



NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

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NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE TO EXAMINE PHILIPPINES ELECTIONS

WASHINGTON, DC, APRIL 14, 1987 -- An international delegation, sponsored by the National Democratic Institute and led by Canadian Senator Al Graham, will observe the May 11 congressional elections in the Philippines.

The National Democratic Institute (NDI) conducts nonpartisan political development programs in various parts of the world. The Institute received widespread acclaim for its international observer mission to the Philippines last year. Senator Graham was a member of that mission.

NDI has closely followed the democratization process in the Philippines and believes that there is substantial international interest in learning from the Philippine experience.

NDI President Brian Atwood said, "one of the goals of the program is to familiarize influential advocates of democratic reform in nations that are creating or strengthening an electoral process with the Philippines' election system."

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Events in the Philippines have drawn worldwide attention since former President Ferdinand Marcos declared a 'snap' presidential election in February 1986. Since that time, the Philippines government has restructured its Commission on Elections and has invested major resources toward the conduct of free and fair elections.

Senator Graham, former President of Canada's Liberal Party said, "Last year's events and President Corazon Aquino's efforts to consolidate the Filipino democracy have provided an important base of information about democratic transitions and an inspiration to advocates of democracy everywhere."

NDI has invited over 20 political party representatives and members of non-governmental organizations from Bangladesh, Chile, Haiti, Israel, Northern Ireland, Pakistan, South Korea, and Taiwan to participate in the delegation.

NDI President Brian Atwood believes that in observing the May elections, "individuals from countries that seek a peaceful democratic transition and face problems similar to

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those found in the Philippines before 1986 will get new ideas that could be applied to their own political situations."

"They will also learn from one another, and from countries such as Canada, Israel and the United States, which have strong election systems," he said.

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