



# TI PROGRESIBO

vol. 2 no. 4  
April 1981

Newsletter of the Union of Democratic Filipinos (K.D.P.)

## Hawaii Filipino Festival Coming June 13

Plans for the June 13 barrio "Fiesta Grande!" at Ala Moana McCoy Pavilion are now underway.

The Festivals Committee of the 75th Anniversary Commission has put together an all day program that will include door prizes, food booths, arts and crafts, entertainment by local artists, and fireworks in the evening.

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## Immigrants Rights Conference To Be Held

"After 75 Years, the Struggle for Equality Continues." This is the theme of the 2nd annual conference on Filipino immigrant rights to be held on May 16, 1981, Saturday, at the Harris Methodist Church.

The conference is organized by the Hawaii Chapter of the National Filipino Immigrant Rights Organization, is posed as a challenge to a common belief that, after 75 years, Filipinos "have made it" in Hawaii.

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- \* \*Beginning next issue we will be \*
- \* listing the sites where you may \*
- \* pick up the TI PROGRESIBO in Hono- \*
- \* lulu. (We're working on other \*
- \* areas, too!) \*

"This conference will be the FIRO's contribution to the celebration of the 75th anniversary of Filipino migration to Hawaii," says Atty. Joe Florendo, Co-Coordinator of the organization.

"Whenever we are asked if Filipinos have already 'made' in Hawaii, most community leaders are quick to name Filipinos who hold state or govern-

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ment jobs such as judges, legislators, directors, etc. to show that Filipinos are now 'equal' to other ethnic groups who have many representatives in government and businesses," explains Florendo.

"We in NFIRO, however, have a different view. We do not believe that Filipinos as a community have 'made it' yet. Statistics from the U.S. census, the Hawaii Data Book, and other studies show that Filipinos are still far from having 'made it'," he added.

Florendo also explained how Filipinos in Hawaii today make up the largest number of service workers. These are the maids, janitors, waiters and waitresses that work in hotels and hospitals. He explained that Filipinos make up nearly 15% of the population in Hawaii, but only 3% of the student population at UH Manoa are Filipinos. They also have one of the highest drop out rates in the public schools.

"These are just some of the issues we want to address at the conference," says Mary Jane Galbiso, another conference organizer. We hope that the resolutions that will be introduced will call for concrete action that can be taken up by the community," she added.

The conference, according to organizers, has four goals: (1) to further the struggle against discrimination, (2) to inform the community about current issues, (3) to revive the progressive spirit of the first wave of Filipino immigrants, and (4) to orient the participants on the need to unite with other immigrant groups.

Four workshops will be held to discuss bilingual education, equal access to social services, national and local legislation affecting immigrants, and equal opportunities and treatment in employment.

"We in NFIRO believe that community participation is the key towards gaining the rights that Filipinos deserve in employment, education, and social services in the same spirit that the first wave of Filipino immigrants struggled for their rights as workers in Hawaii."

For more information about NFIRO and the conference, call Joe Florendo at 696-6321 (days) or 668-7725 (eves), or Marvie Tacazon at 847-6678 (eves).

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Participating community organizations will provide all the Filipino delicacies in the food booths and will compete against one another for the best booth display award.

These organizations, representing a wide variety of interests, include the Union of Democratic Filipinos, the Women's Civic Club, Cabugao Sons and Daughters of Hawaii, the Committee for Human Rights in the Phils., Our Lady of Peace, the Nat'l Filipino Immigrant Rights Organization, Sariling Gawa, and many more.

Participating organizations were required to sign an agreement which included the provisions that: (1) "This is a non-political, non-religious affair and we will conduct ourselves for the greater honor of the Hawaii Filipino community" and (2) "The main goal of this affair is to share our Filipino culture with each other and with the community at large. Therefore, we are not looking to cure social ills here or in the Philippines nor are we expecting to make a lot of money."

The Committee for Human Rights in the Philippines, (CHRP), questioned the legality and political intent of the agreement. Moy Tacazon of the CHRP says, "We strongly feel that

the provisions were made to stop us from expressing our opinions against the Marcos dictatorship in the Philippines. It's like telling us and other people who feel the same way against Marcos, that we have no right to voice our opinions and at the same time be a part of the community. It's certainly a violation of our first amendment rights!"

Tacazon also added that the festival organizers should recognize that the anti-Marcos dictatorship sentiments rightfully exists and are a part of the Filipino community today. "These sentiments have been there since Marcos placed himself in power since 1972. These sentiments and those who express them have to be respected as a part of a politically maturing and developing community. We will never grow as a community if we keep trying to hold back people's expressions," he stated.

Gary Bonifacio, chairman of the Festival Committee of the 75th anniversary commission, said that the provisions referred to both the pro and anti Marcos groups and the Moncado typ religious organizations. "We mainly want a day of fun and excitement and to share our culture with the general public," he said.

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## Filipino in Hawaii: Building New Roots

Most organizations in the Filipino community are regional associations. It's estimated that there are about 600 such groups in Hawaii today, made up of people of all ages and social backgrounds who want to get together with Filipinos from their home provinces in the Philippines.

In Hawaii, as in most Filipino communities throughout the U.S., regional associations and similar social groups have become important community institutions that help keep Filipinos as a distinct community in the U.S.

These regional associations provide Filipinos with social activities throughout the year. Every month or so the members get together at picnics, parties and meetings. Each year they hold banquets, which sometimes coincide with the town fiesta back home. They often conduct their installation of new officers at some "high class" hotel in Waikiki like the Ilikai or Sheraton.

These regional associations, where the home dialect is spoken and events in the Philippines are discussed, help to make social ties among Filipinos. These associations serve to continue the Filipino culture in Hawaii and helps newcomers to America to adjust to their new home.

Many changes have taken place among social organizations in the Filipino community. While there were social organizations in the early years of the Filipino community in Hawaii, purpose and activities were different.

"First wave" Filipino immigrants who arrived in Hawaii from 1906 thru the 1930's faced the racist attitudes of the "haole" elites who owned the plantations where Filipinos were brought to work. At the time, the haole plantation bosses believed that whites were superior over the Hawaiians and immigrant workers. Immigrant workers were thought to be no better than "jute bags" in the plantations.



Very few Filipino women were allowed to immigrate with their husbands in the first wave. The lack of Filipino women prevented the development of a kinship system or family ties which are important in Filipino culture.

In place of the traditional families, then, Filipino men in Hawaii made up their own "families" among themselves in the plantation camps. Often, the oldest in the bunkhouse was made to look after the younger and less experienced workers. Chores were divided up and traditional Filipino customs were followed as much as possible. This helped to preserve the Filipino language and culture in Hawaii.

Early Filipinos also formed "mutual aid associations" where a group of men living together or coming from the same barrio would get together and set up a savings fund. Each month they would decide how much each person would contribute, then everyone would take turn sending the lump sum to their families in the Philippines.

This type of association called the "kumpang," was very informal and often led to stealing by whoever took care of the money. As a result, Filipinos came to distrust each other in business arrangements and made famous the idea of "crooked Filipino businessman."

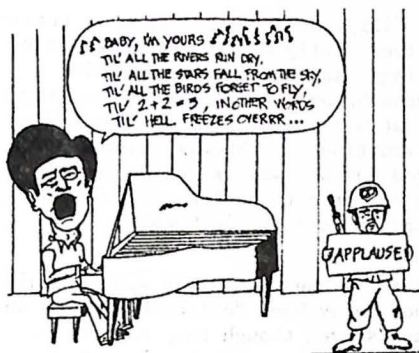
Filipinos brought over many traditional religious observances. Marriages and baptismal ceremonies brought over the "kumpadre" system that was practiced back home. This tradition of having sponsors and god parents was important to Filipinos at a time when most of them had no families in Hawaii.

This is one reason why many Filipinos today have "calabash" uncles and aunts even though they may not be related to each other by blood.

The "barrio" or town fiestas and national holidays were other traditions brought over by Filipinos. In Hawaii, fiestas were held mainly as social occasions; in the Philippines, fiestas were mainly held in observance of the town's patron saint.

For the whole Filipino community, Philippine national holidays were important occasions where the Filipino national identity was shown. The most famous is Rizal Day, every Dec. 30th, which continues to be celebrated today in Filipino communities throughout Hawaii.

*NEXT ISSUE: FILIPINOS IN THE TRADE UNIONS, THE MOST IMPORTANT ACTIVITY IN THE FILIPINO COMMUNITY IN THE 1920's THRU WWII.*



The Civil Liberties Union of the Philippines denounced it as an attempt to "legalize tyranny."

The growing labor movement around Manila called for its boycott and promised more major mass actions.

The United Democratic Opposition held a protest rally, 8000 strong, in historic Plaza Miranda and revived the Constitutional Convention.

These are all but a part of a wide opposition conducted against the April 7 plebiscite held by Marcos. The plebiscite, he explained, was to (again!) "convert the country's government, from a parliamentary to a strong presidential system" But while Marcos on nationwide t.v. insisted that the new system, with the loss of prime ministerial powers could mean less power for him, observers pointed to the further legalization of one-man rule as the goal of the plebiscite.

## "President" or "Prime Minister" Marcos?

"A Stronger Stongman" was even the title of a story on the plebiscite in the Far Eastern Economic Review.

Several days prior to April 7, the Committee for Human Rights in the Philippines (CHRP), conducted an educational leafletting campaign in various Oahu churches, markets, and bus stops. They tried to explain to Filipinos what the plebiscite meant for Marcos and the Filipino people in the Philippines.

"The people were generally doubtful and suspicious of the plebiscite and other Marcos plans," says Romy Ramos, a CHRP member. "One woman even told me, 'Plebiscite? Elections? Do you still believe them? He had already decided to be a dictator forever!'"

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"People were very receptive of the leaflets. Some even gave their names to us to add to our mailing list," added Moy Tacazon, another CHRP member. "Some praised us for doing it and some even offered help next we do it. They were even offering us some donations for future printing of leaflets. We felt very successful afterwards," he explained.

Under close examination, the powers held by the "strong president" proved to be a lot. Here are some of them:

- \* The president will have a six year term with not limit on re-election.

- \* The Prime Minister will hold no power independent of the President and, in fact, is to be nominated for the post by the President.

- \* If the Batasang Pambansa proves to be troublesome, the President may, upon the advice of the Prime Minister, dissolve the body "whenever the need arises."

- \* The minimum age for an opposition Presidential candidate should be 50. (Because Benigno Aguino, his most popular opponent, is 48)

- \* A constitutional guarantee of immunity from lawsuits during and even after the President's stay in office. (This means no lawsuit

could be filed against him or anyone who carried his orders while he was president and even after.)

- \* Finally, just in case someone else should win the presidency, a provision allowed the parliament to veto a president by two thirds majority.

Aside from the added powers which the plebiscite brought about, the 1976 amendments to the constitution still remains in force. The provisions are:

- \* Allowing the president to rule by decree if, in his judgement, "there exists a grave emergency or a threat of imminence (foreseen threat)."

- \* The president may order preventive detention of anyone suspected of subversion.

- \* Should Marcos die or be disabled his policies will remain in effect.

"With all these powers vested upon a president, can you still call him a 'president?'" asks Moy Tacazon of the CHRP. "This is why there should be a strong movement to boycott the June 16 elections he will conduct. If anyone runs against him, they will only be giving credibility to these deceptions, and more importantly, legalize the dictator's tyranny towards the Filipino people," Tacazon added.

The National Filipino Immigrant Rights Organization (NFIRO) - Hawaii Chapter

presents the

## 2nd Annual Conference on Filipino Immigrant Rights

# "After 75 Years: The Struggle for Equality Continues"



\*\*\*\*\*  
 \* HARRIS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH \*  
 \* (CORNER VINEYARD BLVD. & NUUANU) \*  
 \* MAY 16, 1981 SATURDAY \*  
 \* 8:30 AM REGISTRATION \*  
 \* 9:00 TO 3:00 PM CONFERENCE \*  
 \* REGISTRATION FEE: \$3.00 \*  
 \* (INCLUDES PLATE LUNCH) \*  
 \*\*\*\*\*

FOR INFORMATION CALL:

JOE FLORENDO, CO-COORDINATOR, 696-6321 (DAYS) 668-7725 (EVES)

BEVERLY CALIZO 622-2736 (EVES)

MARVIE TACAZON 847-6678 (EVES)

CHILD CARE  
PROVIDED

PARTIAL LIST OF ENDORSERS: *Sariling Gawa, Union of Democratic Filipinos, Operation Manong, Ethnic Studies, Philippine Studies UHM, Concerned Parents of Kunia, Committee for Human Rights in the Philippines, Philippine Language Club, UH Filipino-American Students Association, Oahu Filipino Community Council Susannah Wesley Immigrant Service Center, United Group of Home Operators...*

## ABOUT THE NATIONAL FILIPINO IMMIGRANT RIGHTS ORGANIZATION

The National Filipino Immigrant Rights Organization, is a nationwide Filipino community organization with chapters in Hawaii, San Francisco Bay Area, Los Angeles, San Diego, Seattle, Chicago, and New York.

The NFIRO was established in 1979 at the Filipino People's Far West Convention (PPFWC) held in Sacramento. Originally called the National Task Force for the Defense of Filipino Immigrant Rights, the organization formally adopted its name, NFIRO, at its first national conference in November 1980 in San Francisco.

The purpose of NFIRO is to educate and organize the Filipino community around issues that affect Filipino immigrants. The SSI anti-alien legislation, harassment of Filipino elderly by the INS, Filipino 4-H trainees, and the need for bilingual education have been some of the issues that the NFIRO in Hawaii has taken up.

### GOALS OF THE CONFERENCE

- (1) TO FURTHER THE STRUGGLE AGAINST DISCRIMINATION
- (2) TO INFORM THE COMMUNITY ABOUT CURRENT ISSUES
- (3) TO REVIVE THE PROGRESSIVE SPIRIT OF OUR FOREBEARERS
- (4) TO ORIENT THE PARTICIPANTS ON THE NEED TO UNITE WITH OTHER IMMIGRANT GROUPS

### WORKSHOPS

- (1) BILINGUAL EDUCATION: Are current DOE bilingual programs adequate for Hawaii's immigrant population? Does the DOE's bilingual program meet federal standards?
- (2) EQUAL ACCESS TO SOCIAL SERVICES: Are there enough bilingual workers to serve immigrants in public and private social service agencies? Are immigrants well informed about how to get housing, medical services, educational support for their children beyond high school, etc.?
- (3) NATIONAL & LOCAL LEGISLATION AFFECTING IMMIGRANTS: What are current legislative bills being considered by Congress and state legislatures that will affect immigrants? What policies of the Reagan administration will affect immigrants?
- (4) EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES & TREATMENT IN EMPLOYMENT: Why do many immigrant Filipino professionals become underemployed? Why are Filipinos among the lowest paid workers in Hawaii?

These are some of the questions that will be discussed at the conference. Resolutions will be proposed to develop concrete action that will address these questions. Community participation is vital in developing and implementing these resolutions.

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### Registration Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: (days) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ (eves) \_\_\_\_\_

Registration Fee (\$3.00): paid \_\_\_\_\_ will pay at door \_\_\_\_\_  
\* Make checks payable to NFIRO-Hawaii Chapter

Workshop Attending (Please Check One Of Your Choice): \_\_\_\_\_ will need childcare \_\_\_\_\_

(1) Bilingual Education \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Equal Access to Social Services \_\_\_\_\_  
(3) National and Local Legislation \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Equal Treatment in Jobs \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE CLIP AND SEND REGISTRATION TO: NFIRO - Hawaii  
P.O. Box 17404  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

2nd Annual Conference on Filipino Immigrant Rights by the National Filipino Immigrant Rights Organization, Hawaii Chapter. May 16, 1981, Saturday, 8:30 am to 3:00 pm, at Harris United Methodist Church, corner of Vineyard Blvd. & Nuuanu Ave. Information: Joe Florendo 696-6321 or 668-7725

Barrio Fiesta June 13, Saturday, McCoy Pavilion, Ala Moana Beach Park, 10 am to 10 pm; information - Gary Bonifacio 548-7179  
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He added that the Festivals Committee felt that the fiesta was no place to voice out any political, or religious position and did not want to make the rule a point of debate with participating organizations.

"Because there's two sentiments that presently exists in the community, both of these should be heard," says Tacazon. "Moreover the sharing of the Filipino culture and heritage means sharing our history of struggles for equality, against discrimination, for freedom and many others! Denying groups to educate the community on such issues through leaflets, brochures or other forms of educational will have a negative implication in our on going development and maturity as a community."

UNION OF DEMOCRATIC FILIPINOS  
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