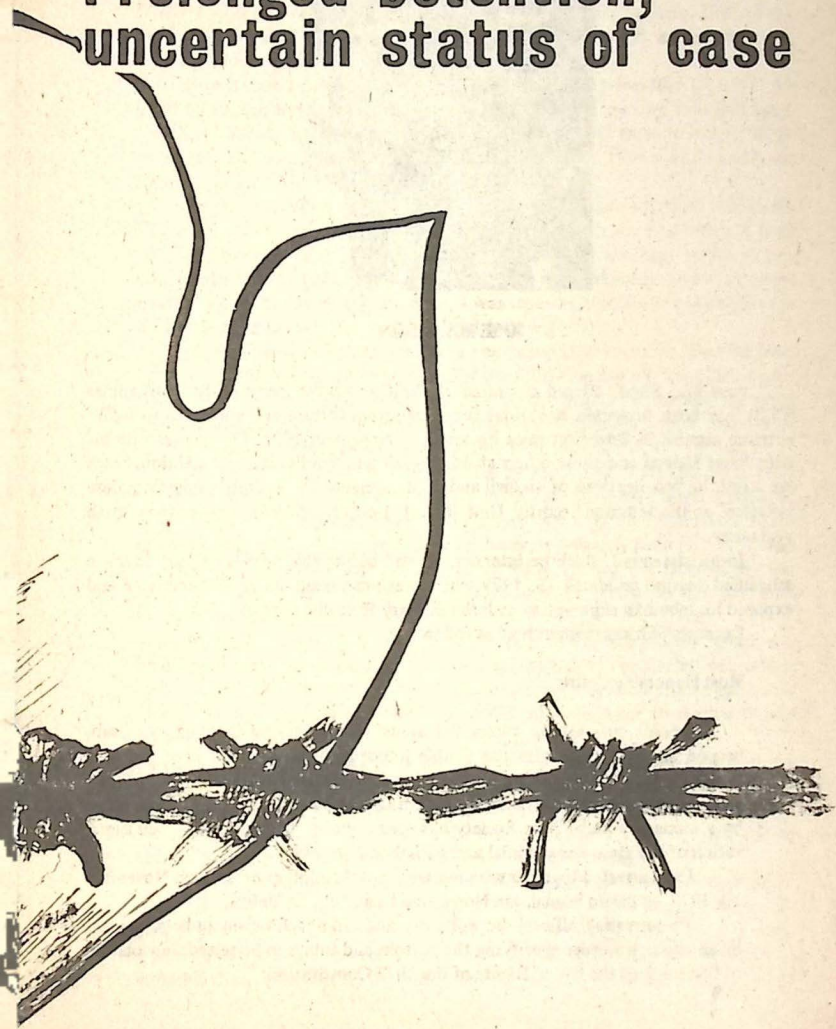


# Prolonged Detention, uncertain status of case





JOSE MA. SISON

Jose Ma. Sison, alleged chairman of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), has been subjected to various forms of severe torture and continues to suffer extreme anguish in detention since his arrest on November 10, 1977 together with his wife Juliet Delima and three others at Bo. Pagdalagan, San Fernando, La Union. Since his arrest, he was deprived of his civil and political rights. He is placed under complete isolation at the Military Security Unit (MSU), Fort Bonifacio for more than three years now.

In his statement which he intended to read before the Supreme Court during a scheduled hearing on March 13, 1979 which was postponed, he vividly described and exposed his inhuman experiences with the military from the time of his arrest.

Excerpts of his statement read as follows:

Most Honorable Court:

I point out, among others, the unjust redundancy of the charges of subversion and rebellion, with the double jeopardy involved. Most importantly, I deal with the illegitimate foundation of the autocratic government and its military commissions and the falsity of such claims as that a Republic has been saved by a monarchy and a New Society has been built by the preservation and aggravation of the same semicolonial and semi-feudal society.

I was arrested together with my wife and three other persons on November 10, 1977, at Barrio Pagdalagan Norte, San Fernando, La Union.

The arresting officers did not carry and did not show any judicial warrant or an executive order specifying the persons and things to be seized, in violation of Section 3 of the Bill of Rights of the 1973 Constitution.

Past 11 pm on November 10, 1977, I was blindfolded and brought to what I later found out after several months to be the Military Security Unit of the Philippine Army at Fort Bonifacio. I was pushed into a small, suffocating room with a boarded-up window.

Events took a drastic turn between 8 and 9 pm on November 13, 1977. Alleged that I was trying to escape, I was blindfolded with my own shirt and handcuffed behind my back by Lieutenant Melchor Acosta (I came to know his real name only on June 23, 1978). Another person came in after a while and I was hit with fist blows on the chest and floating ribs.

Later, I was chained to a cot by one hand and one foot, with handcuffs. The room was dark when I removed my blindfold with my free hand. A large flashlight was constantly on and focused on my face. I was kept awake by two young men in their twenties who made death threats and insults while asking me questions that had been asked before. I was repeatedly told I would be killed as if I had been in the act of escaping if I did not cooperate.

A pistol was always pointed at me by one of the two men. He said from time to time that I would be disposed of the following day. He kept kicking the foot of the cot. He would make a motion of wanting to hit me and the other man would pretend to hold him back. They cursed whenever I told them to let me sleep or to learn methods of investigation from Hawaii Five-O.

My free hand and foot were shackled by handcuffs to the cot, completely binding me to the cot. A pail of water was brought in. A face towel was placed across my nose and mouth. I had to be pinned down by the shoulders as I kept on struggling, lifting the upper part of my body, moving my head vigorously and at times succeeding in loosening the blindfold and seeing the faces of my tormentors. Someone sat down on my stomach to hold me down as the water cure was in progress.

Water was poured into my nostrils through the towel and my mouth was held shut for strangulation effect in order to force me to seek relief and answer questions. When I did not answer or said something they didn't like a gun barrel was poked into my mouth. They threatened to subject me to electric shocks before they kill me.

Near the end of the water cure, when I was about to fall asleep from exhaustion, one of them tried hypnosis but failed. I was without food and sleep for about 26 hours, from the beginning of the punching session to the end of the strangulation session. Even after the water cure, two relays of interrogators still came after my meal so I was not able to rest until midnight.

Up till November 17, 1977, interrogators came into the room every morning, afternoon and evening. The first ones came at 5 or 6 am and the last at 1 or 2 pm. I had to maintain my wits and integrity even though I was in a daze. I was not allowed to recover completely from the punching and water cure. I suffered chest pains due to the water and my hands were numb from the wrist

down as a result of the overtightness of the handcuffs during the torture session.

They took advantage of my forced isolation and the force, violence, threat and intimidation applied on me by offering relief in exchange for the self-incriminatory statement. A person of my educational background and political experience could not have refused to remain silent and to have a lawyer as a matter of right had he been allowed to exercise it.

But I was continually subjected to what turned out to be a worse form of torture. It was mental torture through physical isolation, constantly in chains and other straining conditions. It was clear my tormentors still wanted me to break my nerves or my principles.

The days, weeks and months passed until August 7, 1978, when my mother, father, sister and lawyer were allowed to visit me.

One or two officers would come to my cell once every two weeks from December 1977 to the middle of February 1978. Then they ceased to come to complete my isolation. My guards were prohibited from speaking to me except when they say something in behalf of their superiors.

I was kept in a fully enclosed cell, a small room with a boarded-up window. From 11 AM to 5:30 PM during November to January, it was oppressively hot. In the summer months, it was practically hell during the day and even at night. During the day, a wet cloth dried up in a few hours' time.

I was shackled to my cot by my right hand and foot from November 13, 1977 to June 23, 1978 for 24 hours a day. I consider that even more savage than the punching and strangulation sessions. I was told by an officer and guards that I had to be chained because I had refused to cooperate or because I would escape or commit suicide.

For four months, I was deprived of my eyeglasses despite the unequal visual capacity of my eyes. I had to suffer eyestrain and headaches every day. I was told I did not need eyeglasses because I had nothing to read from the ceiling and walls.

I had nothing to read for four months. I was given something to read for a few days and again I had nothing to read for a longer stretch of time.

Until now, I remain in chains in the same cell. Since June 23, 1978, I have been disconnected from my cot but I am still shackled on both feet by handcuffs during my waking hours, limiting my movements. At night, I am chained to the cot. The inspectors still come often to flash a light on me.

From November 10, 1977 to January 17, 1978, I was not allowed any sunshine. The next 11 months, I had just 24 hours total of sunshine. The standard prison rule is one hour daily sunning even for criminals already condemned to death. Only since December 1978, was I allowed to have some sunshine but still only three times a week for an hour each day.

Whenever I am brought out of my room for any reason, I am blindfolded. The blindfolding sometimes becomes painful when I am bumped into things by

careless or mischievous escorts, I feel it is designed more to humiliate me than anything else.

I have not been allowed to read even the Marcos-controlled newspapers of Manila. Reading materials from relatives and friends are not allowed to reach me. When Attorney Joker Arroyo gave me a copy of the pamphlet, "Legal Rights of Political Detainees" last February 23 during a hearing, it was immediately confiscated as soon as I was out of the public view. When Attorney Juan T. David, my lawyer, gave me a copy of his Habeas Corpus petition to the Supreme Court involving my wife and me, it was also taken away as soon as he left the MSU reception room last February 28.

Visitations by lawyers and family allowed to me since August 7, 1978, have been so restricted that in effect there is only one person in my family who can visit me.

My wife and I are detained in the same compound. After more than 15 months since our arrest, we have still not been allowed to meet and talk by ourselves at some respectable length, despite precedents which allow not only conjugal meetings between co-accused husband and wife but even temporary release on account of children.

My mother and sister wanted my wife and me to be visited by religious people. I have agreed to welcome their visit since August 7, 1978 but my custodians do not allow them. I was told one time that communists do not talk to religious people. Another time, I was told that religious people are in collusion with communists.

My requests for medical and dental treatment from MSU medical personnel have not been attended to for periods as long as five months. Each time that my dental treatment was allowed, the attention was superficial and incomplete. The last time my two lower front teeth were treated for filling, my dentist practically busted these plus one more tooth, dealing permanent damage to them. I am also skeptical of the medical treatment I received concerning an obstruction in the pupil of my left eye.

In isolation, minor vexations that might be dismissed as trifling can spell misery. Once I was asked to undress completely in my cell to be inspected thoroughly before meeting a visitor. When I was chained to my cot 24 hours a day, I was not allowed to clean my cot and get rid of bugs. I was not allowed to have my hair or nails cut for as long as five months. While eating, my guard would tell me to hurry up because he had a loose bowel movement.

My handcuffs were replaced with new ones with sharp edges and tightened at the slightest pressure. When I complained they were replaced by handcuffs with only one chain link (usually they have two or three) to limit my movements more.

I am aware that so far my ordeal in the hands of the fascists is slight in

comparison to the torture suffered by several of my co-accused. It is also nothing in comparison to the torture and murder of thousands of nationalist martyrs. I am determined to keep on fighting and I am prepared to undergo further brutality until my tormentors decide to kill me.

Despite his being detained under subhuman conditions, plus the ordeal of tortures, he underwent, Joema became more firm in his fight and defense of the people's democratic cause. When he was bluntly told by Major Gen. Fidel Ramos, PC chief, during their first meeting of his arrest that his captivity has broken the backbone of the CPP, he answered calmly that as long as the problems of society prevail, the people will always struggle to change the situation.



**JULIET DELIMA-SISON**

Juliet, too, has suffered because of her arrest and detention. She is imprisoned in the same detention center but they are not allowed to be together.

Juliet is charged with rebellion in the Karagatan-Andrea Case and violation of RA 1700 (Anti-Subversion Law). The case is filed with Military Commission No. 2.

On account of their children left behind with no parents to care for them and based on the policy of the military that when a couple is detained, one of them must be released, it is but just for her to be released immediately.



**SATURNINO OCAMPO**

Satur, as he is fondly called by friends, is 41 years old, married and has four children. A leading journalist prior to the declaration of martial law, he was the Asst. Business Editor of the *Manila Times*, the leading national daily padlocked by the military government. He was also President of the Business Economic Reporters Association of the Philippines (1970-1972), and Vice-President of the National Press Club of the Philippines (1971-1972)

He was arrested on January 14, 1976 by constabulary and army intelligence operatives and taken to the headquarters of the First Military Intelligence Group (1st MIG) in Camp Olivas, Pampanga. There he was stripped naked, manacled, blindfolded, and then given "electric shock" for hours on the genitals and other parts of the body. His nipples, sexual organs, and toenails were burned with lighted cigarettes; his ears violently slapped repeatedly. Countless fist blows, karate chops, and kicks were delivered on the various parts of his body. Not content with keeping him without food for sometime, his sadistic military captors made him eat human excreta.

He was kept in isolation in three different places for nine months, during three months of which he was manacled to a bedpost all day and night. He was denied access to his lawyers of choice until after nine months. The first three months he was kept in a "safehouse" and the succeeding six in isolation cells in Camp Olivas and Camp Crane. On January 10, 1977, he was transferred to Bicutan Detention Center.

The government has charged him and a number of co-accused, with rebellion and subversion in two separate cases now pending before military tribunals. The rebellion case, better known as the Karagatan-Andrea Case, was initially heard by Military Commission No. 1 in July 1977. The last hearing was held in February 1979, then a month later the Supreme Court issued a restraining order that suspended further hear-

ing of the case. The subversion case was initially heard on October 3, 1978. In March 1979, further hearing of the case was suspended by the Supreme Court upon the habeas corpus petition filed by the respondents.

Satur should be released on humanitarian and other grounds. He has been unduly imprisoned for more than four years, his human and constitutional rights violated at every turn since his arrest.

On April 22, 1980, Pres. Marcos told the American Newspaper Publishers Association (ANPA) convention in Honolulu: There is not a single journalist in prison in the Philippines today. If you can name one, I will have him here in 24 hours." Then he added: "There are political dissenters who claim to be journalists."

Obviously, Marcos sought to cover up Satur's detention. He is a legitimate journalist who has been a consistent political dissenter, before and after martial law. Although in prison, he has issued statements and has written open letters (mostly to fellow journalists and editors) expressing his criticism of government policies inimical to the Filipino people's interest. His is a voice that must be allowed to be heard.



JOSE LUNETA

Pepe is 36 years old, married and has one child. He graduated from the University of the Philippines with a bachelor's degree in Political Science. After college, he returned to his home province and took up a teaching job at the Lyceum of Batangas.

He was manhandled, hogtied and blindfolded upon his arrest in October 17, 1976 in Malabon, Metro Manila. He was brought to a military "safehouse" where he was stripped naked, made to lie down on the toilet floor, and given the "water cure" treatment. With hands and feet bound to a cot, he was beaten black-and-blue with a family-size pop bottle. He was also given "electric shock" treatment, the electrodes attached to his wrists, small fingers, sexual organs, ankles and left base of his neck. Continuously, for four months, one of his hands was handcuffed to a bedpost 24 hours a day (removed only when eating or going to the toilet). From time to time, he would suffer painful beatings when his guards were drunk.

Pepe was under solitary confinement and denied the right to visits from immediate family and legal counsel for almost a year since his arrest. During that period, he was kept in a "safehouse" for five months and in the isolation cell of the PC Stockade in Camp Crame thereafter. His immediate family was allowed to see him only on December 26, 1976. He was transferred to Bicutan on June 1977.

He is currently facing two separate charges before military tribunals. In the first, he is one among 63 respondents accused of violating the Anti-Subversion Act. Trial of the case is suspended by virtue of a restraining order issued by the Supreme Court. Of the original respondents, only seven remain in prison. In the second case, he is also one among the 92 respondents accused of rebellion. The trial of the case has likewise been suspended by the Supreme Court, pending resolution of pleas for habeas corpus and other motions involving constitutional questions raised by the respondents. Of the 92 respondents, 80 had already been released, and only 12, including Pepe, remain in detention.

Pepe should be released on the ground that his legal and constitutional rights have been grossly violated; he suffered grave torture, prolonged solitary confinement, was denied legal counsel for a long period after arrest and has been deprived of speedy trial. He should be granted even temporary release if only for the sake of equal justice since most of his co-accused in the two cases have been already released.

Satur and Jose were forcibly transferred from Bicutan Rehabilitation Center on November 16, 1980 because they were accused of being the leaders in the hunger strike which was then launched by the detainees. The two were carried bodily from their dormitories to a Fiera filled with soldiers. All the while, their co-detainees, with locked arms, formed two lines till the gate singing "Ang Bayan Ko" (My Country).

The two were brought to the Military Security Unit, Fort Bonifacio where they are presently detained.

It was a few weeks later that their lawyer was allowed to visit them. Starting January 1, 1981, the two were allowed to sun three times a week for 30 minutes each. Daily newspapers were brought to them and their relatives could visit them once a week for one hour. However, the food in the detention center is not sufficient and palatable.

Satur and Pepe have suffered enough. It is but just that they be released as soon as possible.



SIXTO CARLOS, JR.

Sixto Carlos, Jr. is 32 years old, married with two children. He was arrested on the evening of April 23, 1979 at the corner of Boni Avenue and EDSA in Mandaluyong. He had just alighted from a tricycle and was walking quickly towards the overpass when he noticed a red car come to a sudden stop beside him. A man in civilian clothes quickly alighted and chased him with a revolver in his hand. Another car also came to a sudden stop on the other side of the street in front of the gasoline station and two men, also in civilian clothes, ran out for him. One of them had a revolver and the other held something like a sub-machine gun, resembling that of a greasegun.

In the hands of his captors, he received various severe tortures such as "water cure", electric shock, punches and slaps. The following are excerpts from his Tagalog statement. The English version is faithful to the original.

One of the most painful things I experienced all day was the continuous pounding of my testicles. One of them sat on the sofa by my knees. By means of what seemed a small wooden hammer, my testicles would be hammered by quick sharp blows.

Repeatedly, I asked them to get me some medicine for my heart ailment. They knew about this ailment because they got results of my ECG test administered in 1977 out of my wallet. Rather than granting my request, they even used this as provocation. "We will give to you if you tell all." "What further need have you for medicine - we are going to kill you anyhow."

At other times, the hard blows to the chest would be delivered simultaneously with the twirling of chicken feathers and thin coconut-leaf midribs in my nostrils. My face contorted with the stinging and the pain of this.

When I did not respond to the "pleadings" of the old man, the cover over

my eyes was tied around my head. They aided me to rise and leave the room. I was made to lie down on a wide object (it felt like a flat iron sheet). This was cold against my back. Someone removed my briefs. I heard them move an object closer to me which seemed to have rollers and grated against the cement floor . . . a hook was tied to my hogtied hands. Next, I heard the grating of steel which . . . must have been some kind of a pulley. They pulled up the hook, pulling my hogtied hands and raising the upper portion of my body, suspended, while my feet remained attached to the edge of the iron sheet. How it hurt - stretching the flesh and bones on my arms (particularly since the handcuffs seemed to be of the type which automatically tightens when tugged at). In this hanging position, a towel was placed over my nose and mouth and again the water from the hose commenced, and also the interrogation. The same questions over and over again while the pulley pulled me higher, bit by bit. The "water cure" continued. I would be jerked upwards in the attempt to be able to inhale some air. Only for a moment would they remove the hose when the interrogator would ask a question, and then the hose would be returned . . . It seems there were a number of people gathered around me, either to goad the others on or merely to watch the proceedings.

In the evenings, I could hardly sleep from the mosquitoes and the heat of my room. It would not get cool until around midnight and just before dawn it would be very cold. I asked for a blanket but this was not given. I had only my polo shirt to use as a blanket. Many times through the nights, the guard would come to unlock the door and come in to check on my hand - and handcuffs. On many occasions, I would ask them to loosen the tight cuffs. On several nights, occurring towards dawn, someone would suddenly open the door, enter quietly and slowly come near me. He would not stir nor move for a few moments. Then suddenly, he would grab me by the neck as if poised to strangle me . . .

In the early seventies, Sixto actively took part in protest actions, along with many Filipinos, to expose the neo-colonial status of the country and the intensifying fascist schemes of the government. As a student, he was an active scholar and leader in UP, because of his membership in militant nationalist organizations and active participation in the anti-fascist movement. He was one of the first 60 placed on the wanted list of the government when the writ of habeas corpus was suspended.

Upon his arrest, he was a leader of the National Democratic Front (NDF), an alliance of progressive groups from the different sectors of Philippine society, which desires and acts to change the fascist, feudal and neo-colonial nature of the country.

Sixto was missing for four months. The search for him was sparked by his failure to show up in an appointment he had with his wife, who was then pregnant, and his son. At first, the family was given firm denials and misleading answers whenever they approached concerned military authorities regarding his whereabouts.

After months of tortuous inquiry, he was discovered to be in solitary confinement in a 7 x 4 feet cell at MSU, Fort Bonifacio. Until now, he is still detained in an isolation cell. Since then, only his wife and his two little sons aged 5 and less one year old, have been allowed to visit him. His parents and sisters have been denied visitation rights. His lawyer, Atty. Jose Diokno, was allowed to see him once. But then, Sixto was told by the military that if he kept Diokno as his lawyer, the visitation privileges of his wife and children might be cut off.

His family has presented the following demands to the military authorities but no actions have been taken yet as of this writing:

- 1) that he be transferred to a regular detention center, specifically to Bicutan Rehabilitation Center so he could have a community life;
- 2) that his parents, relatives and friends be allowed to visit him;
- 3) that he undergoes a regular medical check-up by his own doctor.



**BERNABE BUSCAYNO**

Bernabe, the legendary commander of the New People's Army (NPA), was captured during a military operation in Mexico, Pampanga on August 26, 1976. His wife was also detained but subsequently released.

Bernabe is one of the respondents in the case "PP vs. Aquino, et. al." where he is charged with violation of Republic Act 1700 (subversion). He is also charged with

rebellion in the Karagatan-Andrea case. The charges were filed with MC No. 2 sometime in August 1973. Initially, he was tried in absentia since he was not yet arrested when the trial began.

In November 1977, the three respondents in the said case were found guilty and sentenced to death by musketry. A worldwide outcry against the court's decision caused Pres. Ferdinand Marcos to order the case to be reopened. Bernabe elevated certain legal issues to the Supreme Court bearing mainly on the partiality of the proceedings. The court consequently issued an order restraining the Military Commission from further proceeding with the case until it decides the issue.

Bernabe is kept in isolation at the 4th Regional Security Unit, Camp Crame, Quezon City. The military tortured him and tried every means to extract information. They also forced him to implicate others.

His cell is damp and humid allowing only little sunshine to enter. It is near a filthy, foul-smelling toilet.

Meanwhile, his wife and children have been deprived of their sole breadwinner. She and the children, including their baby born on May 1979, have been living on the charity of friends. Mila cannot get any employment as she does not have any particular skill and people are hesitant to employ her as she carries the stigma of a detainee's wife. Besides, her full-time job of being mother and father to the children ties her down to the house. Mila, however, makes it a point to visit her husband regularly.

Bernabe, likewise, carries a double burden — his continuous detention and the knowledge that his wife and children are suffering so many hardships and he is unable to do anything to help them.

For the benefit of both Bernabe and his family, he should be released on humanitarian grounds.



## VICTOR CORPUZ

Victor, married with three children, was a cadet in the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) when he defected to the New People's Army (NPA). After his arrest on January 30, 1976, he was placed under solitary confinement and tortured. He has been charged with rebellion in the Karagatan-Andrea case.

Victor is psychologically imbalanced because of his arrest and subsequent experiences in detention.

His wife supports their children through the selling of food in the sidewalk stores. This further aggravates the condition of Victor.

The detainees in isolation are human beings who must be treated with dignity and respect as any other detainee would be treated. Being isolated, without contact from the outside world, is in itself a form of torture. This is apart from the physical sufferings that they underwent in the hands of their torturers.

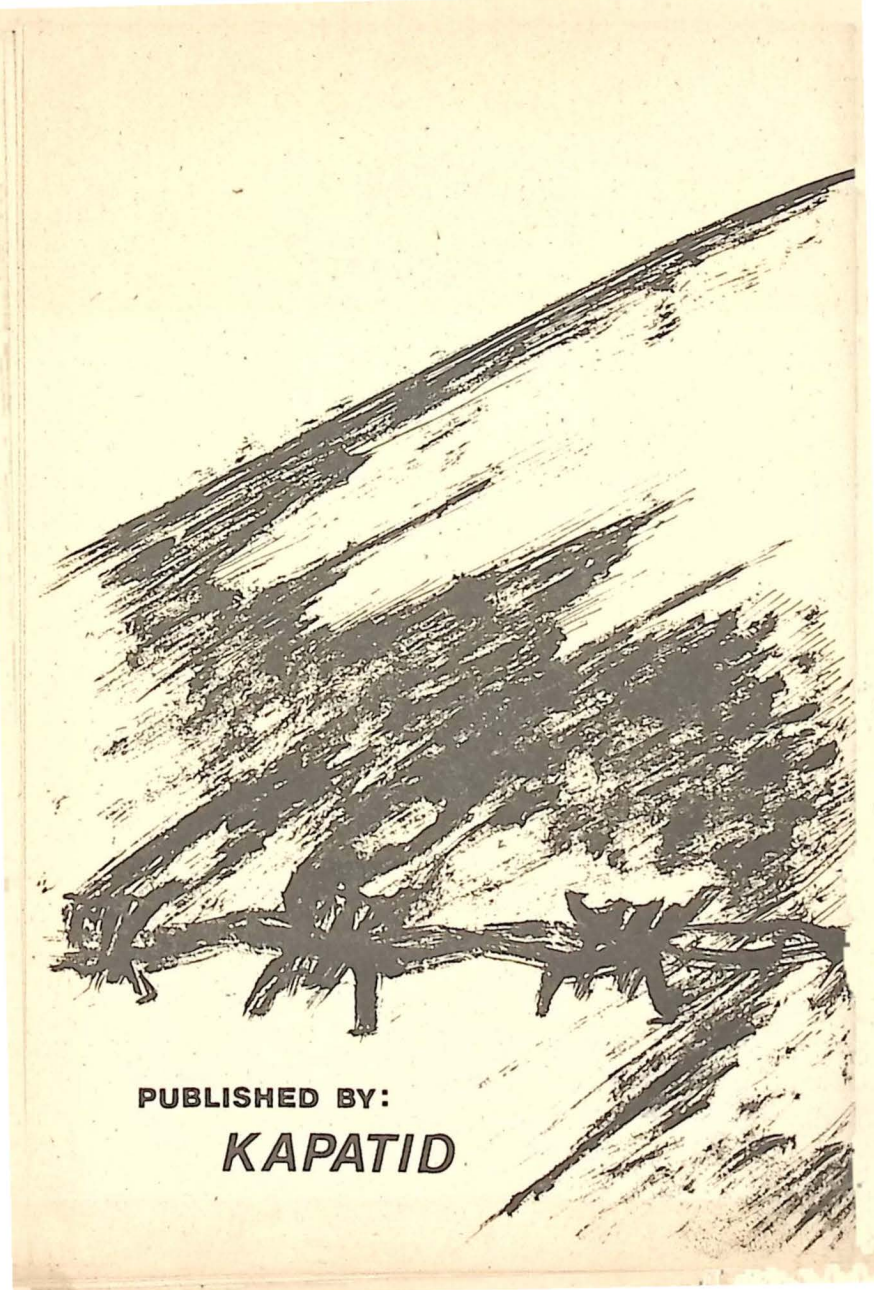
The readers are earnestly requested to demand the release of these detainees in the light of the the lifting of martial law. Please write to the following to present the demand:

President Ferdinand Marcos  
Malacañang Palace  
Manila, Philippines

Minister Juan Ponce Enrile  
Ministry of National Defense  
Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City

Deputy Minister Carmelo Barbero  
Deputy Minister for Civilian Relations  
Office for Detainee Affairs  
Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City  
The Philippine Embassy in your area





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