

Khomeini's U.S. backers lead assault in Congress on the Philippines

by Gail G. Kay

The Philippines has started the countdown to the May 14 legislative elections which may put the government of President Ferdinand Marcos to its most severe test since the Aug. 21 assassination of opposition leader Benigno Aquino. The results of those elections will be fixed long before May 14 rolls around, however, and the verdict will be decided not in Manila, but in Washington, D.C.

Henry Kissinger and liberal Democrats in Congress, such as Stephen Solarz (N.Y.) and Edward Kennedy (Mass.), are out to break the ties that have made the 7,000-island Philippine archipelago the linchpin of U.S. strategic military defense in the Pacific. They are feeding a process of economic and political destabilization that will make it impossible for the United States to maintain its military installations at Clark Field and Subic Bay, and will turn an ally of 80 years into an enemy, a process identical to recent U.S. experience in Lebanon and Central America.

The State Department and the liberal Democratic caucus in Congress, using the investigation into the Aquino assassination as the pretext for a phony uproar about "lack of democracy" in the Philippines, are openly courting alternatives to the Marcos government. In the past month, two top Filipino opposition leaders, Salvador Laurel and Agapito Aquino, the brother of the murdered Benigno, have launched their electoral campaigns with tours of the United States and top-level meetings in Washington. The goal is to create a caretaker government that would impose the austerity conditionalities of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), a government combining elements of the liberal opposition, such as Laurel, a faction of the military, and the technocrats now negotiating a debt rescheduling package with the IMF and the Philippines' 350 creditor banks.

But the "liberal" opposition is intended for only a transitional role, paving the way for chaos under the aegis of the National Democratic Front (NDF), the political front of the illegal Communist Party, and its guerrilla arm, the New People's Army (NPA). This is the "Iranian model" for the Philippines.

The Americans running the destabilization of Marcos are the same who toppled the Shah of Iran, and who celebrated

the collapse of the transitional government of Shahpour Bakhtiar at the hands of Ayatollah Khomeini's fanatics: terrorist controller and former Attorney General Ramsey Clark, Princeton professor Richard Falk, and former U.S. Ambassador to Iran (1977-79) William Sullivan. Henry Kissinger, the "friend" who "persuaded" the Shah to retire, is working a parallel, but separate, track into the Marcos government.

What is Reagan administration policy? In testimony before Congress March 6, Montana Democrat John Melcher generously described administration policy in the aftermath of the assassination of Aquino as a "policy of benign neglect." Vice President Bush's February private interview with visiting opposition leader Laurel suggests an attitude that is less than "benign"; the State Department publicly fêted the visiting senator. Undersecretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger, a Kissinger protégé, even begged Laurel to stay a few extra days in order to meet Secretary of State Shultz.

Congress pulls the plug on Marcos

Representative Solarz, a backer of Walter Mondale who endorsed the Carter administration's *Global 2000* plan to reduce the world's population by billions, has turned the U.S. Congress into a forum for those plotting the overthrow of the Marcos government. As chairman of the House Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs, he engineered the passage of a resolution in the House of Representatives in October, saying that the conduct of U.S. policy toward the Philippines should "take into account . . . the conduct of the Philippines' investigation into the Aquino assassination and the fairness of the 1984 National Assembly elections."

Solarz and his fellow liberal Democrats are lying when they say the intent of their hearings on the Philippines has anything to do with seeing President Marcos return the Philippines to "democracy" by meeting opposition demands for holding "free and fair elections" in May and conducting a satisfactory investigation of the Aquino assassination. The only major opposition movement that will even participate in the May elections is Laurel's UNIDO coalition. The movements headed by Agapito Aquino and the more radically anti-American grouping around Jose Diokno and Lorenzo Tanada

of the Anti-Bases Coalition will boycott the elections. Diokno is even planning to lead sit-in demonstrations against the elections outside the Election Commission headquarters, the Supreme Court, and—the U.S. embassy. Remember Teheran?

On Rep. Solarz's initiative, the House Foreign Affairs Committee approved a FY85 Foreign Aid bill March 15 which calls for reducing the military component of the payment for U.S. bases in the Philippines from \$85-90 million to \$25-30 million (the bill has yet to come before the full House). There are rumors in Washington that the Congress will soon cut the military allocation entirely.

Manila has responded with rage and indignation to the congressional aid cut-off. Arturo Tolentino, a critic of Marcos within the ruling KBL party and rumored to be a candidate for the foreign minister's job, told Solarz aide Stanley Roth that the aid reduction was "insulting." On Feb. 24 Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile said the shift "would necessitate a renegotiation of the whole defense agreement between the Philippines and the United States . . . the move will affect Philippine defense efforts as well as the security situation in Asia." Three days later, President Marcos told Admiral Robert Long, retired U.S. commander in chief of the U.S. Forces in the Pacific, that he talks to the President or the Executive, not the U.S. Congress.

Deputy minister of Foreign Affairs Pacifico A. Castro protested March 2 in an article in *Bulletin Today*, entitled "Solarz vs. International Law": "If Congressman Stephen Solarz succeeds in his proposal . . . it will not only constitute a unilateral revision of a treaty but will subvert the fundamental basis for the peaceful conduct of international relations. . . . [The base agreement] cannot be unilaterally altered without seriously placing in jeopardy the defense capabilities of the Philippines in the Pacific region."

Castro hit the nail on the head. Only two months ago, on Jan. 9, Defense Minister Enrile had reported that the Philippines were able to turn down requests for Soviet warships to enter Manila Bay because of the strong U.S. military presence. Without the U.S. bases, he cautioned, there would have been no way to prevent the Soviets from intruding into Philippine waters.

IMF pressure tactics

Forcing a U.S. strategic pullout from the Philippines goes hand in hand with the policy of forced deindustrialization imposed by the International Monetary Fund. This is the key to the "political" crisis brought on by the Aquino assassination, a murder which provided a convenient pretext for the IMF and the banks to pull the plug on the Philippine economy through the fall of 1983. Meeting the political conditions demanded by the State Department is the price demanded for a rescheduling of payments on the Philippines' \$26 billion debts, payments that will likely enter a third 90-day moratorium on April 16. Rep. Solarz in November joined 33 other liberal Democrats, including Parren Mitchell, Barbara Mik-

ulski, Ron Dellums, and Charles Schumer, in writing a letter to Treasury Secretary Donald Regan calling on the U.S. administration to oppose the IMF loan to the Philippines to break Marcos's resistance.

The Marcos government has told the IMF it wants to postpone initialing the letter of intent on the IMF's \$630 million standby credit until after the May elections—because the conditions attached would "require very stiff austerity measures which are politically unpalatable particularly during an election period," says one foreign banker. For the moment the IMF agrees, and securing the IMF credit is necessary to strike a deal with the 350 private and commercial banks holding a piece of the Philippine debt.

Rumors are circulating in the State Department that a Kissinger man, Policy Planning Council head Stephen W. Bosworth, will take over as ambassador to Manila in May or June, to oversee the implementation of the IMF package. Bosworth's credentials include a stint as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Latin American Affairs in the State Department under Thomas O. Enders, where he sought to break Latin American joint efforts to resist the debt collectors. When Bosworth took the Policy Planning job in February 1983, he identified the debt crisis as one of his top priorities because it "involves economic issues with political implications."

Enter the Iran crew

Although the crimes of the Khomeini regime in Iran are now beginning to be exposed in their full grisly horror, the very people who toppled the Shah and engineered the "Islamic Revolution" from abroad are repeating the Iran "experiment" in the Philippines. They are using the same bogus propaganda about "human rights violations," "despotism," and "subjugation to U.S. imperialism," hiding their true intentions behind a veneer of liberalism.

A prime example is William Sullivan, former U.S. ambassador to the Philippines (1973-77) and the U.S. ambassador who oversaw the overthrow of the Shah. In testimony before the Solarz subcommittee Feb. 22, he called for suspending payments for the U.S. bases altogether until Marcos offers some guarantee of "an honest return to democracy," which Sullivan said "could even possibly mean his own resignation, after a transition period."

Sullivan demanded that President Reagan back this move: ". . . the President of the United States has given no clear signal of his own personal commitment to a return to democracy in the Philippines. . . . The purpose of this subcommittee and of this Congress should be to make clear the commitment of the United States to democracy in the Philippines. Its first task should be to get the attention of the President of the United States and obtain his public commitment to that cause. . . ."

The key congressional interface to Filipino opposition support networks in the United States is Walden Bello, head of the "Congressional Liaison Committee" of the Philippine Support Committee that is out to block economic and military

Melcher hits interference by Congress, IMF

Sen. John Melcher (D-Mont.) testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs March 22 against the FY85 foreign aid bill which would cut allocations for the use of U.S. military bases in the Philippines by \$60 million. Melcher is a harsh critic of those U.S. politicians who have sought to destabilize the Philippine government, and had accused the Reagan administration of a policy of "benign neglect," in a March 6 report on his December 1983 trip to Manila.

In his testimony March 22 Melcher rejected the use of U.S. military and economic aid as a lever to shape the domestic policy of the Philippines. "I find that frankly, however well intentioned, to be antagonistic and insulting not just to the Philippine government under President Marcos. It would be insulting to the entire Filipino peoples."

EIR interviewed Senator Melcher after the hearing.

EIR: Senator Melcher, you have been an outspoken opponent of the International Monetary Fund. Could you comment on the role that the IMF is playing with regard to the Philippines?

Melcher: Unfortunately, I think that the IMF wants to make it miserable. . . . Even the banks that would like to

turn over their debt cannot do so because of the IMF restrictions. I think it is unfair.

The IMF is being pretty restrictive and I think that is disadvantageous for everybody concerned. . . . I think that the IMF has a bias toward [against] the Pacific in general. The Philippines do not have a tremendous debt—only \$20 or \$30 billion—yet they are being hamstrung by the IMF. I think the IMF policies are not being uniformly applied and you see this most in the Pacific.

EIR: In your testimony this morning you referred to the economic viability of the Philippines. Could you expand on that?

Melcher: I am quite confident of that myself. There is some political unrest, although it is exaggerated, and that also hampers the economic activity in the country. But I think much of that would dissipate if the IMF weren't putting the Philippines through hurdles on this six month moratorium. If that were not the case the political unrest would still hamper economic activity, but I think that that would be cleared up if the elections on May 16 go off.

You know that the Speaker of the Philippines parliament has extended an invitation to the U.S. Congress to observe the elections on May 16. And I have seen no response to that invitation at all, it's as if people are saying "So what?" I think the U.S. ought to accept. There is an attitude prevailing among some that the election will be rigged in favor of the Marcos party. Well, we should accept the invitation and go observe.

aid to the Philippines. Bello heads the Committee Against Military Intervention in the Philippines (CAMIP), a subcommittee of the World Council of Churches' Clergy and Laity Concerned, which one informed source says links the top 50 U.S. Filipino support groups to groups in the Philippines and Southeast Asia. Bello trained at the Philippine Institute of Culture and works with Princeton Professor Richard Falk. He is an adviser to the Southeast Asia Resource Center, a West Coast-based clearinghouse for antinuclear and peace groups, and is an editorial advisory board member of the Institute for Policy Studies journal, *CounterSpy*.

Bello claims expertise in two areas: U.S. military installations in the Pacific and IMF/World Bank economic imperialism in the Philippines. Bello is the contact man linking the U.S. support networks to the explicitly anti-American, anti-nuclear opposition in the Philippines, headed by former Senator José Diokno and Lorenzo Tanada of the Anti-Bases Coalition. Bello's key U.S. contacts are Richard Falk and former Attorney General Ramsey Clark.

Falk, Clark and Prof. Norman Forer ran the support networks from the United States and Western Europe that brought the Khomeini regime to power, and then ran the Carter-

backed U.N. Commission of Inquiry into U.S. "crimes" in supporting the Shah. Clark, after the fall of the Shah, marched in the streets of Teheran under banners calling for "Death to America," and later issued a joint communique with the Ayatollah Khomeini: "The Ayatollah Khomeini and I hope that the American people and President Carter will respect our wishes, and that the United States will not interfere through the army, through American advisors, the CIA, or through support for Bakhtiar, and let the nation determine its own fate. . . ."

Clark and Falk have pulled together leading separatist/integrist and terrorist support networks on two continents, including the American Indian Movement, the Baader-Meinhof/Red Brigades terrorist networks in Europe, and their above-ground supporters in the antinuclear "peace" movement, with church-based "human rights" networks.

In October 1983, Falk drew these forces to Manila, at the invitation of José Diokno, head of the Anti-Bases Coalition, the Justice for Aquino/Justice for All (JAJA) opposition movement and former head of the Filipino Civil Liberties Union. This was the first-ever nongovernmental international conference against foreign military bases; participants in-

cluded Falk, lawyer J. Roman Bedor of the Pacific Concerns Resource Center, Isidro Gali of the American Indian Movement, Alfred Horn of the West German antinuclear, environmentalist Green Party, retired Greek Gen. Georgis Kovmanakos, Francisco Penas of the Madrid-based anti-NATO commission, and Japanese parliamentarian Ryuichi Ishui.

The three-day conference concluded with a rally outside the U.S. embassy, where a four-page declaration was passed through the gates of the embassy for Ambassador Michael Armacost. That document repeated, in crucial features, the charges Falk lodged against the United States in its dealings with the Shah, including that U.S. military installations make the Philippines an unwilling target of Soviet SS-20 missiles and that the United States has held the Philippines economy "hostage" to its military interests and prevented the development of a "self-reliant," "nationalist-oriented economy."

Clark and Falk had claimed that the United States' biggest "neo-colonialist" crime in Iran was participating in its industrial development, specifically nuclear-related industries. In 1980, Falk stated that "nuclear technology in an undeveloped country will have to involve police methods just by the nature of the thing."

One banker involved in the Philippines debt renegotiations recently concurred, saying that large-scale development projects "are the genesis of the problem." The Philippines, he said, doesn't "need nuclear power plants." In fact, out of 11 ambitious development projects scheduled for completion by the mid-1980s, only 3 have not fallen victim to the IMF's deficit-cutting ax. Jose Diokno, the "Ramsey Clark of the Philippines," has personal experience in shutting down development projects. In the past he joined with Jesuit Bishop Claver to protect the endangered Kalingan tribe against construction of hydroelectric dams.

'Radical restructuring' planned

Last month Clark's Fund for New Priorities cosponsored Salvador Laurel's New York junket, but it is clear that Clark is not interested in any "liberal, transitional government." 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. We must not give the Philippine people guns to point at their own throats."

Ending the "United States-Marcos dictatorship" is the stated goal of these circles and to do that they have made a deal with the illegal Communist Party of the Philippines, through its political front group, the National Democratic Front (NDF). Since early 1983, there has been consensus within the opposition movement to legalize the CPP, whose New Peoples Army is the largest guerrilla insurgency in the Philippines and is now in open alliance with the Muslim Moro National Liberation Front in parts of Mindanao. One of the fears of the U.S. Establishment think-tankers is that the NPA will make rapid political gains as the economic situation deteriorates, and leave the moderate opposition in the dust.

At an October 1983 conference in Stony Point, New York, the NDF won the endorsement of the entire network of World Council of Churches-backed opposition support groups.

The latest issue of *Southeast Asia Chronicle*, journal of the Southeast Asia Resource Center, makes clear the goals of the "Iran crowd" that is shaping the congressional debate on U.S. aid to the Philippines. The issue is wholly devoted to "The Philippines After Aquino, After Marcos." Author Joel Rocamora writes off all "elite" opposition leaders, such as Salvador Laurel, except Diokno and Tanada, who "stand out so dramatically for their principled position, especially on the role of the United States." Diokno and Tanada, Rocamora confirms, "became the main links between elite politicians and the many sectoral organizations sympathetic to the NDF who compose the bulk of [the] JAJA [opposition movement]." The two formed a more effective political organization last November, says Rocamora, the Nationalist Alliance for Justice, Freedom and Democracy. In stark contrast to the "elite oppositionists," Rocamora reports, "popular forces demand the radical restructuring of U.S.-Philippine relations away from U.S. dominance and control."

Of these forces, the NDF communist front group is the most important, and Rocamora quotes the September 1983 issue of their official journal, *Liberation*: "Not until the people's armed forces in the countryside have gained enough strength to lay siege around the capital, and the city's population is sufficiently prepared, will the outbreak of an armed uprising lead to a decisive victory for the people. . . ."

The need for armed struggle is the one point on which all underground organizations agree, says Rocamora. The largest and most influential of these is the Communist Party of the Philippines and its military arm, the New Peoples Army (NPA). He writes: "Among the organizations of the opposition, the CPP is politically and organizationally best prepared to benefit from the post-assassination situation. The murder of Aquino starkly shows that Marcos will use all means to defend his monopoly of power. It also shows the limits of reformist strategies in the anti-Marcos struggle and the need to develop the capability to fight Marcos on his own terms, with armed, underground forces."

In conclusion, Rocamora outlines the following scenario for the May elections:

"Groups interested in participating remain under heavy pressure from more numerous boycott forces. After the long Christmas season, the urban demonstrations are likely to start up again, this time fueled by new militance deriving from severe economic conditions. The cooptation of the elite opposition is not going to have much impact on the urban mass movement, but it may embolden Marcos to use heavier repression. The approval of the IMF and commercial bank loans could have the same effect. Intensified repression will strengthen the main organization with the network and experience of working under these conditions, the National Democratic Front. . . . The NDF stands poised on the threshold of a period of rapid expansion."