
PHILIPPINES

Opposition drawn into Iran scenario

by Carole Green

The Philippines is about to be made the Iran of Asia. A "popular revolution" is to force the United States to withdraw its military bases—Clark Air Field and Subic Naval Base—America's most important military bases in Asia. At the same time, using the International Monetary Fund, the Swiss, British, and New York banks intend to grab the country's rich resources. To effect this plan, the people who worked to bring down the Shah of Iran are now running the same operations against the government of President Ferdinand Marcos.

Speaking at a New York forum of the Movement for a Free Philippines and the Ninoy Aquino Movement on Feb. 22, former Attorney General Ramsey Clark declared, "We must free the Philippine people from the geopolitical and economic domination of these United States . . . and end all foreign loans and military grants."

The occasion was the introduction of Salvador Laurel, advertised as a "moderate" Philippine opposition leader, UNIDO (United Nationalist Democratic Organization) chairman, and former assemblyman. Laurel's trip was hosted by Clark's "Fund for New Priorities," among other groups.

Clark was the special envoy to Iran appointed by Jimmy Carter during the period of Khomeini's rise to power. While in that position, Clark marched down a Teheran street at the head of a procession demanding, not the Shah's overthrow—he was already gone—but the overthrow of Shahpour Bakhtiar's alternative government. Clark wanted all government eliminated in favor of Khomeini. Now, Clark is using Laurel's well-known ambition to be the next president of the Philippines in order to put forward a "transitional moderate coalition" option for the Philippines, which he knows will lead to chaos.

Liberals work with Sullivan

Thus Laurel is only a puppet of Clark and the former ambassador to the Philippines and Iran, William Sullivan. Salvador Laurel's father was the "Quisling" of the Philippines: as president he was chief collaborator with the Japanese during World War II.

The Laurel option is based on the formula put forward by Sullivan in the Winter 1984 issue of *Foreign Policy Review*, where he called for a new liberal coalition which would obey the International Monetary Fund and dump Marcos, purport-

edly as pre-emptive action against the communists. Sullivan is currently working with the American Assembly, a think tank associated with Cyrus Vance, Secretary of State when Khomeini came to power. The Assembly functions as a policy formulator for the Mondale wing of the Democratic Party. On Capitol Hill, Clark is getting help from Rep. Steven Solarz, chairman of the House Subcommittee on the Pacific, and Sen. Edward Kennedy.

At a Feb. 23 Clark-Kennedy-Solarz-sponsored banquet to honor him, Laurel told the crowd that the United States should stop funding its own military bases. Later that afternoon, Solarz announced that in exchange for an increase in economic aid to the Philippines, he would seek a *decrease* in funding for military-related aid. Under the FY85 agreement the White House had worked out with President Marcos, Reagan had agreed to make "his best efforts" to secure \$90 million in military-related assistance for both the bases and military manpower training related to the bases between 1984-89. Solarz is reportedly asking that the first installment of \$85-\$90 million be cut back to \$25-\$30 million.

The immediate goal of Sullivan, Clark, and the Solarz-Kennedy forces is a grand 60%-70% victory for the opposition in this May's parliamentary elections. TV Channel 13, the New York outlet of the Public Broadcasting System, prominently featured Laurel's trip to Washington, saying: "The U.S. may be backing losers, first in Cuba [Batista-ed.] then in Lebanon, but it looks like this time . . . with the tour of Salvador Laurel, we may be on the winning side. . . ."

Walden Bello, head of the Committee against Military Intervention in the Philippines, functions as a point-man for his associate Richard Falk of Princeton University, who in 1976 designated the Shah of Iran as a target for overthrow on behalf of the Council on Foreign Relations, and made numerous trips to Iran during the Khomeini revolution. Bello's Congressional Liaison Committee directs the campaign in Congress to stop economic aid to the Philippines. In the March 1984 issue of *The Progressive*, Bello "predicts" the inevitable outcome of the Laurel option—chaos.

As one member of the Committee Against Military Intervention explained: "Reagan is on solid ground when he assumes that the parliamentary option will open the floodgates to the left. Marcos has done an effective job of destroying the old order. . . . Today, any program short of genuine democratization and full equality will most likely be rejected by the people, for the temper of the times is revolutionary. . . . [Assassinated opposition leader Benigno] this. He said: 'Look, you have a situation when Marcos falls, you come in, the communists back off, and people expect you to perform miracles. How do I create 3 million jobs? How do I bring down the price of gasoline? So, the people will say, Jesus Christ, you're the guy we waited eight years for? You're even worse.' Recognizing the risk, Aquino predicted that the first guy that will come in will be blown out in six months. . . ."