

## Primary Source Packet

### 1. Nonfiction, Javanese Education

Raden Ajeng Kartini is hailed in Indonesia as that country's first feminist. She was born in April 21, 1879, in North Central Java, the daughter of a Javanese official serving the Dutch colonial government. During this time, women were secluded from the age of 14 until marriage. This did not stop Kartini from aspiring for higher education. She received a scholarship to study, but succumbed to family pressure not to continue her education. And despite her written pronouncements that she would never marry, she consented to be the consort (fourth wife) of a man 25 years her senior. A year after her marriage, shortly after the birth of her son, Kartini passed away at the age of 25. Prior to her marriage, Kartini founded a school for young girls.

Influenced by Dutch feminists, Kartini wrote passionately for the improvement of education, public health, economic welfare, and traditional arts in her country. The following source is an excerpt from a memorandum she wrote in January 1903 in response to a request from an official of the Dutch Ministry of Justice during a visit to Batavia. In it, Kartini makes two main points. First, Kartini argued that women should be educated because they are the mothers of the future nation's leaders. She wanted Westernization and instruction in the Dutch language, something which in today's parlance is seen as "un-nationalistic." "Modernization" at that time, however, was associated with "Westernization." Thus, the desire to modernize her country and access the language of knowledge could be interpreted as a "nationalist" move. Second, in Kartini's view, given the resources and the Javanese population of 27 million, educational policy should first be directed to elite women who could then open schools for the rest of the "masses." She did not believe grass cutters should be taught Dutch, but she did criticize the Javanese culture's hierarchical nature where younger siblings had to grovel to older ones and where norms dictated elaborate rituals of hierarchy. Overall, she wanted to alter relations between Indonesians and the Dutch a decade before the flowering of the nationalist movement.

*Source:* Kartini, Raden Ajeng. "Give the Javanese Education" In *Letters from Kartini: An Indonesian Feminist 1900-1904*. Translated by Joost Coté. Melbourne: Monash University 1992.

### APPENDIX ONE Give The Javanese Education! Japara, 1903

While it may be absolutely impossible to provide an entire population of 27 million people with education immediately, it would not be impossible to begin by providing education to the upper layers of that population and developing it in such a way that they could be of benefit to those below them. The people are very attached to their nobility; what emanates from them finds ready acceptance amongst them. What advantage has been taken of this fact which could be of benefit to all parties, the Government, the nobility and the people?

To date more or less the only advantage has been to ensure law and order and the regular receipt of revenue. The State and the nobility have benefited from this but what have the people themselves gained? What benefit have the people had from their highly revered nobles who the Government uses to rule them? To date, nothing, or very little; more likely they have been disadvantaged on those occasions when the nobility has abused its power, which is still not a rare occurrence.

This must change, the nobility must earn the reverence of the people, be worthy of it, and this will be of inestimable benefit to the people.

The Government must prepare the nobility for this and this can only be achieved by giving the nobility a sound education, one not exclusively based on an intellectual education but one which also provides a moral education.

This principle must not be lost sight of in any education to be provided for the Javanese. ...

And one should not be too hard on those individuals whose moral character remains coarse and unrefined: in most cases the fault lies not with them but with their education. Great care was taken with their intellectual development but what had been done for the training of their character? Nothing! Without the inclusion of moral education even the best of education systems could not hope to achieve the results which might be expected of it.

And Native society has a great need for an improvement of its moral foundations, without which the measures taken by the Government, however well intentioned they may be, will, if not totally fail, at best have only minimal results. Therefore the moral bases of Native society must be improved; once a decent moral basis has been established then the seeds of progress can be successfully cultivated.

Who could deny that the woman has a great task to perform in the moral development of society? It is she, precisely she, who is the one to do this; she can contribute much, if not most, to ensure the improvement of the moral standards of society. Nature herself has appointed her to this task. As mother, she is the first educator; at her knee the child first learns to feel, to think, to speak; and in most cases, this initial nurturing influences the rest of its life. It is the hand of the mother which first plants the germ of virtue or wickedness in the heart of the individual where it usually remains for the rest of the person's life. Not without reason is it said that a knowledge of right and wrong is imbibed with a mother's milk. But how can Javanese mothers now educate their children if they themselves are uneducated? The education and development of the Javanese people can never adequately advance if women are excluded, if they are not given a role to play in this.

In the meantime provide education, instruction, for the daughters of the nobility; the civilizing influence has to flow from here to the people; develop

them into capable, wise, fine mothers and they will vigorously spread enlightenment amongst the people. They will pass on their refinement and education to their children: to their daughters, who in their turn will become mothers; to their sons who will be called upon to help safeguard the welfare of the people. And as persons of intellectual and spiritual enlightenment they will in many different ways be of assistance to their people and to their society. ...

Really, an important factor in the uplifting of the population will be the progress of the Javanese woman! Therefore it should be the first task of the Government to raise the moral awareness of the Javanese woman, to educate her, to instruct her, to make of her a capable, wise mother and nurturer! ...

Schools cannot advance society by themselves: the home must cooperate in this. And it is from the home in particular that moral guidance must come—after all the family influence is present day and night, the school only several hours a day.

And how is it possible at the moment for the home to provide this nurture when such an important element in it, the wife, the mother, is totally unprepared for this nurturing role. ...

If the nobility knew that the Government desired that its daughters be more highly cultured then, initially, it may not send its daughters from personal conviction, but it would nevertheless send them on their own volition. The nobility must be encouraged in this direction. What does it matter with what motives their daughters are sent to school? The issue is that they are sent to school!

With those who are to teach the girls entrusted to them, lies the task of developing, to the best of their abilities, women who are refined and cultured, who are aware of their MORAL VOCATION in society, to become its loving mothers, wise, upright nurturers and, beyond that, to be of service to society in every way, at a time when so much help is needed.

For the time being a single school could be opened, a boarding institution so that children could be totally educated in this spirit; however the institution should also be open to day pupils. The medium of instruction should be the Dutch language. It is only a knowledge of a European language, and in the first instance of course, Dutch, which will in the foreseeable future, be able to civilize and bring spiritual freedom to the upper layers of Native society!

The best means to learn that language is by thinking and speaking in that language whenever possible. It is not necessary that thereby one's own language should be neglected: this should receive attention second only to the learning of Dutch.

It would be highly desirable if all the works of European literature which could have a beneficial and uplifting influence on the Javanese were translated into that language. And this should be done! But, at the moment these do not exist and will not in the near future.

Must the Javanese in the interim then grow up in ignorance when "more light" is so desperately needed in a society which has such need for better moral foundations upon which to base its material progress? It is not the intention to teach the Dutch language to the entire Javanese people: what use would the agricultural labourer, the woodcutter, the grasscutter etc. have for Dutch? It should be taught only to those elements of society who have an aptitude for, and are suited to, learning Dutch, and at all times it should be made clear to such pupils and one should work with this in view: that knowledge of the Dutch language by itself does not represent cultural refinement, that being civilized consists of something more than simply speaking Dutch, or superficially adopting Dutch manners, and even less in wearing Dutch clothes. Knowledge of Dutch language is the key which can unlock the treasure houses of Western civilization and knowledge; one has to exert oneself to appropriate some of that treasure for oneself. ...

General knowledge about the Indies and its people should be spread widely amongst Dutch people; were they to get to know about the Javanese from an unbiased point of view, prejudice would disappear so that not only the educated, but also the ordinary Dutch person would come to regard the Javanese as a fellow being who, through no fault of his own, is his spiritual inferior and not because his skin colour is brown.

Books written in this spirit for Dutch people would be most beneficial to both Java and to the Netherlands itself and it would be of even greater value and influence if a child of the people itself could reveal that people to the Netherlands! For that reason also it would be very good if the Javanese were taught Dutch - he would then be understood all the better when expressing himself in that language and in this medium tell of his desires, requirements and needs.

But why should an interest in the Indies be developed among the Dutch only as adults? Could this not be begun earlier? Schools offer a perfect opportunity for this, both in the Netherlands and in the Indies. ...

Oh, every opportunity should be utilized to invoke an interest in the Indies in the Netherlands and especially amongst the young!

The children of today will be the rulers of the Indies tomorrow! ...

As engineer or as forester, energetic, intelligent Natives would be most suitable and could be of great benefit both to the Government and to the people!

Therefore the Netherlands should make it possible for the sons and daughters of Java to qualify themselves which would enable them to raise their people to a higher level of spiritual development and greater flowering—to the honour and glory of the Netherlands.

## 2. Nonfiction, Philippine Suffrage

This is an essay written by suffragist Trinidad Fernandez Legarda, editor of *The Woman's Outlook* and President of the National Federation of Women's Clubs (NFWC). NFWC led the campaign for suffrage in the Philippines in 1921. The essay presents a summary of the Filipino suffragists' argument for the vote.

The Philippines were an American colony from 1901 to 1935 and a Commonwealth from 1935 to 1941. The American government promised independence after a period of democratic tutelage, so Filipino men were allowed to participate in local and national politics. American colonial powers were willing to grant Filipino women the franchise, but Filipino men opposed the idea. In 1912, American suffragist Carrie Chapman Catt visited Manila in the hopes of starting a suffrage movement, but there was not much interest before NFWC activity began in 1921.

Filipino suffragists did not challenge cultural constructions of the feminine (as moral guardian, beauty queen, wife, and mother). Mrs. Legarda was Carnival Queen in 1924 (beauty queen of the annual Manila Carnival, the precursor to the Miss Philippine Beauty Pageant), and was a noted civic worker. In this essay written for the *Philippine Magazine*, a mainstream publication with a primarily male audience, Legarda articulates the feminist position. Legarda's essay draws out the differences between Western and Filipino feminism, stressing the non-militancy of the Filipino movement. Their strategies involved appealing to male reason rather than by violent protest (unlike British suffragists). She labors the point that they were already qualified to become doctors and lawyers and therefore since women had been given access to tertiary education, it was incongruous that they be able to practice law but not be given the right to vote. Note especially that the essay shows quite clearly how much the suffragists were plugged into the global suffrage movement.

*Source:* Legarda, Trinidad F. "Philippine Women and the Vote" *Philippine Magazine*, Vol XXVIII, No. 4, (1931), 163-165, 196-200.

### Philippine Women and the Vote

By TRINIDAD F. LeGARDA

"Never wilt peace and human nature meet  
Till free and equal man and woman greet".

—*Shelley*.

The time seems to be most opportune for a dispassionate discussion of the question of woman suffrage in order to bring home to our people the reasons why we believe the ballot can be safely entrusted into the hands of the Filipino women.

The complexion of the new legislature is very apparently pro-suffrage. We are lucky to count among our law makers a considerable number of progressive and broad-minded men who are heartily in accord with our aspirations, and rightly so. For woman suffrage is a just and honorable cause, and the reasonableness of our demand is its best recommendation. ...

We have been accused of being lukewarm on the subject of woman suffrage just because we have made no visible agitation for the fulfillment of our aspirations. This attitude, it seems to me is the best proof for our capacity to exercise the suffrage. We believe in our cause but we do not believe that to attain our end we have to resort to violent and drastic methods which would only reflect upon ourselves. We are of the conviction that good manners and soft words will bring the most difficult things to pass. In the words of George Washington, we will not allow our campaign to *exceed* a decent warmth but will submit our sentiments quietly, knowing full well that a dictatorial manner, though it may carry conviction, always arouses resentment.

We are arraying ourselves not as foes of men but as friends, demanding, not an empire but friendship and equality, and wishing to reign, not over men, but over ourselves.

I am fully aware that in this cause some of our worst foes are found within our own sex. But I am aware that some of our best friends are to be found among the men. I am not deluding myself into the belief that our women are solid for suffrage. What I do know is once they are shown the justness and the reasonableness of our demand, they will most naturally side with us, for Euripides has rightly said that woman is woman's natural ally. Even granting that among our women there are more who are opposed to it than those favoring it, it is still to our advantage, for we can then say with Chesterton, "To be in the weakest camp is to be in the strongest school."

A woman, above the accident of her sex, is, first of all a human being. Like every human being she is potentially heir to every human faculty and achievement. As attested to by an eminent psychologists, there is no male and female mind anymore than there is a male and female lung or liver. Sex is merely a division of gender, not of intellect or capacity.

Equality knows no difference of sex. The law of equal freedom necessarily applies to the whole race, female as well as male. As Plato said, "Either sex alone is but half itself." The human race, like the human body, can advance only by the joint motion of its limbs.

The citizens of this country are Filipinos and women form one-half of our population. Our nation is created, not by one sex alone, but jointly by men and women. If it is to be presumed that the right of suffrage inheres in men solely because they are part of

the "people," the same right also inheres in women simply and solely because they are part of the people.

We are classed as citizens of this country. We help in our country's struggle for economic freedom and for political liberty just as much as men do. There is no campaign, no demonstration, no undertaking for the motion and the welfare of our country that we have not gladly shared in with our men. Yet when election day comes around, a discrimination is set up against us just because we are women. and we are unwittingly classed among the minas, criminals, and lunatics of this country! But while the child will become a man and a voter, the lunatic may be cured, and the criminal may be pardoned, no amount of wisdom, no age, no peculiar fitness, no public service rendered, however great, no effort, can remove from woman the extraordinary disability because of her sex. This is contrary to natural justice and to the most enlightened political philosophy. It is manifestly unjust to exclude one-half of our people from political influence, because woman has as many interests to work for as man, and she is quite capable of caring for her rights. In the words of Victor Hugo: "She who bears half the burden ought to have half the rights. Half of the human race is deprived of equality and it must be given to them."

The "natural right" of a woman to vote is just as clear as that of a man, and rests on the same ground. Since she is called on to obey the laws, she ought to have a voice in making them. ...

We all admit that women were created to be the mothers of the race. This is an unequivocal fact. Women bear the world. Women make it. The souls of little children are marvelously delicate and tender things, and keep forever the shadow that first falls upon them, and that is the mother's, or at best a woman's. The suffrage that we ask for is, in the words of Carrie Chapmat Catt, one which we hope to make worthy of the best and highest womanhood by insisting upon honesty and nobility in our politics; by providing that a mother is a better mother when she is also a citizen.

To be more practical, are women less concerned than men in having clean streets, decent sewers, untainted milk, good schools, charities properly administered, hospitals put on a proper footing? Yet we can not have to do with any of these things without taking part in politics, pure and simple. "Not one whit of glory would I withdraw," said Henry Ward Beecher, "from the picture of the mother in her home where we are told she should stay. But I aver that her power to teach her children largely depends upon the influences that surround the household. Every true Christian woman is bound to have a thought for the village, the country, the state, the nation."

...

Said Theodore Roosevelt, "I believe in the rights of the women just as much as I do in those of men and, indeed, a little more... She can do the best work in her home if she has healthy outside interests and occupations in addition". "Neither do I believe that the evil effects to the home and to the family and to the womanliness of woman would follow woman suffrage, which its opponents prophesy," said Robert Erskine

Ely. "On the contrary, political duties and privileges will have an educational influence upon women from which their homes and the children will greatly benefit."

The majority of women will always be homemakers in spite of woman suffrage. As an old Hindu proverb says, "A hundred men make an encampment. One woman makes a home." Yet in the words of John Bright, "Yes, yes, it is all very well, but *one just law is worth a million soup kitchens.*"

Surely, the duties of the home, especially in these times of labor saving devices and new discoveries, are not so rigorous as to prevent the most domestic of women from leaving her fireside once every three years or so to record her vote! ...

Women will become more satisfactory friends and helpmates of men when they have learned self-reliance by depending on themselves, self-protection by protecting themselves, self-reverence and self-control and the courage of their convictions by freely and openly sharing on equal terms with men in the responsibilities of the government. "There can be no real marriage worthy of the name and a help to civilization save on a basis of political, social, and economic equality." says Jesse Lynch Williams.

The most flimsy argument against woman suffrage is that it will mark the end of chivalry and destroy the woman linen of our women. ...

Some men say that a great many women will not wish to vote because they will think it is not "lady-like", or whatever the proper term may be. Are there a great many men who abstain from politics because they think it ungentlemanly? Suppose the majority of women do not wish to vote—is that a reason for depriving one woman, who is taxed, of her equal representation? ...

Our opponents are dreadfully exercised for fear the vote will unsex women. They say we are too delicate—women are such "fragile flowers"—yet men get these delicate blossoms to undertake at the lowest possible wages the intolerable toil of the rope-walk. Women make bricks, girls are driven, when not driven to something worse, to being scullions and boarding-house slaves. Women are graciously permitted to sweat in factories and over other people's washing when they should be caring *for* their babies. Still others of these fragile flowers work on the roads, make bridges, build houses, and plough the fields to keep alive. Yet a vote in their hands would soil them and destroy their womanliness! ...

It is alleged that women are already represented by men. When was the choice made? "If I am told they are virtually represented," said George William Curtis, "I reply with James Otis that no such phrase as *virtual representation* is known in law or constitution." The pronouncement that women are represented by their husbands is entirely inadequate. It is fortunate for those who have husbands to represent them but unfortunate for the great number of unmarried women and widows who may still need representation at the polls. And brothers and fathers may answer the last summons before their women folk, and thus leave a family wholly



unrepresented in the machinery of our government.

The American colonies were said to be represented in the British Parliament but the colonies were not content with such representation. "Neither are women contented to be represented by men," says James Freeman Clarke. What can be more to the point than the old defense of republics, "Taxation without representation is tyranny?" ...

A frequent argument against woman suffrage is that since women can not become soldiers, they ought not to vote: in other words, that behind every vote there must stand a bullet ready to defend it.

Always some woman risks her life whenever a soldier is born into the world. "For years," describes Lucy Stone, she does picket duty by his cradle. Later on, she is his quartermaster and gathers his rations. And when that boy grows to be a man, shall he say to his mother, 'If you want to vote, you must first go and kill somebody?' That is a coward's argument." ...

Conclusion.

There are many arguments against woman suffrage, but no reasons. The more we interrogate common sense, the less reason we find for excluding women from political existence.

Let us then exclaim with Abraham Lincoln. "Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith let us to the end dare to do our duties as we understand them."

### **3. Court Records, Imelda Marcos**

Unofficial power is difficult to document, yet the martial law years in the Philippines were often described in the media as the "conjugal dictatorship of Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos" (1972-1986). This epithet articulates succinctly the perception of the First Lady's power behind the scenes. Assistant U.S. Attorney Debra Livingston, of the government prosecution panel, gave this opening statement at the start of Imelda Marcos's 1990 trial in New York for corruption and racketeering. In July 1990, Imelda Marcos was acquitted on all corruption charges against her. The statement provides insight into the unofficial power Marcos reportedly held, presenting it in a negative light. Unofficial power is prone to abuse, in part because it is largely unaccountable. It is not, however, invisible. Since the women politicians are a minority (11%), they still have to abide by male rules. In recognition of the existence of women's unofficial power, wives of congressmen in the Philippines were asked to take an oath of office to the current president in 1992.

*Source:* "Theft, Fraud on an Incredible Scale." *The Philippines Free Press*, (May, 1990), 10-13.

Opening Statement of Assistant U.S. Attorney Debra Livingston, of the government prosecution panel, at the start of Imelda's trial:

Judge Kennan, members of the defense, ladies and gentlemen of the jury:

This is a case about theft, fraud and deceit on an incredible scale. It is a case about stolen money and money grabbed by fraud, over \$140 million that the defendant Imelda Marcos stole and that she grabbed by fraud and then secretly brought into New York to buy four buildings in Manhattan.

It is also a case about fraud before a United States court, about an obstruction of justice considered in this very courthouse by the defendant Imelda Marcos and by the co-defendant Adnan Khashoggi to deceive the court and to hang on to the fruits of Imelda Marcos's fraud: her four buildings in Manhattan.

The government will prove that in about two years, from around September 1981 to November 1983, the defendant Imelda Marcos brought over \$140 million into New York. The money that came into New York came in in the form of cash from secret bank accounts in Hongkong, in Switzerland, and in the Philippines. Once that money came into New York to purchase those buildings, you will learn that 30 million more dollars came into New York to keep the buildings going. \$52 million came in the space of about six months for other purchases in New York unrelated to the buildings. You will learn that that's only a portion, ladies and gentlemen, of the millions and millions of dollars that Imelda Marcos brought into New York during those years, that she laundered through fictitious accounts, nominee accounts and fake accounts, both here in the United States and overseas, in order to pay for her multi-million dollar purchases, of not only real estate but artwork and jewelry here in New York.

### **A Criminal Enterprise**

Now, ladies and gentlemen, the money that poured into New York during those years, that flooded New York, was stolen money and the proceeds of fraud. The government will prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendant Imelda Marcos and her husband, Ferdinand Marcos, plundered the Republic of the Philippines, their native country, and then exported the fruits of their fraud here. In fact, they exported the fraud itself into the United States and into New York and into this very courthouse.

The government will also prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendant Imelda Marcos and her husband, Ferdinand Marcos, violated United States law by bringing the proceeds of this theft and fraud here and by misusing United States banks and financial institutions here in order to conceal their wealth and to operate a criminal enterprise here in New York.

Ferdinand Marco, ladies and gentlemen was the President of die Republic of the Philippines for about 20 years from around 1965 to 1986. You are going to learn that Imelda Marcos was his wife, but that she wasn't just his wife; you are going to learn that Imelda Marcos was a high-ranking member of the Philippine government in her own right. She was a cabinet minister. She was the mayor of Metro Manila, the capital city of the Philippines.

Imelda Marcos was responsible for the day-to-day operation of the Ministry of Human Settlements, a sprawling government bureaucracy in the Philippines that is about like our Department of Housing and Urban Development.

### **Her Piggy Bank**

You are going to learn, ladies and gentlemen, that Imelda Marcos and Ferdinand Marcos together were partners in crime.

Now, you are going to learn that the Marcoses earned a modest income as Philippine government officials. You will learn that during the entire time that the Marcoses were government officials, they earned an average of about \$20,000 a year. But you are going to learn, ladies and gentlemen, that during the same time that the Marcoses were legitimately earning \$20,000 a year, they were collecting huge sums of money, millions and millions of dollars, as bribes and kickbacks on Philippine government contracts.

During the same period of time Imelda treated the Philippine National Bank, which is the Philippine government bank, as her own personal piggy bank here in New York.

You are going to learn, ladies and gentlemen, that every time that Imelda Marcos descended on New York during those years—and she came here quite frequently—she cracked open that piggy bank. She directed that bundles and bundles of cash be taken out of that New York branch office and delivered to her suite at the Waldorf. She stole money directly out of that New York branch office in New York and put it into her Manhattan real estate and into her multi-million dollar purchases of artwork and jewelry here in the city.

When the time came to pay the bills for Imelda Marcos's charges to the Philippine National Bank, you will learn that millions of dollars were taken out of that bank's profit and out of the Philippine treasury, out of the taxes paid by Philippine citizens, to pay for Imelda Marcos's multi-million dollar purchases here in New York. ...

The fraud, ladies and gentlemen, still isn't over. You are going to learn that in March 1986, after the Marcoses left the Philippines and came to live in the United States, the Philippine government went into court here in New York. The Philippine government claimed that the Marcoses' Manhattan skyscrapers, those four buildings that Imelda Marcos secretly purchased in New York, rightfully belonged to the people of the Philippines because they had been purchased with money stolen from that government. ...

First, you are going to learn that this fraud existed over a number of years and it was international in scope. It involved activities that reached from the Philippines into Hongkong, into Switzerland and finally into the United States and here into New York. This is a case about exporting fraud on a massive scale into New York. ...

You are going to learn that in September 1981, Imelda Marcos brought over \$48 million into New York to buy the Crown Building. At the same time that she brought that money into New York, she bought a collection of fine art, antiques and porcelain known as the Samuels collection. Imelda Marcos bought that collection through a front, through a nominee, for about \$6 million. She is charged with bringing stolen money and the proceeds of fraud into New York to pay for that art collection.

The last couple of crimes in this pattern relates to money that Imelda Marcos laundered through bank accounts in New York to buy mainly jewelry, corporate stock, and artwork.

#### **4. Newspaper, Unofficial Power**

Unofficial power is often exercised in private, far from public view. This newspaper exposé discusses the power (real and perceived) of Rosemarie Arenas, an alleged former mistress of Philippine President Fidel Ramos, during a democratic regime (1992-1998). The basis of Arenas' power was the fact that she was a major fundraiser in the presidential campaign of Fidel Ramos. Arenas's use of power is portrayed as negative, in part because she exercised it to its maximum potential. Unofficial power is prone to abuse, in part because it is largely unaccountable. It is not, however, invisible. Since women are the support system in kinship politics (women run election campaigns and raise funds), this becomes the source of their power later on.

*Source:* Danguilan-Vitug, Marites, and Glenda Gloria, "Past Relationship Impinges on Present Affairs of State," and "Socialite Seeking Legitimacy." *The Philippine Daily Inquirer*, (October 11, 1993), 1, 12, 13; (October 12, 1993), 1, 10.

#### **"Past Relationship Impinges on Present Affairs of State" (First of 2 Parts)**

*We are running this series to put an end to the backstreet gossip that has hounded President Ramos since he assumed office last year. The gossip about the alleged relationship between Mr. Ramos and Rose Marie "Baby" Arenas now threatens to distract the nation from its own responsibilities toward nation-building.*

*Never has gossip influenced public perception about how decisions are made in the highest levels of government. Never has gossip trivialized the affairs of State.*

*The series the prestigious Center for Investigative Journalism looked into and behind the gossip and came up with this two-part report. It is hoped that with the CIJ report the gossip will be stripped of its mystique and set the President free to put on his armor of governance.  
-- Editor-in-Chief*

A PHOTOGRAPH of President Ramos in white duck uniform is prominently displayed in the luxurious living room of 2056 Lumbang St. in Makati's posh

Dasmariñas Village. This is the residence of Rose Marie "Baby" Jimenez-Arenas, where some of the country's most powerful officials regularly meet.

Arenas, a wealthy former beauty queen and fashion model is said to have had a relationship with President Ramos. At least two persons close to Mr. Ramos have asked him about this and they say the President dismissed it as part of the past, a tacit admission of the liaison. Similarly, Jose Almonte, national security adviser, once referred to it as "something that happened in the past...a matter between two persons." Aides of the President as well as Cabinet members we interviewed consider the relationship common knowledge. ...

Arenas is known to have sought favors on behalf of a number of business interests and to have influenced a few appointments in government. "She asks for jobs, concessions but these are low level—not the PLDT or Cabinet posts," a friend of Arenas says. ...

Arenas' power is both real and perceived. She draws strength from her association with Almonte, who is probably the President's closest and most trusted adviser.

She also projects a power image, flaunting her access to the Palace. She is not shy about making known that she is close to the top official of the land. Recalls a former Cabinet official of Mr. Ramos: "She says she calls the President directly." Arenas has also shared this information with other people.

The case of Arenas may be unique, compared to experiences of past presidents. Manuel Quezon had reported liaisons, but these apparently did not affect official matters. Ferdinand Marcos' affair with Hollywood actress Dovie Beams had no impact on the affairs of the State, although others now say the former first lady, Imelda Marcos, started building her domain after her late husband's relationship with Beams.

But Arenas' role as a wielder of influence is not uncommon. Says Felipe Alfonso, president of the Asian Institute of Management: "She reflects a highly personalistic society and a protectionist system. Here, protection of industries means protection of families, individuals and power blocs.

### **The problem**

Perceptions that Arenas uses her access to Malacañang to boost certain businesses or place people in government has worried some Cabinet members. ...

These Cabinet members thought it was important that the President be informed about the growing concern about Arenas' activities and the disturbing talk about her influence on the Palace. ...

According to government officials and presidential aides, Arenas, on two occasions, was about to go public with the relationship. During the presidential campaign, she

visited Mr. Ramos' headquarters on Pasay Road, Makati, and nearly raised hell because campaign staffers who did not know her denied her request for stickers.

Visibly mad, Arenas threatened to call the media, a member of the campaign staff recalls. She was later placated.

"If Baby (Arenas) gets angry, she can do a lot of trouble. The President needs trouble like a hole in the head," says a retired general.

### **The facilitator**

Our investigation has shown that Arenas has, on occasion, intervened on behalf of business interests. (Arenas declined to be interviewed despite repeated requests.) ...

Among some members of the Chinese-Filipino community, Arenas is seen as a "facilitator." Explains one Chinese-Filipino: "Many see nothing illegal in asking her to speed up a bureaucratic process. In Philippine politics, whom you know counts. What would prevent us from asking her help?"

This source also says that Arenas, through her representatives, is known to "facilitate" release of shipments from the Bureau of Customs. "It makes matters easier," the source says. ...

### **"Socialite seeking legitimacy" (Conclusion)**

As early as 1989, Rose Marie (Baby) Jimenez Arenas was hosting weekly meetings, usually held on Wednesdays, attended by friends and supporters of then Defense Secretary Fidel V. Ramos. At that time, Mr. Ramos was already talked about as a potential presidential candidate.

A year later, when Mr. Ramos emerged as a likely contender, these meetings evolved from social gatherings into "informal strategy sessions" aimed at boosting Mr. Ramos' chances in the elections. Some of those who joined the initial meetings later formed the inner core of a team for the Ramos presidential campaign. ...

Arenas also invited at least two cabinet members to the meetings, but they declined.

"Baby likes to arrange things, to broker meetings," says a friend. "A lot of people seek her out thinking she would make a difference." ...

### **Effective fund-raiser**

Arenas' bigger role in the campaign, sources say, was in helping fill up the coffers. She is said to earn generous sums from renting out her houses in exclusive villages in Makati.

Arenas wants it known that she contributed heavily to the Ramos presidential campaign. She has told a number of people that she sold anywhere from two to seven of her 21 or so houses, aside from jewelry, for the campaign. ...

But an aide of Ramos who dealt with Arenas during the campaign estimates that she may have donated P50 million. This includes thousands of campaign paraphernalia such as stickers, hats, fans, umbrellas and pins which she may have solicited from her businessmen friends.

Arenas comes from an upper middle class family with no substantial wealth. Her father worked with the Bureau of Internal Revenue and her mother was the soprano Remedios Bosch, who taught for many years at the University of the East. In the late 1970s, her now-estranged husband, Ramon, was in the shipping business. Ramon, who comes from a wealthy Negrense family, was recently appointed to the board of the Manila Electric Company.

Arenas was, by some accounts, one of Mr. Ramos' most aggressive campaigners. "...It is this aggressiveness on the part of Baby and her group that contributed a lot to the decision of Mr. Ramos to run for the presidency even after his defeat in the LDP convention. Those in the know credit Baby for the hard work done by this particular group to make Mr. Ramos win," wrote the INQUIRER columnist Julie Amigo, a close friend of Arenas. ...

### **Charity and high visibility**

Although she had already been involved in charity work for soldiers, Arenas began to take a high profile after the 1986 uprising. In the early 1980s, she was fund-raising for the Constabulary, then headed by Mr. Ramos. The V. Luna Hospital, now renamed Armed Forces of the Philippines Medical Center, was also a beneficiary of her work. ...

"I know Baby to be very generous and charitable," says a newspaper editor. Arenas, one of her friends says, finds it had to say no to requests or favors: She accommodates anyone who calls on her." ...

Months later, Arenas went on a media binge, meeting with journalists, granting interviews and having her photos published in newspapers and magazines. Almost all of the full-length feature articles written on her were lavishly positive. Pleased with one of these articles, she gave a gift check worth thousands of pesos to the author.

But she was less kind to the bearers of bad news about her. In a speech before the Makati Rotary Club in June, she lashed out at the media: "The things that have been attributed to me have been largely nasty and nastiness is always good fodder for news. Besides these speculations being absurd, ...they question my motives, yet they have been aired through an institution powerful enough to assign blame while itself escaping blame." ...

Arenas may raise another stone if reports are true that she intends to run for a seat in Congress to represent Makati, a plan that worries some presidential aides. Public office will give Arenas a mantle of legitimacy and propel her from the backroom to center stage.

“People expect her to vanish after long years of relationship (with) and help for the President?” asks a friend of Arenas. “She will not do that.”

### **5. Speech, Philippine *State of The Nation***

When opposition Senator Benigno (“Ninoy”) Aquino was assassinated in August 1983, Filipinos rallied around the widow Corazon Aquino who symbolized all those who were victimized by the Marcos dictatorship. The housewife with no political experience found herself elected president of the Philippines after the overthrow of Marcos’ authoritarian rule. As the Philippines’s first female president, she presided over the transition to democracy facing the challenges of no less than seven military coups attempting to topple her government. In this 1991 speech, her last *State of the Nation Address*, she reviewed her term of office, focusing on her husband’s ideas and the image of women as “moral guardians.” Aquino constantly refers to her Catholic religiosity. Note that her speech does not reflect a feminist perspective. Corazon Aquino presided over the transition of government from an authoritarian regime to a democratic one and she did not express an interest in women’s issues. After six years in office, she still focuses on her husband and his ideas. Though politically prominent in her own right, Corazon Aquino was perceived to be the alter ego of her husband, a Filipino hero.

*Source:* Aquino, Corazon. “The State of The Nation Address 1991.” *The Name of Democracy and Prayer: Selected Speeches of Corazon Aquino*. Pasig City: Anvil Publishing Inc., 1995.

In March 1973, six months after the declaration of martial law, Ninoy Aquino was taken blindfolded from Fort Bonifacio and brought to a place he did not know. He was stripped naked and thrown into a cell. His only human contact was a jailer. The immediate prospect, in such a place, was a midnight execution in front of a grave dug by himself.

The purpose was as clear as it was diabolical. It was not to kill him yet, but to break him first—and with him break the compelling proof that men can stand up to a dictatorship.

He came close to giving up, he told me; he slipped in and out of despair. But a power that must have been God held him together. He remembered the words of the epistle, God chose the weak to confound the strong.

On the third anniversary of his incarceration in Laur, the recollection of his pain gave birth to a poem of hope. This is the poem he wrote:

*I am burning the candle of my life in the dark  
with no one to benefit*



*from the light.  
The candle slowly melts away; soon its wick will be burned out and the light is gone.  
If someone will only gather the melted wax, re-shape it, give it a new wick —  
for another fleeting moment my candle can once again  
light the dark,  
be of service  
one more time,  
and then...goodbye.*

This is the anguish of good men: that the good they do will come to nothing. That pains suffered in obscurity or sacrifices made away from the sight of men, amount to the same, and mock the man or woman who bears them.

Mr. Senate President, Mr. Speaker, members of the Congress, distinguished guests, my countrymen:

That is not true. None of the good that we do is ever lost; not even the light in an empty room is wasted.

From Ninoy's burnt-out candle, and thousands like it in cells throughout the garrison state, we gathered the melted wax and made more candles. To burn—not as long in such loneliness—but much more brightly all together, as to banish the darkness, and light us to a new day.

You might ask: When will the president stop invoking Ninoy's name! My answer is, When a president stands here other than by Ninoy's grace. And not while gratitude is nourished by memory. Not while we acknowledge that it was his sacrifice that gave us back our freedom. And restored the freely elected office whose incumbent must stand every year in this place.

Five years have passed. My term is ending. And so is yours. As we came, so should we go. With grateful acknowledgement to the man who made it possible for us to be here. A man who discovered hope in the starkest despair, and has something yet to teach a country facing adversity again. ...

By 1985, the economy has contracted considerably, its rate of growth had been negative for two consecutive years. The country was at a standstill, as if waiting only for the last rites to be performed. By 1986, we had turned the economy around—in less than a year. We improved on that performance the year after.

The rate of unemployment was reduced, the volume of new investments significantly increased. New industrial projects were introduced, hitherto idle industrial capacity was fully utilized. The foundation of new regional industrial zones was laid. Public infrastructure and services strained under the load of expanding economic activity.

I mention this, not to offset the shortcomings of the present with the achievements of the past. I mention it to show what can be done in such a short time, and how much improvement was made from conditions far worse than what we have today—the dictator's apologists notwithstanding, that the country is worse off now than when he and his wife were stealing the country blind.

This progress was cut off by the August '87 coup attempt. But the economy quickly rallied, and in two years recovered a great deal of the ground we had lost. We were on the verge of a second take-off when the December 1989 coup broke out. It drained the last drop of confidence in our future from all but the hardest spirits, and shattered our image abroad.

Still we persevered, achieving gains that, admittedly, continue to fall short of the galloping needs of a fast growing population, but real gains nonetheless: Improved health care, increased housing, and—one of the proudest achievements we share with the legislature—free secondary education. 660,000 youth immediately availed themselves of it; another 200,000 private school students received scholarship grants under another recent law. 80,000 new classrooms have been built: the first preparation of the nation for the future of economic competition, which will take place in the highly educated minds of the youth. ...

You might ask, Having lost so much easily, what was the worth of all that effort?

With such reversals of fortune, is progress for our country a hope in vain?

Paul says that suffering produces perseverance, perseverance character; and character hope. The good we do is never lost. Some of it remains, if not in material goods, then in a deeper experience, a more practiced hand, and a spirit made stronger by that which failed to break it—stronger to meet greater challenges ahead.

But in one thing we grew from strength to strength—in the enlargement of our democratic space and the strengthening of our democracy. ...

Participatory democracy will end the practice of punishing provinces and municipalities for the wrong vote in the last poll. It will separate elections, where the people vote for their favorites, from the provision of public service which every Filipino has a right to expect from the government, regardless how he voted.

This administration has made large steps in that direction. To the disappointment of those who marched with me against the Marcos regime, my administration has plowed resources into regions and provinces where I was cheated in the Snap Elections. The politics of revenge has had its day.

The organized participation of the people in daily government may provide the stabilizing element that government has always lacked. Policies have radically changed with each administration, yet the basic needs of its unchanging

constituencies have not been met less bureaucracy for business, more public services and infrastructure support for agriculture and industry, an economic safety net for the common man. The active participation of the people in government will lend proper direction and continuity to policy.

This is what I wish for most. That after me, the continuity of our work is not broken. So that things well done shall be completed, and the same mistakes avoided by succeeding administrations. In this way, nothing done shall go to waste, and the light of a misplaced candle shall still be valued for the light it sheds on the things to avoid.

I am not asking that all my programs be blindly followed by my successor. God knows, we have made mistakes. But surely, our objective is right—the improvement of our people's lives. And the new way is much better than those before. To give the people greater power over their lives is the essence of democracy that we must strive to bring out completely. ...

As President, I have never prayed for anything for myself; only for our people. I have been called an international beggar by the military rebels. Begging does not become me, yet—perhaps—it is what I had to do. I could have kept my pride and held aloof, but that would not have helped our people. And it is for them that I was placed in this office.

Someone who will stand in this place next year, may do better for I believe in the inexhaustible giftedness of the Filipino people. I only hope that he will be someone who will sincerely mean you well.

I hope that history will judge me as favorably as our people still regard me, because, as God is my witness, I honestly did the best I could. No more can be asked of any man.

On June 30, 1992, the traditional ceremony of political succession will unfold at the Luneta. The last time it was done that way was in 1965. I shall be there with you to proudly witness the event. This is the glory of democracy, that its most solemn moment should be the peaceful transfer of power.

## **6. Speech, Burmese Democracy**

This speech, given in 1988 by Aung San Suu Kyi of Burma, marked the beginning of her staunch campaign against the Burmese military regime. Aung San Suu Kyi is the daughter of Burmese nationalist hero Aung San. She spent much of her adult life overseas and married an English academic named Michael Aris. When she visited her mother in Burma in 1988, she witnessed massive student demonstrations and the massacre of demonstrators. She decided to lead the democratic opposition to the regime and has since been placed under house arrest. In 1991, she received the Noble Peace Prize. In this speech, as leader of the National League for Democracy,

she called for the restoration of democratic institutions and “freedom from fear.” She delivered the speech in Burmese and later translated it into English.

Note that her speech does not reflect a feminist perspective. Aung San Suu Kyi conforms to Southeast Asian constructions of the feminine as “moral guardian.” She delivered her first speech in the Schewedagon Pagoda, a Buddhist temple (Theravada Buddhism) believed to house the guardian spirits (*nats*) of the nation. In addition, she agitates for the restoration of democratic rights in Burma and fights for the human rights of both men and women victims of *tatmadaw* (Burmese army) rule. Aung San Suu Kyi’s first speech declaring opposition to Burmese army rule repeatedly mentioned her father, a legend whose photograph is carried by Burmese students during demonstrations. She justified her decision to speak out against human rights violations by the military dictatorship with the words, “I could not as my father’s daughter remain indifferent to all that was going on.” Though politically prominent in her own right, Aung San Suu Kyi was perceived to be the alter ego of her father, a Burmese hero.

*Source:* Kyi, Aung San Suu. “Speech to a Mass Rally at the Shwedagon Pagoda.” *Freedom from Fear and Other Writings*. Edited by Michael Aris. London: Viking, 1991.

Reverend monks and people! This public rally is aimed at informing the whole world of the will of the people. Therefore at this mass rally the people should be disciplined and united to demonstrate the very fact that they are a people who can be disciplined and united. Our purpose is to show that the entire people entertain the keenest desire for a multi-party democratic system of government.

It is the students who have paved the way to the present situation where it is possible to hold such a rally. The occasion has been made possible because the recent demonstrations have been spearheaded by the students and even more because they have shown their willingness to sacrifice their lives. I therefore request you all to observe a minute’s silence in order to show our deepest respect for those students who have lost their lives and, even more, in order to share the merit of their deeds among all of us. So while doing this please keep perfect silence for the duration of one minute.

I believe that all the people who have assembled here have without exception come with the unshakeable desire to strive for and win a multi-party democratic system. In order to arrive at this objective, all the people should march unitedly in a disciplined manner towards the goal of democracy.

In this connection I would like to explain the part I have played in this movement. This is needed because a fair number of people are not very well acquainted with my personal history. It is only natural and right that those who do not know me would like to know some facts.

A number of people are saying that since I have spent most of my time abroad and am married to a foreigner I could not be familiar with the ramifications of this country's

politics. I wish to speak from this platform very frankly and openly to the people. It is true that I have lived abroad. It is also true that I am married to a foreigner. These facts have never interfered and will never interfere with or lessen my love and devotion for my country by any measure or degree.

Another thing which some people have been saying is that I know nothing of Burmese politics. The trouble is that I know too much. My family knows best how complicated and tricky Burmese politics can be and how much my father had to suffer on this account. He expended much mental and physical effort in the cause of Burma's politics without personal gain. That is why my father said that once Burma's independence was gained he would not want to take part in the kind of power politics that would follow.

Since my father had no such desire I too have always wanted to place myself at a distance from this kind of politics. Because of that I have kept away from politics. Some might then ask why, if I wished to stay out of politics, should I now be involved in this movement. The answer is that the present crisis is the concern of the entire nation. I could not as my father's daughter remain indifferent to all that was going on. This national crisis could in fact be called the second struggle for national independence

This great struggle has arisen from the intense and deep desire of the people for a fully democratic parliamentary system of government. I would like to read to you something my father said about democracy:

We must make democracy tie popular creed. We must try to build up a free Burma in accordance with such a creed. If we should fail to do this, our people are bound to suffer. If democracy should fail the world cannot stand back and just look on, and therefore Burma would one day, like Japan and Germany, be despised. Democracy is the only ideology which is consistent with freedom. It is also an ideology that promotes and strengthens peace. It is therefore the only ideology we should aim for.

That is what my father said. It is the reason why I am participating in this struggle for freedom and democracy in the footsteps and traditions of my father. To achieve democracy the people should be united. That is very clear. It is a very plain fact. If there is no unity of purpose we shall be unable to achieve anything at all. If the people are disunited, no ideology or form of government can bring much benefit to the country. This must be firmly fixed in the minds of the people. If there is no discipline, no system can succeed. Therefore one people should always be united and disciplined.

While I am talking about the need for unity I would like to say one thing. Some may not like what I am going to say. But I believe that my duty is to tell the people what I believe to be true. Therefore I shall speak my mind. If my words meet with your approval, please support me. If they are not acceptable, it cannot be helped. I am only

doing what I believe to be right. What I wish to say is that at this time there is a certain amount of dissension between the people and the army. This rift can lead to future dangers. The present armed forces of Burma were created and nurtured by my father. It is not simply a matter of words to say that my father built up the armed forces. It is a fact. There are papers written in my father's own hand where he lays out in detail how the army should be organized and built up. So what objectives did my father have for the armed forces? Let me read to you one of them:

The armed forces are meant for this nation and this people, and it should be such a force having the honour and respect of the people. If instead the armed forces should come to be hated by the people, then the aims with which this army has been built up would have been in vain.

Let me speak frankly. I feel strong attachment for the armed forces. Not only were they built up by my father, as a child I was cared for by his soldiers. At the same time I am also aware of the great love and affection which the people have for my father. I am grateful for this love and affection. I would therefore not wish to see any splits and struggles between the army which my father built up and the people who love my father so much. May I also from this platform ask the personnel of the armed forces to reciprocate this kind of understanding and sympathy? May I appeal to the armed forces to become a force in which the people can place their trust and reliance. May the armed forces become one which will uphold the honour and dignity of our country.

For their part the people should try to forget what has already taken place, and I would like to appeal to them not to lose their affection for the army. We shall reach our goal of a strong and lasting Union only if we are all able to go forward in unity. We have not yet achieved this goal. Let us not be disunited. Therefore let us resolve to march forward in unity towards our cherished goal. In doing so please use peaceful means. If a people or a nation can reach their objectives by disciplined and peaceful means, it would be a most honourable and admirable achievement.

I have a few things to say about the students who have been at the forefront of this nationwide movement. The students are most able. They have already demonstrated their physical courage. I believe that they will now go on to demonstrate their moral and mental ability. May I appeal to the students to continue to march forward with the same kind of unity and resolve? At this moment there are a number of student groups. I would like these groups to come together as a unified body. I understand that they are soon going to call a conference for this purpose. Should this occasion arise may I pray that it will result in an entire cohesion and unity of the students.

Some students have asked me which politicians are standing behind me. They are apprehensive that such politicians might manipulate me and then take over the students. I am happy that the students have been so open and honest with me. Young people are frank and free from deviousness. I answered them truthfully. There are no politicians behind me. What I am trying to do is to help achieve the democratic

system of government which the people want. For the achievement of this system, there are some veteran politicians who wish to help me in various ways. I have told such politicians that if their object is to obtain positions of political power for themselves, I would not support them in any way. Should these politicians try to obtain positions of political power I promise in front of this assembly of people that I myself will not hesitate to denounce them.

There is a sort of gulf between the older and younger generations. This gulf will have to be bridged. There is the feeling that the older and younger generations are quite apart from each other. This is something that should not happen. Whether young or old the entire people should be united.

The strength of the people is growing day by day. Such growing strength has to be controlled by discipline. Undisciplined strength or strength which is not in keeping with right principles can never lead to a beneficial fruition. It could lead to danger for many. Therefore please continue to use our strength in accordance with rightful principles. At this juncture when the people's strength is almost at its peak we should take extreme care not to oppress the weaker side. That is the kind of evil practice which would cause the people to lose their dignity and honour. The people should demonstrate clearly and distinctly their capacity to forgive.

If we are to examine what it is that we all desire, that is what the people really want at this time, the answer is multi-party democracy. We want to get rid of the one-party system. The President, Dr Maung Maung, has said that he is calling an emergency party congress to decide whether there should be a national referendum. So far as I am concerned I do not think it is necessary to have this referendum. The entire nation's desires and aspirations are very clear. There can be no doubt that everybody wants a multi-party democratic system of government. It is the duty of the present government to bring about such a system as soon as possible.

For the people's part they should continue to demonstrate for this through peaceful and disciplined means. May I emphasize again that we have not yet arrived at our cherished goal. Please think in advance of what should be done to bring about a firmly established Union. Please think of the country's future. Unless we consider the future of our country, the changes that are coming into being may not be able to achieve much benefit for the country. My father said there is a great need for the people to be disciplined and this cannot be repeated too often.

We do not need to have a referendum. What we do need is a multi-party system. It should be introduced as quickly as possible by means of free and fair elections. Conditions necessary for the holding of free and fair elections should be created throughout the country. The people have lost their confidence in the government of the day. If the holding of free and fair elections requires an interim government, such a forerunner should be created.

The main objective is not to have either the present form of government, nor an interim government, nor to have some other new government, but to have a government that can bring about a strong and prosperous Union of Burma. Please do not lose sight of the main objectives, nor forget the future welfare of the country. Should we lose sight of these, present victories will change to future failures.

What stage have we reached now? Well, our cherished aim is clearly within sight. Let us march forward together towards that goal. Let no divisions creep in. It is important that divisions of opinion should not arise among the students. There should be a complete restraint on creating such divisions. Therefore should differences arise between them now the country's future unity will be jeopardized.

While I am on the subject of unity may I speak for a while on the union of states of which Burma is composed. The different peoples of Burma should also remain united. The majority people of course remain the Burmese. They must strive with ever-increasing efforts to live in this accord and amity. Because the Burmese people form the biggest majority, they should make the greatest efforts to live in this accord and amity and to achieve that much needed unity and friendship among national racial groups.

Those who have the greater strength should show restraint and tolerance towards those who have less strength. Here I wish to say one thing regarding those people who are supporting the one-party system. The fact is many members of the Lanzin Party (Burma Socialist Programme Party) have themselves lost faith and confidence in their party. Such party members should resign from the Lanzin Party. They should hand in their party cards.

However, those who continue as members of the Lanzin Party out of conviction should not be molested. Democracy is an ideology that allows everyone to stand up according to his beliefs. They should not be threatened or endangered. Each one should go forward towards his own goal. Do not because of your greater strength be vengeful towards those who are of weaker strength.

We have gone far beyond the intended time, so I must cut this short. The final remark I wish to make is for our rally to maintain unity and discipline. Our strength should be used for the cause of what is right. Only by observing these requirements shall we be able to find our goal.

May the entire people be united and disciplined. May our people always do what is in complete accord with rightful principles. May the people be free from all harm.

To conclude I would like to reiterate our emphatic demands and protests, namely that we have no desire at all for a referendum, that the one-party system should be dismantled, that a multi-party system of government should be established, and we call for free and fair elections to be arranged as quickly as possible. These are our demands.



## **7. Photograph, Philippine First Lady**

Politicians are astute experts on the symbols and meaning of dress as part of self-representation. For women, the politics of dress are highly significant. This photograph depicts a powerful woman, Former First Lady Imelda Romualdez Marcos and shows her use of national dress in the Southeast Asian political context. Marcos popularized the *terno*, the Philippine national dress for women with butterfly sleeves, when she became First Lady. She used the national dress to craft a self-representation of herself as embodying the nation, presenting herself as a nationalist subject. Marcos was conscious of Southeast Asian cultural constructions of woman as bearer and wearer of national tradition, and tapped into these notions to achieve her political agenda. She stated during her trial that she wanted to be seen as a nationalist. Since she could not wear the Filipino flag, the *terno* became her flag. Filipinos, however, identified the *terno* with her personally and with her frivolousness. The *terno* became a symbol of Imelda Marcos rather than a metaphor for nation.

*Source:* Bravo, Claudio. Painting of Imelda Marcos. In Pedrosa, Carmen Navarro. *The Rise and Fall of Imelda Marcos*. Manila: 1987.



### **8. Photograph, Burmese Activist**

This photograph of a powerful woman, Burmese activist Aung San Suu Kyi, shows her use of national dress in a Southeast Asian political context. Aung San Suu Kyi was educated overseas and married to an Englishman. Yet she always wears Burmese national dress complete with a flower in her hair. This choice of clothing downplays her Western education and stresses her image as a nationalist fighting for the restoration of democratic institutions in Burma. Aung San's dress demonstrates her awareness of Southeast Asian cultural constructions of women as bearers of national tradition. In addition, she appears frail, but this is most likely intentional. The "woman

as martyr” can be a powerful symbol in Southeast Asia. Her image serves as a stark contrast to the machismo of army rulers who wear Western military attire.

*Source:* Falise, Thierry. Photograph of Aung San Suu Kyi.



### **9. Song, Philippine Feminist Movement**

This song, entitled *Maria* and sung in Tagalog (a Philippine language), challenges cultural constructions of women as passive, as sex objects or domestic cooks. “Maria” is used as a generic term for woman. The song identifies heroines such as Lorena Barros, Gabriela Silang, and Tandang Sora. Barros founded MAKIBAKA in 1971, the first second wave feminist organization. The organization was forced underground during the martial law regime of President Marcos (1972-1986) and Barros was killed by the military. Gabriela Silang led the revolt against Spanish colonizers in the 18th century and Tandang Sora helped the Filipino revolutionaries against Spain in 1896-1898.

Maria is performed by Sining Lila, a performing group of GABRIELA (General Assembly Binding Women for Reforms, Integrity, Equality, Leadership, and Action), an umbrella organization of about 200 grass roots women’s organizations in the Philippines. Sining Lila performs songs during the demonstrations, workshops, and other public events where GABRIELA is a participant or organizer.

GABRIELA was formed in 1984 and adhered to the national-democratic brand of feminism. There are now roughly 200 organizations under its umbrella from all over the country. They represent second wave feminism in the Philippines and epitomize the new militant nature of feminist activism. Many women who join GABRIELA (like the Filipino “comfort women”) have not been given the opportunities for higher education, but the songs, demonstrations, and workshops introduce them to ideas and history. This group of feminists challenges cultural constructions of the feminine as wife and mother. Their workshops directed at women from all classes succeeded in developing a feminist consciousness.

*Source: Sining Lila. Maria. © 2002 by GABRIELA. Compact Disc. Translated by Mina Roces.*

I.	Mula ng isilang ka, Maria Dinanas mo na Ang mga pang-aaping 'Di mo makaya	I.	When you were born, Maria You already experienced Oppression you could no longer endure
II.	Ika'y nalilito, Ika'y nagtatanong Bakit ba ganito ang papel ng mga Maria	II.	You are confused You're asking questions Why is it that this is the role of all women?
III.	Ika'y hindi pangkusina Hindi pangkama Ika'y di bagay tingnan Sa pagnanasa Ika'y hindi laruan Pag nagasawa'y iiwan Ika'y babaeng may karapatan	III.	You do not exist only to be in the kitchen Or a sex object You are not an object to be gazed at You are not a toy That is abandoned when one tires of playing with it
IV	Maria, Maria iyong pag-aralan Maria, Maria ang iyong kasaysayan	IV	You are a woman with rights. Maria, Maria you need to learn
V	Si Lorena, Gabriela at Tandang Sora		Maria, Maria your own history

<p>Naaalala niyo pa ba sila Sila ang huwaran Nang bagong Pilipina Sila ay ikaw at ikaw ay sila</p>	<p>V Lorena, Gabriela, and Tandang Sora Do you remember them? They are examples Of the new Filipina</p>
<p>VI Maria, Maria iyong ipaglaban Maria, Maria ang iyong karapatan</p>	<p>They are who you are and you are the IV. Maria, Maria go and fight Maria, Maria for your rights.</p>

### 10. Website, Sisters In Islam

The women's movement has always been inherently global, but by the end of the 20th century there was a new burst of transnational women's organizing as women used new technologies to network at home and abroad. Women's movements are studied in the context of globalization and Southeast Asian women's "positioning" within this global context. The Southeast Asian women's diaspora (for example, the significant number of Filipino domestic workers overseas) and the effect of globalization on women, has inspired the contemporary women's movement to work in a transnational rather than a local context. At the same time, Islamic revivalism has made Southeast Asian Muslim women more conscious of their transnational Muslim identity. *Sisters in Islam*, based in Malaysia, reinterprets the Koran from a feminist perspective, focusing on issues faced by the "modern" Muslim woman in Malaysia and in the global Muslim community.

Sisters in Islam (SIS) was founded in 1988 to promote the rights of Muslim women. A group of feminist, professional women organized SIS because men, as *ulama* (Islamic scholars), were the only ones permitted to interpret the text of the Koran (Qu'ran). SIS presented a more egalitarian interpretation of the Koran, especially regarding women. In the 1970s, as women began to enter the labor force, Malaysia experienced a rise of Islamic revivalism (*dakwa* movement). *Dakwa* encouraged a more pious practice of Islam and veiling became popular (veiling is a relatively modern phenomenon associated with elite, university educated, middle class women). SIS argued that one could be both a feminist and a Muslim. An examination of the titles of SIS publications (listed on the homepage) and seminars topics reveals a distinct interest in women's rights, particularly in Shari'a Law or Muslim Law (Hudud) based on the Qu'ran and the Hadith (the traditions of the Prophet written down by his followers).

Source: Sisters In Islam (SIS), [http://www.sistersinislam.org.my/home\\_mission.htm](http://www.sistersinislam.org.my/home_mission.htm)



[HOME](#)

[WHAT'S NEW](#)

[ACTIVITIES](#)

[RESOURCE CENTRE](#)

[PUBLICATIONS](#)

[BOOKS & ARTICLES](#)

[LINKS](#)

[CONTACT SIS](#)

## Home > Mission & Objectives

Sisters in Islam (SIS) is a group of women within the framework of Islam.

Our efforts to promote the rights of women are based on the freedom enjoined by the Qur'an as follows:

We uphold the revolutionary spirit of Islam as revealed 1400 years ago. We believe in the basic rights of equality and justice for all. We justify cultural practices and values that have made possible the text of the Qur'an.

We believe that for the ummah to progress, women must participate in all spheres of life. We believe in the socio-economic development of the ummah.