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April 1987

Dear Colleagues,

Ever since World War II, the Philippines have waited for land reform. In 1947 it obtained its independence from the United States but its people have never been free from poverty.. Despite extensive resources, 75% of the Filipino people live in poverty according to the United Nations.

Ferdinand Marcos promised land reform in 1972 when he declared martial law. At that time he called for a "new society" for the poor.. "a bloodless revolution with a democratization of wealth." As we know he never delivered on this pledge to his people. The issue of land reform has not gone away. It is an urgent agenda again, this time for President Aquino.

While she spoke often of the need for non-violence in her speeches at the Congress and at Harvard, she is now being urged to look for a military solution to the insurgency and to the problems caused by the distress of her people. Land reformers are now being challenged as Communists.

In fact, Aquino recently was quoted as saying to her military, " the answer to terrorism of the left and the right - is not social or economic reform but military and police action."

Yet from 1945 to the years before Viet Nam, the government of the United States recognized the need of effective land reform to create a stable nation. In Japan, under Mac Arthur, and later in Taiwan and Korea it had its greatest successes. In 1955 the American Ambassador to the Philippines, Admiral Spruance urged " better assessments and a land tax" as one way to create more access to the land for the peasants.

It is important that in the renewed fighting between the government and the rebels of the left and the right in the Philippines that the need for justice and true land reform, not only not be forgotten, but be stressed, both by the new government of Corazon Aquino, and the government of the United States.

TO CREATE THIS POSSIBILITY, A NUMBER OF US ARE LAUNCHING A NEW PROJECT TO REACH KEY CITIZENS AND LEADERS OF BOTH GOVERNMENTS. YOU HAVE A KEY ROLE TO PLAY IN THIS PROJECT.

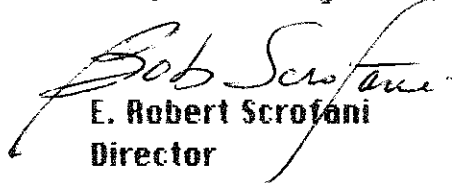
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This letter is an appeal to you to join 200 like-minded people in the United States who believe that we can create justice in human affairs. And justice is the object of this project. And you are one of those people.

Members of Common Ground USA, the Council of Georgist Organizations, Oxfam, Equal Rights USA, and of other organizations are on our roster. As an individual, a member of a group, a church., etc. you can make a difference. Using your own expertise, your own contacts etc., we urge you to join this project to encourage and sustain land reform in the Philippines. Your role in this project could be the most vital. Please join us.

An outline of our motives, objectives, strategies and tactics (based on the ideas of John Burger and Common Ground USA) are attached as a guide. Also sample letters to key officials. Please start immediately and keep us informed of your activities.

For peace and justice,

  
E. Robert Scrofani  
Director

encl. Land Reform in Taiwan (last page is a brief story of our land reform in California at the turn of the century.

Land Reform in the Philippines

M.O.S.T. Chart

Sample letters to officials