

A SUMMARY OF MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS IN PHILIPPINE MEDIA UNDER MARTIAL LAW

Newspapers and Magazines

1. Upon the declaration of martial law, all publications were closed by the military. Subsequently, permits to open or re-open were issued to publications, whose owners are sympathetic to the Marcos regime, being close relatives or friends of Ferdinand Marcos or his wife.
2. Foremost among the newspapers allowed to operate and are now in circulation are:
 - (a) Daily Express - it is an open secret that this is owned by the Marcos clan.
 - (b) Times Journal - owned by Francisco "Kokoy" Romualdez, brother of Imelda R. Marcos.
 - (c) The Bulletin Today - formerly the Manila Daily Bulletin and owned by Hans Menzi, aide-de-camp of Ferdinand Marcos. Menzi is also the Chairman of the Print Media Council, the government agency which regulates and licenses print media.
3. The Manila Times, largest English daily in the Philippines, was summarily closed and its Publisher, Mr. Chino Roces, imprisoned for three months.
4. The Manila Chronicle, second largest English daily, was also closed by the military and later, its premises and facilities used by the Times Journal, without paying a single centavo. Its publisher, Eugenio Lopez, Jr., was imprisoned for five years until his escape in October of 1977.
5. The Philippines Free Press was closed and its publishers, Teddy Locsin, imprisoned for three months.

Broadcast Media

1. As in the case of print media, upon the declaration of martial law, all radio and television stations were closed by the military except only the government station which was needed to disseminate instructions to the populace.
2. Broadcast companies which were later allowed to operate were required to submit to censorship and limited to owners and operators who would be sympathetic to the martial law government. Most were relatives or cronies of the Marcos family and all could be relied on to toe the line.
3. The outstanding networks operating today are:
 - (a) Radio Philippine Network (trade name: Kanlaon Broadcasting System) and the Banahaw Broadcasting Company, both owned by Roberto Benedicto, Philippine Ambassador to Tokyo and a close confidante of Marcos. (See more details below)

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- (b) Republic Broadcasting System (trade name: GMA Radio Television Arts), formerly owned by the Stewart family but control has been acquired by Gilberto Duavit, another crony of Marcos and Secretary of the Department of Youth and Sports Development.
- (c) Inter-Island Broadcasting Company, formerly owned by the Sorianos and the Canoys, now controlled by Roberto Benedicto (through dummies) and renamed Inter-Continental Broadcasting Company.

The above-named broadcasting networks control all television and radio operations in the Philippines, except for a few provincial radio stations which are equally subservient to the Marcos dictatorship.

4. Before martial law, the biggest radio-television company in the Philippines was the ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corporation, owned by the Lopez family and headed by Eugenio Lopez, Jr. (See Manila Chronicle, Print Media, above.) ABS-CBN had 7 TV and 21 radio stations. Like all the other media companies, when martial law was declared, ABS-CBN was closed by the military which took custody of all its premises, studios, equipment and facilities all over the country. As already mentioned, Eugenio Lopez, Jr. was imprisoned for 5 years.

On June 6, 1973, the studios of Benedicto's KBS stations were razed by fire. On June 8, 1973, KBS took over the buildings, studios and facilities of ABS-CBN, then under custody of the military. KBS occupied said ABS-CBN properties for five years, used the facilities and equipment, made considerable profit from those operations, then - when new KBS buildings and studios were completed - simply abandoned the ABS-CBN premises without any inventory or accounting ever being made to the lawful owners nor to the military which was supposed to have custody of the ABS-CBN properties.

KBS did not pay ABS-CBN a single centavo for rental, nor for a considerable number of equipment lost or damaged, not counting the potential profit ABS-CBN could have made. Before the KBS fire, there had been a proposal for ABS-CBN to resume operations as a cooperative, which would have enabled the company to continue the employment and livelihood of more than a thousand employees and even pay off its creditors, the bulk of its obligations being to American financial institutions like FNCB.

It has never been explained why a network, taken into its custody by the government's armed forces, should peremptorily be made available to a private commercial broadcasting company, without the consent of nor any compensation or restitution to the lawful owners.