



PHILIPPINE TRADE UNION REPORT

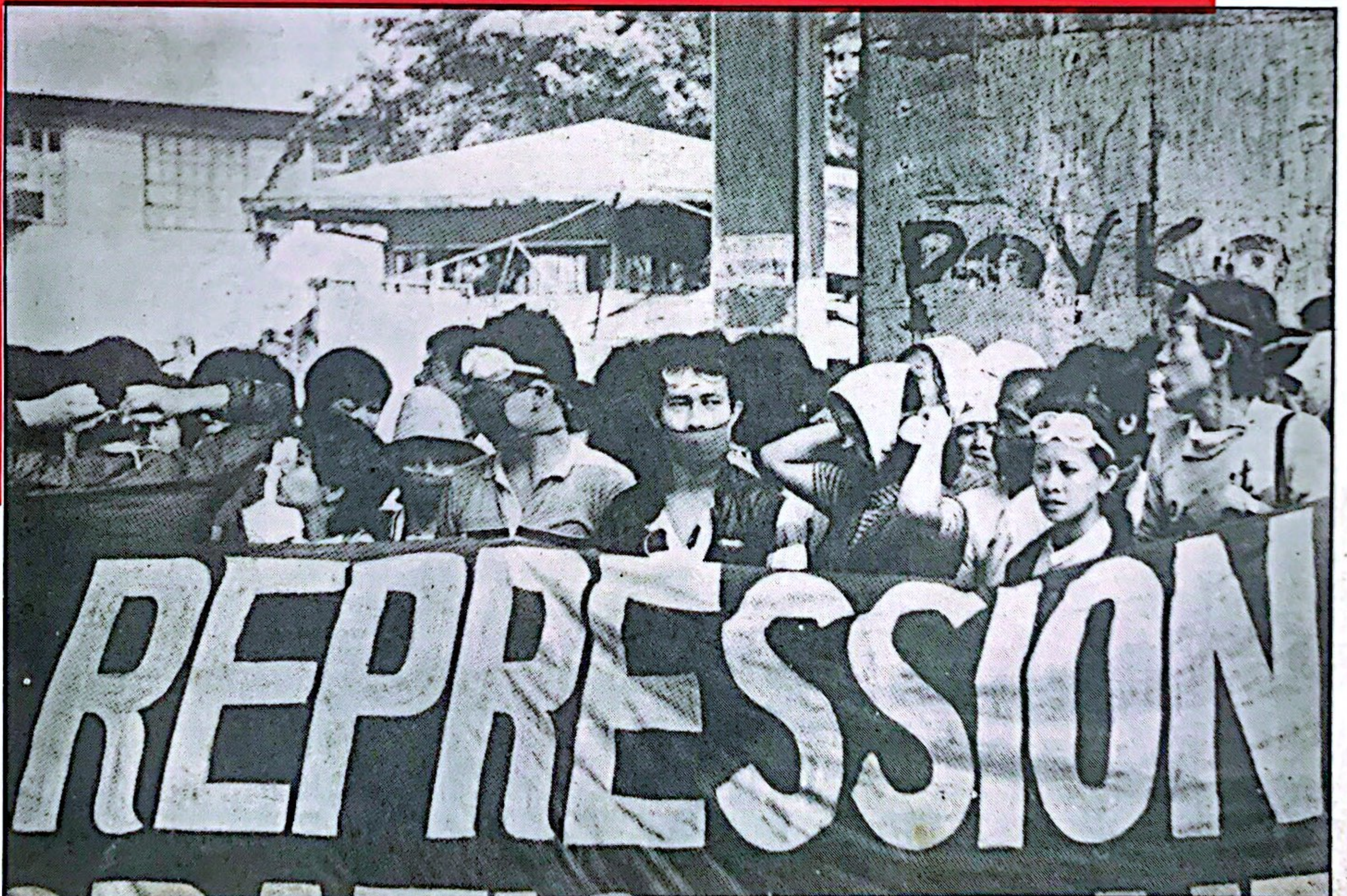
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DECEMBER 1994

- 1984-1994 A Decade of Trade Union Repression
- Trade Union Rights Violation: The Real Picture
- GATT: Its Impact on the Workers

*10th Year
Anniversary Issue*



A continuing challenge to uphold trade union rights

Within the pages of this paper unfold a history of continuing repression and courage of workers whose dream for a better life are snapped by agents of the government and its cohorts in the business community whose only vision is to increase profits even at the cost of the most important element of production—the workers.

Within the historical framework that dates back to the dark years of Martial Law, to Aquino's people power up to Ramos' people empowerment, the workers suffered almost the same repressive government that differed only in the time they were committed.

And within a decade of service to the workers, the Center for Trade Union and Human Rights has continued to oppose and expose trade union rights violations perpetrated against the workers and how we, at the CTUHR responded to the challenge of working for the promotion of human rights of workers.

We are celebrating our first decade of service, not with an air of rejoicing but with an eye for vigilance because the events of oppression are again played to the hilt by a government racing against time to institute a development process leading to a newly-industrialized country. But what price development?

Our documentation of workers who tell us of their harrowing experience do not give us joy but anguish because there was not enough resolve to put a stop to these violations. They have resorted to slogans and dubious programs meant to appease the workers but they remained merely as palliatives to the malady that is plaguing the labor force today. Much has been said for the workers but not much has been done for them, except of course, the never-ending promise that should workers learn to sacrifice, the fruit of development is forthcoming.

The situation of the workers needs a radical surgery but the government treats them as as simple case of "headache"—a peace and order problem. And so everytime a labor dispute results, the least that the government does is issue a temporary restraining order, assume jurisdiction, order the workers to go back to work without the necessary action to resolve the dispute. Endemic poverty of many workers is not an accident or fate but a result of wrong priorities—wanting to please the bigtime business groups and push the workers to the margins.

These bitter tales of many workers have already been retold again and again for the past decade, but the government has remained deaf and blind to their plight. And in our commitment to serve the Filipino workers through the promotion of their human rights, we will continue to say:

STOP TRADE UNION REPRESSION.

PHILIPPINE TRADE UNION REPORT (PTUR) is published twice a year by the Center for Trade Union and Human Rights (CTUHR), a non-governmental institution committed to uphold and defend workers' rights and welfare.

The CTUHR has been undertaking programs on public information and education, research and documentation, campaign, networking, and other trade union services. It is duly registered with the Philippine Securities and Exchange Commission, bearing SEC No. AN 091-192155.

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PTUR welcomes articles, letters to the editor, photos and other contributions that can help the workers ventilate their issues. Manuscripts must be typewritten, double-spaced and with generous margins. PTUR editors reserve the right to edit manuscripts for publication.

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Fighting Repression with Solidarity

REPRESSION of workers' rights is as pervasive as the Presidential Decrees and Executive Orders being institutionalized by the present dispensation. Almost every facet of human experience in the Philippines today has been tinged with the blood and tears of its people. Cause: Greed, wealth and power at the expense of workers.

For Filipino workers, demands for wage increases, job security and the recognition of their labor unions are with armed force and coercion. This is not too uncommon in the picketlines, factories and even the homes of labor leaders who merely seek the recognition of their human and trade union rights.

But the workers do not take such hostile treatment with apathy. They continue their struggles in the form of strikes and other protest actions, standing as one class to defend their rights and interests.

And in the spirit of solidarity to fight state repression, the Center for Trade Union and Human Rights (CTUHR) was conceived. Its purpose is to confront terrorism not with an equally evil force but with an awareness that victory and strength lies in the hands of the people and not in a fascist army. The Center is committed to the cause of **ADVANCING GENUINE, NATIONALIST, and MILITANT TRADE UNIONISM**. It is against all forms of deception and coercion that seeks to derail this cause. The Center believes that repression can and has taken on different and subtle forms with labor legislation as one of them, and therefore devotes itself to exposing such devious moves by the ruling elite.

No human being can ignore the succeeding tragedies in the labor front. All these tragic experiences, from the death of a working class martyr, labor-leader symbolic of Ka Bert Olalia to the detention of many oppressed workers and the suppression of the rights of the workers of Foamtex, Artex, Blue Bar and others, become the witness of the struggle of the people against oppression and tyranny.

And in advancing these goals, the Center hopes to serve as the people's vehicle for uniting and contributing to the advance of workers' rights and interests.

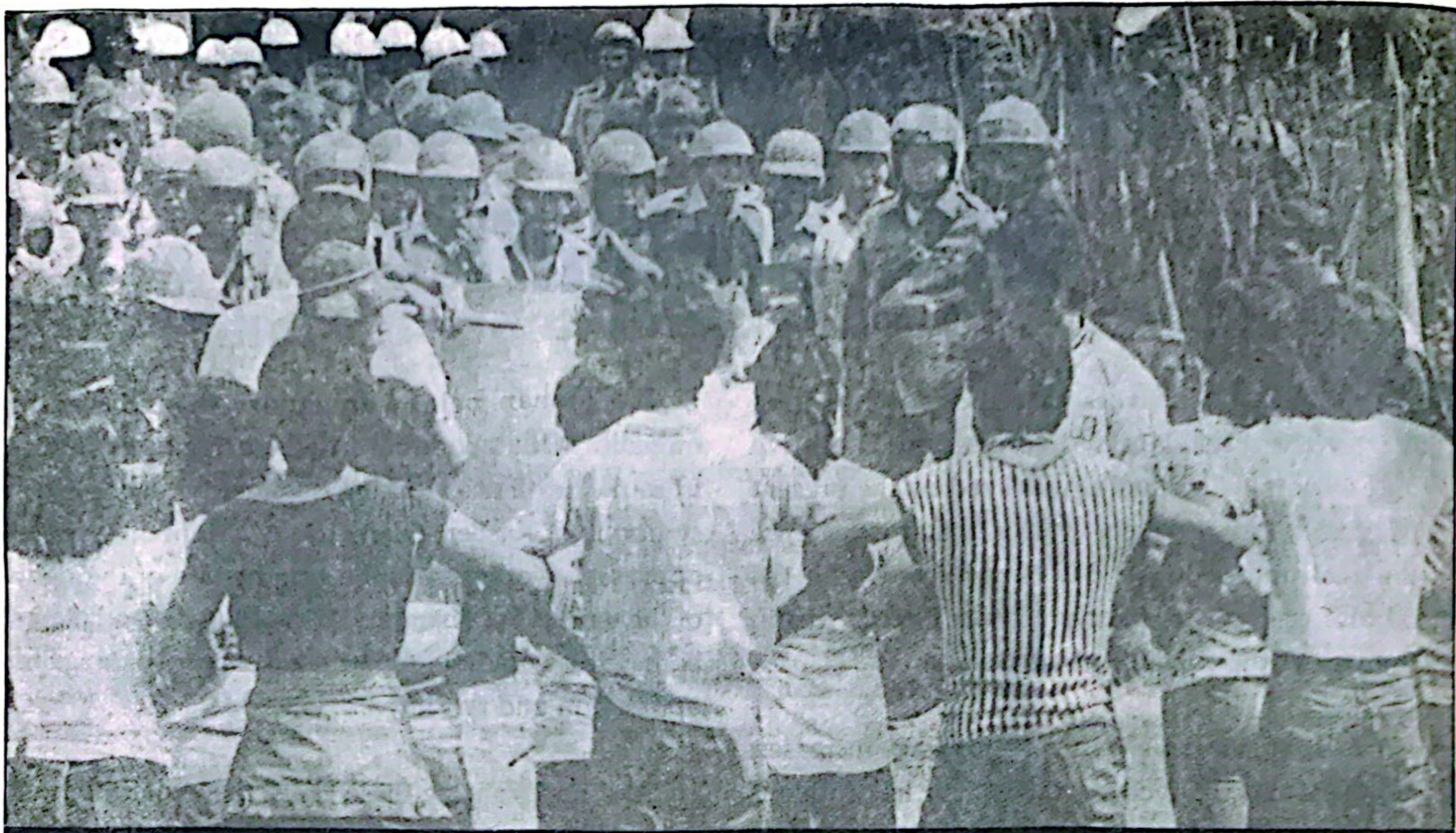
Objectives

CTUHR shall oppose and expose the repression being experience by the workers in particular and the trade union movement in particular in the pursuit of its just demand. *It is against the system that perpetrates such repression and oppression and shall unmask the entities responsible for it, so that the people may see their true nature.*

CTUHR shall establish programs to document and publicize trade union rights violations through its fact-finding teams and massive information campaigns. Its goal shall be to promote the establishment of and strengthen **GENUINE TRADE UNIONISM** in the Philippines.

CTUHR shall offer social and educational services to the workers and victims of trade union repression and provide moral support to the dependents and relatives of the disadvantaged workers.

- Bishop Antonino Nepomuceno, OMI



Anti-riot police clash with striking Artex Development workers. Valenzuela, Metro Manila. 1985.

PHOTO BY ALBERTO MARQUEZ

1984-1994: A Decade of Trade Union Repression

JULY 9, 1984. "*Akin 'yon, akin 'yon!*" [That's mine, that's mine!], the military remarked among themselves as negotiations between Col. Alfredo Cruz, who reportedly led a 1,000-man composite team of METROCOM and Northern Police District [NPD] elements in enforcing a labor department issued Restraining Order prohibiting the strikers of Artex Development Co. Inc. [ADCI] from barricading the said firm's gates as mandated by Batas Pambansa [BP] 227, and three women strikers went on. The strikers were given 30 minutes to disperse.

The workers of the said textile firm in Malabon, Metro Manila, who were

being paid a P23 a day wage and not the P48.47 provided by law, have been on strike since April of that year over the measly pay.

The 30-minute grace period lapsed. The attack, which lasted nearly an hour and was highlighted by brutality and gunfire, commenced. And when the smoke cleared, 6 strikers and at least one resident of the nearby community lay bloodied with gunshot wounds; 58 strikers and five residents of the same community were limping with lacerations and contusions; at least 15 nearby households have been broken into; and a total of 26 persons have been hauled into METROCOM trucks for detention.

None of those responsible for the excessive use of violence, including Col. Cruz himself, was prosecuted.



AUGUST 5, 1987. "*Banatan na natin ito habang iisa pa lang ang press!*" [Let's do it now or media will soon be swarming place!] Thus, were the words heard from Atty. Esteban Calalang, labor department representative who, along with some 200 troopers from the Capital Region Command [CAPCOM] led by Col. Hercules Cataluna, CAPCOM Eastern Sector chief, were enforcing an

Injunction Order [IO] against the month-old strike staged by the workers' union of the giant Purefoods Corp.'s Marikina Meat Processing Plant over a deadlock on wage hike provisions of the would-be Collective Bargaining Agreement [CBA], the negotiations of which had sourly resulted to the dismissal of the union president and the suspension of 20 other union officers.

Shortly after, the troopers, one of whom was even carrying an M-203 grenade launcher, began taking positions in front of the 50 awed strikers. Pushes came to shoves. Seconds later, a loud explosion apparently from a home-made molotov bomb broke the strikers' defense line. The troopers' frontliners then gave way to those behind them who then began firing at the panic-stricken workers.

Twelve strikers sustained gunshot wounds survived. One did not. A certain Alfonso Palabrica succumbed to gunshot wounds in his spine and liver. Five strikers were also arrested and tortured at the 221st PC Company Headquarters in Taytay, Rizal.

Then Labor Secretary Franklin Drilon ordered an impartial probe on the incident. Nothing was heard of it since.



SEPTEMBER 13, 1994. Twenty strikers suffered gaping head injuries while about 60 more sustained bruises and contusions when some 60 company guards led by a retired army colonel identified as a certain Juan Sanchez attacked,

with lead pipes wrapped in masking tapes, a group of workers walking out of the company compound to join fellow workers at the gates shortly after the union called a strike against the Asia Brewery Inc. in Cabuyao, Laguna over the illegal dismissal of six union leaders and the pending retrenchment of 200 unionists which would be done so that a new batch of contractual workers, employed on a six-month basis, could be hired to minimize production cost.



Three incidents of picketline violence and three national administrations [this writer could have enumerated more for each had space allowed] give you a continuing trend of trade union rights violations.

This article is an attempt to provide a vivid picture of the Philippine trade union rights situation for the past 11 years in view of defining areas upsetting the said sector and providing short- and long-term recommendations as to how these could be addressed.

The Dark Years of Martial Rule

Under the Marcos regime, workers were being bludgeoned with military raids in union offices; abduction, torture and summary execution of firebrand leaders; and bloody picketline dispersal operations that often left scores dead and scores more wounded.

Those were the years of Preventive Detention Act [PDA], which empowered police and military to effect warrantless arrests on suspected subversives and "enemies of the state"; the Arrest Search and Seizure Order [ASSO] which allowed law enforcers to conduct raids and arrests on suspected lairs of the supposed subversive, and of the Labor Day Massacre of 1971 which left three workers dead when government troopers opened fire on a mass of workers gathered before cultural artists using wooden armalites as props in the course of their performance.

Those were also the years of Batas Pambansa 130 and 227 which imposed strict measures against striking workers among which included the outlawing of barricades fronting company gates.

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"Banatan na natin 'to habang iisa pa lang ang press"



Asia Brewery Strike. July 1994

Furthermore, Marcos, upon his declaration of Martial Law in September 21, 1972, enforced a no-strike policy through General Order No. 5 imposing a Total Strike Ban, and the Presidential Decrees 823 and 849, limiting the ban on firms of vital interest, saying such action was detrimental to the state of the country's internal security and economic affairs.

On May 1, 1974, Marcos issued PD 442 creating a Labor Code that lumped together all existing restrictive laws against workers.

But despite such restrictions, or perhaps due to such restrictions, radical labor groups mushroomed eventually giving birth to the formation of today's Kilusang Mayo Uno six years later, on May 1, 1980 with an initial membership of 50,000 organized workers.

Meantime, among such raids was the one on the office of the National Federation of Labor [NFL], a militant labor group affiliated with the Kilusang Mayo Uno in 1982 and the arrest of prominent labor leaders on grounds of their being subversives.

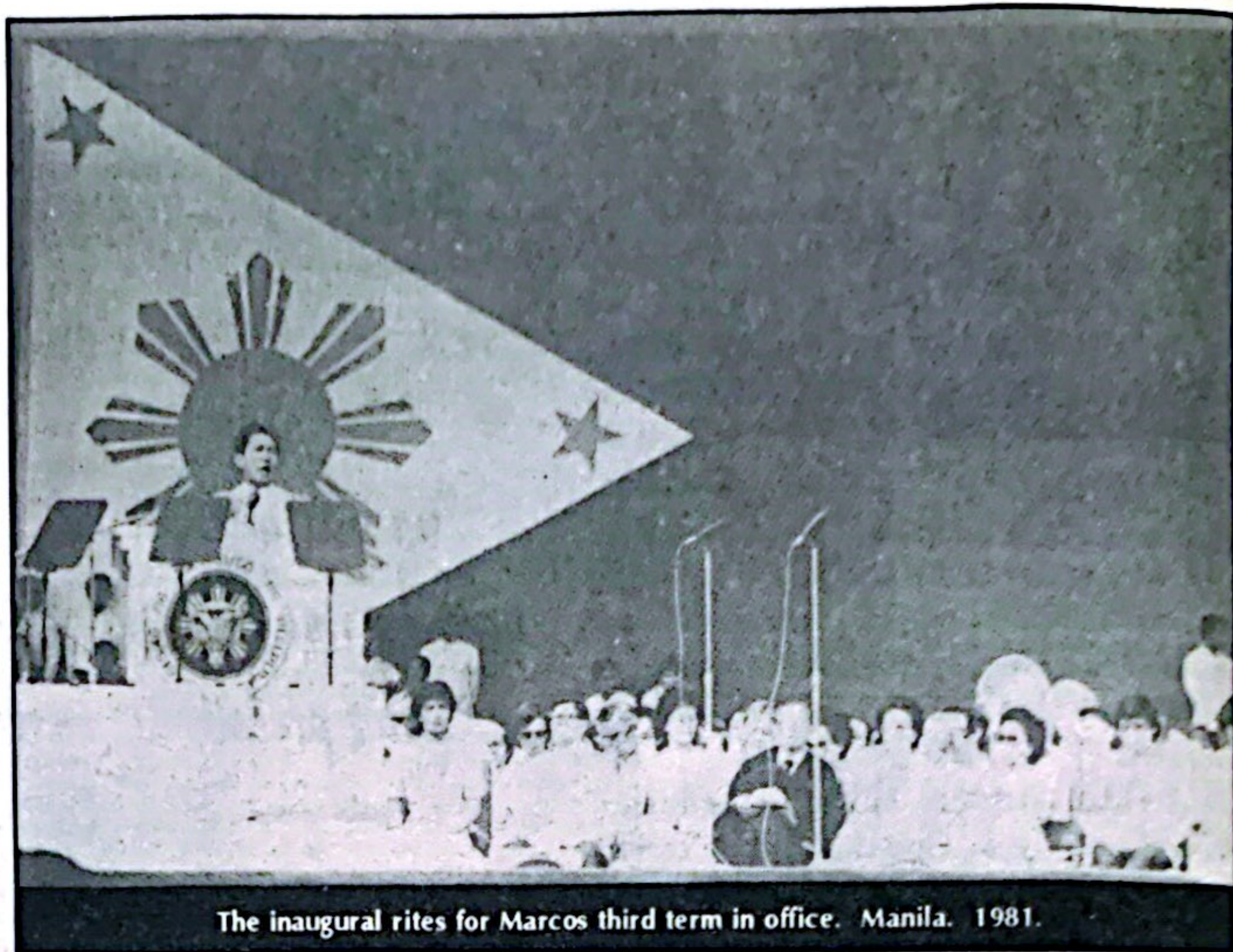
Felixberto 'Ka Bert' Olalia, founder of the Kilusang Mayo Uno [KMU] and otherwise known as the "Grand Old Man" of the country's labor movement was one of those arrested, which included Crispin Beltran and Bonifacio Tupaz, in what would be known as the Marcos government's relentless crackdown against organized labor in the name of "national interest."

Olalia, then 79, was held incommunicado inside a cramp detention cell at the Camp Crame until his health eventually gave way to pressures which led to his death a year later.

And all these can almost come as no surprise. It was supposed to be the dark inhuman years of military rule.

By 1984 and 1985, it can be said that the labor sector was at its peak of campaign against the popularly coined US-Marcos Dictatorship with Valenzuela being called as the Strike Capital of the country.

Meanwhile, the Center for Trade Union and Human Rights [CTUHR] which was created in 1984 to monitor the rampant incidents of trade union rights violations, has documented, for the last two years of the Marcos administration, 123 cases of trade union rights violations, which ranged from summary



The inaugural rites for Marcos third term in office. Manila. 1981.

PHOTO BY ROMEO GACAB

execution to arrests and detention, involving 338 workers. The bulk of these cases was on killings where 99 cases involving 111 victims were monitored in a mere span of two years.

The workers, under the Marcos years, were struggling against state fascism brought about by the abuses that came with US-instigated one-man rule and a social system that saw them merely as implements of production stunting growth -- in its political and economic sense.

*Three incidents
of violations;
Three national
administrations,
we could have
enumerated more.*

The Liberal Democratic Facade

The end of the dreaded regime initially brought forth hopes that trade union rights violations would eventually simmer down. But nay.

Instead, the supposed liberal democratic facade of the Aquino regime was unmasked with the total war policy it executed in utter submission to firm owners' demand for an end to militant unionism.

Aquino abolished the PDA, the Sedition Act and the Anti-Subversion law but essentially put into effect a scheme allowing police and military to conduct warrantless arrests.

At the labor front, Aquino retained Marcos-effected repressive laws like BP 130 and 227. Also, the administration widened the scope of government intervention on strikes by giving the Labor Secretary the prerogative to assume jurisdiction on any labor dispute that in his or her judgment constitutes a threat to the national security.

It was also during the Aquino regime that the public was awed by the brutality it can muster as seen by the slaying of Rolando Olalia, then KMU chair, and his personal aide, Leonor Alay-ay, in 1986.

The CTUHR has documented 683 cases of trade union rights violations involving a total of 3,190 workers during Aquino's term.

Organized labor, which was then at its strongest, was struggling against what it saw as a foreign-government controlled national administration effecting anti-people policies to appease the International Monetary Fund - World Bank clique.

The situation essentially remained the same since the very social system that cuddled social inequity and bluntness on the part of government in its institutionalization of anti-worker policies remained in place.

There was a change in the national administration but the country's bureaucrats were quick to grab and consolidate political power deprived of them during the Marcos years.

Thus, the supposed transition from authoritarianism to national democracy was aborted. Instead, there arose a new social order having the same semi-feudal

*There were
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rights violations
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of the US-Marcos
Dictatorship*

and semi-colonial characteristics inherent with Philippine society even before the Marcos years.

Ramos and Philippines 2000

Today, sadly, trade union rights violations persist.

And while accusing fingers coupled with a bromide of harsh criticisms capitalizing on negligence could easily be thrown on government for this, not one point could actually get across and nothing would eventually be done unless one substantiates to be a little more convincing.

Throwing accusing fingers and platitudinous condemnations is like accusing a bully kid for the lost of another kid's ice cream cone just because the latter was crying his lungs out, kicking dust, and shouting, though helplessly, that somebody give him back his Vanilla Twirl.

With Ramos came further consolidation of bureaucrats power. Aquino failed to put together these bureaucrats as can be seen from the seven coup attempts against her government.

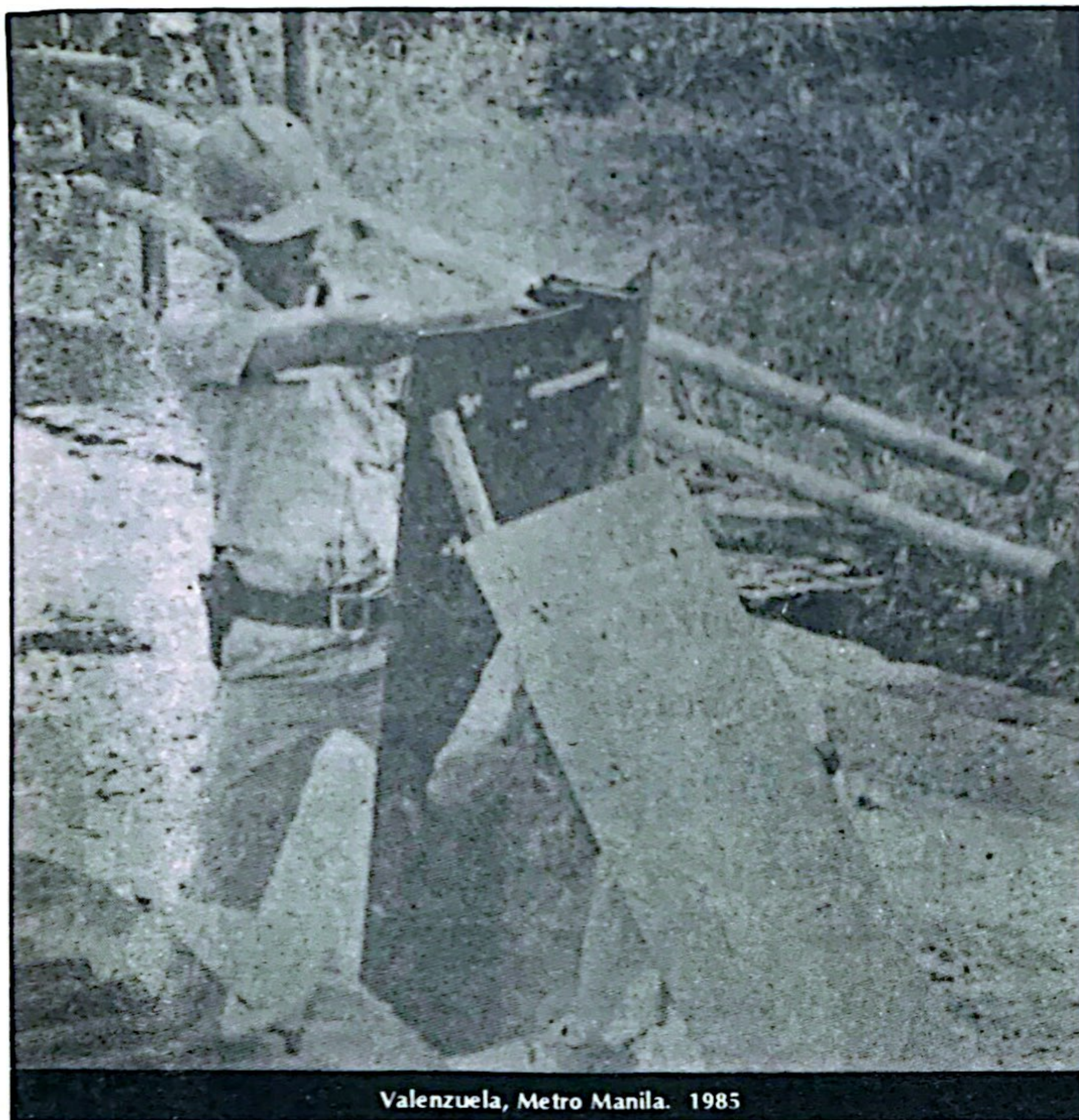
Ramos, being a military tactician that he was through out his tenure as chief of the Philippine Constabulary,

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Mendiola Bridge, Manila. 1984.

PHOTO BY CLARO CORTES IV



Valenzuela, Metro Manila. 1985

PHOTO BY ALBERTO MARQUEZ

was wise enough to forge concessions with different blocs of the elite isolating people's organizations including workers' groups in the formulation of a national development agenda.

Thus was developed a seven year plan to convert the country into a newly industrialized one by year 2000

Not only did the workers' situation remains the same — laws are still intact. Worse, a development plan was being pursued at the expense of the workers.

The National Employment Plan [NEP] of the government's industrialization scheme blatantly seeks to utilize the workers as mere implements of production.

An employment scheme depriving the workers of their hard-earned rights gained during long years of struggle is in place.

With NEP came the contractualization of labor meaning employment

would be based on a six-month renewable work contracts. The scheme virtually abolished the workers' constitutional right to organize unions and collectively bargain for better living conditions.

Government's argument -- if it can stand to be as such -- is such that with contractualization, workers are being given equal employment opportunity.

There now arise a new trend in trade union repression.

Marcos institutionalized a no-union-no-strike policy citing internal security reasons and the need to create a climate conducive to business as demanded by the International Monetary Fund-World bank clique.

Aquino, for the very same reason, backed out from effecting more liberating policies.

Ramos, this time, in the name of development setbacks resulting from

Marcos's abuse of power and Aquino's indecisiveness, is adding more teeth to the already insitutionalized systematic state repression on organized labor by putting into place a scheme reducing labor to where it was before rights to strike and organize were agonizingly won at the expense of not a few lives.

Ramos has even went as far as restructuring the labor code to conform it with his vision of development. Thus, the proposed amendments which, among others, seek to legalize job subcontracting schemes.

Complementing this is a fascist state apparatus ready to strike at the slightest sign of resistance.

As a consequence, from June 1992, or when Ramos assumed the presidency, to September of 1994, the CTUHR has monitored and documented 159 cases of trade union rights violations involving 2,000 workers.

Today, organized labor is back to square one though another factor that can be attributed to this, and which Ramos gladly exploited to his advantage, is the organizational crisis that rocked it this year.

With the crisis came organized labor's fragmentation into different camps thereby further weakening whatever strength was left as a consequence of the elite's consolidation of power.

Organized labor is again on an uphill climb. And with this comes escalation of trade union rights violations.

Retrospect

Trade union rights violations persist despite changes in the national administration precisely because the seed spawning such occurrences is still deeply imbedded in Philippine society.

The anti-fascist anti-imperialist struggle remain precisely because foreign intervention in Philippine political, cultural, social and economic affairs has not stopped.

The IMF-WB continue to devastate the country with its policy recommendations meant to submerge the country deeper into the quagmire that is the cycle of dependence to foreign loans no matter how harsh the conditions might be.

It was the IMF-WB that imposed an economic program of import dependency and export orientation utilizing cheap and docile labor to begin with.

Along with this is the control of Multinational Corporations [MNCs] in the country's economic activity.

Such program resulted to anti-labor laws and the continuing measly take home pay that the workers have been receiving over the years.

This consequence being a result of a consistently landlord-dominated national government who have easily given in and is still giving in to IMF-WB pressures so long as it doesn't mean their removal from power.

Thus it can be said that trade union rights violations persist because the domination of foreign powers and the stronghold of the bureaucrats in power remain.

Recommendations

There are short- and long-term approaches if trade union rights violations is to be addressed.

For one, government should review

trade union rights violations persist because the seeds spawning it remains deeply imbedded in Philippine society

its National Employment Program and labor laws in view of arriving at a more pro-worker policies.

Second, government should learn to do away with the IMF-WB by shifting to a nationalist industrialization development scheme whereby vital industries like steel, energy, telecommunications, and chemical among others are put under its control to secure this from foreign domination.

Third, and most importantly, is that government rethink its general development scheme atuning it to the

needs of the people and not pursuing it at the expense of the people.

But then again, years have shown that government can not be expected to pursue such measures for it have been seen as radically improbable.

Therefore, what needs to be done here is for Filipino people to advance this struggle for national democracy and rebuild a government which truly represents all sectors of society and will create economic programs that would efficiently address problems besetting the country.

This would mean including labor representatives chosen among the ranks of legitimate labor groups; peasant representatives; youth representatives; women representatives and so on.

With this at hand, prospects of trade union rights violations gradually going on a downswing would be more feasible.

Meantime, the cycle of trade union rights violations committed as a consequence of government's inadequacy to address problems besetting its constituents as a result of its being traditional politician and landlord domination remain. ❖



Valenzuela, Metro Manila. 1984.

PHOTO BY BOY ESCALANDA

TRADE UNION RIGHTS VIOLATION: The Real Picture

Based on TURV cases documented since 1984, the general picture, inasfaras the Philippine trade union right situation today is concerned, is such that at a daily rate, a worker either finds himself mauled or threatened by the police, military, paid goons or company guards;

arrested on trumped up charges; abducted; tortured; or killed for reasons ranging from the formation of a genuine union at the workfront to a deadlock in an on-going negotiation for a Collective Bargaining Agreement [CBA].

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TABLE 1

TRADE UNION RIGHTS VIOLATION IN THE PHILIPPINES 1984 - 1994 [SEPTEMBER]

OVERALL TOTAL PER CASE PER VICTIM

CASE	TOTAL	TOTAL VICTIMS
ARREST AND DETENTION	257	1,802
KILLED	141	.157
KILLED IN THE PICKETLINE	21	27
FRUSTRATED KILLING IN THE PICKETLINE	12	24
PICKETLINE MASSACRE	18	68
FRUSTRATED PICKETLINE MASSACRE	25	419
SALVAGING	127	137
DISAPPEARANCE	41	48
TORTURE	50	94
ABDUCTION	4	5
PHYSICAL/MENTAL ASSAULT	263	2,784
RAIDS	6	45
TOTAL	965	5,610

AVERAGE

- 965 CASES DIVIDED BY 129 MOS. - 7 CASES/MO X 12
- 84 CASES/YEAR
- 5,610 VICTIMS BY 129 MOS. - 43 VICTIMS/MO X 12
- 516 VICTIMS/YEAR DIVIDED BY 365
- 1.4 VICTIM/DAY

TABLE 2

TRADE UNION RIGHTS VIOLATION IN THE PHILIPPINES
1984 - 1994 [SEPTEMBER]
OVER TOTAL PER CASE PER VICTIM PER NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION
LAST TWO YEARS OF MARCOS REGIME [1984 - FEB. 1986]

	TOTAL CASES	TOTAL VICTIMS
ARREST AND DETENTION	5	29
KILLED	61	73
KILLED IN THE PICKETLINE	4	4
FRUSTRATED KILLING IN THE PICKETLINE	0	0
PICKETLINE MASSACRE	6	25
FRUSTRATED PICKETLINE MASSACRE	4	163
SALVAGING	38	38
DISAPPEARANCE	5	6
TORTURE	50	0
ABDUCTION	0	0
PHYSICAL/MENTAL ASSAULT	DNA	DNA
RAIDS	0	0
TOTAL	123	338

More to the point, at least four workers are being arrested while five more are being mauled or threatened every week while another three are being killed every month for the same reasons. [See Table-1]

The last two years of the Marcos regime saw 338 victims of 123 documented cases of TURVs where 140 were killed, 38 of which were summarily executed. There were no available data on the number of workers subjected to physical and mental assault [PMA].

The Aquino administration saw 3,190 victims of 683 documented cases of TURVs 1,338 of which were arrested; 1,274 mauled and threatened with bodily harm or death; 243 killed, 97 of which were summarily executed; and 80 tortured.

Arrest and Detention comprised 30% of the entire TURVs documented during the Aquino administration, this being the biggest chunk followed by killings which comprised 28% of the said documentation. [See Table-8]

The first three years of the Ramos government, on other hand, saw 2,082 victims of 159 documented cases of TURVs where 1,517 were mauled and threatened with bodily harm or death; 430 arrested and six killed two of which were summarily executed; and 12 tortured. [See Table-2]

More than half of the documented TURVs under the Ramos government concerns PMA cases meaning maulings and threats are rampant at the labor front nowadays. [See Table-9]

At least one worker was falling victim to trade union rights violations at a daily rate during the Aquino administration.

This has, however, increased twofolds under the Ramos government which, in a span of three years, has nearly reached the total number of TURV victims monitored during the previous government. [See Table-3]

TABLE 2
CONTINUED

TRADE UNION RIGHTS VIOLATION IN THE PHILIPPINES
1984 - 1994 [SEPTEMBER]
OVER TOTAL PER CASE PER VICTIM PER NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION
PRESIDENT CORAZON AQUINO'S TERM [MARCH 1986 - MAY 1992]

	TOTAL CASES	TOTAL VICTIMS
ARREST AND DETENTION	202	1338
KILLED	76	80
KILLED IN THE PICKETLINE	17	23
FRUSTRATED KILLING IN THE PICKETLINE	7	11
PICKETLINE MASSACRE	12	43
FRUSTRATED PICKETLINE MASSACRE	14	155
SALVAGING	87	97
DISAPPEARANCE	36	42
TORTURE	45	80
ABDUCTION	2	2
PHYSICAL/MENTAL ASSAULT	179	1,274
RAIDS	6	45
TOTAL	683	3,190
<p>AVERAGE</p> <p>683 CASES DIVIDED BY 75 MOS. - 9 CASES/MO X 12 - 108 CASES/YEAR</p> <p>3,190 VICTIMS BY 75 MOS. - 42 VICTIMS/MO X 12 - 504 VICTIMS/YEAR DIVIDED BY 365 - 1.3 VICTIM/DAY</p>		

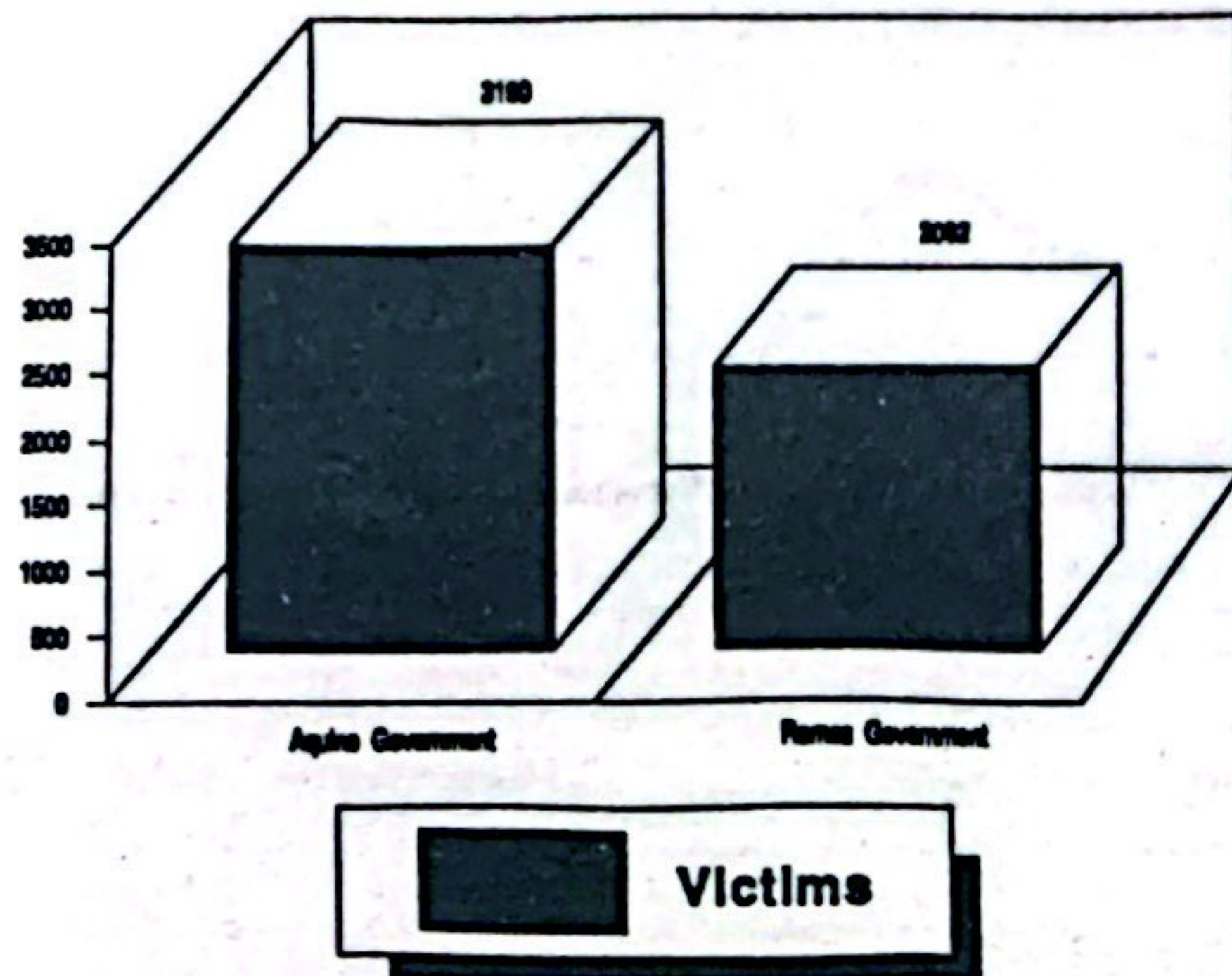
TABLE 2
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TRADE UNION RIGHTS VIOLATION IN THE PHILIPPINES
1984 - 1994 [SEPTEMBER]
OVER TOTAL PER CASE PER VICTIM PER NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION
FIRST THREE YEARS OF PRESIDENT FIDEL RAMO'S TERM [JUNE - SEPTEMBER 1994]

	TOTAL CASES	TOTAL VICTIMS
ARREST AND DETENTION	50	430
KILLED	4	4
KILLED IN THE PICKETLINE	0	0
FRUSTRATED KILLING IN THE PICKETLINE	5	13
PICKETLINE MASSACRE	0	0
FRUSTRATED PICKETLINE MASSACRE	7	101
SALVAGING	2	2
DISAPPEARANCE	0	0
TORTURE	4	12
ABDUCTION	2	3
PHYSICAL/MENTAL ASSAULT	85	1,517
RAIDS	0	0
TOTAL	159	2,082
<p>AVERAGE</p> <p>159 CASES DIVIDED BY 28 MOS. - 6 CASES/MO X 12 - 72 CASES/YEAR</p> <p>2,082 VICTIMS BY 28 MOS. - 74 VICTIMS/MO X 12 - 888 VICTIMS/YEAR DIVIDED BY 365 DAYS - 2.4 VICTIM/DAY</p>		

TABLE 3

VICTIMS OF WORKER'S RIGHTS VIOLATIONS
COMPARATIVE CHART



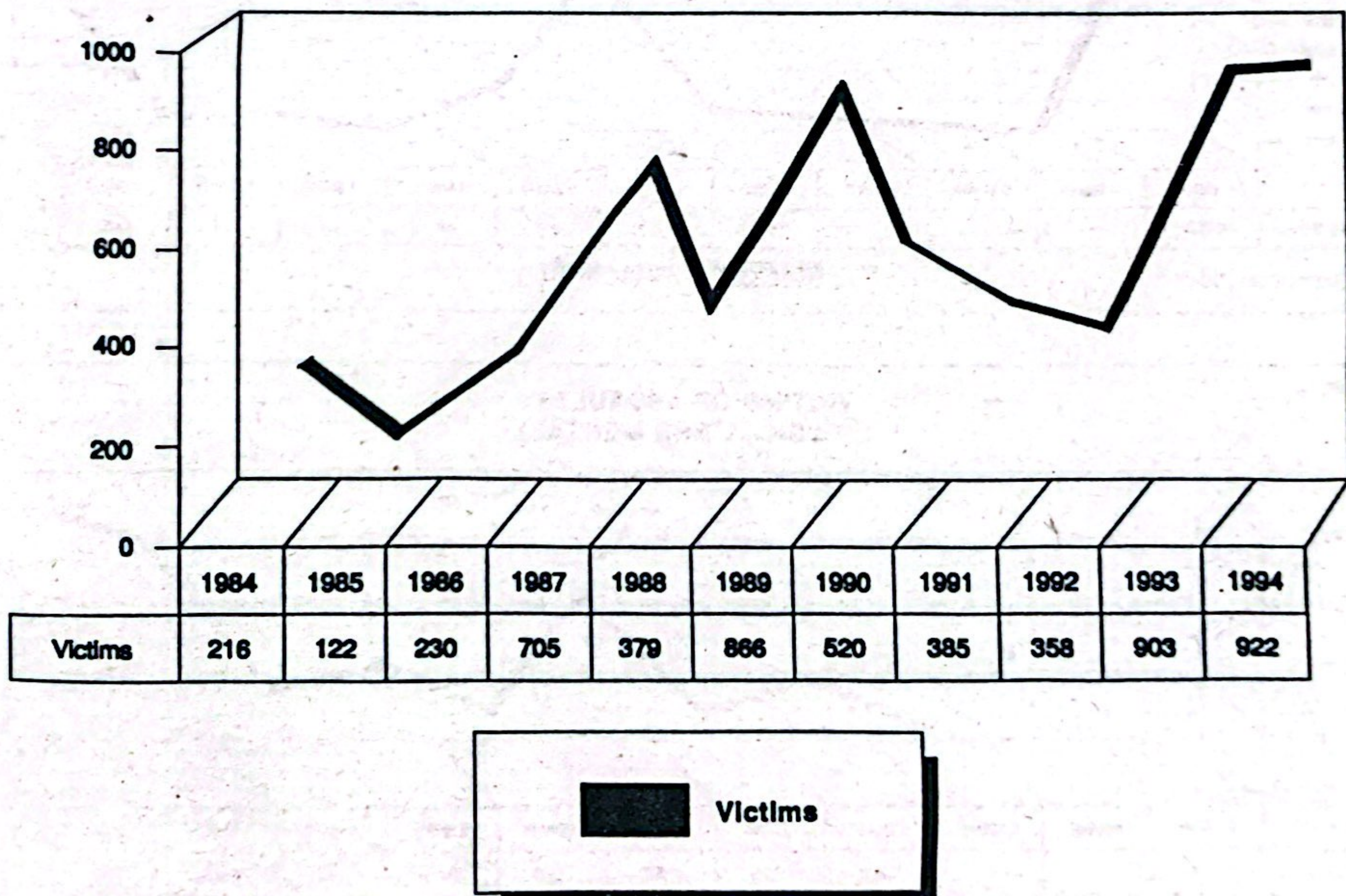
Aquino 1986-1992/Ramos 1992-Sept. 1994

What is disturbing here is that there is no diminishing trend in sight. Instead, while there may be fluctuations in the occurrences of these violations --- the downswing on the documented cases of killings and the upswing on PMAs being notable among them --- the general picture is such that TURVs are on the upswing. [See Tables 4 - 7] over the years, the workers' real wage [the real Peso value of their nominal wage or legislated wage] is quite insufficient to meet the requirements of the daily cost of living. [See Table-10]

This, coupled with repressive labor laws enacted during the Marcos administration and still in effect to this date, constitutes the breeding ground for TURVs. [See Table-11] ♦

TABLE 4

VICTIMS OF TRADE UNION RIGHTS
VIOLATIONS PER YEAR

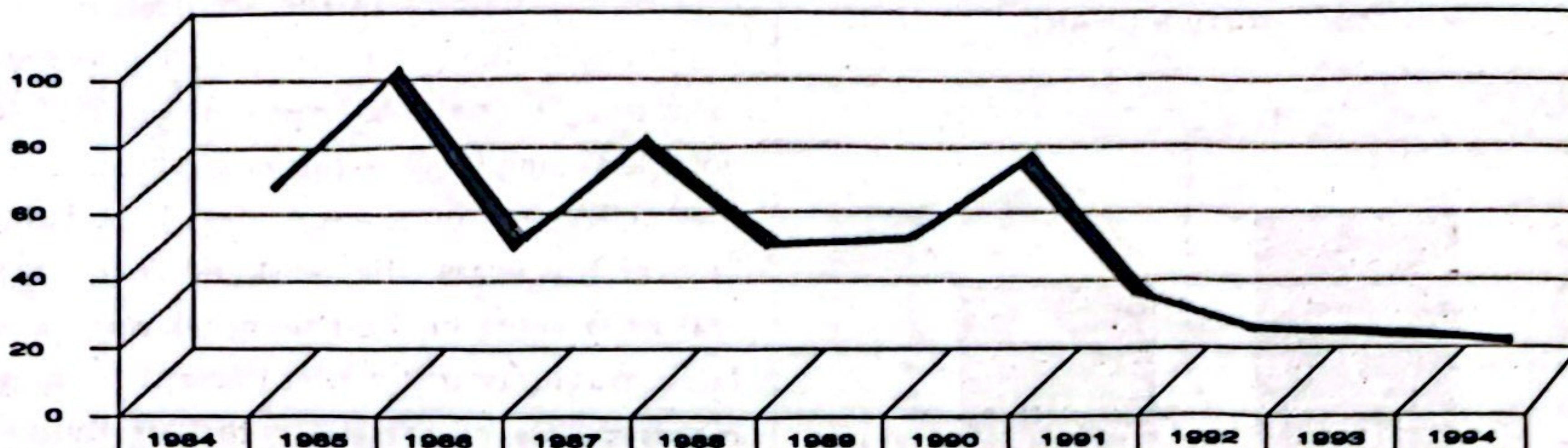


1984 - September 1994

FROM THE FILES

TABLE 5

VICTIMS OF KILLINGS [INCLUDES PICKETLINE KILLINGS AND MASSACRES/SALVAGING]



Killed

51

69

100

51

81

50

52

78

35

25

22

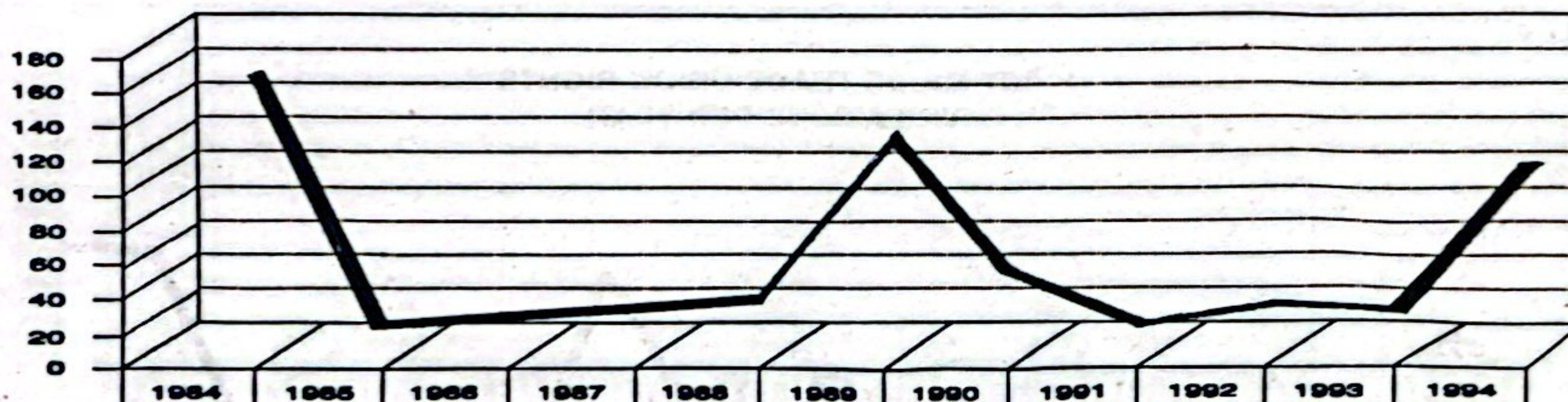
1984 - September 1994

Killed

1984 - 1994 TOTAL 389

TABLE 6

VICTIMS OF FRUSTRATED KILLINGS [INCLUDES FRUSTRATED PICKETLINE MASSACRES]



Frustr. Killing

159

4

16

18

107

107

135

6

13

11

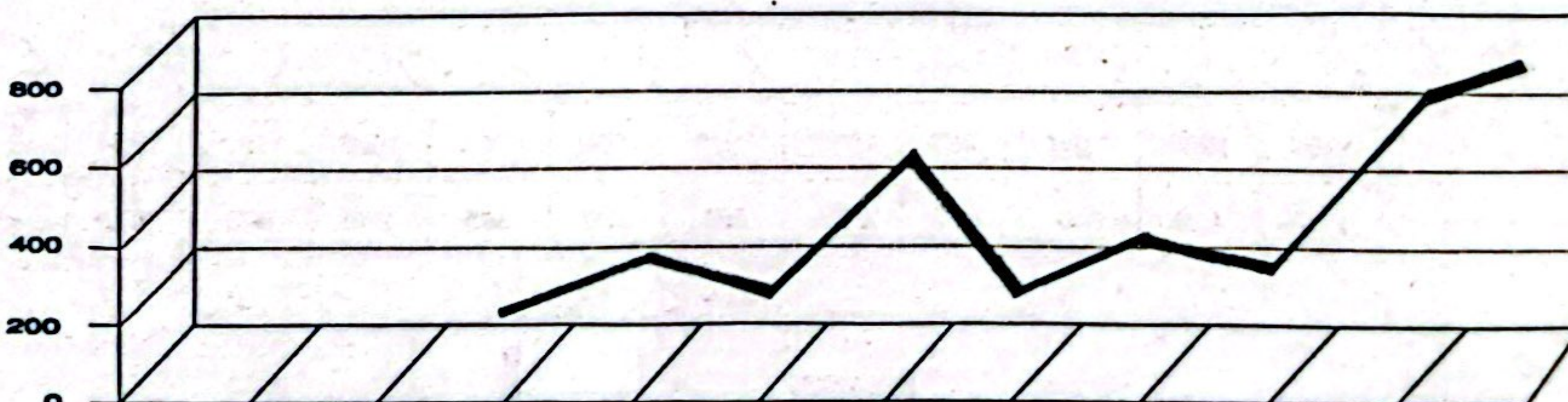
95

1984 - September 1994

Frustr. Killing

TABLE 7

VICTIMS OF ASSAULTS [PHYSICAL AND MENTAL]



Assaults

81

197

104

452

135

248

643

425

343

740

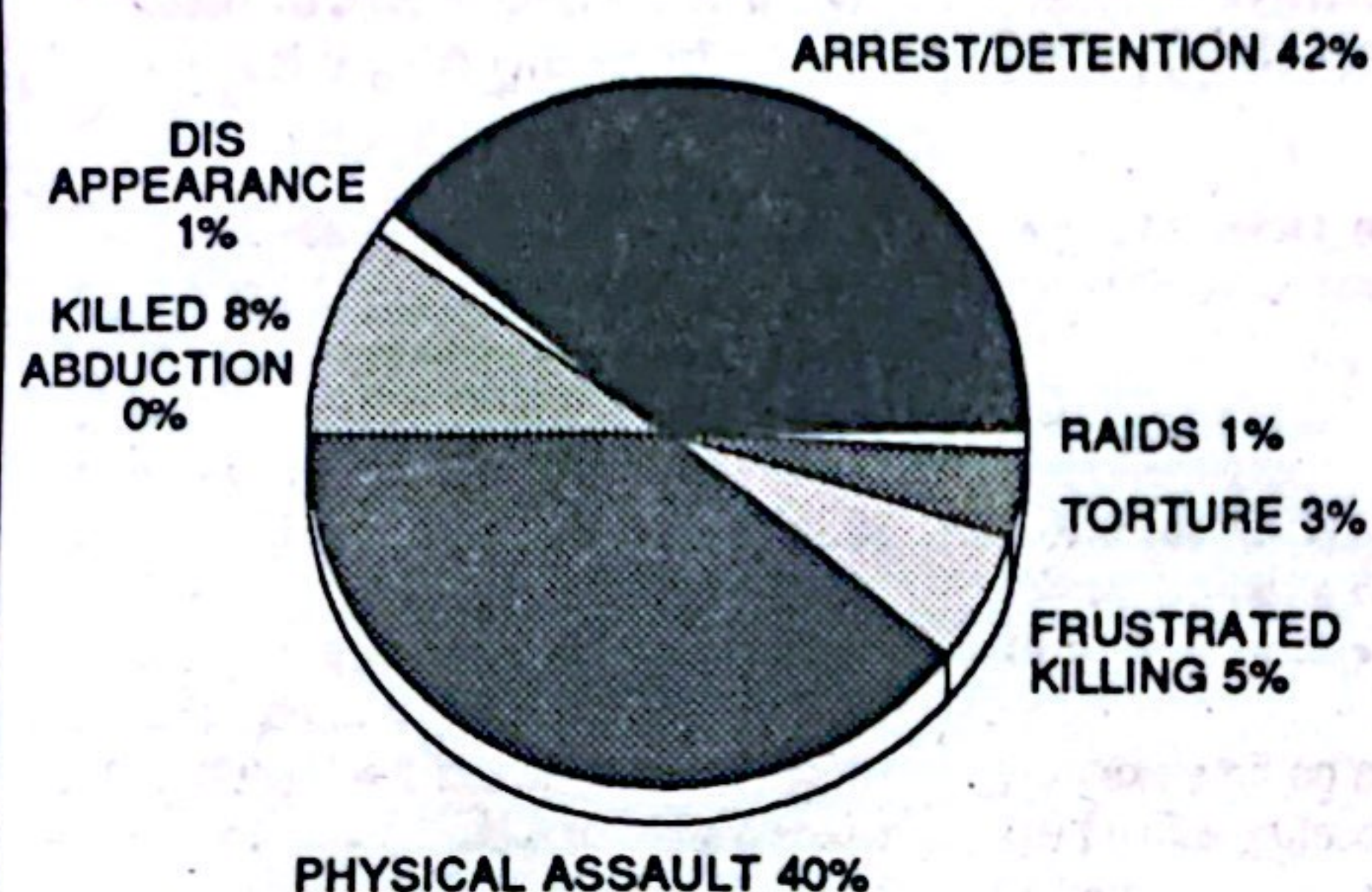
1984 - September 1994

Assault

FROM THE FILES

TABLE 8

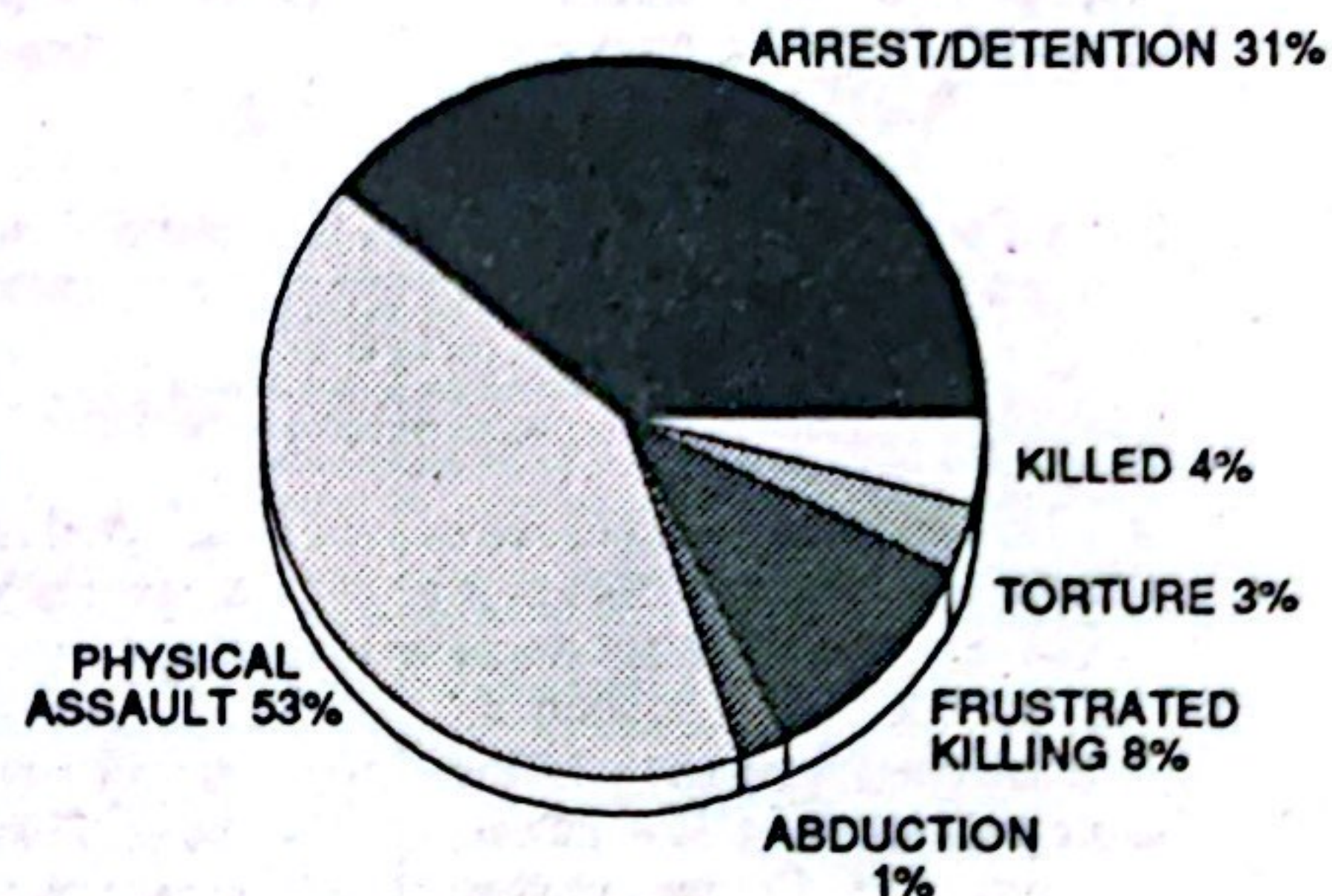
VICTIMS OF TRADE UNION RIGHTS VIOLATIONS UNDER PRESIDENT AQUINO



March 1986 - May 1992

TABLE 9

TRADE UNION RIGHTS VIOLATIONS FOR THE FIRST THREE YEARS OF PRES. FIDEL RAMOS



[Cases] June 1992 - September 1994

TABLE 10

WORKERS' ECONOMIC PROFILE 1984 - 1994

	NOMINAL WAGE	REAL WAGE	DAILY COST OF LIVING
1984*	P 43.67	P 16.54	P 105.60
	51.92	18.17	
	57.08	17.16	
1985*	57.08	17.16	DNA
1986*	57.08	17.16	DNA
1987*	57.83	14.91	144.96
1988*	58.50	14.91	154.30
	58.50	14.37	
	69.33	16.87	
1989*	89.00	20.18	173.85
1990**	91.83	72.14	165.10
1991**	118.00	76.82	208.39
1992**	118.00	68.49	226.62
1993**	118.00	62.75	233.46
	135.00		
1994**	145.00		259.63

* 1978 - P100
 ** 1988 - P100
 DNA - Data Not Available

SOURCES:
 Ibon Databank
 Bureau of Labor and Employment Statistics [BLES]
 Center for Applied Research and Library Services [CARLS]

TABLE 11

LABOR LAWS

**Repressive Labor Laws
Enacted During the Marcos
Regime**

- 1] Batas Pambansa 130 The 1982 Amendment to the Labor Code

Highlights:

.i) The labor department may assume jurisdiction on strikes seen as vital to national interest where national interest is defined as establishments belonging to the strategic industries like power; transportation and communication; and others.

.ii) Government employees/ security guards can not form unions and go on strike.

.iii) A Notice of Strike should be filed and a 15-day cooling-off period should be observed before the strike could commence.

- 2] BP 227 The Anti-Scab and Picketing Law

Highlight:

Strikers can not erect barricades at company gates to ensure that the firm's operations remain unhampered despite the on-going strike. With such provision, the strike virtually loses its sting.

- 3] Letter of Intent 1458

Highlight:

Management has the right to terminate employment of strikers who refuse to heed the labor department's Return-to-Work order.

**What the Aquino Government
Did About It**

- 1] Issued Executive Order 111 providing amendments to the BP 130

Highlights:

.i) Workers can go on strike by a simple majority vote unlike the 2/3 pro-strike vote required by BP 130.

.ii) Workers can go on strike over issues of union busting without observing the 15-day cooling-off period.

.iii) Government employees/security guards can form unions but can't go on strike nor bargain for Collective Bargaining Agreement [CBA].

- 2] Batas Pambansa 227 was retained.

- 3] LOI 1458 was repealed.

- 4] Issued Republic Act 6715 amending the Labor Code otherwise known as the Herrera Law

Highlights:

.i) The Labor department may still assume jurisdiction over labor disputes on firms it sees as vital to the national interest. This time, it is the labor secretary's prerogative to decide whether a particular strike is a threat to the national interest or not. The effect is such that said secretary may assume jurisdiction over any labor dispute and arbitrarily order striking workers to return to work in the name of the national interest.

.ii) The labor department is mandated to conduct a so-called Improve Offer Balloting on workers who went on strike over deadlocks in CBA negotiations. To be voted upon is the management's most current offer regarding the CBA's provision on salary increase. This is an intervention on the workers' right to free trade unionism since there is government meddling on union affairs.

**What the Ramos Government
Is Doing About It**

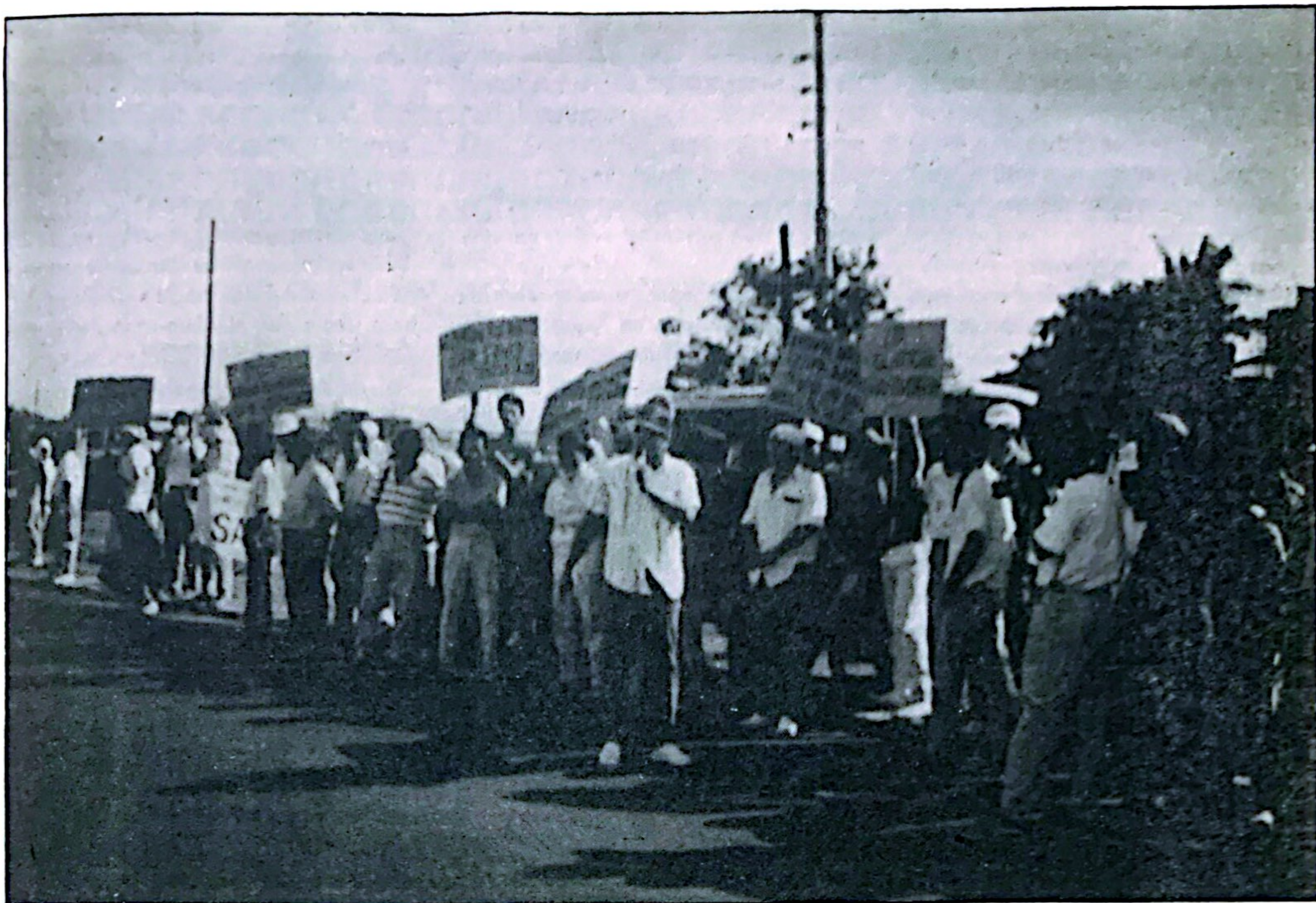
Nothing so far except that there are plans to amend the Labor Code to suit the government's industrialization program aiming to convert the country into a newly industrialized one by the year 2000.

The said program aims to generate employment through job subcontracting schemes which would then result to the casualization of labor.

Casualization is the slow but continuous erosion of regular workforce, or those allowed by law to form unions and negotiate for better living conditions through a Collective Bargaining Agreement [CBA], at the plant level.

SOURCES:

- 1] Ecumenical Institute for Labor Education and Research [EILER]
- 2] The Philippine Labor Code, 1992 Revised Edition



BEPZ No Strike, No Union Policy: A Closer Look

By: Dindo Tria

It was 20 years now since the Bataan Export Processing Zone [BEPZ] was established in Marivelez.

The BEPZ was established under Republic Act 5490 and would be administered by the Free Trade Zone Authority [FTZA], a government body empowered to act as a one-stop administrative agency between occupant firms and the government.

During the early years of BEPZ's operation under the Marcos Regime, BEPZ investors have fiscal privileges. Among these were subsidized prices on factory buildings; houses and dormitories; water,

electricity, transport and communication services; substantial deductions from their taxable income in the form of accelerated depreciation and carry-over of net operating losses; and exemption from all municipal and provincial taxes.

They enjoyed the most important and strategic non-fiscal privilege which made them the "untouchables." They were spared from welfare laws which gave them the right to demand protection from the government against any forms of concerted actions of workers. Consequently, the violations of the BEPZ workers' rights became rampant.

Sympathy Strikes

This entitlement was expressed during the October 1983 sympathy strikes involving 20,000 workers in 21 firms who walked out of their jobs to protest police brutality against the striking workers of one zone firm when the then Labor Ministry Blas Ople immediately placed it under compulsory arbitration.

The Export Processing Zone Chamber of Exporters and Manufacturers [EPZCEM] blamed the government for failing to strictly enforce the law prohibiting sympathy strikes.

➡ NEXT PAGE

They cited a memorandum of agreement between them and the Labor Ministry reached after the June 1982 sympathy strike stating that it "shall not be considered a precedent" and that any "repetition of the mass action in the future by those involved shall be dealt with strictly in accordance with the provision of the law."

As a consequence, leaders were dismissed from work as stricter implementation of the said memorandum was observed.

Labor Laws

Apart from these privileges, labor laws were enacted such as Batas Pambansa 227, and 130. The former pertained to free ingress and egress while the latter concerned the observance of a 15 to 30 day cooling-off period required before holding a strike. These essentially curtail the workers' right to strike.

In spite of these anti-labor laws however, numerous forms of concerted actions like slow-down, boycott, work stoppage and even strike were launched by workers to condemn BEPZ's managements and EPZA's conspiracy on sacrificing the workers in the name of development.

As expected from such policies, violations of workers' rights became prevalent.

One incident occurred on March 5, 1979 when some 154 striking workers of Ford Ensite Ltd., a multinational firm, were arrested and detained for two days at the Philippine Constabulary Provincial Command [PCPC] in Balanga, Bataan.

The workers went on strike over such issues as collective bargaining deadlock and the indefinite suspension of their union president.

Then and Now

The same situation was true with the Aquino and this is becoming worse with the Ramos Administration.

According to Primo Amparo, Chairperson of Alyansa ng Manggagawa sa Bataan-Bataan Labor Alliance [AMBA-BALA], "during the Marcos term anti-labor laws such as BP 130, and 227 were enacted to disempower the workers. These same laws were also implemented by former President Corazon Aquino. But now, under the Ramos Administration, aside from the implementation of the said laws the workers in Export Processing Zone are essentially prohibited from organizing union and to strike."

The no strike, no union policy was couched when some 1,400 workers of Korean owned Lotus Export Specialist, Inc., manufacturer of Reebok shoes for export to the United States, went on strike over issues among which included the firm's illegal closure.

Striking workers were prohibited from manning their picketlines within the company premises.

The workers went on strike when the company closed down on August 23, 1993 citing financial problems. A week later, it resumed its operation under a new company name, the Paramount Footwear Inc., which manufactures the same product under the same management. The daily wage of workers was brought down to P122 from P177.

New Policy

The foundations of a no strike no union policy is now well in place as was confirmed by Raul Soldevilla, Senior Division Chief of Industrial Relations Division of BEPZ. Soldevilla said, "this new conduct on strikes took effect during the strike of Lotus workers.

It was created to protect other firms from any business interference as a result of workers' collective actions and prevent them from withdrawing their business in BEPZ."

This "closure and later resuming operations" has been a common practice nowadays even outside export processing zones to bust

unions and later implement cheap and docile labor policy.

During Marcos time, 41 unions were organized at the BEPZ. But now 18 left and were still fighting for their future under this no-union policy.

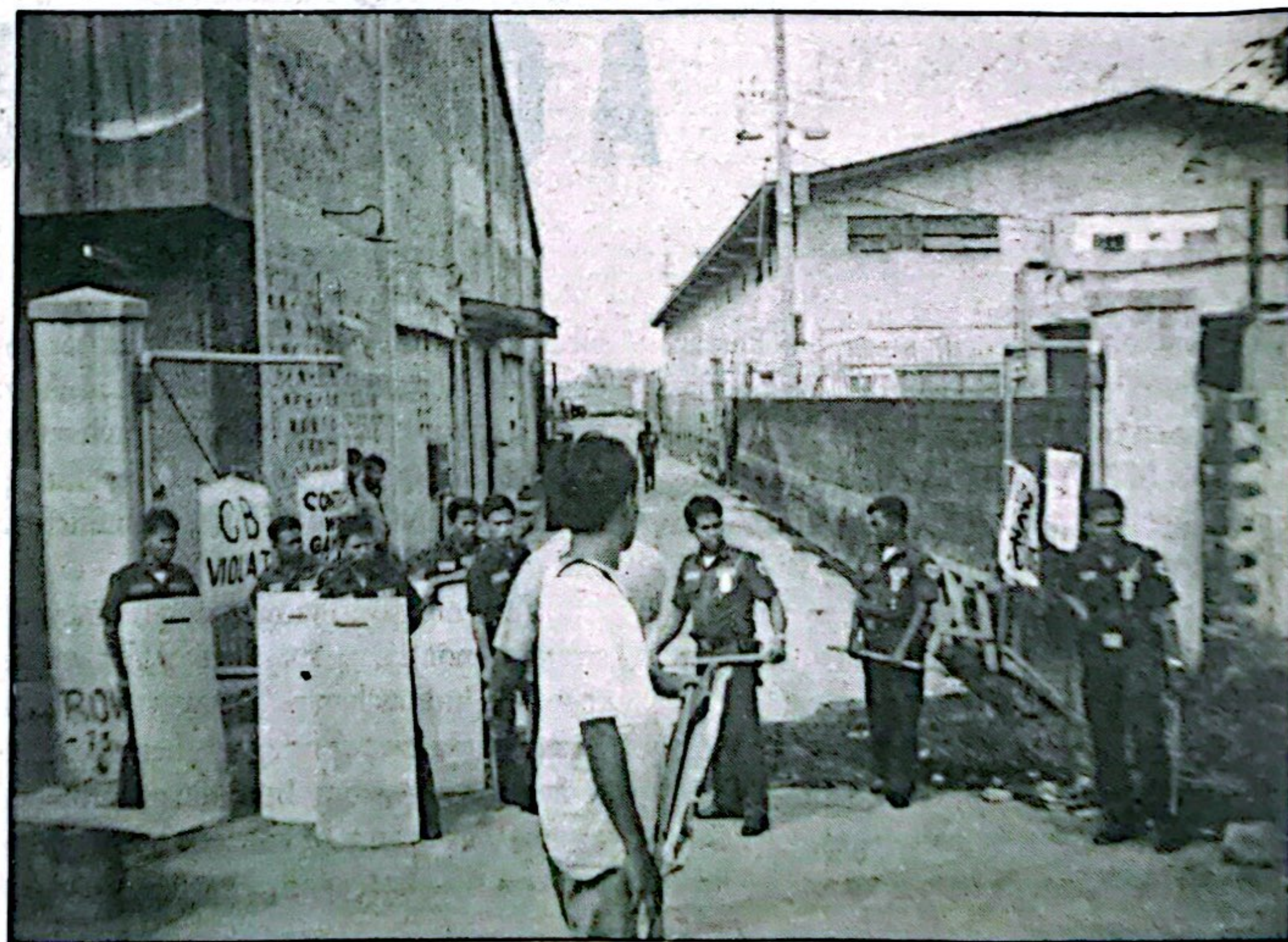
There is also an on-going extensive campaign on Zero Strike being waged by BEPZ authorities in line with the Department of Labor and Employment's [DOLE] program under the Medium-term Philippine Development Plan [MTPDP].

As compared to what Marcos and Aquino did on their economic policies, President Ramos, with his ambitious MTPDP, sacrifices the Filipino workers on the altar of development for the benefit of foreign investors who intend to put up business in the country especially in export processing zones.

Ramos hopes to achieve a no-union, no-strike country by the year 2000. And if the Filipino workers choose to stand on the side of the "silent majority" there comes industrial peace which exacts blood of workers in the name of bigger profit for the benefit of the capitalists.

The no union no strike policy is a bold attempt to infringe the workers' right to air grievances and to bargain collectively for better living conditions through the union.

Such being case, the Filipino workers must revitalized its struggle to thwart the government's plan and advance its nationalist and democratic aspirations. ♦



GATT: Its Impact on the Workers

By: Arsenio Batoctoy

Ratification of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) is already a fait accompli with the way the Ramos administration has been peddling fearful scenarios when it is rejected. It is simply acting true to its form—that of being a slave of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Very soon, (if it is not yet ratified as of this writing) the Philippines will sign a death sentence for its citizens. No less than Pres. Ramos, the chief executive will see to it that the death switch is tightly connected to its power source and fuses are working. He has seen to it that it will breeze its way through the Senate—the treaty-ratifying body of the government even if big nations

are still debating on its merits and demerits. Wittingly or unwittingly, they thought that this undue haste would produce a miracle for our struggling economy.

The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) has become a ticklish issue and a real economic dilemma for us. The card is laid down on the table but only the big players are enjoying the game while the underdeveloped onlookers are betting, not knowing that win or lose, they lose. When GATT was put to us for ratification, they only give two options for us: Ratify or die. We are placed in a very tight situation of damn-if-we-do, damn-if-we-don't.

And yet, like many economic issues, GATT was lumped through

us without the benefit of any credible explanation from the government. Rather, it merely wanted to trivialize everything and refused to divulge what is actually involved in this GATT issue. Even a Cabinet secretary whose department would be severely affected had to be told to attend Senate hearings to shed light on GATT's effect on the farmers.

Global trading

Global trading is premised on the so-called theory of comparative advantage where a nation trades with another because it is more profitable for both countries to exchange goods even when one does everything better than the other. A simple example would illustrate this trade relationship: Our country produces sugar while the U.S. produces computers. It is true that the US can produce sugar more efficiently than Filipino farmers, but it does trade with us because they can get sugar at a relatively cheaper price than they do in US markets. Meanwhile, they can continue producing computers and coax the Filipinos to buy them because we need to computerize. The truth of the matter is: it is better for them to buy sugar from the Philippines because they get cheaper sugar per unit chiefly because Philippine labor is cheap.

And most pronounced in the theory of comparative advantage is



➡ PAGE 22

1994 Third Quarter Trade

CASE	VICTIM/S M F	PERPETRATOR/S	MOTIVE	ESTABLISHMENT	WORKFORCE	UNION MEMBERS	LINE INDUSTRY	OWNER
Frustrated Massacre at the Picketline	83	10 PNP, Cabuyao led by Capt. Morales, 15 RSAF led by one Maj. Dela Cruz and 60 Security Guards	Demoralize the striking workers thru armed assault.	Asia Brewery Inc.	1,500	950 +	Beverages	Mr. Lucio Tan
Frustrated Killing at the Picketline	2	Nicanor Jao, Plant Manager of Rapid Movers, a sister company of ABI which maintains plant at the same compound.	To coward the strikers and forced them to end their strike.	-do-	-do-	-do-	-do-	-do-
Frustrated Killing at the Picketline	3	Company Security guards armed with .38 handgun and shotgun.	Dispersed the striking workers thru armed assault.	R and E Transport	1,000	800	Transport	Honorio Enriquez
Frustrated Killing at the Picketline	3	50 security guards from RBM Sec. Agency armed with guns.	Harassed the strikers thru armed assault.	Balance Food Corp.	226	200 +	Food Mfg.	Sy Tian Tin
Arrest and Detention	2	Two (2) policemen from Carmona Police Station	To demoralize the union and its members.	Rohm Electronics Philippines Inc.	1,200	800 +	Electronics	Japanese National
Arrest and Detention	1	Sgt. Jess del Rosario and a certain Victor Maala from Pasig Municipal Jail Police Station.	To harass and demoralize the striking workers.	Prima Cinema 1-2-3	35	35	Entertainment	Francisco Ching-cuangco
Arrest and Detention	1	Five civilian clad policemen from Taguig Municipal Station with Sheriff Carlos Maog from RTC-Rizal Branch 162	Forced the strikers to end-up their strike.	Micron Silvertrone Electronics Corp.	103	103	Electronics	Michael Sagara
Arrest and Detention	1	Sgt. Jess del Rosario with a certain policeman from Pasig Municipal Jail Police Stn.	Demoralize the strikers thru fabricated cases	Prima cinema 1-2-3	35	35	Entertainment	Francisco Ching-cuangco
Arrest and Detention w/ Assault at the Picketline	5	PNP- Caloocan and members of SWAT from Valenzuela	Forced the implementation of TRO.	R and E Transport	1,000	800	Transport	Honorio Enriquez
Arrest and Detention	1	Celestino Dacula RETADU union Pres. together with elements from SWAT-Valenzuela.	To harass/demoralize the strikers.	R and E Transport	1,000	800	Transport	Honorio Enriquez
Arrest and Detention	1	Unidentified number of policemen from Kalookan	-do-	NV PAS Mfg. Corp.	150	150	Tire Recapping	Alfredo de Leon
Illegal Arrest and Detention w/ Torture	6 2	Intelligence Division of Cordillera Regional Command	Harassment of active organizers of Trade union movement	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Illegal Arrest with Torture	1	15 members of Iglesia ni Cristo led by a certain Ka Terroy together with Rommel Millona	To harass the strikers.	Prima Cinema 1-2-3	35	35	Entertainment	Francisco Ching-cuangco
Arrest and Detention	6	10 unidentified armed civilian clad policemen from Kalookan	Arrested the victims.	R and E Transport	1,000	800 +	Entertainment	Honorio Enriquez
Assault at the Picketline	2	Civilian clad policemen from Valenzuela	Escorted three Petron fuel trucks into the company.	Manasse Paper Mills	150	150	Paper Mills	George Lao
-do-	2	Six armed unidentified policemen from Valenzuela.	To harass the strikers.	-do-	-do-	-do-	-do-	-do-
-do-	90 10	60 company guards from Sigasig Security Agency	Dispersed the strikers barricading the gate.	Asia Brewery Inc.	1,500	958	Beverages	Mr. Lucio Tan
Assault at the Picketline with Grave Threat	99 1	PNP-Novaliches Station led by Major Roxas	To pull-out finished products.	Oriental Tin Can and Metal Mfg. Co. Inc.	1,200	937	Metal Mfg.	George Lao
Assault at the Picketline	1 21	70 PNP from Orani, Bataan led by Col. Aycocho and Major Efren Ramos	To pull-out machine.	Orani Garments Inc.	DNA	DNA	Garments	Paul Tarjican
Assault at the Picketline	2	15 policemen from PNP-Hill Top led by Lt. Avendano	To pull-out machine using ten wheeler truck.	Philine Garments Corporation	235	225	Garments	Raymond Maguid
-do-	4	A certain Rico from MTC-Antipolo	To implement a court order and pull-out machine.	-do-	-do-	-do-	-do-	-do-

Union Rights Violations

DATE	PLACE OF INCIDENT	ACCOUNT OF INCIDENT	REMARKS/RELATED INFORMATION
Sept. 13	Sala St., Cabuyao, Laguna	Workers were holding roving picket in front of the ABI plant when 60 sec. guards together w/ 15 RSAF and 10 PNP attacked them.	Workers went on strike for the 4th time over management's refusal to reinstate the 6 union officers.
July 14	-do-	Workers were sleeping at the picketline when Nicanor Jao who was drunk came and shot the strikers.	Workers launched their strike over management's unfair labor practices.
Aug. 4	#37 Rose St., Reparo Road, Baesa, Q.C.	Striking workers were moving their picketline closer to the company's gate when the company guards shot them using .38 cal. and shotguns.	Workers went on strike over management's unfair labor practice coupled with union busting.
Aug. 24	#23 Atlas Rd., San Bartolome, Novaliches, Q.C.,	Company truck ramped the company gate while the guards fired at the strikers.	Workers went on strike over management's unfair labor practices and union busting.
July 21	Carmona, Cavite	Two policemen from Carmona station came at the company and arrested one of the victims allegedly for falsification of documents.	Charges for the two arrested workers were learned fabricated by the management due to their union activities.
July 29	Caruncho Avenue, Pasig	Policemen arrested the victim at the picketline allegedly for malicious mischief-a case fabricated by the management.	Workers went on strike over management's refusal to recognize their union.
Aug. 3	Lower Bicutan, Tagig	The victim was arrested while manning their picketline after the union rejected the temporary restraining order (TRO) illegally issued by RTC-Rizal Branch 162.	Workers went on strike over management's refusal to negotiate with the union.
Aug. 6	Caruncho Avenue, Pasig	The victim was arrested at the picketline allegedly for Qualified Theft -a case fabricated by the management.	Workers went on strike over management's refusal to recognize their union.
Aug. 19	#37 Rose St., Reparo Rd., Baesa, Q.C.	Striking workers were attacked while others were arrested and scabs from pulling-out taxi.	Workers went on strike over management's unfair labor practice and coupled with union busting.
Aug. 22	#37 Rose St., Reparo Rd., Baesa, Q.C.	The victim was arrested while manning their picketline.	-do-
Aug. 24	Gen. Tirona St., Bagong Barrio, Kalookan	The victim was arrested while manning the picketline.	Workers went on strike over management's illegal dismissal of active union officers and members.
Aug. 26	#60 Poblacion, La Trinidad Benguet	The victims were arrested at their rented house while conducting assessment.	All victims were released due to immaterial evidence.
Sept. 10	Caruncho Avenue, Pasig M.M.	15 members of Iglesia ni Cristo forcibly arrested the victim, brought him to Pasig PNP headquarters where he was mauled.	Workers accused the owner of instigating the said harassment.
Sept. 29	NLRC, Kalaw	The victims (all union officers) were arrested in front of NLRC after their hearing.	All the victims were released thru amicable settlement after almost a month of detention.
July 8	R. Delfin St., Marulas, Val.	The victims were attacked and threatened when they inspected the petron trucks and its escort van loaded with armed men.	Workers went on strike over managements' unfair labor practices.
July 12	-do-	Six armed men believed to be elements of PNP-Valenzuela escorted the entry of fuel trucks and harassed the striking workers.	Workers blamed the management for instigating several forms of harassment to coward the strikers.
July 13	Sala St., Cabuyao, Laguna	Company guards dispersed the strikers using water cannons.	Workers went on strike over managements unfair labor practice and union busting
Aug. 4	R. Delfin St., Bgy. Capri, Novaliches	Strikers were assaulted when they prevented the scabs and the management from pulling-out finished products.	Workers went on strike over management's ULP (illegal termination) of active union officers and members.
Aug. 9	Maria Fe, Orani, Bataan	Workers were attacked by policemen when they prevented the management from pulling-out machine.	Workers went on strike due to illegal lock-out.
Sept. 14	#99 Bonifacio, Avenue, Cainta	15 policemen from PNP-Hill Top assaulted the strikers barricading the company gate.	Workers went on strike due to illegal lock-out.
Sept. 21	-do-	Some 15 PNP-Hill Top escorted one Rico, a sheriff from MTC-Antipolo forcing their way to pull-out machine.	-do-

DOCUMENTED TRADE UNION RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES

1984 - SEPTEMBER 1994

[NUMBER OF VICTIMS/CASES/YEAR]

CASE	1984		1985		1986		1987		1988		1989		1990		1991		1992		1993		AS OF SEPT. 94		OTC	OTV
	TC	TV	TC	TV	TC	TV	TC	TV	TC	TV	TC	TV	TC	TV	TC	TV	TC	TV	TC	TV	TC	TV		
1] KILLED	17	20	45	53	23	24	17	21	16	16	2	2	13	13	2	2	4	4	2	2	0	0	141	157
2] KILLED IN THE PICKETLINE	DNA		4	4	2	2	6	7	4	4	1	2	2	6	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	21	27
3] FRUSTRATED KILLING IN THE PICKETLINE	DNA		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	6	4	9	0	0	4	9	12	24
4] PICKETLINE MASSACRE	3	15	3	10	1	4	2	13	3	9	2	6	2	3	2	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	18	68
5] FRUSTRATED PICKETLINE MASSACRE	2	159	2	4	0	0	0	0	8	16	4	107	2	32	0	0	1	4	4	11	2	86	25	419
6] SUMMARY EXECUTION [SALVAGING]	16	16	22	22	6	6	18	20	6	6	24	26	31	37	2	2	0	0	1	1	1	1	127	137
7] DISAPPEARANCE	DNA		5	6	0	0	13	13	12	16	4	4	7	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	41	48
8] TORTURE	DNA		0	0	0	0	0	0	17	21	6	30	19	19	3	10	2	3	1	2	2	9	50	94
9] ABDUCTION	DNA		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	2	3	0	0	0	0	4	5
10] PHYSICAL AND MENTAL ASSAULT	DNA		DNA		13	81	51	197	39	104	35	452	14	135	21	248	16	175	32	643	42	740	263	2,784
11] ARREST AND DETENTION	2	6	3	23	20	113	64	434	44	143	24	231	29	266	14	105	16	160	20	244	21	77	257	1,802
12] RAIDS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	44	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	45
TOTAL	40	216	84	122	65	230	171	705	153	379	103	861	120	520	52	385	45	328	60	903	72	922	965	5,610

TC — TOTAL NUMBER OF CASES

TV — TOTAL NUMBER OF VICTIMS

OTC — OVERALL TOTAL NUMBER OF CASE/CATEGORY

OTV — OVERALL TOTAL NUMBER OF VICTIMS CATEGORY

DNA — DATA NOT AVAILABLE

the inevitable specialization of the process of production to maximize productivity and increase efficiency. Less efficient companies (agribusiness or industrial) will be dissolved and cost-efficient products will be fully supported through tax-incentives, increased quota and the like.

One mechanism used in this respect is tariffs—taxes placed on imported goods. Strictly speaking, tariffs can be both prohibitive and partial. Prohibitive, when it is too high that it keeps out all imports of a certain product by making its price higher than that of the local production. It can also be partial when it is high enough to protect local producers and low enough to leave the less efficient companies exposed to unfair foreign competition. Either way, prices will increase—whether produced domestically or internationally—because tariffs would reduce available supply. When supply gluts the market and demand is low, prices decrease. And tariff naturally seek to keep prices low—artificially.

Dumping of Imported goods

To a greater extent, GATT operates on this assumption and when the Philippines ratifies this, it makes our economy dependent on what the agreement has to say as far as tariffs are concerned. This is why there is a need to agree on the products we trade worldwide to keep global trade efficient, to the extent of dumping our markets with imported products.

Señator Tanada pointed out for example gross inconsistency in the government's trading game with GATT in place. It is investing on cattle and dairy production but would allow large-scale importation of beef, eggs, and milk products from



Europe. He particularly emphasized the removal of 50% funding for irrigation while at the same time, pursuing infrastructure projects to support GATT. Officials pointed out an P80-B loss if we reject GATT but wanted to appropriate P72-B to prepare agriculture for GATT. With GATT in place, there would be a 525.0% increase of live swine to enter our markets.

The problem, however, is: do we really need the GATT? And if our foreign masters say we should ratify, are we prepared for it?

Based on how our economy runs at the moment, we do not need GATT nor are we prepared for its implementation.

In the area of global trading, how far can we decide on

how much and with what quantity of goods do we produce or buy is highly dependent on what our foreign masters have to say. The Philippines is but a speck of the worldwide trend of globalization. We can assume two things: that if

we import products, we get the same price as when we produce it locally. Conversely, we may assume that if we export our domestic products we get relatively good price as the imported ones.

In reality, this assumption falls flat on our face because the global trade is dictated not by countries like the Philippines but by economic

heavyweights. We are always at the mercy of highly-industrialized countries which run the global economic system through their finger tips. We are merely tots in a trading game designed "for adults only."

GATT, when fully operational, will flood our market with imported goods (GATT will simply

make life for us more difficult) and kill our domestically-produced products. Competition is decidedly one-sided in favor of highly industrialized countries which will buy cheaper raw materials from us and sell expensive manufactured

*When GATT
was put to us
for ratification,
they only give
two options for us:
ratify or die.*

products to us. A GATT treaty will keep our exports low and imports high which will greatly affect our balance of payments.

Widening trade deficit

Even without GATT, our balance of payments has already suffered. We pay more for what we import than what we export. As of the end of third quarter of this year, we were able to earn only \$8.462-B from our exports as against \$13.634-B from our imports for a negative balance of \$5.172-B, an increase of 31.0% for the same period last year. If we view the history of our balance of payments, the negative scale tipping against has been hurting our economy too much that taking off becomes an exercise in futility because we are limping from excess imported baggage. Why Pres. Ramos boasted of economic take off when even leeches of our economic system continue to suck blood from our system is a question that direly beg for answer.

Data obtained by Dr. Edberto Villegas proves a very strong argument against GATT. Our economy registered an annual trade deficit of \$428.37 million for the period of 1967 to 1979 when we were only partial GATT member as against \$1.64-B from 1981 to 1993—at a time when became full time member of GATT in 1980.

Displacement of workers

Employment will become a grave concern with the unmitigated displacement of workers resulting in the alignment of the production process. GATT proponents wrongly assumed greater labor mobility would result when "less-efficient factories" are dissolved in favor of

cost-efficient and highly productive companies. They are assuring our workers that they can easily cash in on the displacement bonanza created by GATT because of infrastructure projects that may be created. This

*We are always
at the mercy of highly-
industrialized countries
which ran the global
economic system
through their
finger tips.*

assumption is dead wrong right at the very start. This is at best a hallucination borne out of excessive dreaming. Bigger displacement will naturally result when workers are told to pack up because it is the end of the production line.

The picture of our pre-GATT level of unemployment is at its worst. Our labor market absorbs an average of 800,000 labor entrants yearly competing for any available job. Employers have been striking pretty hard by hiring workers on a contractual basis, and in the case of export processing zones employing workers on a revolving door syndrome. The National Employment Plan promises to produce at least 1.5 million jobs a year—a very ambitious plan which calls for no union, no strike provisions; labor-only contracting; contractualization. Displaced workers will be absorbed in public works projects, the main component of which is the soon to be approved Public Works Act.

The catchphrase, however, is the so-called safety nets measures that would cushion the negative impacts of GATT. These measures, they hoped, would absorb the direct losses to the workers and provide immediate assistance to displaced and affected workers.

The lead agency is, of course, the "much-vaunted" Department of Labor and Employment. It has proposed a P2.09 billion safety net

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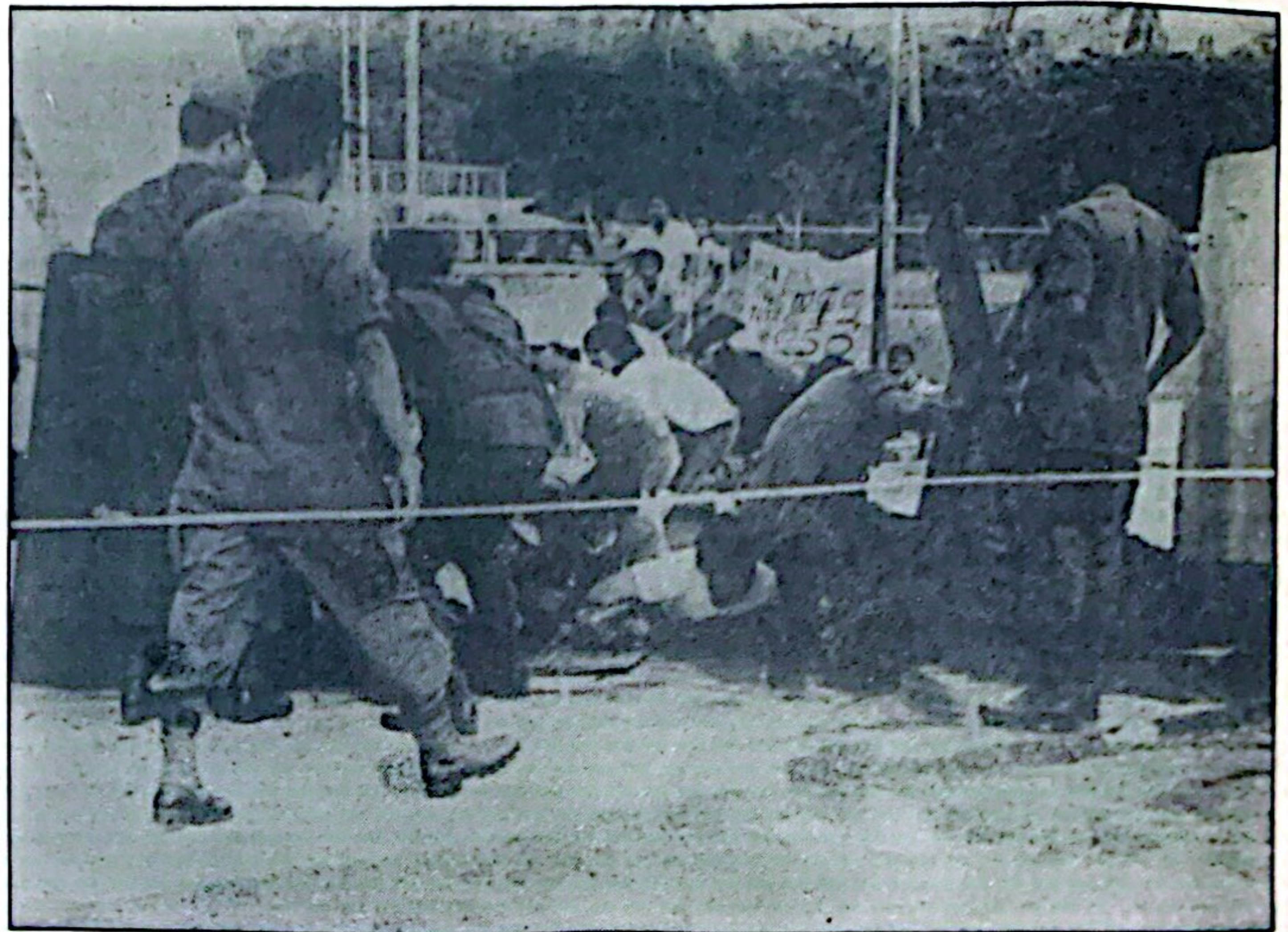


package spread to 4 years to address the immediate and short-term negative impacts of GATT. There will be P500-M for 1995; P505-M for 1996; P527-M for 1997 and P558-M for 1998. Included in this package are skills training, retraining of workers both for employment and self-employment, creation of livelihood opportunities for displaced industrial workers.

The government is now combining—nay mixing up—the National Employment Plan targets and the GATT-related displacement of workers. This is a classic case of the DOLE putting one over us—dreaming of a 11 million jobs at the end of 1998 yearly while offering jobs in the sky for workers of GATT-related displacements. And if reports are true that safety net measures will be sourced from sale of government properties and privatization of government owned and controlled corporations, then we are in for the biggest crisis of our time. The proceeds of this sale are intended for the implementation of agrarian reform. Is the government now saying that since agrarian reform cannot be fully implemented, it is better to divert funds to GATT safety net measures?

GATT is a moral issue

Cardinal Sin, pointed out that GATT must be subjected to thorough study because its ill effects on our people are far-reaching. This economic arrangement is grossly disadvantageous to the whole economic fabric, not only to our country, but to struggling economies as well. Pope John Paul II in the encyclical *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (December 30, 1987) spoke harshly of this anti-people development which banks heavily on the asphy-



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xiation of poor. And he urges us to: "denounce the existence of economic, financial and social mechanism which, although they are manipulated by people, often function automatically, thus accentuating the situation of wealth for some and poverty for the rest. These mechanisms, which are maneuvered directly or indirectly by more developed countries, by their very functioning favor the interest of the people manipulating them. But in the end, they suffocate the economics of the less developed countries.

Conclusion

GATT is capitalism at its worst—appropriating to big industrial countries trade advantages at the expense of small countries. It crushes the desire of our people to live a humane life. Its imperialist design is to effectively bind us to submit ourselves to WB-IMF policies and strangle our modest effort to genuinely develop.

We must oppose GATT at all cost. ♦

R & E Taksi: Sasakay ka ba?

[Kwento ng buhay at dugong pakikibaka ng mga drayber ng nabanggit na kumpanya]

By: Tony Gas

Madaling araw na naman at muli sisikat na ang araw na papalit sa mga mapang-akit na mga ilaw sa mga pook na madalas puntahan ng mga taong mahilig sa panandaliang paglimot sa masalimuot na takbo ng buhay.

Sila ang mga taong masakit mangtanggapin ay mga nagbubulag-bulaga't walang pakialam sa mga nagaganap sa ating lipunan.

Sa mga pangkaraniwang drayber ng taksi tulad ng R & E ang bukan-liwayway at ang takipsilim ay nangangahulugan ng maghapon at magdamag na pagbubuno sa kanyang manibela.

Ang muling pagharap sa ibat ibang uri ng mga suliranin, na kung pakasusuriin ay parang sakit na AIDS na hindi kayang gamutin ng mga tagpi-tagping programa ng pamahalaan.

Buhul-buhol na trapik... kalsadang lubak-lubak baha... huli.... tong... bawal magsakay ... bawal magbaba.... mga buwayang lumaki na ang tiyan sa pangongotong mga kapwa drayber na kung magkaminsan ay mainit ang ulo, bukod pa sa mga pasaherong barat at mareklamo.

Taas ang kamay ! Hold-up to pre ! Ipara mo kung hindi sasamain ka. Todas na naman ang pobreng drayber. Limas na naman ang kita may-utang pa na babayaran sa opereytor ng taksi.

Mabuti sana kung hindi ka sasaktan ng lintek na holdaper. Ang kaso eh baka hindi ka lamang sa ospital itakbo. Baka bumulagta ka pa't takpan na lang ng dyaryo.

Ang lahat ng ito'y bahagi na ng gulong ng buhay ng isang drayber bukod

pa sa mga suliraning kinakaharap nila sa kanilang mga opereytor na kung mamalasin ka'y higit na mahirap hanapan ng solusyon.

Sa panig ng mga manggagawa o mga drayber sa R & E Taxi hindi mahirap bakahin ang suliranin partikular kung nagkakaisa at sama-sama sa pagharap nito, dangan nga lamang at kailangang dumaan muna sa butas ng karayom.

Hindi biro ang pakikipagtunggali sa manedsment ng R & E na bukod sa mayaman na umano'y maimpluwensiya pa sa mga maykapangyarihan. Sila ang mayari ng mahigit sa isang-libong taksi na marahil ay palagian mong nakikita sa lansangan o 'di kaya naman ay iyo ng nasakyan.

At kapuna-puna na bago ang karamihan sa mga taksi nito, tulad na lamang ng 300 na mga Tamaraw FX na bukod sa aircon na ay may radyo pa.

Ang pag-unlad ng kumpanyang ito'y mula sa dugo at pawis ng 2,500 nilang mga manggagawa na kanilang pinagkakaitan ng mga lehitimong karpatan.

Kung hindi sila kikilos ay sino ? At kung hindi ngayon, kailan? Aanhin pa ang damo kung patay na ang kabayo?

Sama-samang pagharap sa suliranin

Sadyang hindi lamang sa gubat matatagpuan ang mga ahas at hindi lamang sa panahon ni Kristo nauso ang Hudat.

Natuklasan ng mga drayber ng R & E sa pakikipagkutsaba ng kapwa nila drayber na sa kisapmata'y nagkaroon sila ng unyon na may kasama pang instant CBA.

Bukod rito, ang kanilang union dues o butaw ay kinakaltas sa araw-araw: sampung piso kapag 24 oras ang labas at limang piso naman kapag kalahating araw lamang o half set.

"Lumalabas na malaki ang aming butaw," ani ng isang drayber.

Ang masakit pa nito ang operation manager ng kumpanya ang direktang may hawak ng pera.

Hindi pa nakuntento ang may-ari ng kumpanya sa ganitong sistema. Patakarin din ng kumpanya na sa garahe lamang magkakarga ng gasolina ang mga drayber at kailangang magbayad pa rin ng dalawang piso sa tauhan ng kumpanya na nagkarga nito.

Sa mga mekaniko naman, karanawang maririnig ang salitang "magkano ang sira niyan" sa tuwing magpapagawa sila ng kanilang sasakyan.

Hindi bumababa sa limampung piso ang kanilang ibinibigay para lamang magawa ang kanilang taksi. Bawat drayber ay iniisyuhan ng kani-kanilang sandalan sa upuan at limang-piso ang kinakaltas para dito.

Walang katapusang kaltasan!

Hanggang sa paggamit ng palikuran ay mayroon ding bayad na piso kung ihi lamang. Dalawampung piso naman kung magbabawas. Mayroong nakatalagang kolektor sa mga kinikita rito at ito umano'y napupunta sa kumpanya.

Natuklasan din ng mga drayber na bagamat regular silang kinakaltasan ng kanilang kontribusyon sa SSS hindi naman ito naihuhulog ng kumpanya. "Aba'y ginigisa kami sa sarili naming mantika," ang ngitngit ng pobreng mga drayber.

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Ang mga suliraning ito sa loob ng kumpanya ng R & E Taksi ang naging daan upang mabuklod ang mga drayber dito sa iisang paninindigan na magbuo ng tunay na unyon na magiging bandila ng kanilang pakikipagtunggali sa kanilang kapitalista at sa binuo nitong unyon papeles.

Dito kumilos ang manedsment at tinanggal sa serbisyo ang labing-anim na drayber na nanguna sa pagbubuo ng unyon. Isa rito si Celso Enopia.

Alam ng kanilang mga kasamahan na ang naganap na tanggalan ay bunga ng masigasig nilang pagkilos upang maipagpatuloy ang nasimulang pagbubuo ng tunay na unyon.

Naglunsad ng piket protesta sina Celso sa harapan ng garahe ng kumpanya upang ipabatid sa manedsment at sa mga kapwa nila drayber ang hindi makatarungang pagtitiwalag sa kanila.

Hindi naglaon ay ipinahuli sila ng kanilang kapitalista at si Ka Celso ay tumanggap ng mga pagbabanta sa kanyang buhay.

Makalipas ang apat na buwan, ika-13 ng Hulyo 1993, natagpuang patay si Celso at lumabas sa pahayagan ang balitang nabaril si Ka Celso kasama ang isang holdaper matapos silang masabat ng mga pulis.

Subalit maging ang isinagawang imbestigasyon ng Komisyon sa Karapatang Pantao ay malinaw na sinabing imposibleng mangyari ang sinabi ng mga imbistigador.

Ang Komisyon pa mismo ang nagsampa ng kasong "Salvaging" sa mga responsableng awtoridad.

Hanggang sa ngayon nanatiling walang katarungan ang pagkamatay ni Ka Celso subalit ang kanyang iniwang binhi sa hanay ng kanyang mga kapwa drayber sa kompanya ay nanatiling nagbabaga at nagliliyab.

Ipinagpatuloy ng naiwang mga drayber ang nasimulan ni Ka Celso at dito si Ka Narciso Eliseo ang nahirang na maging pangulo ng tunay at palaban na unyon.

Sa hinaba-haba man daw ng prusisyon

Ito ang karaniwang naririnig sa mga nagliligawan kaiba sa mga drayber ng R & E.

Para sa kanila.... "Sa hinaba-haba ng negosasyon sa welga rin naman pala ang tuloy."

Batid nilang wala ng iba pang paraan upang gisingin ang nagtutulog-tulugang pamilya Enriquez upang tunan ang mga lehitimong karaingan ng mga manggagawa.

Kaya't noong ika-16 ng Hulyo 1994, nagmukhang eleksiyon sa harapan ng garahe ng kumpanya.

Sa hinaba-haba man ng negosasyon... sa welga rin ang tuloy

Welga kami! Military 50 meters away.... katarungan sa manggagawa ng R & E. Ito ang mga mensaheng isinulat ng mga manggagawa sa kanilang mga streamers.

Karamihan sa mga drayber ay sumama sa welga. Nakulong naman sa loob ng kumpanya ang mahigit sa 800 na taksi kabilang na ang mga bago nitong Tamaraw FX. Pansamantalang natigil ang operasyon ng kumpanya nang mahigit dalawang linggo.

Subalit hindi naglaon, nagpalabas ng Temporary Restraining Order ang DOLE at sapilitang inilabas ng mga bayarang goons ang mga taksi na nakulong sa garahe.

Siyempre hindi kumpleto ang kwento kung wala ang mga pulis na

sabi nga nila'y para daw sa peace and order. Subalit hindi yata tugma sa naganap na kaguluhan sa piketlayn ng mga nakawelgang drayber dahilan sa ito pa mismo ang naging sanhi ng kaguluhan.

Parang mga kriminal nilang hinuli't ikinulong ang anim na kasama sa welga kasama ang ilang opisyaes ng unyon.

Nagpatuloy ang mga karahasan sa piketlayn sa pakikipagkutsabahan ng manedsment sa mga pulis kasama na ang mga bayarang goons at ang mga tuta nito sa hanay ng mga drayber.

Sunud-sunod na pang-aaresto sa mga kasama sa welga ang naganap.

Noong ika-22 ng Agosto 1994, hinuli ang isang welgista, ipinahuli rin ng manedsment and pangulo ng unyon sa mga SWAT na parang kriminal at dinala't ikinulong sa Dagat-dagatan Headquarters noong ika-13 ng Setyembre.

Nasundan ito noong ika-29 ng Setyembre na kung saa'y anim na opisyaes ng unyon ang inaresto sa harapan ng NLRC matapos nilang daluhan ang pagdinig sa kanilang isinampang kaso.

Dito natapos ang serye ng pang-aaresto sa mga welgista. Ang anim na opisyaes ay sinampahan ng kasong carnapping.

Bagamat napawalang saysay ang kasong isinampa laban sa mga opisyaes ng unyon tumagal muna sila ng halos kalahating buwan sa kulungan bago tuluyang nakalaya.

Ang karanasang ito ng mga welgista ay naging bahagi upang higit na mahubog ang kanilang paninindigan na ipagpatuloy ang kanilang welga laban sa pamilya Enriquez na matapos nilang ilagay sa pedestal ay siyang parang higanteng yumuyurak sa kanilang mga lehitimong karapatan bilang manggagawa at mamamayan.

Lisa ang paninindigan ng mga manggagawa sa R and E..... Isulong ang pakikibaka hanggang sa ganap na makamtan ang tunay na kahulugan ng katarungan. ♦

"Sana Nakulong Lang Siya..."

[The author is the youngest son of the slain labor leader Rolando Olalia --- Editor]

by: Atty. Rolando Rico Olalia

"W*hy should we shed tears when others are shedding blood?"*

-- Ka Lando Olalia

IT was almost 10:00 in the evening, November 12, 1986, when I heard the familiar knock on my door. I opened it and saw my mother.

This time, I was sure I really do not have to ask. She has been doing that every thirty minutes for the past four hours. Asking me if my father have finally called up.

"Hindi pa po tumatawag eh," (He has not called up yet) was what I mustered to say even before she could ask me for the upteenth time.

My mother, absently disregarding my reply, went on saying that my father should have already called up as was his practice whenever he'd be home late or won't be staying for the night.

Nevertheless, I consoled her noting that, despite the coldness

of the night, beads of sweat have formed up her forehead and were slowly rolling down her cheek.

I went back to bed thinking what could have happened to my father.

Morning came and still my father was not around. We gathered by the breakfast table and drew plans. Rudy, my eldest brother, told me to drop by my

*"Hindi pa po
tumatawag eh,"
was what I mustered
to say even before
she could ask me
for the upteenth time.*

father's office and try to find out if the people there knew of his whereabouts while he and Ronnie, another brother, will try calling up some of my father's friends to check if any of them was with him that night.

By 8:30 that morning, I was at my father's office. Everything looked normal. No signs of any disruption. I almost felt relieved. But it was shortlived. I told my father's secretary [Linda] that he was missing. And the confusion broke out. Apparently, nobody in that office had any idea where my father was.

Learning this, I felt a chill went down my spine. My thoughts went blurred. Sweat rolled down my forehead and all I could think of was that this can't be happening. It can't be true.

Gathering my senses together, I asked Linda to call up the last person my father had an appointment with the other day and she promptly called up Aji-no-moto. We were then informed that he left the said company at around 7:00 in the evening.

We then checked the BAYAN, KMU and Partido ng Bayan offices. We had the same reply: "Hindi namin alam kung nasaan siya." (We don't know where he is)

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This time, my heart was beating a bit faster... and louder too it seemed.

This can't be true.

I called up home and told Rudy that I haven't made heads nor tails of my father's whereabouts. My mother, I was told, has been crying, looking like in a state of shock.

This just can't be true.

By lunchtime, PNB called up and said that a press conference was to be held that afternoon to officially announce my father's disappearance.

I hurriedly went home and fetched my mother for the said conference. In between the presscon, we recieved reports from TFD that my father was not in any of the detention centers.

My hopes for my father slowly deminished.

I can see the grief in my mother's face when she announced that my father was missing. God I just can't find the word amply describing her strained, contorted, anguished face.

When the presscon was over, we went back to the family car. Inside she said, after a long deep heave, "Sana nakakulong lang siya." (I hope that he's just imprisoned)

I hoped so too but at around 8:00 that evening, Joe Taruc, a radio announcer, called us up and said that three bodies were found in Antipolo. He asked if we could possibly identify any of the bodies.

And it

was him!

He was

laying there

bloodied...

hogtied...

a big roll

of paper

gagged his

mouth.

The development shattered me to pieces. This can't be happening.

My mother begged that she be brought along to identify the bodies but Rudy ask her to stay and instead

told me to do the verification together with my uncle Bernie.

I suddenly had mixed feelings. I wanted to rush over the place to see the bodies but then I can't. The fear that one of the dead bodies was my father was just too much to take. I hate this job, I told myself as I went along.

And it was him ! God it was him. He was laying there bloodied... hogtied... a big roll of paper gagged his mouth. He was apparently thrown away.. the place being not the one where the execution took place.

But it can't be. This just can't be happening to us. How can they do this to him ? How can anybody do a thing so horrible as this ?

We in the family grieved the sudden death of my father. Years have passed since that awful night and not one of those behind his death was put to justice.

We miss him, my father.

To my father's enemies, it was the end. To us, his death was just the beginning. ♦

Rolando 'Ka Lando' Olalia was the chairman of the Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) and the Par-tido ng Bayan at the time of his death.

My Baptism of Fire

by: Mary Ann Yason

It happened on the 8th day of the strike. It was June 12, supposedly the country's independence day. The early night was warm and humid, and we, the strikers and sympathizers, have just eaten our supper at the gates of Magnolia, the ice cream company that also profits from its workers' processing of various dairy products.

Notwithstanding the strong business position of Magnolia (now known as *Magnolia-Nestle Corporation* by virtue of a business merger), it ranked 22nd among multinational corporations in the country (BusinessWorld's Top 500 and Next 500 Corporations 1993 edition) — it's workers aren't paid much.

Worse, Magnolia's capitalists further desire to scrimp on costs of production, where they consider workers as mere dispensable items. They want to retrench their regular workforce and in their place take contractuels or agency workers whom they will gleefully pay less salaries, grudgingly provide lesser (if ever) benefits, and whom they can divide and control more easily.

The *Ilaw at Buklod ng Manggagawa*, the workers union of San Miguel Corporation went on strike to protest against it. On its 8th day till night, I was then with numerous supporters. I was helping to monitor the strike, to document and report on the observance of their trade union and human rights when a Magnolia delivery van came roaring towards us at Gate 1. As I said we've just finished eating,

and we were passing the time by talking about life and work in general as we guard the picketline.

Now, almost every unionist knows that the strike is meant to paralyze production, to show the capitalists that it is the workers who are the decisive factor in production..... that only workers' acting on the materials make it into saleable and profitable goods.... but workers aren't mere hands, brains or in other words, labor power.... workers do feel and think too. Workers are human.

*"But how do you
talk sense
to a rampaging
large freezer
of a delivery van?"*

So how could you truly paralyze production? You must make sure your union is united, so no one will come to work while you're on strike. This however doesn't stop the capitalists from bringing in scabs, although the union could try to stop them from entering. The law, moreover, doesn't prohibit, in fact, it allows, deliveries and supplies and free movement of capitalists even when they are on strike.

That leaves the workers the necessity to convince the scabs, the paid goons and others whom capitalists use to bring deliveries and supplies in and out of their company's premises. The striking workers by virtue of the law on free ingress and egress, have to convince others who may not be union members to cooperate with them instead of with the capitalists.

But how do you talk sense to a rampaging large freezer of a delivery van that's speeding toward the gate without a slackening of its speed even as its light clearly showed there were strikers and sympathizers seated on its path?

Still the workers tried to stop the van, but their requests, shouts and pleas were drowned by the roar of the speeding vehicle. When the strikers saw the driver's intent on hurtling on, we tried to stand up and scamper away from its path. Two strikers beside me managed to stand up. I could have stood as well, when I felt hands on my shoulder. But when I saw a rattan stick tied to one of the hands, I realized they grasped me not for help!

Instead, the owners of the hands dragged me inside the compound as the van was entering the gate. I tried to free myself but they just tightened their grips on me. My shoulders, sides, buttocks, and back began to throb. I was already wounded by the force of their dragging. Still I tried to struggle free from their controlling hands. All I could see now were the

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headlights, the bumper and the rattan stick. Evidently not satisfied still, the monsters holding me suddenly left me in front of the moving van and just as soon I was under it!

I couldn't see anything under the van. The savage beast behind the wheel kept his foot on the accelerator. I felt its tires agonizingly, slowly, trying to finish me off. It almost treaded on me completely. I thought my lungs and sides would burst.

I heard Teddy, a unionist from Shoe-Mart (they too struck early this year), calling my name. He eased me away from under the van (mercifully it stopped moving), then away from its path. Immediately after that the van again roared away.

Teddy tried to make me stand up so he could help me walk. Through Teddy's sheer strength, I managed to walk on my knees (the best that I could do). It was as though my chest and stomach were paralyzed. I found it hard to speak, even to breathe.

We managed to get out of the Magnolia compound. As it turned out, the guards locked the huge gate after they have dragged me inside. Outside, the strikers were banging on the gate, shouting at the guards and to anyone else to open it. Teddy must have ran inside before the guards locked the gate. It took much shouting and banging and our names being called before the guards deigned to open the gate.

Once outside, I remembered saying again how I can't stand up. The strikers helped me lie down at the sidewalk. There was still shouting, cursing, stone-throwing and much running around between the guards and some strikers. Others hailed passing vehicles.

I was brought to a nearby hospital. The workers with me kept reassuring

me I'll be fine. They made me lie down on their legs inside a SkyCable vehicle.

I was taken directly to the Emergency Room. More workers and friends arrived. I thought the doctors and nurses were taking too long to clean my wounds. I then realized the warm liquid soaking

*"I couldn't
see anything
under the van.
I felt its
tires agonizingly,
slowly
trying
to finish me off."*

my shirt and pants was actually my own blood. The pain searing through my flesh as they cleansed the wounds was equal to none, but I neither felt nervous nor lost consciousness. Knowing many workers were with me gave me strength. Later, they told me there were persons inquiring about me on the phone. I don't happen to know these persons.

The next day and for the rest of my stay, my part of the hospital room crowded with guests and well-wishers, strikers, workers, friends, staff of CTUHR, EILER, CARLS and many, many others came. Truth is, I was unable to take a rest because of them. But they were so

good in strengthening me and my resolve. Maybe it was they who really healed my wounds. They truly helped to invigorate me. Workers from ARTEX, a strike-bound company since 1989, even sent me their message of support.

I was hospitalized for seven days. During that time, I was glued to workers' issues and news. I welcomed visitors coming from a strike. I was glad when I heard the strike of San Miguel Corporation particularly that of Magnolia, ended with quite successful results a few days after the horrible incident.

I pored the newspapers for accounts on the San Miguel Corporation workers, on other workers and on other strikes. News of the "incident" in the Magnolia compound eventually made a few lines somewhere inside the newspapers. I became one of the statistics of "hurt strike sympathizer".

But even as our issue got lost in the newspapers, or that the necessary charges we hoped FLAG will help us file against the Magnolia capitalists and its paid thugs haven't moved as swiftly as the van nor the guards, workers in other firms in various parts of the country are going on strike.

Strikes continue. So are cases of strikers being hurt, workers in their picketlines being harassed are violently dispersed. Even as I was still in the hospital, the staff of CTUHR, strikers and perhaps other human rights groups are monitoring and documenting violations of human and trade union rights, to expose it to everyone's attention, so hopefully, everyone would think of the plight of the workers behind the products they make.

I myself will continue praying for the workers who made, processed, packed and distributed the products we consume. ♦

Nonoy Salle: Bilanggong Pulitikal

ni: *Levie Ebio*

"Umamin ka na! Kasapi ka ng Alex Boncayao Brigade di ba?" sigaw-tanong sa kanya ng isa sa mga interogador.

Madilim ang paligid. Nakapiring ang kanyang mga mata. Nakaposas ang mga kamay sa ulunan habang nakahiga sa isang pintuang bakal na rehas. Tinatapak-tapakan ang buo niyang katawan pati mukha at ginagawang "ashtray" ang kanyang dalawang mata.

Umaalingaw-ngaw ang pagtatanong na iyon ng isa sa mga tumotortyur sa kanya. Kasabay ng tanong ay ubos-lakas siyang tinadyakan sa dibdib.

"Si Ka Benjie, alam ko kilala mo siya. Di ba siya ang P.O. (Political Officer) niyo?" Tanong pa ng mga interogador na anila'y mga rebel returnees.

"Umamin, ka na!" sigaw ng isa pa. "Kayo nina Ka Benjie ang nangreyd sa Detachment sa Bagbag Novaliches di ba... diba?!" Hindi pa man niya naigagalaw ang kanyang labi upang pabulaanan ang mga paratang sa kanya'y tinapakan ang kanyang mukha sabay sipa sa kanyang ulo.

"Organisador ha! Ikaw pala ang nagrerekrut ng mga partisano! Bigtime ka pala. Bigatin 'to, Jackpot tayo" ani ng interogador.

"Alam mo dati rin kaming nasa kilusan" ani ng isa pa.

Naging PO nga ako sa isang balangay sa Kiyusi. Pero tingnan mo, wala namang mangyayari sa pakikibaka ah. Kung ako sa iyo, makiki-pagtulungan na lang ako

sa gobyerno. Tingnan mo kami, wala kaming inaalalang security. Ang pamilya namin, suportado ng pamahalaan.

"Kung gusto mo tutulungan ka namin. Kailangan lang na ituro mo sa amin kung sinu-sino ang mga pinuno niyo sa ABB at sa kilusan."

"Malakas yan si SIR," sabat ng isa. "Kailangan lang na ituro mo kung sinu-sino ang mga kasamahan mo at mga pinuno niyo sa kilusan. Nasaan ba si Ka Benjie? Saan niyo dinala yong mga gamit na nakuha sa mga pinatay niyong mga Capcom?"

***"Umamin ka na!
kayo ni Ka Benjie ang
nangreyd sa detachment
sa Bagbag Novaliches
di ba? di ba?!!"***

Paulit-ulit ang kanilang tanong hinggil sa kaugnayan niya sa ABB. Paulit-ulit din ang nararanasang tortyur kaakibat ng pagtatangi ni Francisco "Nonoy" Salle, isang organisador at instruktur ng Association of Democratic Labor Organization [ADLO] na kasapi sa KMU. Naging headline sa pahayagan noong Abril 17, 1990 ang pagdakip sa kanya bilang "hitman" daw ng ABB.

Ayon kay Nonoy, matinding physical and mental torture ang kanyang dinanas sa unang araw at isang gabing interogasyon pagkahuli sa kanya.

Nariyan ang panakot na kukunin nila ang kanyang asawa at gagahasain sa harap niya. Masakit iyon kay Nonoy dahil bagong kasal lang siya at isang linggo pa lang niyangnakapiling ang kanyang asawa. Halos mabaliw siya lalo na nang sabihing ang buhay niya ay nasa kamay na ng mga militar, puwedeng-pwede siyang patayin at palabasing... tumakas.

Pagkatapos ng siyam na araw, iniharap si Nonoy sa midya kasabay ng pagsampa ng militar sa ngalan ni Lt. Col. George Alino, hepe ng CAPCOM North Sector Command ng kasong "Murder with Destructive Arson" sa piskalya ng Quezon City laban kay Nonoy Salle. Akala ni Nonoy, titigilan na ng militar ang interogasyon na may kaakibat na tortyur. Subalit kinagabihan, muli na naman siyang pumailalim sa interogasyon sa pamamagitan ni Lt. Absalon Salboro, ang tinatawag na "astig", pinakamatigas at pinakamatapang na CAPCOM Intelligence sa North Sector Command.

Pareho ang mga katanungan, pilit na pinaaamin. Nagkaiba nga lamang ang pamamaraan ng pagpapahirap. Dahil astig nga ang nagsasagawa, matapang din ang sismura sa panonortyur.

Pinosas ang kanyang mga kamay sa isang upuang bakal. Hindi water cure ang ginamit sa kanya kundi, "beer cure".

➡ NEXT PAGE

Bagamat hindi siya sadyang mangi-
nginom.

Nilagyan ng basahan ang kanyang
mukha at binuhusan ng binuhusan ng beer.
At habang isinasagawa ito, isang round
steel bar ang ipinapalo sa kanyang dibdib.

Lahat ng miyembro ng CAPCOM na
lumalapit sa kanya ay bumabatok, sumu-
suntok, sumasampal at dumudura.

Hindi pa nasiyahan ang astig na
CAPCOM intelligence. Ibinalibag siya sa
lamesa. Sa tindi ng sakit na nararam-
daman, nangungunyapit si Nonoy, nang
biglang kinaladkad siya paibaba. Pin-
aandar ang sasakyan at doon ginagawan
na siya ng mga militar ng spot report na
ang ABB hitman ay tumakas at habang
tinutugis ay 'di sinasadyang napatay.

Alam ni Nonoy na ito na marahil
ang kanyang magiging katapusan. Naging
mabilis ang kanyang naging pasya. Gi-
namit niya ang kanyang mga natutunan
sa pakikisalamuha sa kapwa, ang kasa-
nayan sa pagiging instruktur, ang pagko-
konsolida ng iba't-ibang mga ideya.

Agad gumawa ng kuwento at
kunwari ay nakikipagkoopereyt siya.
Tumigil ang mga pagpapahirap nang
mapasang-ayon niya ang mga militar sa
mga kwentong walang katotohanan.

Tatlong buwan siyang nanatili sa
Camp Karingal. Ginamitan siya ng reverse
psychology upang mapasang-ayon siya na
sumapi bilang "rebel returnee".

Mahinahon siyang kinakausap at
pinapangakuan ng kayamanan, ma-
rangyang kinabukasan at maging armas,
bilang proteksyon.

Nanatili ang kanyang prinsipyo at
paninindigan, tinanggihan ni Nonoy ang
lahat kahit alam niyang hindi niya ito
makakamit kung magpatuloy siya sa
kilusan ng mga manggagawa.

Nahuli si Nonoy Salle noong Abril
7, 1994 sa ganap na alas 11:30 ng umaga
sa Unang hakbang St. Galas Quezon City.

Doon pa lamang tinangka na siyang barilin
sa ulo ng mga CAPCOM na humuli sa
kanya. Masuwerte nga lamang at
maraming tao sa paligid kaya't isinakay
na lang siya't dinala sa iba't-ibang lugar.

Agad sinundan siya ng kanyang
asawa, kung saan-saan presinto at kampo
ng militar siya nakarating. Sa Kamp
Karingal niya natagpuan si Nonoy.

Ika-4:45 ng hapon, itinigil sandali ang
ginagawang tortyur kay Nonoy, upang
mai harap siya sa kanyang Misis. Hindi
sila nagkaroon ng pagkakataon na mag-
usap ng sarilinan. Ang mga nakapaligid
na CAPCOM ay nakikinig sa kanilang

*Nilagyan ng basahan
ang kanyang mukha
at binuhusan
ng binuhusan ng beer
habang isang round
steel bar ang ipinapalo
sa kanyang dibdib.*

usapan. Dahil sa tindi ng tortyur na
dinasas at sa bigat ng bintang na
kaso, naninikip ang dibdib na binitiwang
ang ilang kataga sa kanyang asawa.

"Mag-asawa ka na lang muli.
Matatagalan ang kasong ito."

Bagama't hindi pa nila halos
naranasan ang buhay mag-asawa dahil
sa ikli ng panahong pagsasama, naging
matibay ang kanyang asawa at
tinugunan niya ng buong pag-unawa ang
sinabi ni Nonoy.

"Magtutulungan tayo, nauunawaan
ko ang prinsipyo mo. Maging matatag
ka." Iba't-ibang kampo ng militar at
kulungan ang pinagdalan kay Nonoy.
Lagi-lagi naman siyang dinadalaw,

sinusubaybayan at binibigyan ng pag-
asa ang kanyang asawa.

Noong ika-28 ng Nobyembre, taong
1991, nasentensiyahan at iginawad sa kanya
ang habambuhay na pagkabilanggo.
Noong ika-20 ng Marso, 1992, dinala siya
sa Maximum Security Compound ng Na-
tional Bilibid Prison sa Muntinlupa.

Sa loob ng Muntinlupa, hindi niya
pinigilan ang kanyang sarili na ipagpa-
tuloy ang mga natutunan sa pakikisa-
lamuha sa manggagawa. Naging matu-
lungin siya sa mga bilanggo at
nakatulong siya sa pagpapalabas sa mga
bilanggong nakatapos na ng sentensiya.

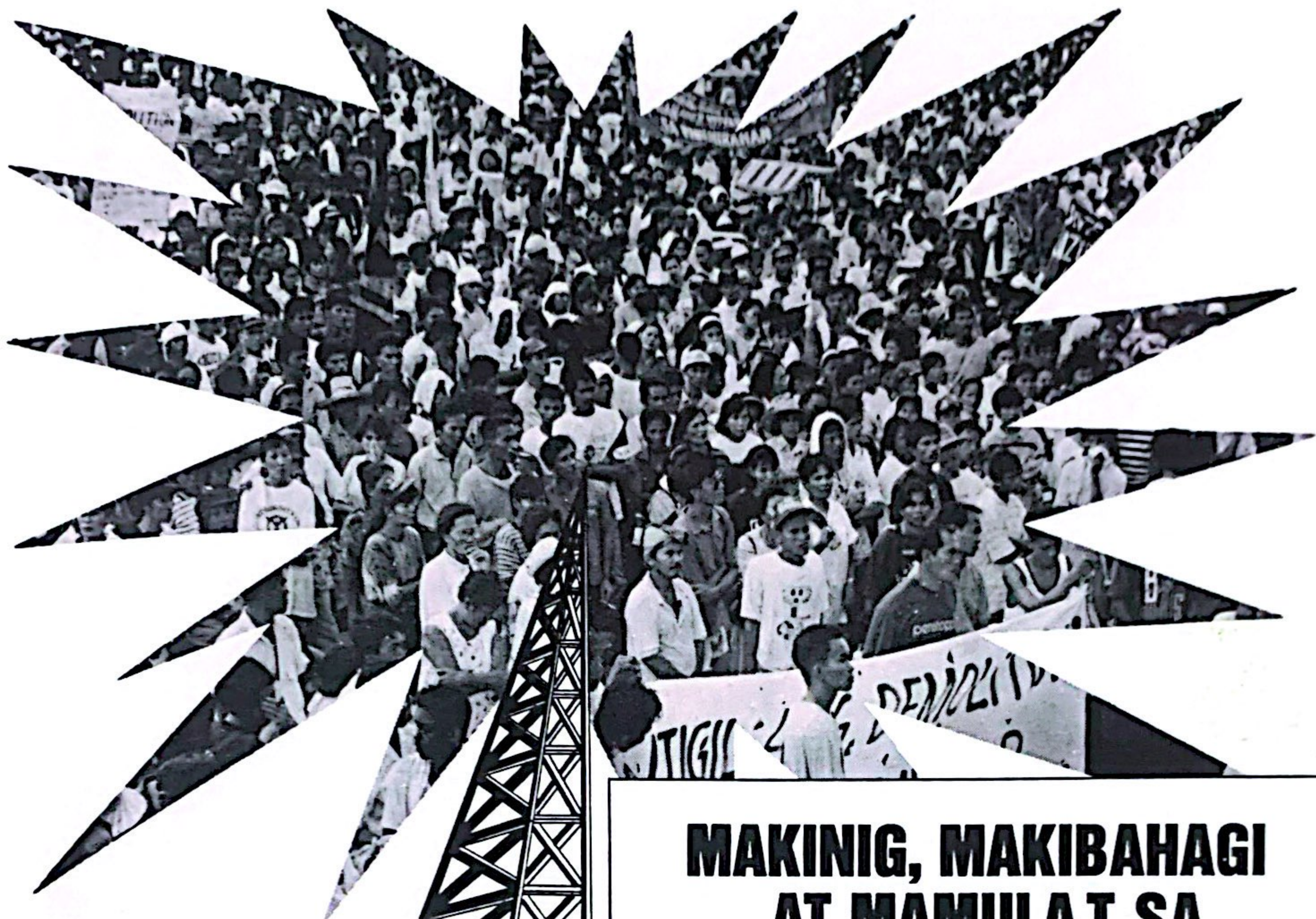
Kasama siya sa nagpursige upang
magkasama-sama sa isang lugar ang lahat
ng bilanggong pulitikal.

Isa sa mga naging gawain sa loob ay
ang pag-oorganisa ng iba't-ibang grupo
ng mga bilanggo at mga religious groups.

Nakapagtayo sila ng isang alliance
na tinaguriang HATOL (Huwag Angkinin
ng Tao ang Otoridad ng Langit). Anti-
Death Penalty ang batayan ng pagkakaisa.

Napatunayan ni Nonoy na hindi ka-
yang ibilanggo ang prinsipyo. Patuloy ang
kanyang pag-oorganisa sa loob ng bilang-
guan nang mabalitaan niyang ginulantang
ang iba't-ibang organisasyon ng matinding
problema. Naging masakit sa kanya ang
pangyayari. Tila sinisisi pa niya ang kayang
sarili dahil wala siyang magawa upang
makatulong sa pag-aayos ng problema.

Sa tulong ng iba't-ibang Human
Rights groups tulad ng Center for Trade
Union and Human Rights (CTUHR), Task
Force Detainees (TFD), Free Legal
Assistance Group (FLAG), KAPATID at
iba pa, siya'y nakalaya sa bisa ng
Presidential Pardon noong Disyembre,
1993. Paglabas ng kulungan alam na niya
kung saan siya tutungo. Sa ngayon si
Francisco "Nonoy" Salle ay nakikibaka
mulit sa pagsusulong ng Tunay Palaban
at Makabayang Unyonismo. ♦

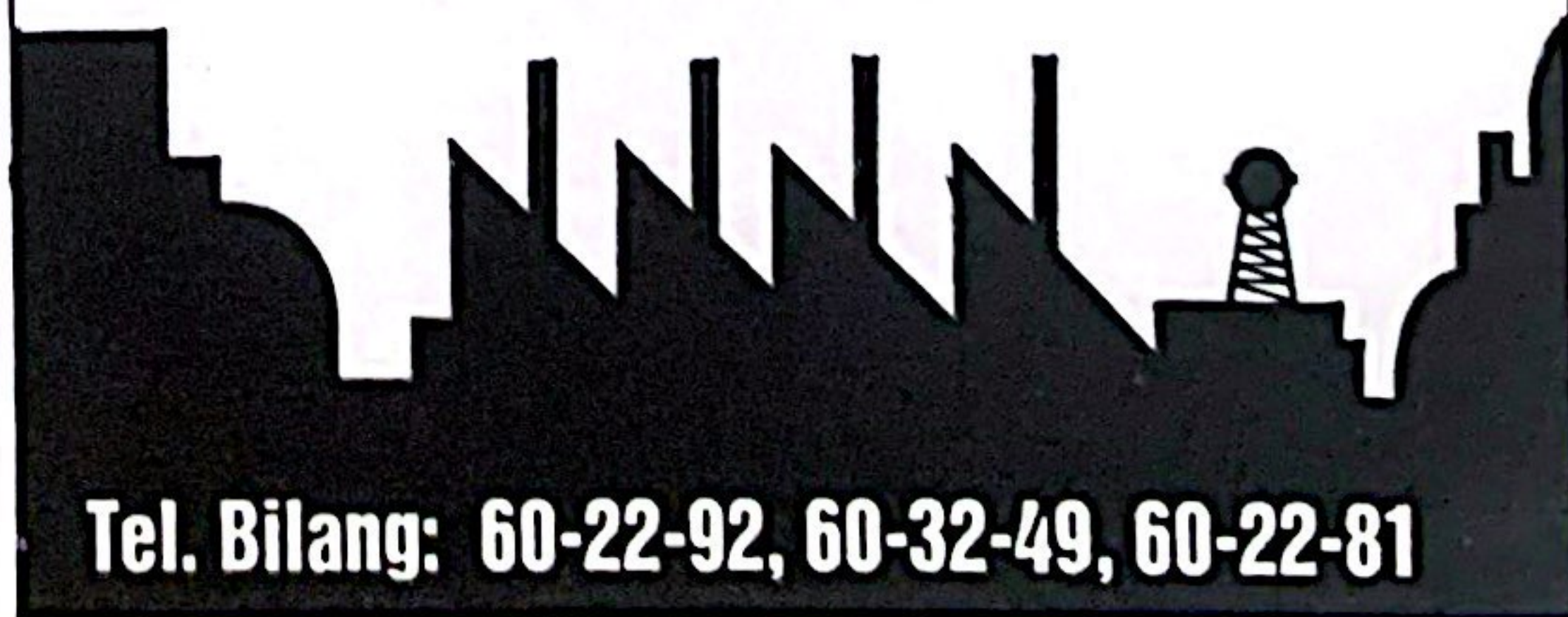


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