



# THE INTERNATIONAL DEMOCRAT

Vol. 2

March 1986

*The National Democratic Institute was created by the National Endowment for Democracy Act in 1983 to encourage democratic development efforts throughout the world. A non-profit, non-partisan organization, its central purpose is to help individuals and institutions outside the United States become effective participants in democratic systems.*

## FRAUD IN THE PHILIPPINES: A FIRST-HAND ACCOUNT

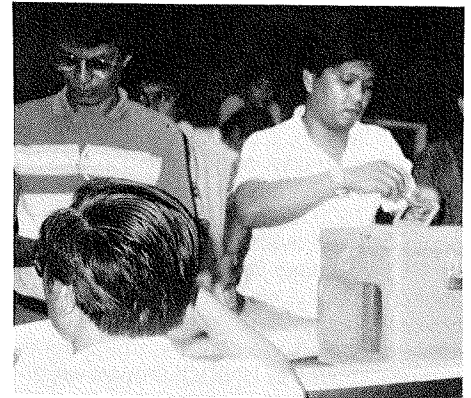
Speaking a number of languages and representing the full spectrum of political viewpoints, the international observer delegation to the Philippines election was a diverse group. We were led by John Hume, Leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party of Northern Ireland, and Misael Pastrana, a former President of Colombia and leader of that country's Conservative Party. The forty-four person delegation arrived in the Philippines February 4 with the hope that it could deter some amount of electoral malpractice, detect it when it occurred, and bear witness to the credibility of the result.

We deterred very little, detected a great deal, and left Manila with the public hav-

ing made up its mind before the results were fully tabulated.

Before deciding to send a delegation to observe this election, we studied the electoral code and the safeguards against fraud and abuse. In early January, a six-person advance team travelled to the Philippines to determine whether the political climate and groundrules would permit the possibility of a free and fair election. The laws and procedures were fundamentally as sound as they are in most democratic nations; indeed, they were so proscriptive that we feared the technicalities might later be used to thwart the popular will. In our report on the electoral process, we concluded that the issue was not whether the

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February 7, 1986. A Filipino man casts his ballot on Election Day.

## DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE

Following is part of a resolution adopted on March 8 by the Democratic National Committee:

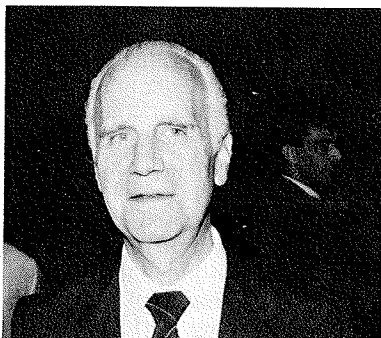
**WHEREAS:** The National Democratic Institute for International Affairs played a significant role in monitoring the election, in identifying abuses of the electoral process, and in forming international opinion that the election was not free or fair or credible to a majority of the Filipino people;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** The Democratic National Committee commends the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs for its role in determining international opinion about the Philippines election, and further urges the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs to continue its presence in the Philippines to play the vital role of helping to strengthen Filipino democracy by working with political parties which request the Institute's assistance.

## NDI's ROLE IN PHILIPPINES PRAISED

I want you to know of my appreciation for your joining with your Republican counterpart in organizing an international team to observe the recent Philippine election. Your excellent and highly professional work contributed to public understanding of what occurred during the election and helped preserve democracy in the Philippines. My congratulations on a job well done.

George P. Shultz  
Secretary of State



An Advocate for Democracy. Dr. Aristides Calvani, former Venezuelan Foreign Minister and a good friend of NDI, died in a Guatemalan airliner crash in January.

## IN MEMORIAM

"NDI and all who believe in democratic principles lost a good friend on January 18, 1986, when former Venezuelan Foreign Minister Aristides Calvani died in the crash of a Guatemalan airliner. We worked closely with Dr. Calvani in an effort to identify and assist Democrats from around the Hemisphere. He believed strongly in the need to strengthen those who believe in democracy and to fight the forces of oppression wherever they appeared.

Dr. Calvani was a good and decent man whose character embraced the best in international understanding and commitment to human rights. He was one of the first we at NDI met as we began our democratic development work almost two years ago. Aristides Calvani will always represent the best of what we attempt to accomplish. We have lost a good friend, and the world has lost one of its strongest advocates of democracy."

Cont.

law was adequate, but whether public officials would enforce that law in good faith.

Even before the international team arrived in the Philippines, there were already a number of reports indicating that good faith was lacking. The opposition party (UNIDO) had filed several complaints with the Commission on Elections (COMELEC), a body heavily criticized by the opposition because it was dominated by Marcos appointees.

The complaints referred to unequal access to the media, the registration of massive numbers of flying voters (people registered to vote several times in several districts), and various efforts made by local officials to stop UNIDO from campaigning. COMELEC ignored all of these, and their ruling to the effect that the Catholic Church should not engage in partisan activity—a complaint filed by Marcos' KBL party—did little to dispel doubts about COMELEC's objectivity.

On election day, our delegation was dispersed to the far reaches of this archipelago's 7000 islands. We covered 15 provinces and over 1500 precincts. Observing that many voting centers functioned smoothly, we also saw every type of violation of the electoral code imaginable. In the end, we could attribute none of these abuses to UNIDO, though we intentionally sent teams to areas under their control.

In one southern area the vote buying had been developed to a science. Instructions on a carbon paper form advised the voters to write "Marcos and Tolentino" on the ballot with the carbon placed underneath. The copy—proof of a Marcos vote—was good for anywhere from 25 to 200 pesos. One brave woman leaving a polling place handed her carbon copy to the well-armed paymaster; on it was written "Aquino-Laurel."

Our observers visited one town which had been abandoned. The only person seen was a woman sitting in the official polling station filling out ballots for the absent townspeople!

In many areas, representatives of UNIDO and NAMFREL, the nationally accredited citizens' arm, were unceremoniously expelled from the polling places, despite the fact that under law they had a legal guarantee to access as poll-watchers.

In other precincts where Aquino polled particularly well, the KBL pollwatcher refused to sign the election return, thus possibly invalidating the result. Elsewhere, thugs stood at the entrance to intimidate voters. Thousands of voters were turned away when their names did not appear on the registration list, primarily in Aquino strongholds, and, in the end, only 19.5 million people voted, though 26.2 million had been given as a "conservative estimate" earlier.

The counting phase yielded further abuse. In many places, the vote tallies



Manila Meeting. Leaders of International Delegation meet with Cardinal Jaime Sin in Manila. (left to right) (l. to r.) William Tucker—NRI; John Hume—SDLP-; Sue Wood—National Party of New Zealand; Cardinal Jaime Sin; Misael Pastrana—former Pres. of Colombia; Brian Atwood—NDI; Keith Schuette—NRI; Curt Wiley—NDI.

NAMFREL OPERATION QUICK COUNT	
NATIONAL TALLY BOARD	
MARCOS - AQUINO - TOLentino - LAUREL - KALAW REGISTERED VOTERS	
TOTAL	
1. Marcos	
2. Aquino	
3. Tolentino	
4. Laurel	
5. Kalaw	
6. Blank	
7. Invalid	
8. Spoiled	
9. Other	
TOTAL PRESENTS	
DATE	
TIME	

Philippine Election Results. A NAMFREL National Tally Board reflects the Aquino lead with 46% of the vote counted.

showed zero votes for Aquino even though the UNIDO pollwatcher and others swore by affidavit that they voted for the opposition candidate. Despite the Herculean efforts by NAMFREL volunteers to protect ballot boxes, many were found open and some were snatched away by force.

Despite all of this illegal activity at the local level, early counts showed Aquino ahead. Perhaps as a result, vote counting in many areas of the country ground to a halt. It seemed that the government had stalled the process to ascertain what would be necessary to pull out a victory.

Meanwhile, the government-controlled media was announcing results showing President Marcos consistently ahead. Confidence about the accuracy of the final count was diminishing rapidly.

It was further substantiated on the second day of the counting. Thirty COMELEC computer operators who had been inputting election results walked out, saying that numbers posted on the tally boards did not reflect what they had processed. The world press recorded both their story and their fear as the operators left COMELEC headquarters at 2:00 a.m.

for a press conference at Manila's largest cathedral.

This act of courage was one of many we observed. NAMFREL volunteers linked arms to protect ballot boxes from being stolen. Four hundred people slept in the Makati City Hall for three nights to guard the election returns. A priest volunteering for NAMFREL was dragged into the street clutching a ballot box as goons attempted to steal it. A NAMFREL helicopter en route to a sensitive area was forced down by the military.

On February 9th, our delegation announced its preliminary assessments of the election. In a surprisingly strong consensus, we voiced anger about the pervasive and obvious efforts to disenfranchise voters and support for the thousands of Filipinos who risked their lives for the integrity of the electoral process. Since the counting had not been completed, we could not yet determine whether the fraud we had observed would be enough to distort the popular will. Nevertheless, it was already clear that the election was not "free and fair," as President Marcos had promised.

Following the election, our collective voice joined a chorus of assertions that the government had perpetrated widespread fraud throughout the electoral process. The loudest voice was, of course, that of the Filipino people.

Their courage subsequently transformed a perverted election into a cause for a dramatic revolution. The election served as a powerful reminder of the spirit of democracy—one that will linger long in the hearts and minds of the world's democratic community, and most certainly our delegation. People power in the end made Corazon Aquino and the Filipino people the winners.

## CONGRESSIONAL VICTORY

After nine tortuous months, on December 6, the Congress made NDI eligible to apply for grants from the National Endowment for Democracy. This action reversed a congressional prohibition in fiscal year 1985 and gave us access once again to our most important funding source. Key votes underscored the fact that the many Members of Congress who were previously skeptical about the role of the Institutes now view them as essential.

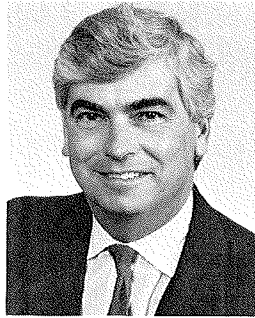
In the Senate alone, 15 Senators changed their votes from last year. NDI views this Congressional vote of confidence as a mandate to continue and expand our democratic development projects around the world.

The key vote came in the Senate on December 6, on a motion to table House language permitting our Institute to apply for Endowment grants. The vote was 43-44 against tabling; and the motion subsequently passed by voice vote. As close as this vote was, it drastically reversed last year's 62 to 30 vote against the political development institutes.

Senators Dodd, Pell, Moynihan, and Kennedy offered important and eloquent support on the Democratic side, but a Senator who last year opposed the NED and the political development institutes, Tom Eagleton of Missouri, was the key to victory. At a crucial moment, Senator Eagleton, using deft parliamentary tactics, convinced the Senate to accept the vote on the tabling motion and to agree to a voice vote on the House amendment. Senators Eagleton and Dodd managed the debate and convinced a number of their colleagues to support the Institutes.

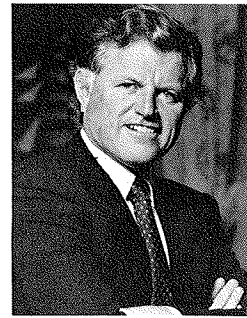
We are grateful to our key House leaders Dante Fascell, Neal Smith and Dan Mica as well. They managed this issue with extraordinary skill through a thicket of legislative maneuvers.

NDI received words of strong support from a number of Congressional friends:



**Sen. Christopher J. Dodd  
(D-Connecticut)**

*"Already those of us in the Chamber and elsewhere who have participated and worked with these Institutes have seen first hand what a tremendous benefit they can be."*



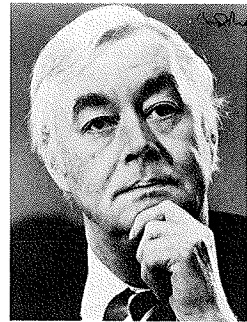
**Sen. Edward M. Kennedy  
(D-Massachusetts)**

*"The National Democratic Institute has an impressive record of fostering the development of democracy and citizen participation in many countries around the world."*



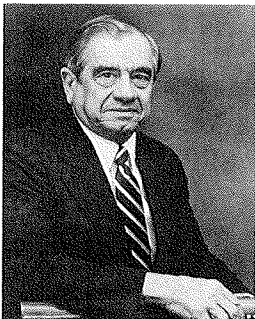
**Sen. Thomas F. Eagleton  
(D-Missouri)**

*"After viewing the work of NDI in the past 12 months, I am convinced that their work has made a real difference in the lives of ordinary people around the world."*



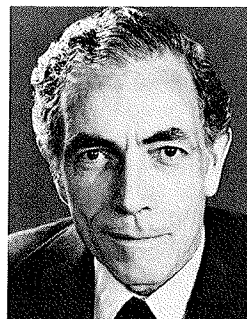
**Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan  
(D-New York)**

*"This is a vote on our commitment to democracy, not just in this country, but in a world which looks to us for standards in these matters and in small ways, but important ways, for help."*



**Rep. Dante B. Fascell  
(D-Florida)**

*"From my perspective, the two party institutes are absolutely essential. No society can build and maintain democratic institutions or political systems without the development of stable, effective political parties."*



**Sen. Claiborne Pell  
(D-Rhode Island)**

*"NDI, working with both major parties in Argentina, has encouraged much needed legislative reform at a time when the nation's democratic institutions have been severely challenged and a state of seige imposed to protect the system."*



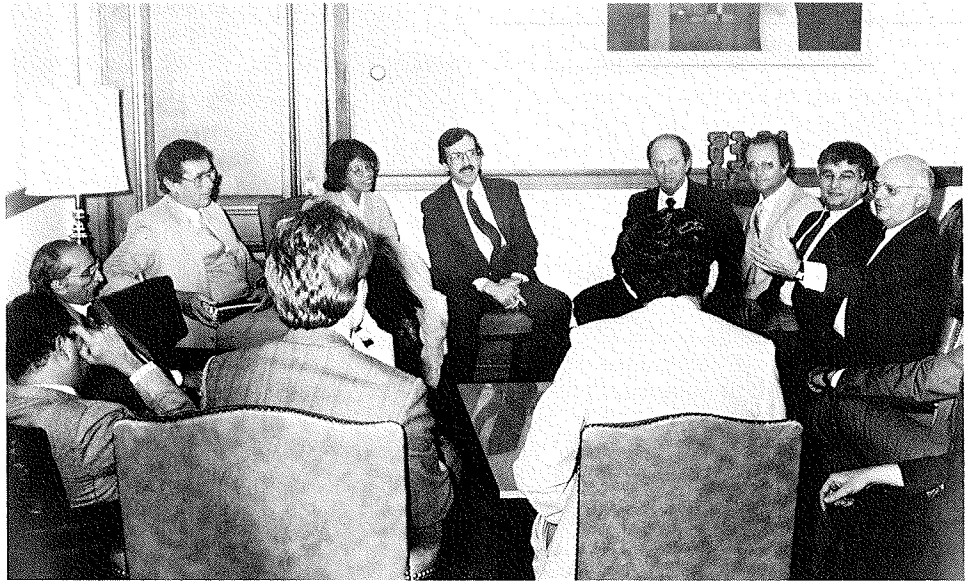
**CULTURE SHOCK**

This cartoon reflects the type of attention our international observers of the Philippine election received upon their return home. Portrayed is Senator Al Graham of Canada.

## BRAZILIAN LEGISLATORS BRAVE WASHINGTON WINTER TO STUDY U.S. BUDGET PROCESS

From post-carnival Rio to the snow of Albany, N.Y., in 12 hours would test the commitment of any democrat. Nevertheless, seven Brazilian legislators and senior staff from the Senate and Chamber of Deputies recently braved the cold Washington and New York weather to attend an NDI-sponsored workshop. The legislators were invited to Washington to gain an understanding of the U.S. budget process, which may be helpful to them as they try to reform their own budget process after 21 years of military rule.

The legislators spent the first week of the budget workshop in Albany, New York, meeting with key legislators and staff from the state level, along with their staffs. In Washington, the second week of the workshop focused on meetings at the federal level. The legislators asked perceptive and penetrating questions. Much of the questioning focused on the ongoing conflict in the U.S. between the executive and the legislative branches over the budget. However, our Brazilian guests seemed eager to learn about a system which permits such a dialogue to exist.



NDI Brazilian Group Meets with Secretary General of OAS. Brazilian legislators travelled to Washington, D.C. to study the U.S. budget process. Participants included: Rosinethe Soares; George Lawton; Luiz Carlos Chavez; Oswaldo Sanches Maldonado; Dr. Abdo Baaklini; Secretary General of O.A.S. Joao Clemente Buena Soares; Vincente Sebastiao de Oliveira; Gerald Mitchell (NDI); Deputy Jose Jorge (PFL-Brazil); Deputy Jose Frejat (PDT-Brazil); Jose Carlos Alves Dos Santos.

### Senator Joao Lobo, *PDS member from Pinai*

**During the years of dictatorial rule in Brazil, the keys to the coffer were thrown away. We come to your country, a country with strong democratic principles, to help us to find new keys so that we may throw open the coffers once more.**

Representative Peter Kostmayer (D-PA), a member of the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs, hosted a lively coffee for the group and sparked heated debate when he asked the Brazilians their opinions on Nicaragua. Many of the Brazilian legislators argued that a military solution was not the answer to problems in this Central American country.

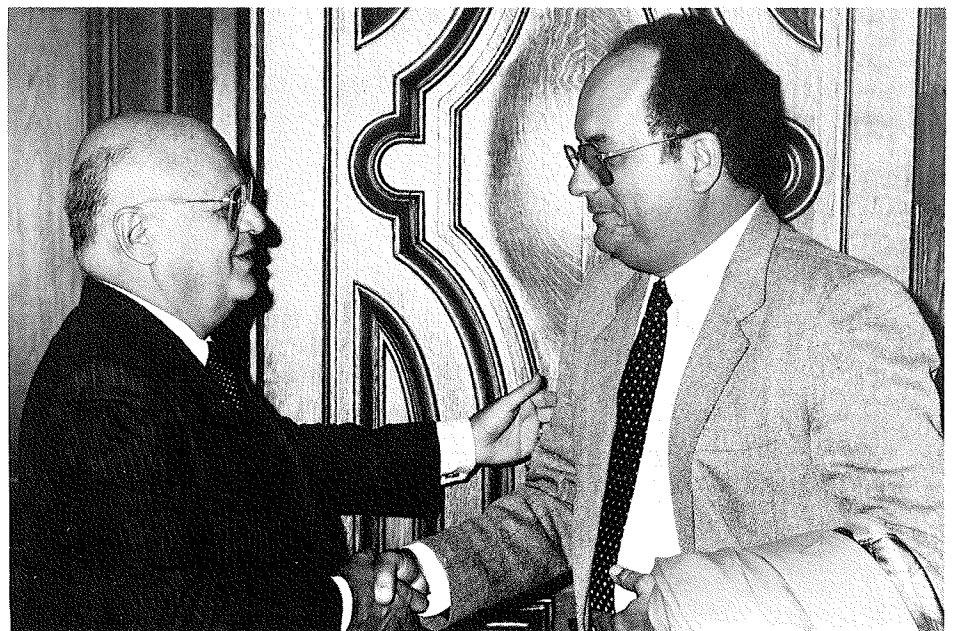
Buoyed by two weeks of seminars and site visits to the Congress and the various agencies that support the budget—the Congressional Budget Office, Office of

### Deputy Jose Frejat, *PDT representative from Rio*

**During the years of authoritarian military rule, much money was appropriated for defense spending, while little was spent on education. Today in Brazil, the Executive prepares the budget, and the Legislature only approves it. That must change.**

Management and Budget and the Congressional Research Service—the Brazilian legislators took back to Brasilia unique knowledge of the American budget process. Since the Brazilian constitution will be rewritten next year, the legislators feel these insights have immediate relevance and applicability to their own system.

This NDI initiative came at an important historic moment in Brazil. On the last day of our conference, Brazilian President Sarney embarked on a bold initiative to stem inflation. This news made NDI's initial Brazilian Budget Workshop all the more relevant, and we now look forward to meaningful follow-up activities in Brazil in the near future.



OAS Secretary General Joao Clemente Buena Soares greets Deputy José Jorge (PFL- Brazil) in Washington.

## NDI ATTENDS LIBERAL INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS

**MADRID, SPAIN:** In early October, 1985, NDI Board member Marvin Weissberg travelled to Madrid as the Institute's representative to the Liberal International (LI) Congress. Joining Mr. Andrew Sundberg, who represented the Democratic National Committee, Mr. Weissberg was the first official NDI observer to an LI meeting.

Comprised of democratic parties from Europe, Latin America, and Africa, Liberal International is one of four "political internationals"—groups of political parties from around the world—which meet regularly to discuss international concerns. Although the American parties have been invited to attend internationals' meetings, they have not participated often. NDI and the DNC have decided to demonstrate the Democrats' interest in these discussions by sending representatives as observers.

The U.S. Democrats were warmly received by the LI delegations. Although observers do not vote on resolutions, they

may participate in discussions. During the meeting, debates included resolutions to:

- promote peaceful uses of nuclear energy and strengthen international atomic energy agencies;
- express concern over human rights abuses in Sri Lanka;
- request all member parties of LI to call upon their governments to urge USSR's withdrawal of forces from Afghanistan;
- express full support for the Contadora process to resolve the problems in Central America;
- call for an end to apartheid in South Africa and that country's policies of destabilization toward its neighbors;
- appeal to the Soviet Union to grant exit visas to Jews who have applied for them;
- resolve that terrorism be treated as a crime, not a political offense;

- emphasize that governments have an international obligation to take appropriate sanctions against nations that harbor or assist terrorists.

The Congress also commended the countries that have recently returned to democratically elected civilian governments. In particular, Liberal International recognized the efforts of President Raul Alfonsin of Argentina with a humanitarian award for his role in bringing democracy back to Argentina and the region. The delegates urged the international community of democracies to support President Alfonsin's efforts to strengthen democratic institutions.

NDI looks forward to naming observers to future meetings of Liberal International, as well as to those of the Socialist and Christian Democratic Internationals, and the International Democrat Union.

## MOVING FORWARD IN NORTHERN IRELAND

In Northern Ireland, the Anglo-Irish Accord and special elections have brought new hope to those who seek a non-violent, constitutional settlement of the conflict in that troubled land. For NDI, working with John Hume and his Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), it has also brought a renewed purpose.

For the last year NDI has been working with the SDLP to strengthen the democratic process in Northern Ireland. The SDLP represents the overwhelming majority of the Catholic-nationalist community. This political party seeks reconciliation through negotiation and democratic participation.

The extremist forces of the IRA and the Protestant-Unionist community have created a highly static and polarized political environment. The SDLP's objective is to diffuse this polarization. The IRA and its political arm, Sinn Fein, as well as the

Protestant-Unionist community, are violently opposed to the new agreement negotiated by Margaret Thatcher, Prime Minister of Great Britain, and Garrett Fitzgerald, Prime Minister of Ireland.

In January, the Unionist members of the British Parliament attempted to disrupt the agreement by resigning their seats and forcing a special election. They failed in their bid. The SDLP was victorious in electing Seamus Mallon, Deputy Leader of the party, and increasing its overall vote by six percent.

NDI does not support either candidates or political parties in elections. Our work with the SDLP's Social Democratic Group focuses on developing techniques to involve people in the democratic process, organization building and planning. We emphasize civic education and methods for communicating messages of non-violent reconciliation.

In September, we sponsored a seminar in Washington, D.C., on developing the democratic process in Northern Ireland. Thirty-five people from throughout Northern Ireland and the U.S. participated. A study group then travelled to Northern Ireland to observe the SDLP's 15th Annual Conference in Belfast. Also visiting Dublin, the group met with the leadership of various political parties and the Department of Foreign Affairs.

We recognize the results of the elections in January as being one of many indications that our program in Northern Ireland is having some effect. Whatever the reasons, Northern Ireland seems to be moving in the right direction. Perhaps the tide is turning for those who believe that the key to reconciliation can be found in the democratic process.

## CARIBBEAN CONFERENCE EMPHASIZES COOPERATION

Heywoods, BARBADOS—Over 60 Caribbean political, business and labor leaders called for new initiatives to promote regional integration and stronger public-private sector cooperation. Meeting at an NDI conference in Barbados November 8-10, Caribbean leaders emphasized the need to solve the pressing economic difficulties facing the English-speaking Caribbean nations.

The participants called for enhanced policy dialogue with the United States, other donor countries, and multilateral development institutions to assure that foreign assistance more adequately coincides with the economic, political and social development needs of the Caribbean nations.

NDI is exploring proposals of bilateral projects with several Caribbean nations as a result of the conference.

Representatives of governing and opposition parties, business and labor associations attended the conference, sponsored by NDI and the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE), an affiliate of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Five organizations co-sponsored the conference: the Barbados Labour Party, the Democratic Labour Party of Barbados, the Caribbean Congress of Labour, the Caribbean Association of Industry and Commerce and the Caribbean Employers Confederation. Representative Dante Fascell, Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, led a delegation of U.S. Congressmen. Private business and labor leaders from the U.S. also attended the meeting.

Barbados Prime Minister Bernard St. John opened the conference emphasizing the importance of the inter-relationship between the United States and its Caribbean neighbors. This sentiment was echoed throughout the conference by U.S. and Caribbean speakers. The conference agenda focused on the tri-sectoral approach. The delegates addressed such topics as the rights and responsibilities of the public and private sectors, obstacles to regional collaboration, and the role of external resources in democratic and economic development.

Speakers included the Hon. Errol Barrow, former Prime Minister of Barbados; the Hon. Billie Miller, Minister of Education of Barbados; the Hon. Herbert Blaize, Prime Minister of Grenada; the Hon. Eugenia Charles, Prime Minister of Dominica; the Hon. Rafael Hernandez Colon, Governor of Puerto Rico; the Hon. Julio Brady, Lieutenant Governor of the U.S. Virgin Islands; and NDI Board member Marife Hernandez. Peter Kelly, NDI's Treasurer, led the NDI delegation.

Representatives from all sectors are concerned that the strong democratic traditions and institutions of the Caribbean



Caribbean Conference. Rep. Dante Fascell—Chairman House Foreign Affairs Committee (2nd from right) shares thoughts with Puerto Rican Governor Rafael Hernandez Colon at NDI/CIPE conference in Barbados.

are facing significant stresses as a result of the current economic crisis. Delegates referred in particular to the growing rate of unemployment and underemployment, especially among youth—a situation which contributes to alienation within Caribbean societies and acts as a destabilizing force in the region.

Training and exchange were cited unanimously as vital components for economic development in the region. Delegates from business, labor and the public sector called upon the United States to allocate additional funds for scholarships and training for the Caribbean. Such efforts, they noted, contribute to national development, benefit all levels of society, and lead to greater U.S.-Caribbean understanding.

During the public/private sector dialogue, the following options were offered for increased economic growth through regional integration and enterprise development:

- \* Establishment of a Caribbean Parliament whose members should be drawn from the members of the sitting parliaments, both government and opposition, from the CARICOM states. Business and labor representatives would also be nominated to sit in the parliament.

- \* Improvement and full utilization of existing mechanisms within CARICOM to promote regional cooperation, with particular emphasis on the Joint Consultative Group.

- \* Development of a regional approach to national development planning, including the creation of a technology pool from which all CARICOM nations could draw.

The final session of the conference was devoted to a Congressional Roundtable on External Resources for Economic Development. Representatives Dante Fascell, Mervyn Dymally, Louis Stokes, and John Seiberling urged the Caribbean leaders to unite their voices when addressing the United States government. Only through combined advocacy, they stressed, could the Caribbean region make its needs known to the U.S. Congress.

The delegates agreed that the conference had provided a valuable opportunity to reach agreement between the political, labor and business sectors and recommended that similar meetings be held on a regular basis.

## FUTURE NDI PROGRAMS

NDI is on the cutting edge of programming in democratic development. From the Philippines to Northern Ireland to South Korea, NDI projects focus attention on ordinary citizens fighting to exercise democratic rights. Programs planned for 1986 continue the tradition. Highlights from some of our upcoming programs are sketched below.

One of the most gratifying outcomes of NDI's successful conference on Democracy in South America was the emergence of a network of Chilean leaders willing to work together to move their nation toward democracy. The leaders formed the National Accord, a group of Chileans across the political spectrum, who are working toward democratization. NDI will continue this pioneering effort through a conference of Chilean leaders in the late spring, when high-ranking leaders will meet in South America to discuss new strategies to advance a Chilean return to democracy.

The enfranchisement of women has been a most striking phenomenon of post-war democracy. More than 80 percent of currently enfranchised women won suffrage after World War II. But although women have been enfranchised, they have not been empowered. NDI, building on its successful workshops on women and political participation at the NGO Forum of the UN Decade for Women at Nairobi, will hold a workshop on women and political development for women leaders from democracies around the world. In the workshop, women will share strategies for increasing their political participation and having access to, influencing and becoming decision-makers.

South Korean political leaders of the New Korean Democratic Party are exercising a fundamental right of democracy--the right to petition one's government. Through an ambitious campaign to collect 10 million signatures requesting a constitutional amendment to allow direct election of that nation's president, the opposition NKDP is expanding debate and discussion on the nature of South Korean democracy.

Last year NKDP leaders visited NDI and requested our aid in hosting a party-building workshop that would focus on organizational development, issue formation and constituency building. As we move toward the 1988 Olympics, South Koreans face new challenges on both national and international fronts. The issues will be addressed in our April 1986 seminar with NKDP leaders in Washington, D.C.

NDI also plans a conference of anti-apartheid leaders from South Africa in Botswana. The focus here will be on the future, when the walls of discrimination come down and the need to consider constitutional options is before these leaders.

As follow-ups to earlier Institute initia-

tives, we will repeat the party-building workshop with leaders of the Social Democratic and Labour Party of Northern Ireland. Later this year, an NDI-sponsored team will visit Brazil to follow-up on our winter workshop on budget formulation.

Major international events often result in new program requests and opportunities for NDI. NDI, in cooperation with the National Republican Institute for International Affairs, organized an election observation mission in the recent election in the Philippines. (See article on page 1.) As a follow-up, NDI will work to strengthen democratic institutions, particularly the

electoral process and non-governmental political development organizations.

In Haiti, we have been approached to work with other interested non-governmental organizations to devise a variety of projects ranging from civic education to the development of electoral processes to party-building.

All of these programs offer the Institute rich opportunities to further our work in democratic development. Equally important, all of these projects enable us to respond to the requests and stated needs of partners in political development overseas.

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## ARGENTINA CONSIDERS LEGISLATIVE REFORMS

Buenos Aires, ARGENTINA — NDI's participation in an Argentine-sponsored seminar on legislative reform has given us a unique opportunity to be involved in an effort to strengthen Argentina's democracy. On September 9-11, 1985, legislative experts from NDI participated in a joint seminar on Argentine congressional reform held in Buenos Aires.

The seminar came at a critical moment for Argentine democracy. Argentina's economy has slumped dramatically in the past ten years. Partly as a result, re-emergent democratic institutions have found themselves under ever-increasing pressures as they struggle to take root.

Former Congressman James Shannon; Martin Franks, Executive Director of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee; Burton Sheppard, author of the new book, *Rethinking Congressional Reform*; and NDI Executive Director Brian Atwood represented NDI. A bipartisan group of Senators and Deputies from the Argentine Congress also attended. Co-sponsoring the seminar was the Arturo Illia Foundation for Democracy and Peace, which is affiliated with the Union Civica Radical Party of Argentina.

The seminar addressed such topics as the role of Congress in a democracy, the role of political parties in Congress, the role of interest groups in electoral and legislative politics, and the relationship between Congress and the Executive.

The institutional problems Argentina faces include, most importantly, a powerful and dominant presidency as well as an election system which places party affiliation over the individual, weak or non-existent oversight, a lack of information provided to the opposition and overlapping committee jurisdictions.

Dramatically underscoring the fragility of Argentina's democratic system was President Raul Alfonsin's imposition of a

state of seige in November. This decisive action, designed to quell right-wing violence prior to congressional elections, received widespread acclaim from opposition leaders and the public. However, its necessity emphasized the weakness of institutions that form the fabric of successful democracies in most countries. A vigorous legislature, an independent judiciary, a protected and non-partisan civil service, and active interest groups remain uncertain entities in today's Argentina.

Most of the participants in the seminar recognized that the Argentine Congress needs restructuring and rebuilding to be effective. Theoretically, the Argentine Congress is vested with the same powers as the U.S. Congress. In actuality, the Argentine Congress has been weakened by the problems heretofore mentioned.

NDI was pleased to contribute to this high level debate on Congressional reform. We are currently planning a follow-up seminar in Washington with key members of the Argentine House and Senate. Representatives from both the Radical and Peronist parties can use the opportunity to consider both the U.S. and alternative systems to explore reforms which could be taken to strengthen their Congress.

***Argentina's two political parties are well aware of the dangers inherent in a weak legislature. The military has seized power three times in this century, not when the executive was weak, but when the Congress was ineffectual. And although Argentine politics historically have been characterized by a strong executive, no single person can carry the entire burden of maintaining democracy in Argentina today. The seminar enabled Argentine legislators to explore reforms which could be taken to strengthen their Congress.***

## INTERNATIONAL VISITORS TO NDI

Xaxier Cebrenros Barros,—Secretary General, Christian Democratic Party, Peru.  
Peter Beattie,—Member, Labour Party, Australia  
Hans-Juergen Beerfeltz,—Member, Free Democratic Party, West Germany  
Benezir Bhutto,—Member, Pakistan People's Party, Pakistan  
Fritz Bolkestein,—Member, Dutch Liberal Party, the Netherlands  
Jose Bordon,—Member of Congress, Peronist Party, Argentina  
Woong Cho,—Member, New Korea Democratic Party, South, Korea  
Augusto Conte,—Member of Congress, Christian Democratic Party, Argentina  
Caetano Cunha Reis,—Member, Socialist Party, Portugal  
Gustavo Delgado,—Member, Blanco Party, Uruguay  
Boris Dolnicar,—Editor-in-chief, Delo, Yugoslavia  
Roberto De Michele,—Union Civica Radical, Argentina  
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