

sugar, etc. Another measure of variable capital or labor cost (wages, bonuses, etc.) is "constant capital" or other expenses as in item (2) of the surplus value or the value produced in excess of the paid labor and is appropriated by the landlord/capitalist and the government.

Substituting (all units in P/pp.):

Following is an alternative exploitation. The thesis here assumed is that the worker is not paid the actual value of his labor output, but rather a wage that keeps him alive for the further reproduction of the surplus of his labor. The surplus is taken by the landlord and to some extent by the government.

$$156.93 = 35.28 + 40.44 + s$$

$$s = P(v + c) = 156.93 - (35.28 + 40.44) = 81.21$$

Indicators of Exploitation or Surplus Appropriation:

(a) rate of surplus value or exploitation:

$$s' = \frac{s}{v} = \frac{81.21}{35.28} = 230\%$$

(b) rate of profit:

$$p' = \frac{s}{v + c} = \frac{81.21}{75.72} = 107\%$$

A rate of surplus value of 230 percent means that for every P 1.00 labor cost (wages, etc.), the landlord/capitalist

appropriated P 2.30. Considering other expenditures (fertilizer, etc.), a rate of profit of 107 percent means that for every P 1.00 production cost, the landlord/capitalist profited by P 1.07 for minimal work done in the production process.

I repeat, these computations are just approximations. I believe that these figures are still conservative estimates due to the following reasons:

- (1) Industrial estimates placed industrial labor cost to be around 5-10% only of total production cost; here, labor cost comprised 46.6% of the total production cost which is highly exaggerated;
- (2) The assumed 16.64% increase in wages when total production cost increased by such amount is high. Generally, wage increases trail behind commodity price increases.

This alternative definition of labor exploitation is only in the economic sphere. In the psychological sphere, there is the consequent alienation, or the estrangement of the worker from himself as a result of his estrangement from the tools and means of production (simple machineries, etc.), from land (as it is owned by the landlord), and from the product itself — sugar.

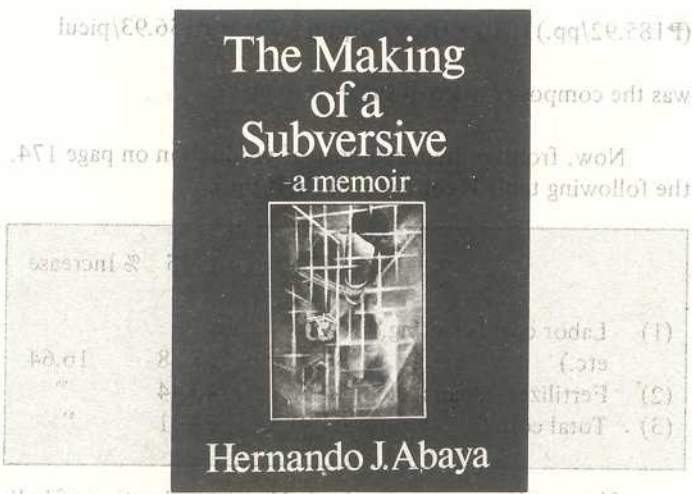
Thus, the book, in flooding the reader with more than a hundred tables of not-so-important, if not completely irrelevant, data; in naively presenting labor exploitation as simply a function of being given or not given the minimum wages, fails in truly grabbing the bull by the horns, in a manner of speaking.

BOOK REVIEW

Looking Back on a Life and History

Danilo F. Sibal

The Making of a Subversive
by Hernando J. Abaya. New Day Publishers. 1984.
235 pp.



Hernando J. Abaya's is a voice with a brave past. As author of *Betrayal in the Philippines*, an account of how the United States government (through Gen. Douglas MacArthur) maneuvered the rehabilitation of erstwhile collaborators with Japan in order to further its neo-colonialist aims, Abaya

reaped harassment and intimidation on a level rare even for the traditionally harried dissident intellectual.

For that book, he suffered everything from losing a prospective United Nations appointment in the late '40s, becoming the object of anti-communist calumny in the early '60s, to spending 114 days at Camp Crame at the onset of martial law.

However legitimately contemporary Filipino social critics may complain about censorship and restrictions, the fact is that they never had it easier compared to Claro M. Recto, Renato Constantino, I. P. Soliongco, and Abaya. For, unlike the new generation of progressive publicists, Recto *et. al.* confronted a hostile Establishment without benefit of a sympathetic public. In the post-Liberation euphoria of those years, to be critical of American policy was to risk being regarded in the popular colonial consciousness as a godless Bolshevik or, at best, a shameless ingrate. To go to war against smugness, complacency, and prejudice of society itself required a special kind of courage.

If we are tempted now to shrug off as trite and commonplace Abaya's inventory of nationalist convictions, we need only remember that when they were first espoused by his generation, these ideas were nothing less than iconoclastic and heretical. When we fulminate against colonial mentality, the military bases, and foreign control of the economy, we do so on the shoulders of Abaya and a few other lonely voices. The present work's importance lies in affording us a look into some of the most intimate aspects of our political history since the Second World War.

In those days, no Marxist subtleties were required to grasp the reality of the State as an imperialist instrument. The Americans quite straightforwardly rammed military bases, free trade, and parity down our throats, making or

unmaking our national leaders as their whims dictated. Abaya relates the story — fresh even in the retelling — of how Gen. MacArthur picked the wily Maj. Manuel Roxas out of wartime limbo and humiliated Sergio Osmeña into oblivion to pave the way for the former's ascension to the presidency. Roxas was later to distinguish himself by engineering the wholesale pardon of even the most blatant collaborators within a year of war's end, and by blazing the trail of subservience for succeeding presidents.

Ambitious Filipinos found a short-cut to success by toeing the American line. Many discovered that it did not hurt to be more zealously anti-communist than McCarthy. We read, for instance, of the colorful careerism of Leonardo B. Perez, who was one of the most aggressive inquisitors of the outrageous House Committee on Un-Filipino Activities. (Perez summoned up enough candor once to confess that he was in the witch-hunting business to make a name for himself.) There was also Maximo Soliven, who wrote some of his prose

to join the witch-hunting chorus. (After a long hibernation during martial law; Soliven recently resumed serving up the red scare in the pages of *Mr. and Ms.*)

Abaya's vignettes about people like Recto, Diosdado Macapagal, Ninoy Aquino, Luis Taruc, and Francisco Nemenzo add a light touch to the story. The author encountered some of the varied lot in unlikely places like Camp Crame. There is a fascinating account as well of Abaya's meeting with Lord Bertrand Russell. The author succeeds in conveying a little of the warmth and humanity of that extraordinary man, who spent his last years fighting American intervention in Vietnam.

A lot of enjoyable reading is packed in this slim volume. Few of us can even aspire to be able to reflect on so fascinating an intertwining of life and history. Given that, the book's occasional lapses into the melodramatic and the sentimental seem only slightly self-indulgent. As a whole, Abaya's book is clearly the expression of the man: intelligent and intelligible.



Dazzle Rivera

"We need rice, not tear gas."

SMALL GROUPS PLAN UNITED ACTION IN WORLDWIDE STRUGGLE FOR FOOD RIGHTS

Independent food and development groups from more than 50 countries today* issued a manifesto denouncing the political root causes of world hunger, identifying essential reforms and setting out a programme to consolidate their own efforts for change.

The 14-page manifesto represents the analysis and conclusions of the World Food Assembly (WFA), a global network established by non-governmental organizations at a meeting in Rome last November. The Assembly brought together 115 development workers, small farmers, researchers, environmentalists and technologists, as well as nearly 50 observers, in what was described as the biggest, most representative meeting of its kind ever held.

Asserting that "radical changes are needed if we are to meet our human responsibility of ensuring food for all", the WFA Manifesto declares that the first aim of its member groups will be to mobilize support for more equitable, human-scale paths of development. It has been shown, the document adds, that these paths are "not only viable but a necessary precondition for any future worth having".

Based on the reports of eight working groups at the Rome conference, the Manifesto is scorching in its critique of both national and international food policies. To a large extent, it says, "development" has meant the development of poverty. In many countries, and not only the poorest, economic policies which suit those at the center of power are a direct cause of hunger — but since the hungry have little influence, these policies are politically affordable.

Farming systems in the industrialized North, and in the countries of the South, are increasingly being plugged into world markets: a global food auction where the poor can never hope to compete. And being encouraged to pursue unsustainable rates of growth, developing countries have been driven deeper into debt and dependency. Their huge debt burden means that the poor are now actually paying the rich to keep the "morally bankrupt" world economy afloat.

The WFA deplors the growth of authoritarian and dictatorial regimes in the South, and the economic and military support given to them by industrialized countries. At the same time, it urges international support for countries such as Nicaragua, where popular movements have overthrown repressive regimes, distributed land to the poor and introduced "food first" policies.

A few governments and official agencies may recognize the kind of reforms needed to make food systems humanly and environmentally sustainable. But in general, the Manifesto says, "these are not the priorities that governments choose to see" — hence the Assembly's emphasis on building a strong and autonomous people's movement to pursue its own alternative paths.

For their future programme of work, the Manifesto signatories commit themselves to a 12-point action plan. Proposals in the plan include:

- an international network to investigate violations of the right to food;
- a campaign to expose disparities between the rhetoric and the reality of development aid, including food aid;
- combined efforts to challenge the austerity programmes imposed on Third World governments by the International Monetary Fund, which cut basic services to the poor while leaving military and other non-essential budgets largely intact;
- an independent biotechnology network of grassroots workers, non-government groups and workers in the industry to combat the near-monopoly of information by a few big companies in the biotech field;
- lobbying by food researchers and others for a reorientation of research priorities towards real food needs and sustainable farming methods.

Work is already underway on some of these proposals. Others will be worked out in more detail at a meeting of the WFA's 18-member International Liaison Committee to be held in Rome in July. The Committee, elected by the Assembly last November for a three-year term, is backed by a small London-based Secretariat responsible for coordinating the programme.

For further information
please contact:

Robin Sharp
WFA Secretariat
15, Devonshire Terrace
London W2 3DW
Tel: (01) 723.0147 / 328.7251

*Tuesday, 21 May 1985.