

8

People's Power Revolution: A Return to the 'Old Society'?

A. Revolution as Effect (*continued*): The 'Third Force' and the February Uprising

I

With most people now--in the mid-1980s--it was not that some dysfunctions (e.g., the OPEC oil-price increases [1970s], the U.S. recession [1980s]) were actually beyond the regime's control. These no longer mattered. What was more important was that Marcos's responsibility for the *ills* and *uncertainties* of Filipino society was deemed unmitigated; that is, in making his power absolute he had also made all possibility of his failure inexcusable.¹ In addition, he had raised the peoples' expectations (e.g., with his democratic revolution) but failed to deliver.² And yet the regime came through to most as 'corrupt, abusive and inhumane'.³ Especially concerning the Right Opposition, he had denied them the chance to win any 'fair voting' since 1971; furthermore, despite the economy being a shambles, the

¹ See, e.g., 'Primer of the *Kongreso ng Mamamayang Pilipino* (KOMPIL), . . . January 7-8 [1984], (Extract)', in Javate-de Dios, Daroy, and Kalaw-Tirol, op cit., 599-603, esp. 599, in which it is stated: 'President Marcos has been in power for the past 18 years, the last eleven of these years with absolute powers and virtually no effective opposition. It is therefore unavoidable that all developments, good or bad, during this period must ultimately be laid at his door'.

² Ibid.

³ See, e.g., "'Comparative Tabulation of Hidden Wealth of the Marcos Family and its Cronies", Released by *Bayang Nagkaisa sa Diwa at Layunin* (BANDILA), . . . September 21, 1985', in Javate-de Dios, Daroy, and Kalaw-Tirol, op cit., 582-584; also see 'Parliamentary Resolution "Calling for the Impeachment of President Ferdinand E. Marcos", (Resolution No. 644) *Batasang Pambansa* (Parliament), . . . August 8, 1985, (Extract)', in Javate-de Dios, Daroy, and Kalaw-Tirol, op cit., 584-591.

PEOPLE'S POWER REVOLUTION

murder of Ninoy Aquino, and other disvalues, he also refused to step down. As a result, Marcos's support by a cross section of the society--from the elite to the 'middle class' and to the masses--began to dissipate, as did also that of the foreign bankers and creditors and business groups as well as the so-called pragmatists in the Reagan administration.⁴

In fact, since Aquino's assassination more and more people had been demanding that Marcos resigned. And as the socio-economic conditions continued to deteriorate, the regime found itself increasingly on the defensive; but it could do little to reverse the growing alienation of the people. To sum it up: 'In both places [Philippines and Washington], there is a near overwhelming sense that a chapter of history is almost over: the Marcos era. Over the two decades since his first democratic election in 1965, the President [Marcos] has run the gamut of transformation, changing from a populist reformer to a modernizing strongman to, in recent years, a fading and often grotesque shadow of his former authoritarian self. In the process, he had profoundly changed his country, at times in the past for the better, but of late decidedly for the worse'.⁵ Thus, in the mid-1980s, an aspect of such political issue, namely, *succession*, was being pitched in an increasingly uncertain tone: what will happen to the Philippines when Marcos's one-man rule does come to an end? In effect mediating between the regime and the *neo-ilustrado* Opposition, the Reagan administration made its stance: 'While President Marcos at this stage is part of the problem, he is also necessarily part of the solution. We need to be able to work with him and to try to influence him through a well-orchestrated policy of incentives and disincentives to set the stage for a peaceful and eventual transition to a successor government'.⁶ The 'Third Force' (pro-American) strategy was

4 These so-called pragmatists at the U.S. State Department, including Michael Armacost, former ambassador to Manila, were largely responsible for the shift in U.S. policy towards the 'opposition'. See Walden Bello, *Creating the Third Force: US Sponsored Low Intensity Conflict in the Philippines* (San Francisco: IFDP, 1987), chs. 5 and 6.

5 *TIME*, Feb. 3, 1986, 6.

6 See the 'National Security Study Directive (NSSD)' which was adopted as a policy of the Reagan Administration in January 1985. See also Bello, op cit., 58.

under way.

Towards the mid-1980s the 'revolutionary situation' loomed large--although it seemed a mere 'economic problem' to the regime, but largely 'political' (meaning dismantling *the regime itself*) to the Right Opposition. For long the spate of 'precipitants' had been unremitting. Significantly, for instance, the CPP-NPA and NDF's strength grew; and Left and Right opposition rallies and protests continued. The anti-Marcos media too had reports on the regime's dysfunctions (further demoralizing its more passive supporters): among others, the continuing human rights abuses by paramilitary troops, the Central Bank scandal, fake-medals exposure, and others.⁷ Altogether, they effectually wrote off every possibility in which the situation--as Marcos's counter-revolution did in the early 1970s--might have been turned around once again. But more than all other precipitants, two extraordinary incidents climaxed the effects of the regime's excesses and scandals, intensified anti-Marcos activism, and hastened the demise of the regime.

The first was the assassination of former Old Society senator Benigno (Ninoy) Aquino Jr. on August 21, 1983, as he arrived home after a three-year exile in the United States.⁸ (Escorted by soldiers down the China Airlines plane and onto the tarmac where nearly 2000 other troops were standing guard he was shot point-blank from behind his head.) Seething with 'moral outrage' at the regime, most Filipinos blamed the military. So did international reaction. Then, besides scuttling the military's findings, the Agrava Fact-Finding Board⁹ concluded after a year-long investigation that

⁷ See, e.g., *TIME*, Feb. 3, 1986, 16. See also Francisco Nemenzo, 'From Autocracy to Elite Democracy', in Javate-de Dios, Daroy, and Kalaw-Tirol, op cit., 223; and John Lyons and Karl Wilson, *Marcos and Beyond: The Philippines Revolution* (n.p.: Kangaroo, 1987), 116-117.

⁸ In 1980, Marcos allowed Aquino to undergo a heart operation, after which he took out a fellowship at Harvard University. See, e.g., Monina Allarey Mercado, ed., *People Power: An Eyewitness History, The Philippine Revolution of 1986* (Manila: Reuter, 1986), 9.

⁹ See PD no. 1986, dated October 14, 1983, "'Creating the Fact-Finding Board to Investigate the Tragedy on August 21, 1983" . . . , (Extract)', in Javate-de Dios, Daroy, and Kalaw-Tirol, op cit., 625-627. See also 'Report of the Fact-Finding Board Created Under P.D. 1986 ("The

PEOPLE'S POWER REVOLUTION

Ninoy Aquino had not been killed by an alleged communist 'hit-man'; but that there was a military-based conspiracy for members of the Aviation Security Command (AVSECOM) to murder both Aquino and the suspect Rolando Galman. A majority of the Board also implicated Gen. Fabian Ver, chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP). All this notwithstanding, the anti-graft court *Sandiganbayan*--after holding 'widely discredited proceedings'¹⁰--acquitted Ver and all the other twenty-five co-accused. (All these others except one were military men and were implicated by the Agrava Board.) It also upheld the regime's version that Galman was the assassin and that he had acted alone. Needless to say, the court's verdict failed to persuade most Filipinos; and few doubted their (i.e., the accused's) guilt. But immediately afterwards, despite Washington's opposition and Ver's notoriety, Marcos reinstated him as well as all the other accused soldiers. Loyalist but overstaying (retirable) generals were then given further extensions by Ver and Marcos.

Secondly, the elections for president and vice president were called--announced by Marcos on U.S. television on November 3, 1985--and took place on February 7, 1986. (Such elections seemed to have tenuous constitutional basis; yet the Supreme Court took notice [in Bobbitt's typology, *prudentially*] of the 'people's wishes'.¹¹) Contrapositions in state-oriented relationships had then reached a climax: the president wanted to prove--especially to the Americans--that he still had the mandate of the people; the Right Opposition--the 'Third Force'--sought a final democratic transfer of power; the Reagan administration pressed for reform and stability; and the plebeian masses needed relief from their situation. In the face of growing polarization, the only other recourse would have been non-constitutional mediation; that is, either Right-despotic martial law again or the revolutionary uprising of the

Majority Opinion"), . . . October 22, 1984, (Extract)', in Javate-de Dios, Daroy, and Kalaw-Tirol, op cit., 627-630.

¹⁰ See, e.g., Guy Sacerdoti, 'Making Cory Run', and 'Tearing Up The Pieces', *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Dec. 12, 1985, 12-14.

¹¹ See *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Dec. 20, 1985, 9: By a vote of 7-5, the Court upheld the law calling for the election, with some justices saying that it had become a 'political question' and must be decided by the people rather than the court.

radical Left.

In frantic efforts at 'unification' of right-wing opposition forces, Corazon (Cory) Aquino, Ninoy's widow--whom Marcos had denounced as an 'oligarch' and a 'cat's-paw' for the communists--was prevailed upon to run against Marcos. With Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin and the so-called Jesuit mafia behind her, the Opposition closed ranks. Within the rightist 'institutional church' itself, Cardinal Sin had long since abandoned his 'critical collaboration' with Marcos; and Ricardo Cardinal Vidal and the 104-member CBCP had also become irreconcilably anti-regime. Thus, Cory--without any vision or program of reform--was to run in the 'interest' of the Right Opposition and the United States. And she would invoke the 'values' of the masses in order to co-opt them and bring down the regime. Meanwhile, after being spurned by Cory and her vice-presidential candidate, Salvador Laurel, the legal leftist umbrella group *BAYAN* boycotted the polls. Both the CPP-NPA and NDF called the polls a 'circus of the reactionaries'; but, although boycotting them, they refrained from interfering. On the other hand, the president--whom Cory had accused as 'the no. 1 suspect in the murder of my husband'--had his still formidable KBL party machine, General Ver's military, and the cronies-dominated mass media. And they could (and did!) spend some \$US160 million (or six times more than the Opposition).¹²

The elections kept to the pattern set by the regime in the 1970s and early 1980s. And so, widespread irregularities occurred (e.g., vote-buying, terrorism and bloodshed, ballot-box stuffing, and others). As a matter of fact, among the voters for the Opposition about three million were disenfranchised. The volunteer quick-count organization, U.S.-financed NAMFREL and the Marcos-controlled COMELEC had divergent tabulations. Nevertheless, according to the KBL-dominated National Assembly, Marcos had received 10.8 million votes and Aquino 9.4 million. Then as reports of regime-perpetrated irregularities broke far and wide, the results lost all credibility.¹³ 'In our considered judgment',

¹² For a brief but accurate discussion of the elections and immediate implications, see, e.g., Lyons and Wilson, *op cit.*, chs. 8 and 9.

¹³ See *ibid.*

PEOPLE'S POWER REVOLUTION

declared the Catholic bishops, 'the polls were unparalleled in the fraudulence of their conduct'.¹⁴ As if to legitimize widely-held sentiments, they called for 'non-violent struggle for justice'; so that 'the truth [shall] prevail, that the will of the people [shall] be fully respected'.¹⁵ In the aftermath, Marcos and his regime claimed victory, but so did Cory and the Right Opposition.

Thus as his election gambit seemed not to work out as intended, Marcos threatened to clamp down on the opposition--but ostensibly still behind 'constitutional mediation'--as if it were 1972 again. But as had been rightly observed, he had already become the 'fading and . . . grotesque shadow'. On top of all this, even his so-called constellations (of power) had also become vulnerable. Among them, for instance, there was the 'network of local, provincial, and regional kingpins whom Marcos formalized into the New Society party (KBL)'.¹⁶ They included 'powerful "warlords" like Jose Durano in Cebu, Ali Dimaporo in Mindanao, and the Gustilo and Pacificador gangs in Western Visayas', whose private armies had been constituted into 'Civilian Home Defense Forces'.¹⁷ Turning in the votes for Marcos in the 1970s and 1980s, they shared much of the regime's exclusive privileges and absolutist powers--being accountable mainly to him. Thus, for very long they were also dependent upon his hold on the bureaucracy.

But now the KBL seemed to have lost the elections, and the 'warlords' themselves had not been unopposed. In fact, many of its leaders had already been 'demoralized' at Imelda's choice of maverick politician Arturo Tolentino as the KBL vice-presidential candidate.¹⁸ Even as this was so the rank and

14 'Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) Post-Election Statement (given by Ricardo Cardinal Vidal, the archbishop of Cebu, who was the CBCP's president)', in *The Philippine Revolution and the Involvement of the Church* (Manila: UST Social Research Center, 1986), 48.

15 Ibid., 50.

16 Bello, op cit., 29. According to the author, there were 'four constellations of power in the Marcos state', namely, the KBL network, cronies, technocrats, and the military. See ibid., 28-30.

17 Ibid.

18 For a brief discussion of this 'demoralization' within the KBL, see, e.g., Gemma Nemenzo Almendral, 'The Fall of the Regime', in Javate-de Dios, Daroy, and Kalaw-Tirol, op cit., 189-192.

file, as one writer puts it, were now 'simply aghast at the opposition's documented expose on Marcos and his family's hidden wealth'; and many party members had also opposed 'military abuses and crimes'. Equally important, there was the Armed Forces sector itself. This main pillar of Marcos's militarist strategy (including police forces and intelligence agencies) had been closely centralized; and Marcos and Imelda's relatives, other *Ilocanos*, and loyalist subalterns were given strategic positions. But with the military's expansion in numbers, budgets, and privileges, graft and corruption and other excesses grew. Casualties against the NPA and MNLF also increased. Their main purpose had now shifted to the 'security of the seat of government'--that is, Malacanang Palace;¹⁹ yet the military's handling of 'counterinsurgency' still pushed for a militaristic solution--not political.²⁰ As Washington called for 'reforms', Marcos and Ver resisted them. As a result, demoralization spread and factional rivalries worsened. And as the regime collapsed, the KBL broke up into various factions--but the military revived to become the so-called New Armed Forces of the Philippines.

II

In the face of all this, what made for the 'low-intensity conflict' struggle by the masses? Why did they 'choose' a *political*, not a *social*, revolution? Among others, two things stood out which had immediate impact. One was the continuing 'special relationship' of the United States with the erstwhile colony. Generally, American influence--military, cultural, and economic--remained considerable among Filipinos. But more specifically, as it was in the past (both colonial and post-independence) U.S. influence could still 'make or break' the Marcos regime or the Right Opposition as they clashed against each other. (But by making good their 'leadership' with the masses, the *ilustrada* as a whole also served American interests.) Accordingly, the U.S. government distanced itself from the regime and made overtures to the Opposition. But in pressing for 'reforms' and 'fair and free

19 See Bello, op cit., 39-42.

20 See *ibid.*, 35-39.

PEOPLE'S POWER REVOLUTION

elections', all the while the U.S. focused solely on the problem of *leadership* by the *ilustrados*. Eventually, the Opposition became a more viable alternative to both Marcos and the communists. And the masses abided by such class leadership--but without Marcos. The second fact involved the radical Left's boycott of the elections. Misreading the masses, they lost their 'political initiative', and were thus easily blackballed from possible participation in the post-Marcos government. In other words, the Americans (already a 'known quantity') appeared on the side of 'peaceful reform and stability'; but the communists (still a largely 'unknown quantity') could only have been deemed a 'desperate and violent alternative'. Even more importantly, however, two other things must be considered.

a) As the military remained hard pressed, rival factions (e.g., Ver's and Ramos's) firmed up and polarized. Shortly after Ninoy Aquino's assassination, a new group of middle-level officers formed the 'Reform AFP Movement' (RAM). In December 1985 it stated that 'the Movement has sought to strengthen the commitment of the AFP to the service of the Filipino people'.²¹ It was, however, firmly anti-communist, and remained 'committed to the 1973 Constitution and Marcos's Filipino ideology'.²² More importantly, it sought and steadily gathered support from various sectors, and also gave support to Cory's candidacy. The RAM had been backed by the defence minister and a long-time Marcos crony, Juan Ponce Enrile. Before the elections it drew up what it called a 'tactical defense' strategy (an anti-Marcos '*coup*' plot) but decided to shelve it. In the aftermath of the polls, it again plotted a *coup* to force Marcos to step down. Its professed goals and strategies (e.g., *Kamalayan*) would ensure a minimum of conflict within the demoralized AFP.²³

21 "An Electoral Service to the People", Statement of the Reform AFP Movement (RAM) on the Snap Presidential Election, . . . December 1985', in Javate-de Dios, Daroy, and Kalaw-Tirol, op cit., 677.

22 Ma. Serena I. Diokno, 'Unity and Struggle', in Javate-de Dios, Daroy, and Kalaw-Tirol, op cit., 170.

23 The overriding goal was *limited*. According to the author: 'The goal was to enable the AFP to "justly perform its proper role as arbiter, and active participant in the Democratic Revolution from the Center"'. Ibid. See also Almendral, 'The Fall of the Regime', op cit., 193, on the so-called

b) Further, the Catholic Church too had become involved. Threatened with a 'schism' between the conservatives and radicals within the church, the ecclesiastics became a 'political force' in themselves--in effect, setting aside the traditional 'separation between church and state'. There was, in fact, hardly a dearth of leaders. Among them, besides Sin and Vidal there were many others who were just as influential (or nearly so), notably, Bishops Claver and Fortich, as well as the Columbans and Jesuits. A number of Church-based groupings also emerged--both moderates and militants, or the 'national democrats' and 'social democrats'. Among the most influential was the AMRSP's 'Educational Forum' (EF) which was established in 1979 'as a task force on education'. It promoted 'nationalist and people-oriented education', and called for the 'overthrow of Marcos'.²⁴ Another group consisted of the so-called Basic Christian Communities (BCCs) which served as 'social support networks'. They were also 'an important vehicle for creating awareness of the broader political crisis and the role the villagers could play--given the reality of a dictatorship--slowly chipping away at the Marcos regime'.²⁵ Altogether, the Church's involvement extended from the conservative CBCP to various cause-oriented groups (e.g., EF, RFDF) to the Marxist, NDF-affiliated CNL. But cutting across all this was the call of the 'institutional church' for 'non-violent struggle for justice' and 'national reconciliation'.²⁶ It became part of the masses' revolutionary commitment.

tactical defense (*coup d'etat*) plot of RAM against the Marcos regime before and after the elections. See also the '*Kamalayan* 1986 (Awareness), Reference Manual of the Reform the AFP Movement (RAM) for the Snap Presidential Election, . . . August 1986, (Extract)', in Javate-de Dios, Daroy, and Kalaw-Tirol, op cit., 700-705, esp. on its holding of 'prayer-seminars' to promote 'honest, clean, fair and free elections'.

²⁴ Lyons and Wilson, op cit., 39.

²⁵ Ibid., 38.

²⁶ See, e.g., "'Reconciliation Today", Statement by the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, . . . November 27, 1984, (Extract)', in Javate-de Dios, Daroy, and Kalaw-Tirol, op cit., 577-579. See also "'We Must Obey God Rather Than Men", Statement of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines on the Snap Presidential Election, . . . January 25, 1985', in Javate-de Dios, Daroy, and Kalaw-Tirol, op cit., 709-712. And see also "'The People Have Spoken", Post-Election Statement of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, . . . February 13, 1986,

PEOPLE'S POWER REVOLUTION

In an apparently conciliatory gesture, the president now called on the Aquino camp to join a 15-member 'Council of State'; purportedly, the 'highest policy-formulating and advisory body of the government'.²⁷ Marcos would be chairman and Tolentino, vice-chairman; and Cory would be given a seat if she was nominated by the 'dominant opposition party'. Ver was going to be retired, Marcos announced, and Gen. Fidel Ramos, the deputy chief, would be installed as the new chief of staff. All too clearly, he would not relinquish the presidency. Earlier, the KBL majority in the *Batasang Pambansa* had already proclaimed Marcos and Tolentino as 'the duly elected President and Vice-President'. And not willing to abandon a close ally and friend, U.S. President Reagan had remarked that fraud 'was [possibly] occurring on both sides [in the elections]', and suggested a 'power-sharing' arrangement.²⁸

But the opposition rebuffed both of them. Instead, on February 16 Cory Aquino proclaimed her own 'victory' before half a million supporters, and then launched a nationwide campaign for 'civil disobedience'. A so-called 7-point Boycott programme had been issued; and a general strike set for February 26, a day after Marcos's scheduled inauguration.²⁹ But with Ver now further reinforcing the security forces at Malacanang, Marcos threatened to re-impose martial law if the strike went ahead. Meanwhile, Cardinal Sin again called on him to resign. The Catholic bishops had immediately declared their support for Cory's campaign. And Pope John Paul II sent them a message saying: 'I am with you'.³⁰ Significantly too, the Enrile-backed and U.S.-financed RAM had described the elections as fraudulent and called for 'non-violent struggle

(Extract)', in Javate-de Dios, Daroy, and Kalaw-Tirol, op cit., 738-740. The 'institutional church' comprised the conservatives and moderates--all anti-communists--like Cardinal Sin, Fr. Joaquin Bernas, S.J., and the CBCP. Opposed to them was the Marxist-oriented 'people's church' which included the CNL and supported 'armed struggle'. See Ian Buruma, 'Bishops in Open Defiance', *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Feb. 27, 1986, 11-13.

27 See Executive Order (EO) no. 1093, dated February 22, 1986.

28 See *TIME*, Feb. 24, 1986, 9-12.

29 See Guy Sacerdoti and Rodney Tasker, 'Marcos' countdown', *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Feb. 27, 1986, 10.

30 See Buruma, op cit., 11.

for justice'. (But they also warned BAYAN against exploiting the deteriorating situation.) Marcos's tactic called plausibly for his staying on and riding out the instability of rising popular anger. The Opposition--never a very cohesive grouping--was also beginning to show signs of 'splitting up'. Among other things, 'power sharing' was already being welcomed by some, while other Cory supporters feared public support for them might soon peter out.³¹ No neo-*ilustrado* 'scenarios' counted on the masses to rise.³² But as the post-election impasse continued to deteriorate, Reagan reversed himself, now accusing Marcos's party of 'largely initiating widespread fraud'.³³ The U.S. Congress also reacted strongly against what it called the 'illegitimate' regime of Marcos's.³⁴ No other foreign state or government recognized Marcos's election. In sum, constitutional mediation seemed finally to have broken down, even as non-constitutional mediation had irreversibly set in already. 'I think the people may take the law into their own hands', says former congressman Pedro Venida. 'Now, there is no other alternative.'³⁵

And so they did. Climaxing their *ilustrado*-led, post-election attempts at civil disobedience, they rose; but their rising was unarmed and largely non-violent. It was also the conclusion to their *struggle for liberation*--the 'first stage of revolution'. Epitomizing a nation-wide struggle, the hostilities centred around the Metro Manila area. But at this juncture, those whose goal was 'political revolution' broke with those who were fighting for no less than a 'social revolution'. The former would afterwards enable the Third Force to consolidate. Anyhow, after the four-day Uprising in February, the old 'tyrant' fled. The people had won their struggle; and it was

31 See Almendral, op cit., 207-211.

32 See *ibid.* Also see "'Post-Election Scenarios", Discussion Paper, Anonymous, . . . February 1986, (Extract)', in Javate-de Dios, Daroy, and Kalaw-Tirol, op cit., 744-749.

33 See Nayan Chanda, 'US Rethinks and Agrees Marcos Should Step Down', *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Feb. 27, 1986, 12.

34 See *ibid.*

35 This was in reference to what TIME saw as 'the impression among Marcos's opponents that the election had been stolen'. *TIME*, Feb. 17, 1986, 4. But based on our theoretical discussions, *supra*, the statement that 'the people may take the law into their own hands' is erroneous.

PEOPLE'S POWER REVOLUTION

'swift, bloodless and final'. To observers, '[t]he Philippines offered astonishment'.³⁶ (To a growing number of Filipinos, however, something quite simple had still to be taught to the masses. To liberate themselves, they had to act--no *representation* by the neo-*ilustrados* would do, their *leadership* hardly enough. To them the beginning and end of the struggle was *nationalism*.) How did it all happen?

a. 'Right' versus 'Right'

Cory Aquino had been campaigning in the southern island of Cebu for her civil disobedience crusade. And in Manila Marcos and Ver were allegedly laying the groundwork for the reimposition of martial law. The boycott was gaining ground--the 'first faint stir of "people power"'.³⁷ Just after dusk on February 22, as Marcos had already dispatched his envoys abroad to 'turn international opinion around to his side',³⁸ Enrile, Ramos, and their 'security people' barricaded themselves inside the military camps in nearby Quezon City, namely, Crame and Aguinaldo (which are across each other on Epifanio de los Santos Avenue [EDSA]). Enrile had been forewarned earlier that day that Marcos and Ver were poised to crack down on them and the RAM soldiers. Apparently, the Movement's 'tactical defense action' strategy (or the anti-regime *coup* plot) had been uncovered by Ver's forces. And with General Ver still in command, U.S. protege Ramos had decided to join Enrile's group. They now broke ranks with Marcos, and were considering shifting their support to Cory. Marcos accused them of plotting to assassinate him and his family. Still confident of the Armed Forces' support, he called on them to surrender. Meanwhile, Aquino and her partisans hesitated, still distrustful as they had been of Enrile and the military. Several commanders (especially those in the outlying provinces) decided to stay neutral. But the 'mutineers' resolved to take their stand--Enrile, Ramos, and the RAM's tactical group, including Colonels Honasan, Kapunan, and others. All in all there were no more than 400 fully armed troops. 'If they

36 *TIME*, March 10, 1986, 5.

37 Quijano, *op cit.*, 11.

38 *Ibid.*, 13.

will kill us here', Enrile had said, 'I think they will find that the situation in the land will no longer be governable'.³⁹ (It is ironic, though, that the man who had helped justify the imposition of martial law fourteen years before by 'feigning' his attempted assassination was now helping the opposition to bring down the regime in order to prevent Marcos and Ver from reimposing martial law against them.)

b. 'Above' versus 'Below'

Meanwhile, Cardinal Sin was summoning the people to show their support for the Enrile-Ramos rebellion. 'Go to Camp Crame and Camp Aguinaldo', he spoke authoritatively over *Radio Veritas*.⁴⁰ 'Lend your support to Enrile and Ramos and protect them', he continued. 'And bring them food, they have nothing to eat.'⁴¹ He also called on Marcos and Ver 'not to use violence against the people and the rebels', and the Carmelites 'to "pray and fast until death if necessary" for a peaceful and successful revolution'.⁴² Thus, the people came to EDSA (acronym for Epifanio de los Santos Avenue) by the tens and then hundreds of thousands: priests and nuns, businessmen, workers, and students, the rich and the poor, the old and young. They brought the soldiers food, and they stayed--ostensibly, to 'protect them and not be protected'. Opposition leaders joined in; even radicals from the Left came too. Defying Malacanang, the U.S.-financed, Church-owned *Radio Veritas* monitored and broadcast the uprising clandestinely. Others laid siege to Malacanang Palace itself

39 See 'Transcript of Press Conference of Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile and Deputy Chief of Staff Fidel V. Ramos, . . . February 22, 1986, (Extract)', in Javate-de Dios, Daroy, and Kalaw-Tirol, op cit., 755. It seemed there were other armed groups involved such as the '*barangay* volunteers', SMK urban guerillas, KMU, and *Bayan* militants, and the group of Agapito (Butz) Aquino, Ninoy's brother. See Marcelo B. Soriano, *The Unused Guns of the 4-Day EDSA Revolt* (Quezon City, Phil., 1986), 77-83.

40 Quijano, op cit., 19.

41 Ibid.

42 Two other sisterhoods--the poor Clares and Pink Nuns--were called on similarly by the Cardinal. But it was at the Carmelite Convent at Cebu where Cory sought shelter on the night of February 22. See *The Philippine Revolution and the Involvement of the Church*, op cit., 78.

PEOPLE'S POWER REVOLUTION

where the president and his family, Ver, and other loyalists were holding out. The next day, Camp Crame (where the 'rebels' had converged) were already surrounded by throngs of people--two to three million it seemed--forming dense 'human barricades'. As General Ver's loyalist forces moved in from Ortigas and Cubao, the people--with food, flowers, rosaries, and images of Our Lady of the Rosary--stopped the tanks, the APCs, and the troops. As the latter approached, the people closed in and pleaded with them. (The troops said they were just following orders.) They fired shots into the air, and an ultimatum was issued--by General Tadiar--for the people to clear out. All to no avail. But with arms oftentimes linked, they prayed and sang hymns. They sang *Ang Bayan Ko* (My Country). 'It was amazing', the elitist writer Quijano observes, 'to see how with no one directing them, the crowd moved in unison, making it impossible for the tanks to proceed without running over people'.⁴³ And the soldiers were won over.

It was with encounters such as these that the 'people's power' uprising succeeded and casualties were minimized. On the third day the balance of forces shifted in favour of the rebels. And Malacanang became increasingly isolated. Thus, as more and more troops and regional commands were defecting to the rebel camp, Reagan called on Marcos not to use force against the rebels but to 'step down'.⁴⁴ (Reversing its long-standing policy, the U.S. government had finally realized that Marcos could irretrievably compromise American interests.) On the fourth day--February 25--Marcos had lost everything: the TV stations, Villamor Air Base, eighty per cent of the Armed Forces. He hoped Reagan would come to his rescue. But he was abandoned. He offered to form a 'provisional government' with Enrile. But Enrile refused. On that same day, Cory Aquino and Doy Laurel formally took office; and a 'revolutionary government' was formed, *de facto*. Later that day in the darkness of night, the deposed 'dictator' together with his family and 80-odd subalterns fled to begin exile in the United States. As this happened, one Filipino writer reports: 'Pandemonium broke out nationwide as church bells pealed, firecrackers exploded, and millions of Filipinos

43 Quijano, op cit., 45.

44 See *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Feb. 25, 1986, 1.

spilled out into the streets, crying, dancing, embracing each other in brotherhood. It was as Cory Aquino predicted it would be: "When I become President there will be dancing in the streets".⁴⁵

B. Functionalization: The 'Third Force' and 'Revolutionary Government'

During the uprising at EDSA, a bemused Cory Aquino is reported to have confided in Cardinal Sin thus: 'We have a big problem . . . there is a third force'.⁴⁶ She was then referring to the breakaway faction of Enrile and Ramos. As it must have seemed to Aquino and her group there were now three 'forces', each one vying for the same *puissance* and *pouvoir* and excluding all the others. These were theirs, Marcos's, and the military rebels'. Indeed, in the *ilustrada's* tradition, the 'people' were by no means also such a 'force'. The role assigned to them was such as to enable the *ilustrada* to mediate the conflicts among its factions. Each one of them, in varying degrees, sought and counted on the *taos* for support through their votes. Before long, though, the Enrile-Ramos clique proved not to be a distinct 'force' at all. No sooner had they fallen out with Marcos than, by the 'people's will', they were absorbed into the 'second force' represented mainly by the alliance of the UNIDO, PDP-Laban, and the Catholic Church. In fact, it never really was much of a 'force', hence would not also be the 'third'. By themselves, they would have been swiftly wiped out by Ver's loyalists; but even more importantly, they did not really vie for power for themselves. From the viewpoint of the masses, however, the Sin-Aquino-Laurel coalition was the Third Force which they would put in government. It was an alternative force twice over; that is, against the extreme Right (Marcos regime) and against the extreme Left (Communists). (For different reasons, this accords well with U.S. 'Realpolitik' policies in the Philippines.⁴⁷) Nevertheless, how significant is it to say that

45 Almendral, op cit., 220.

46 See *ibid.*, 217.

47 See, e.g., Charles Krauthamer, 'Bringing a Third Force to Bear', *TIME*, March 10, 1986, 42. See also Bello, op cit., esp. chs. 3 and 5.

PEOPLE'S POWER REVOLUTION

the Right Opposition was the Third Force?

We may again consider the disvalues and the values of the masses: in particular, 'poverty' and 'oppression' as well as 'land ownership' and 'education'.⁴⁸ Try as they had and still would, how could they reach their goals? And who would speak for them? We may also consider three adverse forces, each one in the mid-1980s 'professedly' pro-*tao* or pro-masses. They were the Marcos regime, the CPP-NPA-NDF subversion, and the Right Opposition. Among themselves, they may be distinguished according to a few criteria,⁴⁹ namely, leadership, ideology, competition, strategy, and--from the U.S. viewpoint--'pro-Americanism'. The Right coalition could be set apart from the regime by its opposition to (or competition with) the latter's monopoly of *pouvoir constituant*. Its so-called liberal-democratic ideology distinguished it from the CPP-NPA-NDF combine. Its strategy was through 'free and fair' voting. And while by their leadership the 'direct participation' of the masses in government was *ipso facto* excluded, the coalition certainly had the potential to 'govern' or be installed as the *pouvoir constitue*. Finally, it was decidedly 'pro-American'. Thus, as disaffection with the regime spread, it became a viable alternative--as the so-called Centre--to the KBL and the regime. True to form, it espoused a 'bill of rights' and denounced 'crony capitalism'. All its rationality, formal and substantive, was firmly based on 'rights' to property. And as the coalition took over the government, it enlisted what was now called the New Armed Forces of the Philippines (NAFP). A governing partnership between the civilian coalition and the military top brass came into being. Unstable as this alliance was, they restored the supremacy of the neo-*ilustrados* in state-oriented relationships.

As soon as the people had secured their *liberation* from the Marcos regime, the neo-*ilustrados* consolidated their leadership. In place of the erstwhile authoritarian regime, they set up a government that was 'moderate and reformist in

48 For the relevant analysis of 'values' and 'disvalues' in folk-charismatic and state-oriented relationships, see chapters 4 and 5, *supra*.

49 The 'criteria' are determined according to whether 'values' or 'interests' have *priority*. For relevant discussion, see part 1, *supra*.

orientation'.⁵⁰ They offered them 'good government'--still believed by many a Filipino as 'the answer to the nation's problems'⁵¹--even as the new powers that he had set upon the route of political pluralism and economic liberalization as was the practice in the Old Society. So-called reformist conservatives, many of them carry-over Old Society politicians, dominated the highest levels of government. Among them were members of Laurel's UNIDO, Aquino's own party, the PDP-Laban, former senator Jovito Salonga's *Liberal Party* wing, and some activist groupings like the JAJA, BANDILA, and MABINI.⁵² Enrile and Ramos were also there. They retained control of the diehard military upper class, which had since put a lot of pressure on the civilian-dominated government. And the task of economic reorientation fell into the hands of influential businessmen represented by Ongpin and Fernandez.⁵³ And as one writer aptly remarks, "'the right" through its most organized agency, the military, has apparently won the initiative in the process of political consolidation'.⁵⁴ Eventually, aggroupments from the Right as well--notably, the PDP-Laban and the regrouped KBL power blocs--would also dominate electoral politics; that is, as the parties in the majority and in opposition, respectively. Once again, it was the 'leadership of parcellization'. In this process of reconstituting state-oriented relationships, they have regained a number of things; that is, in general, through the 'revolutionary order' and by making 'revolutionary changes'.

50 See Kenneth K. Y. See, 'The Economic Directions and Performance of the Aquino Government: A Review', in *The Aquino Government and the Question of Ideology*, ed. Raul J. Bonoan, Agnes Colette Condon, and Soledad S. Reyes (Quezon City, Phil.: Phoenix, 1987), 18.

51 See Alejandro Lichauco, *Towards a New Economic Order and the Conquest of Mass Poverty* (n.p., 1986), 4 et seq., in which he takes issue with some 'causes' of mass poverty in the Philippines.

52 See, e.g., Nemenzo, op cit., 222.

53 See Benjamin T. Tolosa Jr., 'Constraints on Democratic Consolidation and the Economic Ideology of the Aquino Government', in Bonoan, Condon, and Reyes, op cit., 38.

54 Anna Marie A. Karaos, 'The Current Political Spectrum', in Bonoan, Condon, and Reyes, op cit., 49.

PEOPLE'S POWER REVOLUTION

a. Towards the 'Revolutionary Order'

On the one hand, Cory Aquino assumed as much 'absolutist' powers after the February Uprising as Marcos had with his regime. And like him too she took pains to make it appear it was not without 'legality'. But although she stopped short of declaring a 'revolutionary government', there was already such a government *de facto*. To this end, the 'Provisional Constitution' was proclaimed, under which 'the President shall continue to exercise legislative power'.⁵⁵ Thus, a new 'legal-absolutist' order was set up which, according to Cory herself, was 'on the basis of the people's mandate clearly manifested last February 7 . . . in the name and by the will of the Filipino people'.⁵⁶ It was, however, largely a facade. It was hardly called forth except in the widely-supported dismantling of the Marcos regime's 'infrastructure'. But among the most noteworthy results, the 1973 Constitution was abrogated; and the *Batasan* was dissolved. The judiciary was also revamped; and local governments--such as cities and municipalities--were reorganized. Thus, the government justified itself as being 'revolutionary in origin'.⁵⁷

On the other hand, a New Order in which 'the government will respect basic human rights and fundamental freedoms' was also proclaimed.⁵⁸ Unlike the New Society, however, individual freedoms were formally broadened in the so-called democratic space which was opened up after the Uprising.⁵⁹ Popular representation and electoral democratization were to be resumed. And Cory Aquino sustained the support of the people for the 'revolutionary government'. Without more, by pre-empting the *leadership*, the *neo-ilustrados* also vindicated the socio-economic

55 Proclamation no. 3, art 2., sec. 1, March 25, 1986.

56 Proclamation no. 1, February 25, 1986.

57 See *Renato Constantino and the Aquino Watch* (Quezon City, Phil.: Karrel, 1987), 17-19.

58 Proclamation no. 3., op cit.

59 Symbolically as well, the government ratified the U.N. Convention Against Torture (June 1986) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Oct. 1986). See *Renato Constantino and the Aquino Watch*, op cit., 44-46. See also Nemenzo, op cit., 234-237.

prerogatives of the *clase ilustrada*--that is, based on endemic or characteristic folk-charismatic relationships. But from the viewpoint of the masses (i.e., in view of their values and disvalues), the liberation from the regime did not culminate in the 'sovereignty of the people'. *Freedom from* (the New Society) was not transformed into *freedom to* (that is, participate in a New Beginning). And *formal representation* was set against *direct representation*. In effect, until it was superseded by the following 'constitutional order', the revolutionary government led up in the main to the resumption of the Old Society's synthesis of folk-charismatic and state-oriented relationships--social, economic, and political.

**b. Were the Changes 'Revolutionary' . . .
 . in Purpose?⁶⁰**

No sooner had Marcos fled the country than the incoming neo-*ilustrado* leadership made a number of post-Uprising policies and changes. Among others, these included measures other than those that primarily sought to break up the regime's institutions. They subsumed as well the country's relations with foreign powers and international bodies. But more importantly, they also bore upon the relationship between the government and the masses. More specifically, they may be grouped under two broad categories.

a) There were those which tended to delimit the 'direct participation' by the masses in government decision-making. (In more abstract terms, they inhibited and recast whatever 'reserve powers' still remained with the 'Sovereign People'.) As a matter of fact, their drift was towards the centralization of powers in the national government. In sum, they also had the effect of 'turning the revolution around' or, in other ways, 'unrevolutionizing' the consciousness of the masses. Foremost among these changes were those which dealt with what we might call the *constitutional*, *consultative*, and *vindictive* relationship between the government and the people. A month after the Uprising, Aquino proclaimed the so-called Freedom Constitution. Within three months the Constitutional

⁶⁰ See Renato Constantino and the Aquino Watch, op cit., 17-19. See also ch. 3, *supra*, for the discussion of the bases of 'legal authority'.

PEOPLE'S POWER REVOLUTION

Commission was formed, purportedly, to draft a new constitution which would be ratified in a plebiscite. In the meantime--that is, during the Revolutionary period--the Provisional Constitution was supposedly in effect. The Commission was to consist of fifty members who would be 'national, regional, and sectoral representatives [and] who *shall be appointed by the President*'.⁶¹ (Italics mine.) They were to have certain general qualifications--all of them *personal*.⁶² Thus, the efficacy and validity of both the provisional constitution and the commission simply depended on the absolutist discretion of the government.

More importantly, in exercising her powers Aquino had pre-empted the people's prerogative to decide what the fundamental law ought to be like. Simply by her hand-picking the members (especially those who either belonged or were beholden to the *ilustrada's* interests⁶³), the people lost the chance to decide on ideological issues (or those involving the 'formal rationality' of the members). Such basic questions as 'What did the member stand for?' or 'What "constitutional values" was he committed to protect and whose interests with?' were either sloughed off or glossed over--the emphasis being put on personal (or professional) qualifications. Moreover, in being appointed the Commission's members owed their authority to Aquino; and thus by not being chosen in an election, they neither knew the 'people's will' nor did they owe them anything. Accordingly, the issue of the *election* of the members would have been equally important for the masses as their chance at *ratification* of the proposed Constitution. The latter, as it turned out, also depended on less relevant grounds--Cory's popularity, destabilization threats by RAM and Enrile's faction.⁶⁴

61 Proclamation no. 9, sec. 2, April 23, 1986.

62 See Proclamation no. 3, op cit., art. 5, sec. 1; and Proclamation no. 9, op cit., sec. 2(2) and (3), and secs. 4, 5, and 8.

63 This is consistent with our previous characterization of the post-war *clase ilustrada*. See, e.g., chapter 5, *supra*.

64 See, e.g., Aurora de Dios, 'Intervention and Militarism', in Javate de Dios, Daroy, and Kalaw-Tirol, op cit., 294. See also Florangel Rosario-Braid, ed., introduction to *Development Issues: Constitutional Response* (n.p.: National Book Store, 1987), ix-xiv, in which she describes the 'New Development Philosophy' and the 'Evolutionary Approach' of the New

Until the new constitution was ratified and became effective--that is, on February 2, 1987--the government had not had any 'consultations' with the people at large. This time (unlike the practice of the Marcos regime) there were no plebiscites or referenda. Thus, the people were again relegated to being mere spectators of the 'incessant squabbling' of powerful interest blocs and the shifting currents of political alignments. As the conservatives would have seen it, '[the] people's participation is confined to the act of voting while policy-making is reserved for the elite'.⁶⁵ And yet there was scarcely a lack of fundamental, wide-ranging issues. Among them, for instance, there was the question of whether or not the U.S. military bases--mainly at Subic Bay and Clark Field--should remain. Its significance cut across social, economic, and political categorizing. (Eventually, however, the Aquino government reduced it to a mere 'financial' question; namely, 'how much should the Americans be made to pay?') There was also the question of what to do with the enormous foreign debts--over US\$26 billion--that the Marcos regime had incurred. Among Aquino's technocrats, some had proposed

Constitution. The former is deemed to include not only 'the usual economic growth formula' but also 'political, sociocultural, environmental, human and moral dimensions'. 'Development' is not the exclusive concern of what is called 'big government'. In fact, it seeks 'less government and more private enterprise'. The latter is expected to avoid 'socioeconomic instabilities and dislocation' which could result from 'drastic restructuring of society'. This is said to refer, among others, to 'agrarian reform' and 'land distribution'. See also Cecilia Munoz Palma, foreword to Rosario-Braid, op cit., viii: Citing various 'concepts' in the Constitution as the 'common good', 'decentralization', 'cooperativism' and others, she asserts that its overall theme is 'to harmonize conflicting interests of the various sectors of our society in a non-confrontational approach'. And see also Florida Ruth P. Romero, 'People-Powered Constitution', in Rosario-Braid, op cit., 31-32, in which she makes contradictory statements: e.g., on the 'difference' between a 'State-centered' and a 'people-centered' government, on the 'people' exercising 'power and authority', and the 'people' being given direct voice in Congress . . . through sectoral representation'. On the whole, the policy that is rooted deeply in the Constitution is for the government to 'mediate' between conflicting interests--not to pursue supreme values. Unfortunately, it misses the point: that the only 'interest' that ever counts in the Constitution is the 'people's'; and the overriding policy is for government to determine their 'will'--which is the basis of all 'values'.

⁶⁵ See Nemenzo, op cit., 236.

PEOPLE'S POWER REVOLUTION

'selective debt repudiation'.⁶⁶ Others moved for 'full burden of debt repayment'.⁶⁷ It was also a problem that was not limited in its political significance; even more importantly, it was compelling in its moral dimension. As Rev. Fr. Salgado, O.P., points out, 'a nation buried in massive debts can neither do anything of value for its people. The country gets condemned to economic enslavement and misery'.⁶⁸

Finally, we may consider how far the government had tried to 'vindicate' those interests that were consistent with the values of the people. (As may be argued, advocating 'land reform' and 'human rights' also implies the priority of values over interests.) Try as it might have, it did little in two problem areas; namely, 'agrarian reform' (or transforming semi-feudal relations) and 'Human Rights abuses' (or remedies for the regime's crimes). In spite of the government's legal-absolutist powers, no wide-ranging reform program had been adopted; instead, it beat about with a 'repackaged Marcos's program' called the Accelerated Land Reform Program.⁶⁹ Cory Aquino passed the problem on to the Constitutional Commission, which in turn passed it on to the about-to-be-restored Congress under the new Constitution. Still unresolved, three basic issues involving land reform--namely, coverage, retention limit, and compensation--had come full circle, and, finally, back again (as it were) to the Congress of the Old Society. At another plane, despite the widespread atrocities that had been reportedly committed by Marcos and Ver's troops, a 'Human Rights' body which was created by Aquino less than a month after the February Uprising came to nothing. It had been assigned the task to 'investigate . . . unexplained or forced disappearances, extra-judicial killings (salvaging), massacres, torture, hamletting, food blockages and other violations of human rights, past or present, committed by the officers or

66 See *ibid.*, 243.

67 See *ibid.*, 243-244. See also Tolosa, *op cit.*, 38-39.

68 Pedro V. Salgado, *The Philippine Economy: History and Analysis* (n.p., 1985), 159.

69 See Nemenzo, *op cit.*, 239; and also *ibid.*, 241-242, in which the author takes note of the so-called Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP).

agents of the national government'.⁷⁰ But the military--U.S.-backed, Enrile-backed--had become sufficiently 'politicized', and some of its factions too formidable for the civilian partners to bring to heel. And so the patterns of such abuses--including the vigilantes'--had continued from the time of the Marcos regime to that of the revolutionary government and even after the ratification of the new Constitution.⁷¹

b) There were also those policies and measures which aimed at 'national reconciliation'--or, more specifically, the pacification or appeasement of those who had been alienated by the regime. Generally, however, except those whom Cory Aquino had called the 'forces of tyranny',⁷² all Filipinos--including Marcos's 'loyalists'--were to be involved. But more to the point, 'reconciliation' obviously meant more than just 'forgetting the past and setting off on another beginning'. It also meant (at least to the *ilustrada*) that all must first recognize that, as a *sine qua non*, the new *ilustrado*-led government was the sole legitimate 'political authority' which could represent the people. This was based on, at least, two assumptions: that the Marcos regime--by its excesses--had alienated the people and drove many Filipinos into seeking redress of their grievances by violent means; and that the successor government--the coalition's--had won the mandate

70 EO no. 8, sec. 4(a), March 18, 1986.

71 See Amnesty International, *Amnesty International Report 1988* (London: Amnesty International, 1988), 176-179; and Amnesty International, *Amnesty International Report 1987* (London: Amnesty International, 1987), 260-263. See also Amnesty International's report on the killing of Daniel Ngaya-an (chairman of Cordillera Bodong Association) by CPLA soldiers who, since June 1987, had collaborated with government forces in the Cordilleras. But more comprehensively--especially concerning the 'vigilante' groups--see Amnesty International reports, *Philippines: Alleged Human Rights Violations by 'Vigilante Groups', July 1987*; and *Philippines: Unlawful Killings by Military and Paramilitary Forces, March 1988* (London: Amnesty International, 1988).

72 See "'Let Us Give Peace A Chance" Address by President Corazon C. Aquino at the Commencement of the University of the Philippines, April 10, 1986, (Extract)', in Javate-de Dios, Daroy, and Kalaw-Tirol, op cit., 835. Up to now--1989--the Aquino government has resisted attempts by Marcos and his family to return to the Philippines; and there is as yet no indication that this policy of 'non-reconciliation' will change before her term expires in 1992. Also see Proclamation no. 80, February 28, 1987.

PEOPLE'S POWER REVOLUTION

of the people as against other contending forces.⁷³ (It was also meant, among others, to provide a stable basis of the 'democratic space' and economic recovery.)

Accordingly, negotiations with these forces (in Realpolitik terms) would have to be in accordance with the 'framework' of this government.⁷⁴ Based on this, the government granted some measure of 'autonomy'--but not *independence*--to the CPLA and the MNLF. Likewise, while holding 'peace negotiations' with the NDF negotiating panel, the GRP panel insisted that they abide by the provisions of the new constitutional draft (even though it had not yet been ratified in the scheduled plebiscite).⁷⁵ Both parties, nevertheless, seemed to have recognized the same basis of substantive negotiations; that is, 'the roots of the insurgency are in the economic conditions of the people and the social structures that oppress them'.⁷⁶ But the NDF was seeking a

73 See Pedro V. Salgado, *Cory Aquino at Militarisasyon* (speech delivered at St. Joseph's College, Quezon City, Phil., in March 1986), (Quezon City, Phil.: Linangan ng Kamalayang Makabansa, n.d.), 7, in which he noted the Catholic bishops' forebodings about the communists. *'Patuloy na lumalakas ang mga Komunista, salamat sa mga pagmamalabis ng rehimong Marcos. Ang talamak na kahirapan, arbitraryong pag-aresto, dimakataong pagpapahirap, madaliang pagpatay, ang nagtulak sa parami nang paraming tao para sumapi sa CPP-NPA. Naniniwala ang mga Obispo na kung mananatili si Marcos sa kapangyarihan, lalong darami ang mga kaanib ng mga Komunista. Para mapatigil ang paglakas ng Komunista, kailangang mapatalsik si Marcos, at mapalitan ng isang higit na matatanggap na lider, si Cory Aquino.'* See also Steven Hick, *Land Our Life* (Quezon City, Phil.: Claretian, 1987), 100.

74 See "'Let Us Give Peace A Chance" Address by President Corazon C. Aquino at . . . the University of the Philippines, April 10, 1986, (Extract)', in Javate-de Dios, Daroy, and Kalaw-Tirol, op cit., 836, in which she said: 'I am offering the insurgents an honorable peace. One that will not ignore their just demands, but one also that will not detract in any way from the security of the people, the stability of the government, and the honor of the New Armed Forces'. See also 'Proposal of the Government of the Philippines for the Substantive Talks with the National Democratic Front, . . . December 23, 1986', in Javate-de Dios, Daroy, and Kalaw-Tirol, op cit., 854-856.

75 Ibid. GRP means Government of the Republic of the Philippines.

76 See "'Let Us Give Peace A Chance" Address by President Corazon C. Aquino at . . . the University of the Philippines, April 10, 1986, (Extract)', in Javate-de Dios, Daroy, and Kalaw-Tirol, op cit., 836. See also 'Proposal of the National Democratic Front for a Negotiated Political Settlement,

'political settlement' which did not have any room for the *ilustrada* assumptions. On the whole, 'reconciliation' seemed to subsume only the state-oriented relationships; that is, for both the NDF and the government. And yet, more specifically, it was to be the condition and measure of 'political and economic liberalization' for the government.⁷⁷ To the NDF, however, it was the goal to which the 'political settlement' should lead 'on the basis of justice, freedom and democracy especially for the masses of dispossessed Filipinos'.⁷⁸

With these assumptions, then, the government followed certain initiatives which we might generally call an approach of 'least resistance' (also called the 'velvet-glove')--that is, *accommodation* of the 'strong' and *assimilation* of the 'weak'. This was no less so even as Cory Aquino had spoken on Labor Day (1986) of a 'second revolution'--that is, 'to make our country free--of tyranny everywhere: the tyranny of poverty and underdevelopment'.⁷⁹ And on the aborted *coup d'etat* on January 27, 1987, she said: 'There is a moment for reconciliation and a moment for retribution'.⁸⁰ Among others, as soon as the neo-*ilustrados* were about to take power in the wake of the People's Power Uprising, Aquino and Enrile--as un-revolutionary as they could be--agreed with the Americans to exile Marcos abroad. (Marcos thus escaped the legal consequences--and the people's judgment--of his 'wrongdoings', but the coalition government had accommodated both Reagan and the loyalists.) Instead, the

December 23, 1986', in Javate-de Dios, Daroy, and Kalaw-Tirol, op cit., 857.

77 In pursuing what Tolosa calls 'democratic consolidation', the inaugural speech of President Aquino on February 25, 1986 was emphatic: 'We want to make a special appeal to those who have not yet joined us. Do not engage in any further action against the people and instead, be among those who will lend a hand to rebuild the country'. See 'Inaugural Speech of President Corazon C. Aquino, . . . February 25, 1986', in Javate-de Dios, Daroy, and Kalaw-Tirol, op cit., 762. See also Tolosa, op cit., 35-41.

78 See 'Proposal of the National Democratic Front for a Negotiated Political Settlement, December 23, 1986', in Javate-de Dios, Daroy, and Kalaw-Tirol, op cit., 858.

79 See 'Address of President Corazon C. Aquino on Labor Day . . . May 1, 1986, (Extract)', in Javate-de Dios, Daroy, and Kalaw-Tirol, op cit., 774.

80 See Nemenzo, op cit., 265.

PEOPLE'S POWER REVOLUTION

powerful PCGG (acronym for the Presidential Commission on Good Government) was created by Aquino to retrieve the allegedly ill-gotten wealth of Marcos and his cronies. Also important was the non-prosecution of the *coup* plotters in the military, at least three attempts at which were made before the new Constitution went into effect. In fact, the civilian authorities could not avoid accommodating their differences because of the role played by Enrile, Ramos, and their followers in the military during the Uprising. Finally, all political prisoners from the regime--including Sison and Dante--were released unconditionally. And a series of peace negotiations were held with rebel groupings. (Accommodation was also made with other powerful interest blocs or parties.)

Contrasted with these were certain official attitudes towards organized labor movements and the militant peasantry. Among others, a few of Marcos's policies on labor 'activism' were retained; and 'land distribution' schemes did not go far enough. Besides left-wing groupings such as the KMU and KMP, grass-roots activism and vigilance did not hold. And government programs to assist the 'weak' hardly came to anything--among which were the CFDF, NRDP, and urban housing. In some instances, attempts at assimilation took violent turns: among others, the KMU chairman, Rolando Olalia, was murdered by 'unknown assailants'; and a protest march by 15,000 KMP members was broken up by government troops, leaving 19 persons dead. Meanwhile, 'big-business' interests, the right-wing labor federation, TUCP, and the military combined against Left-leaning leaders within the coalition government. And the minister of labor, Augusto Sanchez, who was, according to Nemenzo, 'the only cabinet official who dared give substance to the concept of people's power' was eventually edged out of the government.⁸¹

⁸¹ See *ibid.*, 239. But see also *The Asia Letter*, no. 1139 (April 22, 1986), which claimed that 'nobody has done more harm to the government' than then labor minister Augusto Sanchez with his pro-labor policies.