

Melcher hits interference by Congress, IMF

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

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

EIR interviewed Senator Melcher after the hearing.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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