

International

Aquino takes tough stand

by BEN TIERNEY
Southam News

MANILA — An angry Philippine President Corason Aquino vowed here today to crush once and for all those who want to use force to push her from office.

Speaking on national television scarcely 12 hours after another coup attempt against her government, Aquino declared that the time had come for "justice and retribution" in dealing with her opponents instead of "reconciliation" as in the past.

"Let me make myself clear on this matter — we will not treat this like the Manila Hotel incident," Aquino said.

"I have ordered the chief of staff to proceed against the officers responsible for this act of rebellion... the full force of the law will be applied to everyone, civilian and military, implicated in this crime."

The last coup attempt against the Aquino government took place in July when die-hard supporters of deposed President Ferdinand E. Marcos — led by his 75-year-old former vice-presidential running mate, Arturo Tolentino — seized the most expensive hotel in Manila and demanded that Aquino immediately step down.

That so-called coup collapsed within 48 hours when staff simply abandoned the hotel, turning off the power as they left. Tolentino, as punishment, had his passport taken away, and the military officers involved were ordered to do extra pushups.

This time, said Aquino, things will be different. "This attempt," she said, glowering into the camera, "reflects the inability of some elements, both in the military and in the civilian sector, to accept the fact that civilian government is here to stay."



Masked Philippine rebel soldier responds to Marcos loyalists after military mutineers took Manila TV station early today.

Time for retaliation, not reconciliation

One rebel soldier died and 16 were wounded in today's dawn coup attempt, which involved upwards of 300 soldiers, reported in the early hours of the take-over effort to be attempting to clear the way for a return to the Philippines by Marcos later this week.

The rebels attacked three Manila area military installations and attempted to seize control of a number of news outlets. But they succeeded in securing only a privately owned TV station, which they could not get into operation.

The rebels, however, still had control of the station 12 hours later, and Aquino's military chief of staff, Gen. Fidel Ramos, was pleading with the 100 or so soldiers inside to surrender without further bloodshed.

"We have pointed out that this is already a lost cause, and we are promising them fair and honorable treatment," Ramos told reporters.

Ramos said the rebel soldiers are now denying that they are Marcos loyalists. But he was unable to say who or what they might represent if not the aging ex-president, now exiled in Hawaii along with his wife Imelda.

Reports that Marcos was planning a return to the Philippines later this week were, for the most part, greeted with derision in Manila; there have been rumors of the sort before.

But the reports, however improbable, were given some measure of credibility by an official announce-

ment that Marcos's invalid mother, now in her 80s, had inexplicably disappeared from her hospital room.

The old woman's disappearance was announced at a press briefing by Aquino's press secretary, Theodoro Benigno, who also noted that the president had made reference in the TV statement to civilian involvement in the coup attempt.

While Tolentino was the most prominent civilian involved in the Manila hotel coup attempt, the name of former defence minister Juan Ponce Enrile has been consistently linked with rumors of coups over the past six months.

Benigno would not, however, confirm or deny the possible involvement of a "former high government official" in this attempt, saying only, "You will learn the names when the charges are laid."

Enrile was not available for comment, campaigning outside Manila against ratification of the new constitution to be placed before Filipinos in a plebiscite next Monday.

The delay of that plebiscite is regarded by Aquino and her supporters as the main objective of the wave of unrest that has hit Manila in the last few days.

Last week, following a bloody demonstration on the doorstep of Aquino's Malacanang Palace, the 54-year-old president forecast a full week of violence leading up to Monday's vote.

She again made that view clear today as she not only pledged the vote would take place as planned, but once again predicted it would result in victory for her "yes" forces.

"Nothing," she said, "will derail our efforts to establish full constitutional democracy."

Skeptical public eyes Reagan today

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Ronald Reagan, out of the public eye for a month, is returning to centre stage tonight with a State of the Union address intended to show him in command, undaunted by the Iran-Contra scandal and promoting an agenda for arms control and economic strength.

Reagan will go before the country and Congress at 9 p.m. EST in a nationally broadcast address from the rostrum of the House of Representatives.

It will be his first major speech of the year, and it is expected to be the first time since before Christmas that he publicly mentions the secret arms sale to Iran and diversion of profits to Nicaraguan rebels, known as Contras.

Reagan's spokesman Larry Speakes said: "The president will go to Capitol Hill much in the same manner that he has done in previous years, and in each and every year his message has been a strong message... received and accepted by the American people."

"This will be the same Ronald Reagan that you saw in 81, 82, 83, 84, 85."

On the national security front, Speakes said Reagan would underscore the need to keep the United States strong so it can deal with adversaries and assist allies.

He said Reagan, with two years remaining in office, would "stress his desire to come to some conclusion with the Soviet Union on arms control and will pledge to actively seek and redouble his efforts in the area of arms control."

The Iran-Contra controversy has dominated the White House and severely damaged Reagan's standing in the polls. A Gallup survey said 46 per cent of the people in the United States feel the president is "not believable" while 38 per cent believe he is holding back information on the subject to protect himself and others.

Two polls released Monday indicated public apprehension about the course of the country and the economy is higher than it has been in at least four years.

★ IRAN ARMS DEAL

President 'told all'

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Ronald Reagan, silent for weeks on the Iran arms sale scandal, answered "all questions" Monday from an investigative committee about authorizing secret weapon shipments to Tehran, the White House said.

Reagan met for 76 minutes with the three-member committee he named Nov. 26 to investigate the actions of the National Security Council staff following disclosure that profits from secret arms sales to Iran were diverted to Contra rebels in Nicaragua.

"In the course of the meeting the president answered all of the panel's questions," a White House statement said. "The wide-ranging review included the development of policy in relation to Iran, the factual history of the president's role in the Iran initiative and the U.S. foreign policy process in general."

The statement said the group, known formally as the Special Review Board, will meet Reagan again at his invitation.

It was not known whether the president cleared up confusion resulting from contradictory statements by current and former White House aides about when he first authorized arms shipments to Iran.

Robert McFarlane, Reagan's former national security adviser, has told Congress the president had given prior approval for the first Israeli shipment of U.S. arms to Iran in August 1985.

White House chief of staff Donald Regan has said Reagan did not approve the shipment in advance, and Attorney General Edwin Meese said the president approved it only when he learned of it after the fact.

Fishermen saved on ice

MOSCOW (AP) — Emergency crews rescued 1,200 Latvian fishermen from drifting ice floes in the Gulf of Riga, the official Soviet news agency Tass said Monday.

Tass reported the last of the castaways was rescued Sunday evening and the rescue operation was declared "successfully completed" Monday when no other survivors were found. At least some fishermen were pulled from the water.

The government newspaper Izvestia said some deaths occurred in the ice break at Jurmala, a resort on the Latvian coast. It gave no further details.

But an official of the Sea Rescue Society in Jurmala said earlier in the day there were no fatalities or serious injuries.

Canada attacks wheat deal

WASHINGTON (Reuters) — U.S. officials, seeking to boost slumping U.S. wheat sales and counter subsidies by other governments, announced an offer Monday to subsidize the sale of up to one million tonnes of U.S. wheat to China.

The announcement drew immediate objections from Canada, one of Peking's largest wheat suppliers.

U.S. Department of Agriculture officials said Peking indicated during farm-trade talks earlier this month it would take advantage of the U.S. offer, which involves a subsidy in the form of wheat from government stocks.

The offer was designed to counter alleged unfair subsidies by the European Community, the officials said.

A Canadian Embassy official in Washington, who asked not to be identified, said Ottawa is concerned Washington's subsidy offer to China could damage Ottawa's export prospects.

China is Canada's second-largest wheat market, behind the Soviet Union, and receives 17 per cent of Canada's wheat exports, the official said.

ELECTIONS, OPENNESS

Major Soviet reforms hinted

MOSCOW (Reuters) — Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev proposed today that leading Communist party officials should be elected by secret ballot and that more than one candidate should stand for election.

The reform would mark a sweeping change in current Soviet practice. Party officials now are selected behind closed doors and then formally elected by an open show of hands at party meetings.

Gorbachev was speaking at a party Central Committee session that is expected to witness the dismissal of at least one member of the ruling Politburo who was closely associated with the late leader Leonid Brezhnev.

The Politburo member is Dinmukhamed Kunayev, whose removal as party leader in the Central Asian republic of Kazakhstan and replacement by an ethnic Russian was followed by riots in the capital of Alma-Ata.

The official news agency Tass said Gorbachev "came out in favor of making changes to the electoral system and suggested that they be published for nationwide discussion."

Gorbachev "raised the question of changing the order of electing heads of district, city, regional and republican organizations of the Communist party," Tass said.

"It was suggested that secretaries, including first secretaries, be elected by secret vote at plenums of the corresponding party committees."

"Members of the party commit-

tee would have the right to put on the voting ticket any number of candidates."

Party first secretaries are leading political figures in their areas, and regional and republican first secretaries form the backbone of the Soviet elite.

Gorbachev's proposals represented a significant step forward in his campaign to introduce more democracy, openness and public accountability into Soviet life.

Gorbachev also said more women, young people and citizens who are not party members should

be elected to senior public offices.

In an indication that the riots in Kazakhstan had provoked much concern in the Kremlin, Tass said Gorbachev's speech dwelt heavily on nationalities policy.

The disturbances in Alma-Ata last month have been officially blamed on students who were motivated by misguided Kazakh nationalism and manipulated by opponents of Gorbachev's drive for social and economic reform.

Apart from Kunayev, another Politburo member with a doubtful future is Vladimir Shcherbitsky, party leader in the Ukraine.

USSR PROPOSAL

Afghan talks rejected

WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States, sticking to its view that only a Soviet withdrawal will bring peace to Afghanistan, has rejected a Moscow proposal for private superpower negotiations on the conflict, a State Department official says.

The negotiating proposal was made by diplomats at the Soviet Embassy in Washington but was turned down because direct negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union "are not the answer," said the official, speaking on condition he not be identified.

"The Russians should be talking to the Afghans and presenting a short timetable for the withdrawal they have been saying publicly

they want to make," the official said Monday.

He said the negotiating proposal was made by diplomats of the embassy to Arnold Raphael, a high-ranking State Department policymaker nominated by President Ronald Reagan to be the next U.S. ambassador to Pakistan.

The United States has been willing to discuss the seven-year-long Afghan war with the Soviets. Indeed, U.S. administrations have raised the issue repeatedly at superpower meetings held since Soviet troops moved into Afghanistan in December 1979.

But the actual negotiating, sponsored by the United Nations, has been taking place between the Soviet Union and Pakistan since 1982.

Man's fast in sixth day

GRAND JUNCTION, Colo. (AP) — Hector Rodas, paralysed as the result of drug abuse, went without food or water for a fifth day Monday, exercising the right he won in court to starve to death, his lawyer said.

Rodas, 34, stopped taking nourishment Thursday, the day Hilltop Rehabilitation Hospital officials said they will not appeal a court order giving Rodas the right to determine his treatment.

Rodas was continuing to see visitors and had watched the Super Bowl football game Sunday but has not changed his mind about starving, lawyer Ed Durham said Monday.

Doctors have said Rodas would not be likely to live more than 10 days after cutting off water and food.

Last Feb. 10, Rodas overdosed on a mixture of cocaine and amphetamines.

Rodas cannot swallow or speak. His movement is limited to slight control of his neck, fingers and toes. He has one tube in his bladder and another in his stomach. He must wear diapers.



SCHOOL DISTRICT #57

1894 Ninth Ave. Prince George 564-1511

FRENCH IMMERSION PROGRAMME INFORMATION

Information sessions on French Immersion will be at the following schools presently offering the program:

College Heights Elementary

January 27, 1987 at 7:30 p.m.

Austin Road Elementary

January 28, 1987 at 7:00 p.m.

Spruceland Elementary

January 28, 1987 at 7:00 p.m.

—REGISTRATION for French Immersion will be held at these schools on Thursday, February 12, 1987 between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

—REGISTRATION for Programme Cadre will be held at King George V on Thursday, February 12, 1987 between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

These programs are available to children within School District 57 at these schools only.

Note: The French Immersion Program is intended for parents who may wish their children to learn French as a second language. Entry levels are kindergarten, grade 1 (early immersion) and grade 6 (late immersion). Programme Cadre is intended for children of francophone parents, children whose education or first language is French, and the siblings of children currently or previously enrolled in Programme Cadre.

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