

The Philippines: The problem of the "Private Armies"

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I

On March 13, 1987, Philippine President Corazon Aquino issued a directive to her Local Government and National Defense Secretaries to disband "all private armies and other armed groups" operating in the country. The directive was said to be in compliance with Section 24 of Article 18 of the new Philippine Constitution, approved by a more than 75% majority in a nation-wide plebiscite on February 2, 1987. This constitutional provision stipulated that "private armies and other armed groups not recognized by duly constituted authority shall be dismantled."(1) The same section of the new Constitution goes on to say, however, that "all paramilitary forces, including Civilian Home Defense Forces not consistent with the citizen armed forces established in this Constitution shall be dissolved or where appropriate converted to regular forces." This statement, at least in theory, holds out the possibility that there, indeed, may be "citizen armed forces" whose establishment is deemed consistent with the Constitution. That that may be so (or can be made to become so) and also is apparent from another part of the new Constitution (i.e., Article 17 on "General Provisions", Section 11). This refers to the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) as being composed of "a citizen armed force which shall undergo military training and render service as may be provided by law." And while the AFP is enjoined to "keep a regular force" in order to maintain the security of the state, nothing inherently would appear to prevent the AFP from keeping what may perhaps be called an "irregular force" for the same state security purpose, so long as such a force is "recognized by duly constituted authority" as the above cited Section 24 of Article 18 provides.(2)

To those in the Philippines or abroad who are convinced that the country must bring the problem of its "private armies" and their extensive deprivations under control, all this may seem rather belabored and specious reasoning.(3) But considering the political controversy surrounding the issue, especially so in the face of the currently stepped up Communist guerrilla insurgency, and in light of the vested interests of many in the Philippines today in perpetuating their particular "private" army(ies), any Constitutional loop-hole on the subject is coming under close scrutiny.

Particularly the disbandment (or "appropriate conversion") of the Civilian Home Defense Forces (CHDF) has brought disquiet in the AFP's senior command, as well as among its rank and file in the field. Within four days after President Aquino's disbandment directive, her own Armed Forces Chief of Staff, General Fidel Ramos, issued a "cla-

rification", which said that the President, in fact, had not ordered the dissolution of paramilitary forces such as the CHDF. Rather, Ramos said, Aquino had asked Defense Secretary Rafael Iletto and Local Government Secretary Jaime Ferrer "to conduct a study" and to submit their recommendations on the CHDF in the near future. Ramos explained further that various paramilitary forces would be changed "into something else" and that they would not be immediately dissolved. As for the CHDF, "a transition period" would occur, in which the CHDF would be transformed into "civilian security units under the provisions of the new Constitution."⁽⁴⁾

Was Aquino, then, trying to have the best of both worlds, seeking to "disband" some of the more controversial "private armies" and yet also allowing the military to keep their "civilian" auxiliaries? The controversy concerning the transformation of the CHDF in particular (see below part IV) would seem to suggest this. To some observers, Ramos' statement seemed to imply that "private armies" without some kind of official imprimatur of being a "paramilitary force" in process of "conversion" would be subject to "disbandment", pure and simple. But just how such an imprimatur might be obtained and, thus, how "civilian units" or other paramilitary groups would remain part of the constitutionally defined national military force, apparently remains to be implemented.

That implementation, in any case, is likely to be a very difficult process considering the ephemeral nature of many private armies and the murky political atmosphere and social setting in which they operate. Moreover, imprecise statistics aggravate dealing with the problem of private armies as much as the harrowing economic circumstances and the cultural-psychological imagery (to be discussed presently) that impels Filipinos to join such bands. Well after Aquino had consolidated her power and had come under growing pressure by some of her staunchest supporters, e.g. the then Local Government Secretary Aquilino Pimentel, to disband the CHDF and the private armies, Philippine Constabulary intelligence sources reported (April, 1986) that there were "131 private armies still operating nationwide" in the Philippines.⁽⁵⁾ However, at the time Aquino announced her directive ordering the disbanding of the CHDF and those other armed groups "not duly recognized", the total number of private armies was estimated by the AFP to be "more than 260."⁽⁶⁾ Not even the sharpest critic of the Aquino regime has suggested that during the first year of her Presidential tenure the number of private armies grew by 100%. Neither of the two figures seems accurate, and the present author's best estimate is about 200, depending on whether or not one includes, for example, some of the smaller criminal gangs which sometimes, upon capture or exposure, make political pretensions, or else claim to be the bodyguards of a powerful local business tycoon or estate holder in one of the outlying provinces. The CHDF alone, at the time of Aquino's disbandment order, numbered 45,000 personnel, down from their estimated peak strength of 75,000 in the

early nineteen-eighties.

In Manila, in June, 1986, the present author in a query of Philippine intelligence sources, was informed that the total number of personnel involved in the private armies consisted of at least 150,000 "hard core" or "cadre" personnel, with an equal number of part-time or "auxiliaries", but no generally accepted figure seemed available. To this estimate, however, had been added about 24,000 or so active guerrillas of the Communist "New People's Army" (NPA), and at least 4,000 armed followers of various factions of the Muslim insurgent movement active in the Southern Philippine islands, usually collectively called the "Moro National Liberation Front" (MNLF).

II

Before dealing briefly with the origins, operations, and above all the difficulties of a potential disbandment of these private armies, it seems well to stress one factor which may make the whole issue moot. That factor is the obvious reluctance to the dissolution of the private armies, and particularly of the CHDF, coming from AFP circles. In Metro-Manila's Camp Aguinaldo, senior and junior officers interviewed by the press immediately after Aquino's disbandment order became known, declared that the dissolution of the CHDF would be a "considerable handicap" to the Philippine military establishment, especially in providing village defense service against the NPA insurgency for the more outlying parts of the country.(7)

Other inquiries by the author of the military's reaction showed a wide-spread expectation that an implementation of the president's disbandment decision, in practice, would permit wide discretionary latitude on the part of local AFP commanders as they surveyed the status of the anti-NPA private armies in their respective military regions and the continuing need for them. The military's reluctance to do away with local paramilitary units - often originally created and encouraged with the aid of such local AFP commanders themselves - in part reflects the need for a network of civilian informants and informal intelligence dealing with the plans and operations of NPA units in a particular area. It also was recalled that the disbandment order issued by President Aquino on March 13, 1987, had been preceded for nearly a year by various rumours that just such action was being contemplated. Sharply negative reaction from the side of the AFP already had managed to delay implementation. At the close of March, 1986 for example, Armed Forces Staff Chief General Fidel Ramos, in fact, was widely quoted as saying that the new Aquino government did not intend to disband the CHDF at all. He declared at the time that there had been a "misunderstanding" about reports concerning an earlier press story suggesting the revocation of the appointment of CHDF personnel. Ramos added that

such appointments merely were subject to "quarterly review".(8)

The AFP's reluctance to see the CHDF and various military supported "private armies" dissolved, stems not just from the latter's intelligence value, but also from the operational weaknesses of the AFP generally, as it confronts the NPA and other insurgents. Already in 1985 Ramos had publicly berated the AFP for organizational laxity and unprofessional conduct in the field, which, he said, had been causing needless casualties in the fight against the Communist guerrillas.(9) A belief that the AFP today simply is not up to effectively combatting the NPA is found within ranking Philippine military circles and among authoritative foreign observers alike. Early in October, 1986, for example, one senior Philippine Defense Ministry official, anticipating the eventual collapse of peace discussions with the Communists then being undertaken by the Aquino government, warned that because of the poor state of their equipment and morale the Philippine Armed Forces would be incapable of winning the war against the Communist guerrillas.(10)

On March 19, 1987, U.S. Assistant Secretary of Defense, Richard L. Armitage, told the Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs of the U.S. House of Representatives that the Aquino government had "regrettably failed" to develop a comprehensive counter-insurgency plan, and that, in fact, during the preceding year of Aquino's tenure in office, NPA cadre strength had reached a total of 24,430, a 9% increase over the past twelve months. Armitage added that the Philippine Communists now also had expanded their "presence" and "influence" to about 20% of the country's rural areas, about a fifth more than the previous year.(11) Armitage's remarks drew a rejoinder from President Aquino herself ("I really resent the fact that somebody like Mr. Armitage should be saying things that are not entirely accurate"), but the U.S. Defense Department said that Armitage's statement had been cleared by U.S. Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger himself.

Meanwhile, President Reagan authoritatively was reported to have issued a secret intelligence ("finding" authorizing the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency to step up its assistance to the Philippine Armed Forces. As a result, the CIA would now be engaged in further intelligence gathering activities in the Philippines, including possible overflights of rebel-held areas. At the same time there reportedly also would be an increase in personnel at the Agency's Manila station.(12)

Armitage in the same cited Congressional testimony also accused the Aquino government of having discarded one counter-insurgency strategy after another, and of frequently ignoring the advice of her own military field commanders. Armitage pessimistically had added that "distrust and apathy" prevailed in civilian-military relations, aggravated by poor communication and coordination between civilians and the military at various levels of the Philippine government. The latter point is worth stressing, because the CHDF and a number of other private armies organized and maintained by local military commanders (their names and

activities will be noted presently) have served the AFP in filling this relative void of close contact with the rural masses, and at the same time strengthen the AFP's security function.

Thus, Aquino's own military adviser, retired Major General Jose Magno, in mid-March, 1987 hailed the so-called *Nakasaka* ("United People for Peace") organization, which he described as "unarmed civilian patrols" operating in the villages against the Communist "New People's Army" guerrillas. Nakasaka, Magno said, was an example of "people power" (the term for the kind of spontaneous mass support that had helped Mrs. Aquino to power) against the NPA. Magno asserted further that Nakasaka's members, "even without weapons", were doing guard duty at night, and that "this has a definite effect on the people which once upon a time were cowed by the NPA."⁽¹³⁾ Nakasaka was formed in early February, 1987, with the assistance of local AFP commanders of Davao City and Davao del Sur province in Mindanao. Whether it was intended from the start that its members would be wholly unarmed, however, the present author has found to be open to considerable contention.

In any event, the notion that it is possible for long to perform guard duty at night in remote Mindanao villages, protecting them against the dreaded NPA's "Sparrows" (i.e. death squads who seek out and kill local civilian officials, military and others in government seen as "people's enemies") in an unarmed state, has struck observers as considerably at variance with the harsh realities of the Philippine insurgency environment and with the abundant availability of firearms in the country today. Brigadier Cesar Tapia, chief of the AFP's Southern Command, recently estimated for the Philippine press that the number of "loose firearms", i.e. not under control of military of police units, in the country today was "around 100,000".⁽¹⁴⁾

Other Philippine Constabulary and press sources have indicated to the author that this is a rather conservative estimate, and they also noted that in parts of Mindanao, where the struggle between NPA "Sparrows" and private anti-Communist armies is perhaps at its most intense in all of the Philippines, it had already come to the point where some Nakasaka units have begun to arm themselves. Moreover, Nakasaka no longer is a rural security force. They now have formed neighbourhood "watch" committees who, armed with machetes, guard against strangers and "patrol" the streets of the smaller provincial cities in Davao del Sur.⁽¹⁵⁾

It indeed may well be possible to maintain in official circles the hope and the model of unarmed village guards bravely confronting the NPA at night - even as units of the badly overstretched and logistically still undeveloped AFP themselves are at some considerable distance away. Perhaps the present Philippine government seemed to hope for just such a development when already on April 2, 1987, in anticipation of a final report on the private armies at the close of the month, the Aquino cabinet endorsed "unarmed and self-funded" citizens vigilante groups operating in NPA-infested areas.

III

The reality, however, is more likely to be a duplicate of the development of another, somewhat older, recent "civilian guard" organization, operating in the same general area of Mindanao as Nakasaka and called *Alsa Masa* ("Masses Arise"). The latter organization traces its founding to the internal power struggle within the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its NPA guerrilla force over the question of party tactics to be followed during the accelerating Presidential power struggle in 1985-1986 that eventually led to the downfall of Ferdinand Marcos and the ascendance to the Presidency of Mrs. Aquino. These intra-party tactical disputes, described elsewhere, involved a new CPP united front line (now all but abandoned again as the Aquino government's truce talks with the Communists have broken down), and after deepening internal party dissension and fear of infiltration of the party by AFP spies, led to bloody purges of hundreds of NPY cadres and rank and file during the first half of 1986.(16)

From a small nucleus of half a dozen disgruntled low raking ex-NPA members in the Agdao slum section of the city of Davao in Mindanao, *Alsa Masa* had grown to more than 3,000 in Davao alone by mid-February, 1987. It was encouraged and supplied from the start by local AFP commanders who were interested in tapping the group's intelligence sources and underworld contacts in their own hunt of local NPA units. Headed by its chairman Rolando Cagay, a Davao tire dealer who claims to have been a former "tax collector" for the NPA in Davao del Sur province, *Alsa Masa* embarked upon an avowed anti-Communist crusade, promising to rid Davao City's 1.2 million inhabitants of the CPP-NPA's influence.(17)

To a degree it succeeded. But in the process it also attracted a considerable segment of the membership of various criminal gangs in Davao City, illustrating as was noted before(18) the mutual permeability of virtually all armed private groups in the Philippines. This permeability is a result of the existence in the country of a large "underclass" world, composed of human flotsam and jetsam trying to survive in a condition of semi-permanent unemployment or underemployment, and for whom intermittent gangsterism and criminality, in whatever cloak, has become the preferred if not the only available mode of existence.

Mutual permeability of the armed gangs and private armies is exemplified by the recent report of one AFP field grade officer that *Alsa Masa* groups in the Digos Matanao and Magsaysay areas in Southern Mindanao "call themselves Nakasaka."(19) Finding a new, and perhaps (however temporarily!) more respectable affiliation is not unusual for Philippine private armies, and would seem to be particularly necessary now in the case of *Alsa Masa*. As recently as early March, 1987, Armed Forces Chief General Fidel Ramos, during a visit to Davao, had praised *Alsa Masa* for "defending their area against Communist rebels in accor-

dance with the law."(20) But did the General perhaps misspeak himself? Because by early March, 1987 also Alsa Masa, like so many other private armies before it, including AFP-sponsored CHDF units, already had come under severe criticism for serious human rights abuses committed by its members, including summary executions of suspects, looting and criminal racketeering.(21)

And just what role local AFP commanders and their various military units were playing in conjunction with Alsa Masa as they pursued their common anti-Communist insurgency objectives also remained shadowy. During one investigation by a member of Aquino's Presidential Committee on Human Rights (PCHR) of an alleged summary killing by Alsa Masa members of a peasant during a human rights day rally in Davao del Norte on December 10, 1986, local military spokesmen reportedly acknowledged that they had been assisting the Alsa Masa group but that their support was purely "moral."(22) Yet, local Davao AFP commanders also had been photographed and shown on national Philippine and U.S. television, handing out firearms to Alsa Masa personnel, and praising the latter for their work. Davao's Deputy Police Commander Major Wilfredo Garcia declared in mid-February, 1987, that Alsa Masa cadres were being used by the AFP as "very effective guides" to Communist strongholds and operations. And though both AFP and Alsa Masa leaders in Davao declined to disclose the exact nature of the cooperation between them, Alsa Masa Chairman Rolando Cagay subsequently admitted that Alsa Masa members, in fact, were joining local police in raids on suspected Communist hideouts.(23) Alsa Masa officials also were reported by the local press to be "daily visitors" at local Davao police headquarters.(24)

Is it likely, then, that in this kind of environment the Nakasaka will stay unarmed for long (if indeed it ever wholly was) and that it can continue to serve as a model for the type of "civilian security unit under the provisions of the new Constitution" that Ramos earlier had identified (note 4 *supra*) and that Magno already has praised (note 13 *supra*)? The organizational "looseness" of all such groups, like the "looseness" of abundant firearms (note 14 *supra*), seem to suggest that this is unlikely. After all, Nakasa, like Alsa Masa, operates in the tense, "pressure cooker" environment of Davao City and Davao del Sur and other Southern provinces, where violent political conflict (e.g. between the bands of the secessionist Moro National Liberation Front of MNLF, versus the NPA, and both against the units of the central Philippine Government's AFP) interacts with and is aggravated by organized criminality. Members of such colourfully named Davao City street crime gangs as *Tok-tok* (this name presumably represents the sudden, fear-inducing sound of a sharp knock on the door), of *Akyat* ("Jump Over", a term possibly suggesting dexterity by gang members in evading hot pursuit by the authorities), readily mingle not only with Alsa Masa and Nakasaka, but also with other, self-proclaimed anti-NPA gangs like *Tadtad* (meaning "chop-

chop" - from the gang's practice of dismembering its enemies), or with reputedly religiously oriented, almost cult-like, armed groups like *Sagrada Corazon de Jesus* ("Sacred Heart of Jesus").(25) So long as such groups appear to be formally dedicated to the struggle against the Communist NPA, and so long as the mere criminality and human rights violations some of these groups also engage in remain within certain bounds, local AFP commanders on Mindanao appear to continue to extend a large measure of *de facto* operational freedom to such bands, Mrs. Aquino's March 13, 1987 directive against private armies notwithstanding.

The problem of mutual permeability extends to all the armed groups affected by President Aquino's disbandment order, including the largest one, the already named Civilian Home Defense Force (CHDF). As was indicated earlier, in the face of evident military displeasure, the original presidential order disbanding the CHDF had to be "clarified", so as to allow the latter to be changed into "something else", as General Ramos put it, and thus permit it to be recognized by "duly constituted authority" *supra* note 4). After Aquino's own "clarification", her military adviser, the previously mentioned retired Major General Jose Magno, however, was quoted as saying that Aquino's order really "involves preparations to slowly dismantle the CHDF in two or three years."(26) Perhaps so. But in light of the increased AFP and public policy concern over the effectiveness of the Aquino government's tactics in combatting the Communist NPA's insurgency (notes 10-13 *supra*) and, therefore, over the desirability of tampering with such counter-insurgency organizations as there are in the country, it is also evident that any "dismantling" of the CHDF would at best be cosmetic. Not least of the reasons for this is that the CHDF in the "private army" ridden Philippine environment in fact has become a hybrid of various organizations, each component part of which easily could be reassembled into a new configuration, like so many bits of the same glass in a kaleidoscope.

In mid-March, 1987, for example, the chief of the AFP's Southern Command in Cotabato City, Brigadier General Cesar Tapia, declared that the CHDF in Mindanao in fact consists of three distinctive groups. First there was what Tapia termed the "regular" CHDF, originally formed when the nation CHDF organization was established by President Ferdinand Marcos in 1976. This segment is composed of AFP supervised Christians "and a few Muslims". Secondly, there is the Muslim CHDF, made up entirely of former members of the Moro National Liberation Front (itself a complex of "private armies" fractured along lines of leadership rivalries, tactical disputes, and, to a degree, doctrinal orthodoxy). Members of this group, after their surrender to the AFP, had been recruited and reorganized by the Philippine Army as a kind of auxiliary force, and operate mainly on Mindanao. Thirdly, there are the Special Para-Military Forces (SPMF), stationed on Jolo and Tawi-tawi in the Southwestern islands of Mindanao. The 600-man SPMF is composed of

those MNLF members who more recently surrendered to the AFP. These are among the most orthodox Muslims in the region (Jolo and the nearby Tawi-tawi, Samales and Tapul Island groups, are among the strongholds of Islamic Fundamentalism in the Philippines). The SPMF also has the reputation of being the most violently anti-Communist and independently operating group within the Mindanao CHDF. Any administrative reorganization of the group designed to bring it in accord with new Constitutional directives on military reform, is unlikely to be taken seriously by its members.(27)

The factions within the Mindanao CHDF illustrate why the organization generally, and most other "private armies" as well, are valuable to AFP counter-insurgency efforts and, at the same time, a source of disquiet to those concerned with human rights in the Philippines. For each Mindanao CHDF faction has its own network of contacts and methods of interaction with the mass of the population. Thus, the Mindanao CHDF can be Muslim to the Muslims, Christian to the Christians, terroristic to the NPA's "Sparrow" death squads, moderate to the more compliant citizenry, and so on. It can fight the tactics of "people's war" with its own distinctive practitioners of such tactics - in short it often can go, hear, see, and do, what and where regular, uniformed, AFP personnel, already under public criticism for alleged abuses, cannot. The price to be paid in lawless conduct that ultimately also tarnishes the professional military is, in the view of some local AFP commanders, justified by the gravity of the NPA insurgency problem.

IV

The origins of the CHDF lie at least in part in the widening implications of Vietnam-style "people's war" (*nota bene*, Filipino troops already in the 'sixties had become involved in the Vietnam war, after Marcos became President). As early as 1974, two years after Marcos had proclaimed martial law in his country because of an already widening Communist insurgency, the AFP, at Marco's directive, had begun to experiment with armed but civilian "village guard" units. At the same time there were formed wide-ranging intelligence/counter-insurgency military "task forces" and "long range patrol" groups.(28) These units, in turn, seemed a variant of freewheeling counter-insurgency squads, originally mobilized by the Philippine Constabulary in the later nineteen-sixties to fight the Communist Hukbalahap guerrillas. The most notorious of these anti-Communist squads, at the time, was known as "the Monkees".(29) Some spin-off groups by that name later also moved to the Mindanao area. They took their name, perhaps, from a well-known British rock-music group of the time. As will be suggested shortly, the international rock music culture, with its own freewheeling style of defiance of authority, has played a significant role in the forming and certainly in the naming

of other Philippine "private armies".

Most of the "village guard" units, and certainly the military "task forces" and "long range patrols", particularly those in the NPA-ridden Bicol region in Samar and Mindanao, and in Northern Luzon's Cagayan province, were nominally supervised either by local AFP intelligence, by the government's chief intelligence agency, the National Intelligence and Security Authority, or the President's own Presidential Security Command. In practice however, supervision soon became laxer. Semi-authorized spin-off groups, produced by leadership squabbles, and by the popular appeal of the glamorized advantages of being a professional, anti-Communist "counter-insurgent", began to move about independently in Communist-infested areas. Many of the village guard units and some of the task forces, e.g. "Task Force Lorro" which operated in Agusan del Norte province in the early-seventies, and "Task Force Kanloan", in Negros Occidental, drifted perilously close if not into the criminal underworld of gangs of killers and of extortion, smuggling, and racketeering that already had made notorious cities like Davao or Bacolod, and provinces like Davao del Sur and Zamboanga del Sur.(30)

Some of the village security units in the early 'seventies already had adopted the name "home defense" guards. Perhaps in an attempt to bring some system into the proliferating number of armed bands operating under more or less official AFP aegis, President Marcos, in Presidential Decree 1016 of 1976, established the CHDF as the AFP's "auxiliary force of civilian volunteers" for home defense. Constitutional warrant for the CHDF, which supposedly were to function under AFP, including Constabulary supervision at all times, was made to reach back to Philippines Commonwealth Act no.1 (National Defense Act) which authorizes formation and describes the composition of a "citizens armed force", consisting both of "regular troops" as well as "reserve" forces called upon periodically to aid in the defense of the country.(31)

Originally conceived at a modest strength of 10,000, the CHDF by 1980 already had exceeded 70,000 members, nominally attached to local AFP and Constabulary units. If the aim had been to bring some order and supervision in the plethora of various village guards and AFP "long range" patrol teams and their auxiliaries, the cure turned out to be worse than the disease. For within a short time (though some units remained essentially village, and even small provincial town "watch" committees), many CHDF groups, more loosely supervised or encouraged by local AFP commanders to strike out independently at NPA strongholds in remote areas, began to acquire their own command structure, uniforms, and weaponry. A number of them though on the government payroll, metamorphosed into private armies of local political bosses, wealthy estate owners and businessmen.(32) Once formed, such private armies might produce their own "spin-off" groups, while their members readily transferred from one to another and, seemingly more lucrative, armed organization.

It is important to note that these practices have not changed with the advent of the Aquino era. Indeed, the Aquino Presidency has seen the emergence of a new elite of the wealthy and of powerbrokers, as well as proclamations of loyalty to the new regime by members of the Marcos era's *tayo-tayo* (i.e. "crony") system.(33) The dynamics and structure of Philippine Communist politics are not easily changed - not even by the most reform-minded of President Aquino's supporters. The Philippine Communist Party's National Democratic Front (NDF) hardly is an unbiased source, to be sure. But the charge made in early January, 1987, by one NDF spokesman from Northern Luzon, that in his area alone there were "37 warlords" with a total of some 3,000 to 4,000 men in arms, appears to be not without foundation.(34)

As for arms, this never appears to have been, or is now, a problem for the "private armies". One foreign observer, who recently encountered an anti-Communist vigilante group in the village of Luas, in Central Cebu, noted the collection of weaponry that it displayed: "rifles with barrels fashioned from water pipes, huge revolvers with footlong barrels that fire M16 automatic rifle ammunition, and 'one shots', small derring-er-like pistols that are thrown away after one shot."(35) And even in the waning days of the Marcos administration, US officials in Washington continued to express concern over the smuggling of American arms to various "private armies" in the Philippines. Some of these particular private armies were said to be run by businessmen with ties to the Marcos regime.(36)

And what is one to think of recent reports that several thousands of Philippine military remain "absent without leave", together with heavy equipment, including tanks?(37) Pro-Marcos officers, reportedly, have been recruiting and organizing their own "strike force" on the island of Palawan, and by mid-December, 1986, armed groups loyal to former President Marcos were authoritatively reported to be continuing "to roam the four provinces of Panay, terrorizing residents of those areas."(38)

In March, 1987, a group described as "renegade" AFP officers, come of flag and field rank, were organizing their own dissident "Nationalist Arm of the People" (NAP). Some of these officers were said to have been implicated in various recent Army plots to overthrow the Presidency of Mrs. Aquino. The NAP in the Montalban Mountain region of Luzon not only has been linking up with other local anti-Communist armed vigilante groups, but also has been persuading businessmen in the area to contribute funds to support the NAP in order to keep the "tax collectors" of the Communist New People's Army away.(39) It is hardly necessary to dwell on the perilous ease with which one armed outlaw band can supplant another when it comes to demanding "protection" money from a local citizenry.

V

Another major impulse to the formation of private armies in the Philippines has come from charismatic religious fervour, particularly in the Mindanao area, where the secessionist MNLF and its allies in Khomeini-inspired Islamic Fundamentalism has called forth and confronted a heightened Christian religious fervour. This intensified Christian religiosity expresses itself in the formation of private armies - anti-Communist and anti-MNLF in their tactical objectives - that also are virtual religious cults. Mention has already been made of the Tadtad armed band in and around Davao. Some of its units operating under a label (e.g. *Corazon Senor* of "Heart of the Lord") go forth, as one commentator has put it, "chanting pig Latin incantations and brandishing poison tipped knives", swearing death to "Communist guerrillas and other 'enemies of God'." (40) The Communist NPA, in turn, has vowed vengeance against these Christian charismatic private armies, particularly those called the "Philippine Divine Missionaries of Christ", and the *Tres Cantos* ("Three Canticles"). The fanaticism of some of these charismatic armed cults is said to be derived from special amulets which, so members claim, make them invulnerable. Communist NPA spokesmen have claimed that the members of such sects deserve swift execution because of their allegedly "anti-people activities", including extortion and terrorism among the peasantry of Southern Mindanao. (41)

In the early months of 1987, following the breakdown in truce discussions between the Aquino government and the Communist NDF representatives, there was a new upsurge of such Christian charismatic anti-Communist crusading by local armed bands. An intra-religious undercurrent of conflict also became apparent in this connection. For example, in Cebu City in January, 1987, a large anti-Communist "prayer rally" was organized by the "National Movement for Freedom and Democracy". The rally was held in front of the Redemptorist Church in Cebu City, and took place as much in protest against the Communists, as against the fact that a number of Philippine Roman Catholic clergy, over the years, have made common cause with and even have led units of the Communist NPA. (42)

As has been the case with the members of many "private armies", so too those belonging to Christian charismatic armed bands eventually tend to drift away to other, currently more popular groups; there is a "fad-dishness", so to speak, in the world of the armed gangs, as there is in the world of "Rock" band music with which so many gang members identify themselves. A notorious charismatic armed group named "Rock Christ", numbering perhaps at its peak some 3,000 members in 1983, became active earlier in the present decade in the provinces of Misamis Occidental and Zamboanga del Sur. Avowedly anti-Communist in outlook, "Rock Christ" squads reportedly were responsible for the killing of at least a hundred persons and for scores of kidnappings, "disappear-

ances" and assaults. According to human rights circles, "Rock Christ" was encouraged and supplied with weapons by personnel of a unit of the 125th Philippine Airborne Company stationed in Pagadian City during 1980-81.(43) But "Rock Christ's" notoriety eventually became such as to cause open military disapproval. Since 1985, little or nothing has been heard of the group and its members have drifted into other armed bands in the area.

And, like the musical bands in the world of "Rock" so, too, some armed Philippine gangs seem to be vying with each other in stagey, outrageous conduct. Early in April, 1987, for example, members of the earlier named armed group called Tadtad ("Chop-chop"), which, as has been indicated, is known for dismembering its victims (note 25 *supra*), reportedly had been engaging not only in "chopping up" their enemies, but in ceremoniously drinking their blood as well. According to the same report, these Tadtad members also had been joining the previously mentioned and supposedly "unarmed" Nakasaka anti-Communist movement - thus once again illustrating the mutual impermeability of the private armies and armed gangs in the Philippines. Tadtad was also reported to be joining government militia in anti-NPA operations outside Davao.(44)

VI

With all such incidents, public concern and debate in the Philippines over the role of the private armies and armed gangs has tended to increase. The fact that the government is seen to wish, to an extent, to encourage a lawful, broadbased, citizens' resistance movement at a time of heightened confrontations with the Communists, adds to the urgency of the whole question. Early in March, 1987, a senior Aquino regime official, Local Governments Secretary Jaime Ferrer, declared that the government was, in fact, organizing armed anti-Communist groups in Mindanao Island, including Davao, in order to help the regular military in their fight against the Communist New People's Army.(45) Leading political opponents of President Aquino have praised the new upsurge in private armed groups as well. One of these opponents, Aquino's former Defense Minister, Juan Ponce Enrile, has said that the accelerated growth of vigilante groups in the Philippines today "is a logical offshoot of a situation where people are helpless against forces out to destroy their tranquility and freedom, and government cannot seem to stop them."(46)

A report in a leading Asian newsweekly, meanwhile, that the US Defense Department believes that the 250,000-man Philippine armed forces "are losing" the struggle against the Communists (47), has added fuel to the national debate as to whether, and how, the private armies should or could be disbanded. The Government's Commission on Election

(Comelec), the official watchdog of fair national balloting procedures, at the close of March, 1987, demanded that Alsa Masa, Nakasaka "and all other vigilante groups" be disbanded for the duration of the national legislative and the local election periods in the months ahead. Significantly, considering the quasi-authorized status of many of the Philippines' "private armies" today, was Comelec's additional demand that all these armed groups, "even if sanctioned by the Armed Forces of the Philippines", be required to surrender "their firearms, insignias and uniforms" to the offices that had issued them.(48)

It was noteworthy as well, that Comelec's demands came within hours after President Aquino herself, during an election campaign tour in the Davao area, had said that she was pleased that the local Governor had organized a Nakasaka unit in his jurisdiction; and, reportedly, Aquino even met with Alsa Masa leaders in Davao City on this occasion.(49) Almost at the same time Aquino's press secretary, Teodoro Beningo, was quoted as saying that the president was "supportive" of all groups that "effectively turn back the Communists and other insurgents", provided, however, "certain conditions are observed". These conditions, according to Beningo, include that the groups in question (a) are "not contrary to law"; (b) submit a list of their members to the AFP; (c) must be supervised by local civil and military officials; and (d) recognize that violations of law will be prosecuted.(50)

Aquino herself has stressed that citizens' resistance groups must be lawful - i.e. those presumably recognized and operation in accordance with Article 18, Section 24 of the Constitution. Yet, the presumably once "unarmed" Nakasaka units in the Davao era openly displayed their weapons (discribed as "long, blunt(!) knives") in Aquino's presence.(51) And while the president tries gingerly to trace a Constitutional path between the dangers of uncontrolled private vigilantism on the one hand, and the looming threat of Communist insurgents on the other, it is clear that in the tension-ridden atmosphere of partisan politics and elections and simultaneously, popular demands for stronger counter-insurgency action, bloody violence perpetrated by clashing private armies and armed gangs, including by the NPA's roaming "Sparrow" death squads and the MNLF, is likely to grow. Indeed, it has proven to be a justified fear of a number of observers that precisely because of the presumably regulated, "lawful" anti-Communist vigilantism emerging rapidly in the first half of 1987 there would come a return to the murder-ridden and deeply fraudulent type of elections that has marred the Philippine democracy so often in the past.

VII

Not just rural, but urban vigilantism in the Metropolitan Manila area too appeared to be on the rise again during 1987. Between 1982-1985 the

Philippine capital region had had the experience of the so-called "secret marshals". These were plain clothes police, numbering some 400 altogether, who, riding in pairs on the city's buses and "jeepneys", had guarded the travelling public against hijackings, kidnappings, drug dealing, as well as less serious incidents of street crime. Soon the "secret marshals" acquired the reputation of "trigger happy" official vigilantes, who had the tendency to shoot down suspected criminals of the spot (by early September, 1982, the "secret marshals" had killed thirty-three persons in the preceding months period alone).(52)

In the following years, despite indictments of four "secret marshals" on charges of murder, and notwithstanding occasional official announcements that the group had been disbanded, the "Metro-Com" (i.e. the Metropolitan Manila police command) periodically revived the marshals again. It was claimed that citizens felt more secure with the "secret marshals" around, even though Marcos' critics at the same time charged that the marshals were merely using their campaign against criminals as a cover for intimidation opponents of the Marcos regime.(53) With the advent of the Aquino regime in February, 1986, the "secret marshals" seemed to have disappeared at last in the aftermath of popular revulsion over the Marcos regime's alleged excesses in human rights violations.

Within a year, however, Manila's police vigilantes returned again amidst the breakdown of the Aquino government's truce negotiations with the Communist National Democratic Front, and following a rash of killings of military and police officers in the capital, beginning in January, 1987, which were attributed to roaming death squads of NPA "Sparrows". Now functioning under Manila's new "Capital Command" or CapCom (the successor to "Metro-Com") special squads of plain clothes police called "Eagles" were formed to liquidate what were termed the "urban guerrillas" of the NPA.(54) The "Eagles" swiftly went to work, e.g. by early April they reportedly were "gunning down" "suspected NPA urban guerrillas" in the Manila slums.(55)

Such operations of the "Eagles" soon gave cause for concern. Because, perhaps even more than the AFP and Constabulary units in the Philippine rural areas, with their respective constellation of "private armies" and supposedly "unarmed" citizens' "forces", so CapCom's "Eagles" depend on a network of private informers in a gang-ridden, crime-infested, metropolitan area of 7 million inhabitants. Security and other basic public services are in a precarious condition in Manila, where despite estimates of a 30% or even higher unemployment rate, there continues to be an annual inflow from the countryside of at least 150,000 new settlers, half of whom are doomed to live in conditions of deep squalor.(56) In the context of heightened confrontation of the Communists, and amidst a semi-legitimacy for the rash of new "people power" vigilantism, human rights observers in the Philippines have become fearful that the interaction of "Eagles" and their network of

citizen auxiliaries only can lead to still more indiscriminate violence and extensive disregard for due processes of law.

VIII

This is not the place to review the operations of the Communist NPA and the Islamic MNLF. Because, unlike such groups as Alsa Masa of "Rock Christ", or the "private armies" of sugar barons and politicians, of the AFP's auxiliaries like the CHDF, the NPA and MNLF are extensions of political movements essentially dedicated to a fundamental alteration of the present structure of the Philippine government. In the case of the 24,000-man NPA that alteration envisages a Third World Marxist-Leninist revolutionary state, adapted, like Vietnam, Cuba, or Angola, to national conditions. In the case of the much smaller (about 4,000), and organizationally badly fractured MNLF, the desired alteration of government, at the minimum, is a condition of advanced autonomy: "a Commonwealth within a Republic", as one MNLF theoretician once put it to this author. At the optimum it is secession and independence for those areas of Mindanao and adjacent southern islands where Muslims predominate.⁽⁵⁷⁾ This is not to say, however, that the NPA and MNLF, particularly in terms of the organizational "mutual permeability" noted above do not interact or interchange members with the other "private armies" like Alsa Masa particularly are said to welcome NPA members who have "recanted" and changed their ideologies and organizational loyalty. Sceptics on the Davao scene wonder how deep such recantations go in the midst of a general social substratum composed of footloose "guns-for-hire".

More to the point, perhaps, is the symbiotic relationship between the NPA (and to a lesser degree the MNLF as well) and the "armies" that formally oppose them: each, in a way, lives off the other; without the one's existence, the other would have less of a *raison d'etre*. Because of this functioning interdependence, not only "mutual impermeability" of members flourishes, but proliferation of "private armies" is encouraged as well. Here one is informed that in sugar producing Negros, wealthy estate owners, no longer certain of how long the CHDF units in their *de facto* employ will last, have taken to forming a new private army, called "El Tigre". Elsewhere, in Cebu, there is a new proclivity toward citizens' "movements", which in the first place are to serve as covert, pro-Marcos and avowedly anti-Communist partisan pressure groups, and, secondly, as armed self-defense organizations. The "Movement for Freedom and Democracy", led by an ex-NPA cadre, Pastor Alcover, is of this type, as is the more shadowy CACA ("The Citizens Against Communism Army"). The latter seems to have absorbed some resigned AFP personnel. Yet another variant is met with in the tourist mecca of Baguio, in Luzon. Here the "Baguio Overseas Society" (BOS) has been formed as a flying,

anti-crime, vigilante squad whose main purpose is to protect foreign visitors in the area against petty thieves and worse. The real reason is that it affords enterprising "private army" entrepreneurs another chance to organize local gunmen for whatever lucrative opportunity may come along. Some well-uniformed BOS personnel, in fact, appear to be members of several "private armies" in the Luzon hill country, including local CHDF units.

To both the critics and now disillusioned supporters of President Aquino, the upsurge of the private armies is either a symptom that (a) she cannot control the NPA threat, or (b) that for reasons of political expediency she has had to give in to her AFP opponents. The latter, especially conservative, covert officers' cliques, such as "The Brotherhood" and the "Reformed Army Movement" (usually known by its initials RAM), reputedly are more sympathetic to the hardline anti-Communism of former Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile.

IX

The political conflict in the country over the whole "private army" issue is deepening and will continue to do so, regardless of who wins the election this year. The Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates (PAHRA), a broadbased activist group with strong support in Church and University circles, has expressed its "deep regrets" over Aquino's endorsement of Nakasaka, insisting that the latter organization not only "is armed", contrary to Aquino's own assertions, but indeed is in violation of the country's newly endorsed Constitution.(58) At almost the same time, however, the Philippine National Defense Department, feeling pressure from its own ranks, told the Aquino government's Department of Local Governments that the various "vigilante groups" in the country should not be dismantled.(59) Defense Secretary Rafael Ileta himself provided, in effect, a new, if somewhat disingenuous, rationale for leaving the private armies as they are, at least for now. Ileta said that although the AFP is not arming the private armies, the AFP also cannot prevent them from carrying weapons, "especially if they are licensed".(60) Since getting real (or faked) weapons' licenses itself is something of a growing industry in the Philippines these days, and in any case, is a process controlled by local military/Constabulary commanders sympathetic to their own particular armed "auxiliaries", it is to be feared that Ileta's explanation is unlikely to discourage the upsurge of new private armies in the future.

But, finally, the major factor driving the seemingly endless formation of new private armies today - apart from the long established practices of estate owner and urban political "bossism" which are themselves a legacy from the traditions of Spanish colonialism and pre-colonial Malay feudalism - is poverty. To the hordes of un- or underemployed young

men (and, to an increasing degree, women as well) the "private armies" offer often lucrative work, glamorized further by danger, and more or less sanctified by one ideology or cult belief system or other. In 1970, a Marcos-appointed presidential Education Commission estimated that some 8% of the total potential work force of 12.5 million people were unemployed, with an additional 5 million people being underemployed, for a staggering total of nearly 50% of the work force.(61) In 1969, too, 40% of university or college educated Filipinos were unemployed. At the close of February, 1978, the Aquino government's Department of Labor hardly presented a more encouraging picture. Of the 22.5 million in the 1986 work force, 11.8% officially were listed as unemployed, while the number of unemployed was described for 1986 as having been "up 85% over the number in 1985".(62) Nearly 60% of the unemployed were in the urban sector. One might add that these official data are considered too low by many observers, and to these latter figures, of course, one must add as yet unverifiable numbers of the semi- or underemployed. Such an addition would probably darken the national job picture even more. According to the Philippine Labor Department also, about 628,000 new jobs would have to be generated by the Philippine economy in 1987 "if only to maintain" the 11.8% unemployment rate of 1986.(63)

Given the problems confronting the country's post-Marcos economy, and despite a modest new growth rate and extensive US and other aid and investment encouragement to the Aquino government, it seems unlikely that the required number of jobs will be generated. For some indefinite time the "private armies" will be part of the Philippine political and social landscape.

Notes

- (1) Agence France Presse despatch, Manila, March 16, 1987 (Foreign Broadcast Information Service reports, hereafter FBIS, March 18, 1987, p.P3).
- (2) Text of the draft Philippine Constitution in: *New Day* (Quezon City), October 13, 1986, pp.9-13 (FBIS, October 17, 1986, p.P45).
- (3) On the problem of Philippine private armies see Justus M. van der Kroef: 'Private Armies' and Extra-Judicial Violence in the Philippines, in: *Asian Affairs. An American Review*, Winter, 1986-87, pp.1-21.
- (4) Manila, Far East Broadcasting Company report, March 17, 1987 (FBIS, March 18, 1987, p.P3).
- (5) *Philippine Daily Inquirer* (Manila), April 30, 1986, p.1.
- (6) Gregg Jones despatch from Manila in: *The Washington Post*, March 17, 1987, p.A19, col.5.
- (7) *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, March 17, 1987, p.1.

- (8) Manila Bulletin, March 30, 1986, p.5, and The New Philippines Daily Express (Manila), March 28, 1986, p.1 (both in: FBIS, April 1, 1986, p.P8, and April 3, 1986, p.P14).
- (9) The Straits Times (Singapore), November 8, 1985, p.9.
- (10) The Manila Times, October 3, 1986 (FBIS, October 6, 1986, p.P7).
- (11) The Washington Post, March 18, 1987, p.A14.
- (12) Ibid.
- (13) Agence France Presse despatch, Manila, March 13, 1987 (FBIS, March 18, 1987, p.P5).
- (14) The Manila Chronicle, March 23, 1987, p.1 (FBIS, March 24, 1987, p.P11).
- (15) See, e.g. the Report of Gregg Jones from Toledo City, the Philippines, in: The Washington Post, April 1, 1987, p.A17.
- (16) Justus M. van der Kroef: Aquino and Beyond: Philippine Communist Strategies, in: Internationales Asienforum (Köln), 1986, no.3-4, pp.215-223, and James Clad: The Philippines - Losing Leftist Ground, in: Far Eastern Economic Review, January 22, 1987, p.14.
- (17) Agence France Presse despatch, Davao, the Philippines, February 15, 1987 (FBIS, February 18, 1987, p.P10); Philippine Daily Inquirer, February 26, 1987, pp.1,6.
- (18) See the reference in note 3, above.
- (19) Philippine Daily Inquirer, February 26, 1987, p.6.
- (20) Radyo ng Bayan, Quezon City, March 12, 1987 (FBIS, March 12, 1987, p.P2).
- (21) Ang Pahayagang Malaya (Manila), December 16, 1986, pp.1,13, and Agence France Presse despatch, Davao, February 18, 1987 (FBIS, February 19, 1987, p.P8).
- (22) Ang Pahayagang Malaya, December 16, 1986, p.1.
- (23) Agence France Presse despatch, Davao, February 15, 1987 (FBIS, February 18, 1987, p.P10).
- (24) Ibid.
- (25) Philippine Daily Inquirer, March 17, 1987, p.10, and Far Eastern Economic Review, February 5, 1987, p.76.
- (26) Philippine Daily Inquirer, March 18, 1987, p.8.
- (27) The Manila Chronicle, March 23, 1987, pp.1,7 (FBIS, March 24, 1987, p.P10). For data in this paragraph I also have relied on press and military intelligence sources in Davao City.
- (28) See, e.g. Human Rights Violations in the Philippines. An Account of Torture, "Disappearances", Extra-Judicial Executions, and Illegal Detention (Amnesty International, U.S.A., New York, 1983), pp.15-17.
- (29) Rodolfo Tupas: Our Central Luzon Nightmare, in: The Sunday Times Magazine (Manila), January 11, 1970, pp.10-11.
- (30) Human Rights Violations in the Philippines, op.cit. (note 28), pp.15-17.
- (31) Philippine Daily Inquirer, March 17, 1987, p.1.

- (32) See, e.g. *We Forum* (Quezon City), October 22-28, 1985, p.7.
- (33) Claims of a 'New Cronyism', in: *Asiaweek* (Hongkong), April 5, 1987, pp.24-25.
- (34) *Ang Pahayagang Malaya*, January 5, 1987, p.1 (FBIS, Januar 8, 1987, p.P15).
- (35) Gregg Jones despatch from Toledo City, Cebu, Philippines, in: *The Washington Post*, April 1, 1987, p.A17.
- (36) *The New York Times*, November 22, 1985, p.1.
- (37) *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, May 20, 1986, p.1.
- (38) *The News Herald* (Manila), June 5, 1986, p.6, and *Ang Pahayagang Malaya*, December 15, 1986, p.7 (FBIS, December 17, 1986, p.P13).
- (39) *Business Day* (Quezon City I), February 27, 1987, p.6 (FBIS, March 3, 1987, p.P4).
- (40) Cecil Morella despatch, *Agence France Presse*, Manila, July 7, 1985 (FBIS, July 10, 1985, p.P7).
- (41) On the Christian charismatic armed bands and Communist attitudes see, e.g. also *Filipino Times* (Manila), May 30-June 5, 1986, p.10; *The Manila Times*, June 9, 1986, p.3; *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, May 13, 1986, p.1.
- (42) Gregg Jones despatch from Toledo City, Cebu, the Philippines, in: *The Washington Post*, April 1, 1987, p.A17.
- (43) On "Rock Christ" see, e.g. *Human Rights Violations in the Philippines*, op.cit., pp.18-19.
- (44) *Agence France Presse* despatch, Davao, April 1, 1987 (FBIS, April 2, 1987, p.P7).
- (45) *Agence France Presse* despatch, Davao, March 7, 1987 (FBIS, March 9, 1987, p.P4).
- (46) *Agence France Presse* despatch, Manila, March 14, 1987 (FBIS, March 18, 1987, p.P6).
- (47) *Asiaweek* (Hongkong), April 5, 1987, p.27.
- (48) *Business Day* (Quezon City), March 31, 1987, p.20 (FBIS, April 2, 1987, p.P4).
- (49) *Agence France Presse* despatch, Davao, March 29, 1987 (FBIS, March 30, 1987, p.P1).
- (50) *Far East Broadcasting Company* report, Manila, March 31, 1987 (FBIS, April 2, 1987, p.P3).
- (51) *Agence France Presse* despatch, Davao, March 29, 1987 (FBIS, March 30, 1987, p.P1).
- (52) *The New York Times*, May 13, 1985, p.A3.
- (53) *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1984*. Report submitted to the Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, and Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives, by the Department of State. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, February, 1985, p.848; *Agence France Presse* despatch, Manila, May 13, 1985 (FBIS, May 14, 1985, p.P7); *The Straits Times* (Singapore), May 7, 1985, p.5.

- (54) The Manila Chronicle, March 27, 1987, p.1 (FBIS, April 2, 1987, p.P9).
- (55) FBIS, April 1, 1978, p.P5.
- (56) See, e.g. The Manila Times, June 6, 1986, p.7. See also Business Day (Manila), November 20, 1985, p.2; and Bulletin Today (Manila), December 16, 1986, p.25 (both in: FBIS, November 26, 1985, p.P23, and December 24, 1986, p.P16, respectively); and in: Asiaweek, May 25, 1986, p.62.
- (57) On the NPA and Philippine Communism see, e.g.: Justus M. van der Kroef: Communism in Southeast Asia. Berkely:University of California Press, 1981, and Ross H. Munro: The New Khmer Rouge, in: Commentary (New York), December 1985, pp.19-38. On the MNLF see particularly T.J.D. George: Revolt in Mindanao. The Rise of Islam in Philippine Politics. New York: Oxford University Press, 1980, and in: Manila Bulletin, December 4, 1986, p.1 (FBIS, December 4, 1986, p.P6) on the MNLF's proclamation of an independent "federated" state.
- (58) Business Day (Quezon City), April 1, 1987, p.21 (FBIS, April 2, 1987, p.P6).
- (59) Radio Veritas (Manila), April 1, 1987 (FBIS, April 2, 1987, p.P4).
- (60) Ibid.
- (61) Far Eastern Economic Review, in: Asia Yearbook 1973 (Hongkong, Far Eastern Economic Review, 1973), p.254.
- (62) Business Day (Quezon City), February 26, 1987, p.3 (FBIS, March 4, 1987, p.P13).
- (63) Ibid.