelina Rodriguez's claim that there is no money for the teachers' pay hike, the latter reported that the city has just paid scandalously high prices for Sariling Sikap tools and laboratory kits bought from very lucky dealers.

EDITORIAL

There are many instances showing that if only the Commission on Audit had not removed its preventive function of pre-audit, the government would not today be losing so much of money and property.

What happened to the former Makati Hotel is a case in point. The hotel was purchased by the Metro Manila Commission for P63-million some six years ago. Its furnishings, lights, kitchenware and silverware, furniture and bathroom fixtures were valued at no less than P5-million.

Came the decision to convert the multi-storey building into office spaces for the MMC, which meant stripping the building of its expensive fixtures and furnishings.

To get rid of all such fixtures and equipment, they were ordered to be auctioned off. What happened was not a public auction, duly

COA, wake up!

advertised, with interested buyers bidding against each other in order to get the highest prices for the government.

Had the audit rules been followed, the Commission on Audit would have inspected the properties to be sold, evaluated them, and supervised the bidding. The MMC would have gotten a fair value for the entire kit and caboodle.

But the COA has decided to get entirely out of all transactions, allowing only the management of every government agency and office to do everything, limiting itself to the innocuous job of post-audit, the COA auditors helpless against all acts of fraud committed by crooked and unscrupulous management officials.

It's time for the COA to wake up. Enough should be enough. The time-honored deterrent of pre-audit must be restored.

Thorns and roses

By ALEJANDRO ROCES



You no longer hear about the New Society or about the discipline necessary for the progress of the nation. It is because the New Society turned out to be more rotten than the old.

If there is anything that this present society is totally devoid of, it is discipline. Only under the present administration could a soldier assigned to guard the Rizal monument shoot a jogger for not surrendering a pigeon he was carrying. There is no facet of Philippine life that has not deteriorated under martial rule.

The new society was supposed to do away with gambling. Now we have casinos. The new society was supposed to clamp down on prostitution. Now we have child prostitution.

Maria Kalaw Katigbak is supposed to be in charge of movie censorship. The singing of Bayan Ko is censored; bomba stars have multiplied.

The administration tells the people to patronize

New Society's many failures

Filipino products. But McDonald's is opening branches all over the country.

The NPAs are supposed to be terrorizing the country. The fact remains that when there is a battle between the armed forces and the NPAs, it is the NPAs that the civilian population runs to for protection.

Martial law was supposed to put a stop to illegal logging. The truth is that never in Philippine history has there been as much deforestation as under the military regime. Illegal logging is the easiest thing to stop because the logs have to pass through the main highways and shipped out of piers.

To make matters worse, the logs are shipped out of piers that are not official ports. So log exports are not even taxed. You don't have to be Sherlock Holmes to know that illegal logging cannot exist without army collusion. Roads used for illegal logging and the illegal

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Publisher's notes

By JOSE G. BURGOS, JR.



Everyone has a stake in the strike

Today is the second day of the transportation strike, led by the militant Alliance of Concerned Transport Organizations. The strike yesterday was not very successful; obviously the use of brute force by the military appeared to have succeeded. One could see many jeepneys running their usual route.

Such jeepneys are out to scuttle the strike — wittingly or unwittingly. The owners and drivers may not be aware of the fact that in defying the call for a strike, they are hurting themselves.

On the fast track, they make money — more money than usual; but on the slow track, in the long run, they are committing suicide.

If the transportation strike succeeds, the Marcos government will have to consider the strikers' demand for a rollback in the price of fuel. In this case, it will be the people's victory including all drivers and jeepney owners. With the lowering of gasoline, diesel and other petroleum derivatives, everything else will go down. Prices of all commodities will toboggan and the common people will not be so hard up tightening their belts.

But if the strike will fail, it will be the failure of all including those who are now trying to break the strike. The present prohibitive prices against which everybody is groaning will not only stay; Marcos may even be emboldened to increase the price of fuel some more.

It is clear, as the ACTO has maintained, that the Marcos government can still reduce the price of petroleum products if it wants to. The peso is gaining against the dollar. And prices of crude oil, especially in the spot market, are also going down. Another thing: the gasoline companies, especially the government-owned PNOC, are raking it in.

But the most important consideration is that all people are suffering, to a degree never before realized in their lives.

As the strike enters its second day today, let those jeepney owners and drivers who persist in plying their routes realize that they, too, have a stake in the success of the strike.

Today and yesterday

By ARMANDO J. MALAY



If a man accepts a position from a government he has been attacking only a few years before, is he a renegade, an opportunist, a traitor?

This question appears to be relevant today. Many are raising eyebrows (to say the least) at Luis Taruc, Nilo Tayag, and others of more recent vintage, because they are collaborating, or seem to be, with the Marcos government which they had attacked so bitterly in the past.

At the turn of the century, many ilustrados were branded names because, after the fall of the First Philippine Republic, they accepted offers of the American pro-consuls to hold high positions in the government. Today, some of those ilustrados are still being mentioned in unflattering terms, not the least of whom is President-General Emilio Aguinaldo himself, who accepted American sovereignty while some of his generals (like Sakay, Mondragon, Ricarte, etc.) were still carrying on the war, albeit as guerrillas.



Beyond barriers

By SATUR C. OCAMPO

A friend in Canada has expressed puzzlement over the apparent duality in the Marcos regime's policy vis-a-vis political detainees. After reading about my 12-hour pass on August 31, 1984 to speak at the Press Freedom Day observance of the National Press Club, this friend wrote to me:

"I find it strange that your country is so open about having political prisoners — people whom even the Marcos regime admits are prisoners of conscience, even heroes of the people, not common criminals, but nevertheless people too dangerous to let back on the street.

"You are allowed to address a national gathering of your colleagues on the subject of press freedom. How can this be that you are arrested on little foundation, cruelly tortured, branded by Marcos himself as a 'viciously militant detainee', imprisoned for years, but at the same time you are so openly acknowledged as a political detainee, and in some ways permitted an unusual amount of freedom — unusual compared to our prisoners.

"Our government would never admit to holding a

Collaborators (?): then and now

One of those maligned men was Cayetano Arellano (after whom a public high school is named today, the former Manila North) who was secretary of foreign affairs in the Aguinaldo cabinet, member of the law faculty of the state university established by the Revolutionary Congress (actually named Universidad Literario de Filipinas), and later Chief Justice.

On January 29, 1899, this son of Orion, Bataan accepted the offer of the American military authorities to draw up plans for municipal governments in the Philippines. Arellano's acceptance immediately drew criticism from those who believed that the Filipinos should have refused to cooperate with the new masters when there were still many revolutionists who were holding out in the mountains.

The unkindest attacks said that being men of means, they wanted to ensure their comfortable living or to take

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Dual policy on detainees

single political prisoner, and I can't even imagine a situation where a prisoner would be asked by a national organization to address a convention, and would receive permission to do so. How can the facts of your torture and your long and unjustifiable detention go hand in hand with the seemingly now relaxed and rather liberal attitude that your gaolers seem to have adopted?"

I am sure that this Canadian friend is not alone in her puzzlement. Our countrymen who follow media reports on the plight and struggle of political detainees may be similarly hard put understanding the zig and zag of the Marcos regime's policy. Even journalist colleagues I met at the NPC on that memorable August 31st raised the uniform question, or expressed equal wonderment, on why I was allowed to deliver a public speech without prior censorship. How come this, they asked, when President Marcos had ignored his Defense Minister's recommendation for my temporary release on Dec. 24, 1983

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To seek and live the truth and share a vision.



Politics & politics

By ERNESTO R. RODRIGUEZ, JR.

Where are WE Forum properties?

As the Malaya's "ear ad" for today says, "It's now 34 days since the Supreme Court enjoined the military to return and release all WE Forum properties but we're still waiting. — WE Forum staff."

More than two years after the military raid of the WE Forum premises in December, 1982, 782 days to be exact (correct), the owners of the papers and properties seized on that occasion are still in the dark about what has happened to such properties and when they will be returned.

The Supreme Court had already pronounced that raid illegal, declared the search warrants used for the raid null and void, and ordered the military, by writ of mandatory injunction, to immediately return and release the seized properties but the military appears still unmoved.

Several weeks have passed since the respondents in the case which WE Forum won in the Supreme Court were served the writ of mandatory injunction but the raiders have not shown the same efficiency in returning WE Forum's properties, which they showed in carting the properties away.

As a matter of fact, it cannot now be determined where the seized properties are now and what their present condition is.

Former Immigration Commissioner Martiniano P. Vivo, WE Forum's counsel who argued the case together with Attorney Wigberto Tanada in the Supreme Court, went to the Regional Trial Court of Quezon City shortly after that Court had been served the writ of mandatory injunction, thinking that the seized properties would be there, because that is the normal thing to happen under the Rules of Court, and hoping to be able to see the immediate implementation of the injunction.

As it turned out, the military, instead of bringing the seized properties to the Court, asked that it be allowed to have the properties under its custody because they would be used as evidence in court. It was further alleged that such custody was necessary "for purposes of convenience and speedy transportation" to the "court of venue," and that "Task Force Makabansa has the force to

safeguard the sanctity of these important materials." As a result, WE Forum's seized properties have remained with the military all the time since the 1982 raid.

Vivo and other lawyers have expressed the apprehension that the seized properties which include such diverse things as motor vehicles, typewriters, linotype machines, rolls of newsprint, staplers, chairs, tables, electric fans, calculators, papers, books, and other printing machinery and equipment, may have suffered more than ordinary wear and tear.

Efforts of the petitioners to move out the machinery and equipment so that they could save on rent, and at least keep them under proper maintenance, had been resisted by the military, Vivo now recalls. So that, WE Forum faces the possibility of being asked by its landlord to pay rent for the more than two years that it was not able to use the leased premises for productive purposes.

Worse still, according to Vivo, a good deal of the printing machinery and equipment, as well as air conditioners, may have considerably deteriorated as a consequence of the long period of non-use and lack of maintenance.

Upon being asked whether WE Forum may sue for damages, Vivo said that such question is worth looking into. At the moment, he says, every effort should be directed to the recovery of the seized properties, repair the broken ones if there are any, make use of the said properties as early as possible, and consider the aspect of damages later on.

Vivo further revealed that after the Supreme Court decision had been released, he went to the Judge Advocate General's Office, in the hope of finding means for the military to undo, as early as possible, the harm that it had done to WE Forum, but he failed to meet that officer, who was then in conference.

The question that is on everyone's lips now is: Where are the seized properties? Why have they not been returned to their lawful owners? Are they still what they used to be? Logical questions to be sure.



Viewpoints

By RAUL M. GONZALES

Osmeña destroying unity?

Something stunned me when I arrived home from the airport last Jan. 23: a copy of what appears to be the letter of John Osmeña dated Jan. 11 addressed to Unido President Doy Laurel, threatening to "withdraw" the LP from the Unido. I was still trying to rub my eyes from jet lag and there it was, the threat from Mr. Osmeña.

My first reaction was to go to sleep first. Anyway, the letter was not for me. On the other hand, I suddenly recalled when Senator Kalaw's late husband Teddy was lying in state in the Pinaglabanan church in San Juan, the same John Osmeña told me he wanted to destroy the Unido. His exact words: "Gigibain ko ang Unidong yan." I answered him, "Well, that's your privilege."

Reading his letter to Laurel, I am not surprised; what I am quite dismayed at is the misleading points he mentioned. And I can't help wonder if Eva Kalaw had a hand in it. But what saddens me is the manner in which Mr. Osmeña throws his weight — if he has any political weight left after hibernating in America all throughout the dark days of Martial Rule, even refusing to support the opposition's causes there, and now suddenly finding his voice to fight Marcos because it is now very fashionable to do so. I just would like to know if John Osmeña had even contacted Ninoy in the U.S. all through the three years of Ninoy's exile? And now he comes back, moving about as if he is the only opposition around. Tsk, tsk...

In the first place, why should Osmeña complain if the Unido communicates and invites LPs to attend the convention? On the contrary, he should be happy the LPs are being notified about the convention because the Unido recognizes the party. If we follow Osmeña's logic, then he should not be invited, Eva should not be invited, Ganzon should not be invited, Roy Montejito should not be invited, Neptali should not be invited, and many more. Is this what he wants, that the Unido ignore these leaders?

I recall in the summer of 1980 when I was in LA, I was asked by Congressman Daza to address an opposition gathering. Serge Osmeña III was among those present, together with several other Filipinos. I asked about Mr. John Osmeña and everyone looked at each other and just shrugged their shoulders. Then I remembered very well that it was Serge who said that John Osmeña is not part of any opposition group in the U.S.; that he refused to join them and even spoke praises for Imelda Marcos.

In the U.S., I joined Doy Laurel in Washington, D.C. for a private visit to some friends. We had very fruitful conversations with some people at State, on Capitol Hill and elsewhere. Senator Manglapus joined us and assured us of his help. Senator Richard Lugar, new

chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Congressman Tony Hall, a powerful member of the House Foreign Relations Committee, Senator Bob Dole, new Senate majority floor leader and several members of their technical staffs held talks with us. When we left Washington, D.C., the snow was four inches and it was freezing.

In New York, also under six inches of snow, with the wind chill factor at 40 degrees below zero, we had a long and fruitful meeting with former Secretary Rafael Salas and NAM's Sony Alvarez. For the moment, however, I am not at liberty to divulge the things discussed with Paeng Salas. Suffice it to say that he is sending a message to the Unido convention which will be held either in February or early March. Senator Manglapus is also sending a message to the convention; so is Sony Alvarez on behalf of the Ninoy Aquino Movement of America.

On board PAL on the way home, I read the headline about the dissolution of the giant monopoly notoriously known as Unicom. Now maybe former Vice President Palaez — who almost lost his life fighting the UNICOM — can breathe a sigh of relief; so will my good friend and fighting MP from Quezon Jhalmar Quintana. But one cannot help but ask: is this really the final release of our coconut industry from the hands of the oppressive monopoly? Or will it be another dissolution on paper like the Nasutra which still holds the sugar planters in Negros in its grip? Only time will tell.

Today

From page 4

advantage of the new dispensation so they could wield power. Thus, Trinidad H. Pardo de Tavera, Benito Legarda Sr., Florentino Torres, and many others were the object of hatred and suspicion. Even Aguinaldo was "in the freezer," so to speak, visited only in his Kawit mansion by American visitors but not by many Filipinos.

But Arellano, whether sincerely or not, was a man of peace and he saw the futility of carrying on a one-sided war with the conquerors. It's true that many Katipuneros were still holding out in the countryside and labelled as bandits or *bandoleros*, and hanged as fast as they could be captured. Arellano wanted peace to come to his country after three years of blood-letting, and since he was a distinguished lawyer he did not withhold his legal expertise when the Americans wanted a new code of laws on municipal governments.

Arellano elicited praises from US President Warren Harding, Chief Justice William Howard Taft, and Commissioner Schurman. Of this man, who was born on March 2, 1847, Harding said, "He enjoyed worldwide fame as a jurist." Taft was more effusive: "He could fill with honor the chief magistracy of the highest tribunal of any civilized nation."

Of the men and women who are holding high positions in the Marcos government, would they be regarded today as Cayetano S. Arellano is regarded by some — an opportunist? Or was he a patriot who only wanted to see his country achieve democracy?

My historical calendar notes that on January 29, 1936, Commonwealth President Manuel L. Quezon fired eight cadets from the Philippine Military Academy in Baguio, including his own nephew. Their offense? What else? Hazing! From 1936 to the present, how many hazing incidents have occurred in the PMA, some reported and probably more unreported?

The national hero Rizal was a meticulous recorder of his life, especially while he was a student in Madrid. According to his diary of Jan. 29, 1882 he spent 1.25 pesetas for wax candles; 3 pesetas for subscription (to papers?); 1.70 pesetas for coffee, refreshments and a tip for the *sereno* (watchman), and 1 peseta for a "billete for el baile." I keep wondering if it was a cabaret that Rizal went to. When a ticket for a dance could cost less than coffee, refreshments and a tip for the watchman, it couldn't have been a formal or charity dance he paid only 1 peseta for. I think it was a cabaret. Can you imagine our small, brown-skinned Rizal dancing a waltz with a Madrid cabaret girl? The picture in my mind makes him very human.

Si Mahesh Yogi na dehin goli

N APANUOD natin ang 'special edition' ng programang Tell The People sa telebisyon nuong gabi ng Miyerkoles, Enero 23. Yaon ay tinawag na edisyong espesyal dahil duon sa malayong Washington DC sa U.S. kinunan muna ang pagtatanghal bago nga ipinalabas dito. At sa pagkakataong yaon, ang unikong panauhin ng binibining punong-abala ay walang iba kung hindi ang Kataasta-asang Apo, El Magnifico, Da Great Medicine Man, sa ibang salita, ang Punong Kusinero ng magulo at pinagkakaguluhang chop-suey na Technology of the Unified Field — si Mahesh Yogi.

Tulad ng maraming nani-niwala na halos lahat ng kilos at galaw ng indibidwal o grupo ng mga tao sa materyal na daigdig ay may batayang pang-ekonomya — ibig sabihin, kahit patungong Divisoria lamang halimbawa ay hindi ka makasakay sa pampasaherong diyip kung wala kang pampasahe — unang bulaga pa lamang sa atin ng eksenang yaon na ginanap daw sa isang unibersidad na pag-aari ng mga maharishi



AVE PEREZ JACOB

ay agad nagsalimbayan ang mga tanong sa ating kukote. Sino ang nagbayad para maipadala sa Washington DC ang mga teknisyang katulong ng binibining siyang punong-abala ng programa para sa kaunaunahang pagkakataon ay makapanayam niya at maipakita sa ating madlang pipol ang Punong Kusinero ng mga maharishi? Pare ko, para sa araw na yaon ay nag-overtaym ang programa, tumagal nang humigitkumulang sa 75 minuto. Sino sa kalakhan, bukod sa ilang dating isponsor, ang sumagot sa gastos ng buong program?

Lalong umabala sa atin ang gangganyang mga tanong nang sa kahabaan ng programa ay mangibabaw ang mga pahayag ni Mahesh Yogi na kung hindi talam-

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Philippine Scene



Beyond

(From page 4)

apparently unconvinced that I was no longer a "threat to national security and public order" (which was what the recommendation implied).

Although I have stated elsewhere that I can't see rhyme or reason to my continued detention when my co-defendants in the rebellion and subversion cases, save for two or three, have all been freed in the past years, I can venture an explanation to the seeming contradiction or duality in the regime's policy.

But first I must correct the misimpression of my Canadian friend — that the Marcos regime admits to have "prisoners of conscience" (Amnesty International's term for persons detained because of their political beliefs, religion, race or sex).

President Marcos once did admit — on Dec. 11, 1974, in a nationwide radio-TV statement — that his regime held "1,165 political detainees". But on June 3, 1977, when he addressed the Foreign Correspondents Club of the Philippines, Mr. Marcos denied that his regime had any political detainees or prisoners. He has held on to that position since then. His Cabinet Ministers and his claque in government, the armed forces, and the mass media have since echoed and re-echoed this worn-out claim (or disclaimer), some even petulantly declaring "there are only criminals."

Notwithstanding the official denial, the media — local (alternative and, yes, even crony) and foreign — have continued to use political detainees in headlines, news stories, editorials and feature articles rather than the military's egregiously pejorative tag of "POV" — "public order violators," as differentiated from CCV or "common crime violators" — in referring to those arrested, tortured and detained for political reason. This only shows glaringly the utter lack of credibility of the regime. The liberal reference to political detainees in the media has produced practically the reverse impression of what the regime wishes to achieve, such as what my Canadian friend wrongly perceived.

If one were to take a skeptical (not to say cynical) view, he could very well conclude that the regime purposely creates a confusing picture of its policy vis-a-vis political detainees, as it seemingly does in other aspects of its governance. However, I am inclined to believe that the duality in policy is a result of the regime's penchant to declare a policy of "humane and compassionate treatment" to bolster its claim to being democratic, yet in practice it tolerates the undermining, if not outright violation, of such policy in order to attain another objective: to suppress political dissent by terror tactics.

This duality just won't do, as evidenced by the regime's track record. The efforts to embellish the regime's democratic facade would sooner or later fail and the flaccid facade would crack, as indeed it has. On the other hand, terror tactics cannot be carried out on the sly for sooner or later, too, the evidence — the corpus of the crime — would surface, as indeed it has in many instances.

For instance, the regime avers that as a matter of

policy it cannot tolerate, much less sanction, the torture of political detainees. But the preponderance through the past years of complaints of torture, with solid documentation, flies in the face of the regime's intransigent and truculent denials. One can only surmise that any — or all — of the following conditions prevails: a) "unofficial" toleration of torture behind official denial, b) wanton disregard of human rights by the military, or c) utter incompetence of those in authority to rein abusive military and police officers and personnel charged with making arrests and holding political detainees.

At this late date, one wishes these conditions will have disappeared.

As regards my 12-hour pass on August 31st, I think it was a concession to the NPC and a sort of "testing the water" by the Marcos regime. By writing on this, I take the turn to test the water.

Thorns

(From page 4)

ports constructed for their shipment were paid with public funds.

There is no doubt that the martial law regime will go down in history as the country's great leap backward. Under martial law, the Filipinos were to "temporarily" surrender their freedoms for progress.

Today, they have neither freedom nor progress. Amelita Reyso Cruz was arrested when martial law was declared.

Indeed, her column reflected the wrong values of the so-called Old Society. Can anyone in his right mind say that the values of Arthur Sales are any different?

There were many things wrong with the "old society." But compared with the New Society, it was the Age of Enlightenment. Martial law did not do away with the evils of the old society. It reinforced them. Gambling was a problem. How did they solve it? They legalized casinos.

Just as Mussolini was supposed to have made the trains run on time, martial law was supposed to have made Manila's streets clean. Manila is the sin capital of the world.

A poll was recently taken in our schools. The results were shocking. The last place where those polled wished to be is the Philippines. Most of them would prefer to be in the United States, Saudi or Hong Kong. In short, we have a population of people who live here because they cannot get jobs abroad.

There will be no peace in the Philippines in this century. It will take a decade and a half to undo the harm and devastation caused by the martial law regime.

There is no short-term solution to any of our problems. The military were supposed to be the doctors that could cure the nation's ills. Later, they looked more like the patient. After the Aquino assassination, it became obvious they were neither the doctor nor the patient, they were the disease.

Education, not militarization, will be the long-range solution to the nation's problems. It will be people, not guns, grenades, tanks and bombs that will decide the fate of the nation.

Men at work

(From page 5)

pakang panig sa papet pasistang diktadura sa Pilipinas ay nakauutong papuri sa papet na diktador. Matatandaan na hindi pa gaanong nagtatagal, ginawaran ng tusong mga maharishi ng nakalululang titulo — titulo na kung buhay sina Buddha, Kristo, Mahomet at iba pang dakilang lider panrelihiyon ay baka naging dahilan para manguna sila sa mga rali at demonstrasyon kontra sa Technology of the Unified Field at laban sa ngayon ay lumalabas na paborito rin pala ni Mahesh Yogi — ang tutang diktador ng mga imperyalistang Kano at Hapon sa bahaging ito ng daigdig. Magugunita-rin na matapos koronahan ng maluwalhatian ang ating diktador (pati kanyang ginang ay iniakyat sa alapaap ng pang-uto, kung hindi tayo nagkakamali, pare ko) tinangka at muntik nang mabili ng makuwintang mga maharishi ang University of the East. Salamat at umalma ang militanteng mga estudyante, mga propesor at tauhan at iba pang nagmamalasakit sa nasabing pamantasan at nag-aalala sa kinabukasan ng edukasyong Pilipino sa pangkalahatan, nabigo kahit pansamantala ang maitim na pakana ng mga maharishi.

Lakip ang kaukulang paggalang sa binibining nagpukol ng matutulis na tanong sa kinapanayam, masasabi na ang programa sa kabuuan ay naging kabagut-bagot na lektura ng Punong Kusinero tungkol sa ibinebantang chop suey nga na umano'y isang uri ng teknolohiya. Ngunit kalimutan natin ang hokuspokus at abrakadabrang mga sagot at paliwanag ni Mahesh Yogi na maluwat nang nailampaso at naibasura ng mga eksperto sa relihiyon at siyentipikong mga larangan ng kaalaman. Pansinin na lamang natin ang ginawa niyang mga pahayag para sa rehimen ng papet pasistang diktador.

Sa pagbubuod, umano'y sasagana ang buhay ng sambayanang Pilipino kung maamong susunod sila sa diktador na sinasabing ama ng bansa gayundin sa kanyang rehimen na ang mga patakaran ay kagustuhan daw ng sambayanan. Masama ang mga martsa, rali at demonstrasyon lalo pa ang mga pagkilos ng armada

dong mga gerilya. Tungkol sa mga pulitikong opusisyonista, hindi opusisyon manapa'y kolaborasyon ang dapat nilang maging oreyentasyon. Umano, lahat ng ito'y batay at naayon sa natural na batas ng kalikasan.

Siyempre pa, ang ganyang mga pahayag ay musika sa pandinig ng naghaharing uri sa lipunang Pilipino. Sa partikular, palakpak ang mga tainga ng mga amuyong na nasasirkulo ng diktadurang U.S.-Marcos. Gayunman, matitiyak na ang ganyang mga bokadura bukod sa napakalakang kabubohan ay napakasagwang pag-upasala sa katalinuhan ng malawak na masang Pilipino na habang panahong inaapi at binubusabos ng rehimen. Wika ng isang manggagawa na nagtiyagang manuod sa Tell The People sa telebisyon ng kapitbahay nang gabing nabanggit:

"Kung ang diktador ay siyang ama ng bayan, sino ang maamong tuta ng mga imperyalista? Kung ang rehimen ay hindi papet at hindi pasista, bakit hinahayaan ang nakamatay na pagsakal ng dayuhang mga interes gaya ng International Monetary Fund at World Bank sa ating pambansang ekonomiya?"

Tabi sa kaluluwa, itong si Mahesh Yogi ay mukhang isang tusong matsing. Kahit sabihin pang sa programa, napaliligiran siya ng maraming bulaklak bukod sa kung anuanong adorno sa kanyang likuran. Hindi natin matiyak kung sa kanyang pagkakaupo, sa kanyang puwitan ay may umuusok na insensong bahagi sa tuwina ng mga madyik at nekromansiya ng mga mangkukulam. Paminsanmins, tumututok ang kamera sa mga miron — magaganda ang bihis, malamang may deodorante sa mga kilikili, mukhang nakaririnasang mga Pilipino sa U.S. — na sa tingin ay pawang mga basalyos ni Mahesh Yogi.

Nang tanungin siya ng binibini kung bakit tila lagi niyang gusto sa kanyang paligid ang mga bulaklak, minsan pa niyang ibinenta ang tungkol sa Technology of the Unified Field. Sa manggagawang binanggit natin, simple lamang ang silbi ng mga bulaklak. Dehin goli si Mahesh Yogi at ang halimuyak ng mga bulaklak ay pantakip sa kanyang kabahuan. "May balak palang bumisita sa Pilipinas ang kumag," sabi ng ating manggagawa. "Babalibagin natin siya ng bulok na kamatis bago isakay sa trak ng basura patungo sa tambakan."

Let's give
freedom
a chance

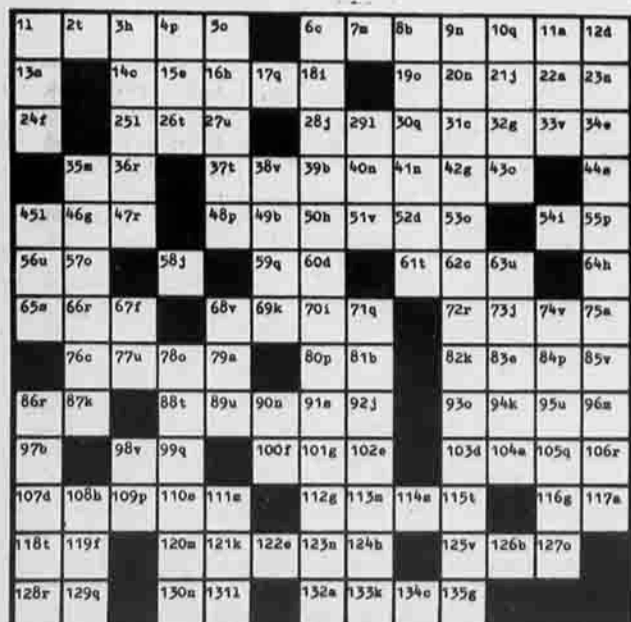
PVT. ISKO LAWAG

By ELOY CRUZ



POLICROSTIC PUZZLE

By RENE J. MARCIANO



DEFINITIONS

a. Mischievous	79	22	104	132	117	11	75
b. Awkward	39	8	49	126	97	81	
c. Ordinary	14	62	6	76	134	31	
d. Reduces, as in sound	107	60	68	12	52	103	
e. Each and all	15	122	102	83	34		
f. Not present	24	67	100	119			
g. Revolved	101	32	112	46	116	42	135
h. Playful or lively	50	124	3	16	64	108	
i. Uncooked	18	70	54				
j. "Love Story" author Segal	28	21	58	92	73		
k. Repeated sounds	94	82	69	133	121	87	
l. Dog: slang	1	25	131	29	45		
m. Keeping out of sight	113	7	96	35	120	111	
n. Demanded strongly	20	40	90	9	130	23	123 41
o. Pale-purple color	57	78	19	5	93	127	53 43
p. Drink, especially alcoholic liquor	84	4	48	109	80	55	
q. Write a later date to than the current date	105	30	10	71	59	17	129 99
r. Spot where situated	106	66	36	86	72	128	38 47

WORDS

DEFINITIONS

s. Student-doctor	91	110	44	114	13	65	
t. Songs, dances or skits in a program	61	26	115	88	118	2	37
u. Click beetle	77	56	89	63	95	27	
v. in an uncertain manner	85	51	33	74	125	38	98

Yesterday's Solution

- a. F — RILLIEST
b. R — ICHTER
c. E — NATE
d. E — MBER
e. A — UTHOR
f. L — ORDED
g. L — OOPS
h. P — OSTMEN
i. O — NJONS
j. L — IFT
k. I — NSTILLS
l. T — RIMMED
m. I — MAM
n. C — HAFED
o. A — RCHING
p. L — OBBY
q. P — ROXY
r. R — AFT
s. I — ACCOCCA
t. S — HEATH
u. O — Z
v. N — EWT
w. E — MBED
x. R — AINED
y. S — CHEMING



BISHOP ANTONIO Y. FORTICH: FOR C.B.C.P. "IF THE REFORMS REGARDING SECRET MARSHALS, AMENDMENT SIX AND THE ECONOMIC CRISIS ARE NOT FULLY IMPLEMENTED, THE BLOODBATH WILL MATERIALIZE."

Chernenko's been absent for 32 days

MOSCOW, Jan. 28 (AFP) — Rumors of President Konstantin Chernenko's worsening health were growing more insistent in Moscow today, after 32 days of not being seen in public.

The Sunday Express, London, reported yesterday that he "may step down" for health reasons.

It said there was "growing evidence that his complaint has taken a turn for the worse. At a recent Bolshoi Ballet state occasion, the 73-year-old leader had

to be lifted up the stairs to his V.I.P. box by a human chair of burly aides."

The Sunday Express uses the services of the well-known Soviet journalist Victor Louis, looked on as having excellent government contacts and who has scored some notable scoops in the past. His wife said today he was at present in Boston, but he could have sent the story either from there or en route from Copenhagen.

Mr. Chernenko is reportedly suffering from emphysema, a lung condition

which makes breathing difficult.

Diplomatic experts here exclude the possibility of a resignation, unless it was made to a plenary session of the central committee, and the next one is not scheduled until the spring.

A foreign ministry spokesman, asked Saturday whether Mr. Chernenko had attended the last meeting of the Politburo, would not answer on the grounds "it is a question concerning the party's internal workings."

Pope John Paul stresses fidelity

MERIDA, Venezuela (AP) — Pope John Paul II took his South American pilgrimage to the foothills of the Andes Mountains Monday and told Roman Catholics to steer clear of ideologies contrary to church teaching.

The Pope flew to this university center from Venezuela's oil capital of Maracaibo on the third day of his Latin American tour, arriving to the cheers of thousands.

In his homily for mass, the Pontiff continued the theme he has struck since the start of his visit, emphasizing church fidelity and discipline.

"To be faithful to the church means to not let yourself be taken in by doctrines or ideologies contrary to Catholic

dogma, which some groups of materialistic inspiration or of doubtful religious content would like," John Paul II told the faithful atop a steep, red-carpeted and flower-covered altar.

The Pope, before celebrating mass, greeted the people, many of whom wore typical brightly colored Andean ponchos and camped out since Sunday night. He helped plant an evergreen to the chant by thousands of: "Long live the Pope."

The Vatican describes Merida, 682 kilometers from the tropical capital of Caracas and the home of the University of the Andes, as one of the most religious areas in all of Venezuela. It has been the seat of a bishop since 1778.

Bhopal 'death dance'

BHOPAL, India (AP) — Survivors of the Bhopal poisonous gas leak voted listlessly in small numbers Monday for one national parliamentary seat in an election postponed by the tragedy that claimed at least 2,000 lives. Critics called the balloting a "death dance."

"My vote does not mean anything," said Kadir Mohammed, 40, a laborer in Jayaprakash Nagar near the Union Carbide plant where the toxic leak occurred Dec. 3. "I lost my wife to the gas and these politicians want to stuff my mouth with money but I won't vote."

Abdur Rakim, an election agent of the governing Congress Party said voter turnout was very low among the 790,000 eligible to vote in the constituency in central Madhya Pradesh.

Chief Minister Arjun Singh told the Associated Press Monday, "The people are going to do their duty (and vote). This election is not over the dead bodies of the victims. We have to move on."

Many voters criticized the Congress Party state government which allowed the carbide plant to locate in Bhopal and said relief and rehabilitation of victims was inadequate.

opposition figure Jovito Salonga, it said, had bolstered a "heretofore weak and divided opposition."

RP:
(From Page 1)
the murder of opposition leader Benigno Aquino in August 1983 was "still another tremor in the earthquake that is rocking the political landscape of the Philippines."

It said the trauma of the murder, an economic crisis, growing doubts over the President's health and a serious communist insurgency, were now threatening to bring down the formerly "impregnable political fortress" of the Marcos regime.

The return from exile of

Aquino

(From Page 1)

News Agency (PNA) reported.

The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) joined the Manila city jail and the national penitentiary in refusing to accommodate the 23 accused, PNA said.

Like the other detention centers, the NBI pleaded lack of facilities. The first two also said the soldiers' lives might be endangered if they were jailed together with hardened criminals and convicts.

The soldiers have been under the custody of their commanding officer, who have requested that the arrangement continue through the trial.

State prosecutors Wednesday upheld the findings of a fact-finding board that blamed the Aquino murder on a military conspiracy and concluded that ex-convict Rolando Galman, earlier tagged as Mr. Aquino's communist killer, was just a scapegoat killed by troops at the assassination scene.

Presiding Judge Manuel Pamaran ordered 23 of the accused. They included the 17 principals denied bail and six alleged accessories who failed to post bail for unknown reasons. The principals are asking to be granted bail.

Twenty five military officers and one civilian charged in the killing of former Sen. Benigno Aquino and Rolando Galman are getting "VIP treatment" after the military refused to turn them over to civilian jailers, according to a prosecution lawyer.

Lupino Lazaro, lawyer for Galman, the man the military allegedly set up as the "fall guy" assassin said the courts should take custody of the defendants and Armed Forces Chief of Staff (on leave) Gen. Fabian C. Ver should be named a principal conspirator, rather than as accessory.

Lazaro, who will act as private prosecutor in the case, said the military action "serves no other purpose than to shower with VIP treatment" the accused military men.

"The military should keep its hands off the Aquino-Galman double murder case. It is about time the judiciary asserts civilian supremacy over the military," Lazaro said in a motion he filed with the Sandiganbayan assigned to try the case.

In a separate motion, Lazaro said state prosecutors have no basis for filing only accessory charges against Ver and seven others. "Gen. Luther Custodio was implicated but who ordered Custodio?" Lazaro asked. (AP)

No way

(From Page 1)

have been rampant ever since Pres. Marcos went into isolation November of last year.

Experts said the President could not afford to wait much longer, what with his failing health and the growing communist

movement in the countryside.

Even Foreign Affairs Minister Arturo M. Tolentino, himself a member of the ruling KBL, said a presidential election this year "is not a remote possibility."

BRIEFS

REAGAN STATE VISITS

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Ronald Reagan will make state visits to both West Germany and Spain after the economic summit of industrialized nations in early May, the White House announced on Monday.

Presidential spokesman Larry Speakes said that after the seven-nation summit May 2-4 in Bonn, Reagan would remain in West Germany until May 8, the 40th anniversary of the Allies' victory in Europe.

On May 8, Speakes said, Reagan will travel to Spain for a state visit to that country until May 10.

A White House official, speaking on condition he not be identified, said Reagan aides also are working on plans for a visit to Portugal after Reagan's trip to Spain, but are not ready to announce that part of his travels.

OPEC WALKOUT

GENEVA, Switzerland (AP) — OPEC oil ministers clashed openly Monday in an emergency meeting that one official said was considering a cut in cartel prices.

Less than an hour after the conference started in a Geneva hotel the oil minister of the United Arab Emirates walked out, complaining that Nigeria was "stabbing OPEC in the back" by breaking its rules.

Ahmed Zaki Yamani, the Saudi Arabian oil minister, said later the incident was sparked by a "misunderstanding" between UAE minister Mana Saeed Oteiba and the Nigerian minister, Tam David-West. The Nigerian refused to discuss the incident.

POLICE DENIAL

TORUN, Poland (AP) — A Polish secret police captain, accused of organizing the abduction and killing of a pro-Solidarity priest, denied Monday that he led the attack and testified "it would be a false assumption" to conclude he was.

Capt. Grzegorz Piotrowski, who has pleaded innocent, was replying to questions from the judges that appeared to be aimed at establishing his role in the kidnapping's final moments before the body was thrown into a reservoir.

Chief Judge Artur Kujawa adjourned the court for the day at mid-afternoon and announced that the prosecutors would begin giving their summary arguments to the court on Tuesday.

The trial of Piotrowski and three other security officers charged in the October abduction and slaying of the Rev. Jerzy Popieluszko was in its 21st day.

LIMA SIEGE

LIMA (AP) — Maoist guerrillas shot and killed a policeman patrolling a Lima park Monday and blacked out the city of Ayacucho in the heart of Peru's insurgency zone over the weekend in attacks ahead of visits to both cities by Pope John Paul II, police said.

Five gunmen shot down civil guard Gerardo Tucso in a suburb of the Peruvian capital and escaped with the policeman's gun, authorities said.

In Ayacucho, 570 kilometers southeast of Lima, Maoist-line Shining Path Guerrillas blacked out Ayacucho for 35 minutes Friday and for one hour Sunday night with dynamite attacks on power installations.

The attacks in Ayacucho, where more than 4,000 persons have been killed in four years of violence, came in the midst of rehearsals to welcome the Pope. John Paul II is to visit Ayacucho's airport for 75 minutes on Feb. 3 as part of his four-day visit to Peru beginning Feb. 1 in Lima.

'LUXURIANT ORCHID'

PEKING (AP) — Zhou Yang, Communist China's veteran cultural arbiter who became a prominent victim of the 1983 "Spiritual Pollution" campaign, had his reputation restored Monday.

The title of the nearly full-page article in the People's Daily (Renmin Ribao) gave a literary hint of what was to follow: "The luxuriant spring orchid."

In the Tang Dynasty poetic metaphor, the "orchid" refers to a person of noble mind who does not yield to pressure. The flower also represents a friend able to withstand the cold.

Zhou, 77 was secretary of the league of left-wing writers in Shanghai when he joined the communist party in 1932. He was Mao Tse-tung's culture chief until 1966 when, like many other intellectuals, he was persecuted by leftist Red Guards during the "cultural revolution."

By then he had engaged in bitter ideological tussles with many of China's best writers, including Lu Xun, Ba Jin and Ding Ling, whom he accused in 1956 of being "anti-party."

He said preparations being made by the KBL and the opposition leaders are the main indicators of an impending election.

Tolentino added, however, that President Marcos might not run in the elections and that several KBL leaders have expressed interest to run in the elections.

But based on the recent survey, only Prime Minister Cesar Virata has the chance of putting up a fight albeit a weak one, against the opposition.

In the survey, 4.12 per cent of the 1,000 respondents chose Virata placing

him a distant sixth among individual candidates. He was followed by acting Armed Forces Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Fidel Ramos who earned 3.25 per cent.

Probable presidential bets who were included in the survey but did not figure prominently were Ambrosio Padilla, Eduardo Cojuangco, Gen. Fabian Ver, Juan Ponce-Enrile, Neptali Gonzales, Ramon Mitra, Francisco "Soc" Rodrigo, Jose Rono, Teofisto Guingona, Rafael Salas, Homobono Adaza, Reuben Canoy, Roberto Benedicto, Raul Manglapus and Francisco Tatad.

Bigger Iraqi offensive

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) — Iraq announced Monday that 40,000 of its soldiers pushed across the border into Iran for the first time in 31 months, inflicting heavy casualties in a three-prong advance apparently designed to preempt a threatened Iranian offensive.

An Iraqi military spokesman, reading a communique over radio Baghdad, said the attack ordered by President Saddam Hussein began Sunday evening and before dawn Monday in the southern desert sector of the 1,180-kilometer-long front line.

"Our forces advanced along three axes in the southern sector of the front and occupied the determined enemy posi-

tions," said the spokesman who was not identified according to regulations applied here.

The Iraqi forces, the spokesman said, are "entrenched in the new positions which they have won from the enemy forces in a heroic battle."

Iraq has said Iran was massing hundreds of thousands of soldiers in the southern region of the border for a major assault. Monday's reported Iraqi attack was regarded as an operation to preempt the expected Iranian offensive.

Iraq withdrew its forces from Iran in 1982 and has since remained on the defensive against several Iranian attacks in the 52-month-old war.

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For an Olympic medal Begeo is 1992 hope-Benson

By IGNACIO DEE

Hector Begeo a prospect for gold in the Olympics? A man whose credentials back up his claim thinks the 21-year-old native of mountain province will be capable of doing it.

"If an adequate training program can begin now," said Tony Benson, former Project: Gintong Alay head coach and currently the national coach for middle- and long-distance running in Australia, Begeo "could undoubtedly win a medal, possibly gold."

Not in the Seoul Olympics three years from now, but in the 1992 Olympiad.

Benson, who enplanes for Hong Kong today after a 2-week stay here, said Begeo's "basic speed" is "world class for the steeplechase...He has enormous potential and has more room to improve..."

The Australian Olympian (1972) pointed out that when Begeo clocked 8 minutes 52.47 seconds in the Asian Games' steeplechase (for a bronze medal effort), there was neither Australian nor American under 20 years of age who could match the time.

Begeo has since lowered his national standard to 8:51.28, established in last year's Palanong Pilipino.

Benson's enthusiasm for Begeo was fanned anew during the national UAAP meet held in Baguio last week, wherein Begeo ran his leg of the 4x400 relay in 52.8 seconds, and the 800 in 1:56.6.

"This indicates that his basic speed is world class for the steeplechase," Benson said. "His 52.8 can be translated into 1:50 in the 800, 3:40 in the 1,500, and 8:10-8:15 in the steeplechase."

"If a long-range training program can be made to strengthen speed-endurance," Benson continued, "he (Begeo) can run in 50 seconds the 400, in 1:58 the 800, in 3:34 the 1,500, which should easily evolve into an 8:04-8:08 in the steeplechase. It could undoubtedly win a medal, possibly gold," Benson opined.

Because of Begeo's tremendous potential, Benson said he has recommended to the Australian Institute of Sports that the 5-foot-3 runner be trained in Australia over a 7-year period.

Benson said Begeo would be 28 in 1992 and by then, properly seasoned for the competition.

Benson sought PATAFA president Jose Sering yesterday, to broach his idea of having Begeo train in Australia. But the former governor of Surigao, who is the newly-elected president of the POC and the OIC of Gintong Alay, was in Butuan City and not due to return to Manila until today.

"I talked to Hector last week about it and he was very enthusiastic about the whole idea," Benson said.

Peñalosa quitting IBF



8 * TUESDAY * JANUARY 29, 1985

Asian baseball

Japanese bats live up to rep

PERTH, Australia (AP) — Japan tightened its title prospects in the Asian Amateur Baseball Championship by beating Chinese Taipei 4-3 with a brilliant display at Parry Field Monday.

Japan jumped to an early 1-0 lead, and with well-controlled pitching by 23-year-old Hiroshi Nagatomi built up a 3-0 advantage after six completed innings.

The reigning Olympic champions, however, survived a powerful last-minute challenge as Chinese Taipei mounted a 3-hit rally and, aided by two walks, scored three runs in their half of the ninth inning.

With none out and bases loaded the pressure was on relief pitcher Yukio Yoshida, but he rose to the occasion and allowed no further scoring.

PERTH, Australia, Jan. 28 (AFP) — Chinese Taipei moved to the top of the ladder in the 13th Asian baseball series here today when it overwhelmed Australia 16-6.

Australia's defeat today ended its slim hopes of figuring in major honors.

In hockey, Pakistan's the pick

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP) — World champion Pakistan beat long-standing rival India 3-2 Monday at Dhaka Stadium to capture the Asia Cup hockey

championship for a second year. The winning goal was scored by Pakistani left wing Kalimullah after a touch-and-go 15-minute overtime in which both teams scored.

No money in it, says Dodie boy

By NOLI FANTIN

International Boxing Federation junior flyweight champion Dodie Boy Penalosa, the country's only world titleholder, may yet give up his IBF title and fight his way up to the World Boxing Council (WBC) crown instead.

Sketchy reports from Cebu City, where the 22-year-old Filipino champion is staying, say negotiations for a fight between Penalosa and a WBC-rated fighter are now in progress.

"This could be the start of his (Penalosa) campaign for the WBC title," said International matchmaker Antero Velandria, Jr.

Penalosa, shortly after he defended his IBF title against South Korea's Choi Chumhwan at the Araneta Coliseum Nov. 16, had expressed disgust over his failure to get more fights and earn bigger purses.

"Mahirap kumuha nang laban dito," Penalosa said after his fight with Choi. "Gusto kong lumaban kay Jungkoo Chang (the WBC jr. flyweight champion).

But before Penalosa could fight against Jungkoo Chang, he has to get into the ratings of the WBC, one of the two boxing bodies which frowns on the U.S.-led IBF.

And the WBC, sources said, may have to require Penalosa to give up his title before he is



DODIE PENALOSA

given the chance to fight for Chang's crown.

The limping champion from San Carlos City won the IBF junior flyweight crown in an elimination against Japan's Satoshi Shingaki on Dec. 10, 1983 in Osaka city.

It took five months before he could make his first title defense. This was on May 13 last year against South Korean Kim Jae Hung in Seoul.

Again it took six months before he could make his second defense of the title.

Penalosa earned \$15,000 in his bout against Shingaki, \$30,000 against Kim and only \$300,000 (\$15,000) in his fight against Choi.

Of the total purses, 10 per cent went to his business manager, Jesse Abrea, 10 per cent to his father, Carl, who is his trainer, and 50 per cent of the remaining amount to his manager, Rex Salud, leaving only 30 per cent for him.

UL spruces up for PBA



Final touches applied for March 3 opening

The University of Life gym in Pasig, Metro Manila is being spruced up in a rush to have it spic and span for the opening March 3 of the country's most popular cage tournament, that of the Philippine Basketball Association.

A visit by WE Forum of the premises found workers finishing up the basketball court (see photo).

"We want to put our best foot forward," a UL official said, "and show the PBA it made no mistake in its holding the PBA First Conference here."

The UL gym can accommodate up to 14,000 people, and is air-conditioned. Araneta Coliseum, where the games used to be played, dismantled its air-conditioning system last year.

The Dome, however, may yet be availed of during championship series.

After the open conference, which starts off this year's season, the PBA will move over to the Rizal Coliseum in Vito Cruz for the second conference (all-Filipino), before winding up at UL again for the reinforced meet.

Although the contract for the use of the UL gym has yet to be formalized, the deal is considered closed, according to a member of the pro league's board of governors.

Andy Jao, who is also the Boer Hausen team manager, said the PBA has decided to try the facilities the UL management is offering them, which is a little bit cheaper than what Araneta Coliseum has been offering them for the past decade.

"UL management is willing to charge us only 20 per cent of the gate, which is five per cent lower than what Araneta has been charging. The savings would come in handy during these times," Jao said.

He added, however, that there is still the possibility of big games being held at the Big Dome, starting with semifinals action.



Bare eye

By RECAH TRINIDAD

Old dream



Talk about a man who took all of two weeks to climb a simple flight of stairs. Well, you have one with you here.

The last time I did a column, if it might rightly be called so, was a good two weeks ago. I did that one at the Malaya editorial office. From there to this cold corner, you take two short corridors, and a curbing stairway. The short trip normally won't take two minutes.

Yes, the stairs. There are 15 steps in all, not to count the landing, and it would seem now that it took me at least a day to complete each step.

Finally, there's no skipping this chore. It's past 5:00 a.m. and I just can't stand to offend our sports ed; he of the most amiable mien.

I should have done this two weeks back yet, after Beth Celis called my attention to what, she said, were inconsistencies noticed by some readers in my treatment of manager-player affairs in the PBA.

First, she said, I scored the team owners for holding on selfishly to their superstars.

Next time, she said, I was scolding the superstars for demanding impossible prices for their new contracts.

I remember plotting an answer to all this, but the long days, the undefinable efforts that went into the re-launching of WE Forum must've stoked the fire.

So I just stand here condemned, I don't plead guilty, but I just don't feel like putting up a defense.

There are simply questions that need not be answered. Like dreams that had to be abandoned, simply because they're no longer worth the dreaming.

Despite the enormous take-home pay, I'd never even once dreamt of making it big as a eager. I've always known I'm not cut for this sort of life, but I do love playing the game.

Dreams. I remember my mother sighing, after she again had to scrape the bottom of the rice bin, how she wished one of us five boys would someday be President of the Philippines.

I know she didn't mean that. All I know she had wanted was an eternal assurance that we won't be skipping the next meal. That dream sounded impossible then.

Oh, mom. I know you'd always be you even if I didn't even make it as president of the dog-eater's society in our place.

Imagine how bitter it would have been if your wish came true, and I wound up the all-powerful man who could not even walk among his people.

There are dreams that are no longer worth dreaming. There are questions we won't answer. All I want to do is to be able to tell you and everybody that I'm well. I never made it there, but you'd be glad to know that I'm not lying.

Now, as to the stairs, I'm glad I'm here, even if it would take me quite a time to again learn how to compose using the typewriter.