

Statement from Camp Crame *

I am about as guilty of subversion as Ben. Rodriguez, Dick Pascual, Art Borjal, or the scores of other newsmen who have done nothing these ten years but to practice their profession and try to keep their sanity intact under the circumstances.

I was out in the United States from September — the time when Olalia, et al, were supposed to have hatched the rebellion conspiracy — up to December, gathering documentation on the U.S. Newspaper Guild — on mission for Labor Minister Blas Ople.

Minister Ople is well aware of our plans to organize the media unions into a guild, a project that he cannot but encourage since it jibes with MOLE's "one-union, one-industry" program.

Does organizing a guild now constitute subversion? I do not think so.

Somebody was looking for a scapegoat and I made a fitting sacrificial lamb. So be it.

I cannot understand the machinations behind the issuance of the presidential commitment order to "indefinitely detain" me. All I know is that the publishers met with the President sometime before the PCO was issued, and I cannot help thinking that that meeting had to do with me and the Brotherhood of Media Unions.

I am no ideologue, neither leftist nor rightist, or whatnot. I have religiously paid my income tax ever since my first job. I have tried to give this government the benefit of the doubt, no matter the many things said about it, the voices raised in protest against its alleged excesses — and because of it I now find myself a victim.

They were looking for ghosts and they saw me.

I try so hard but I cannot seem to come to terms with this kind of reality.

Again and again I ask myself if it really happened.

Did 20 military agents and soldiers, armed with armalites, really raid my house in the dead of night in search of evidence?

Did I really go through an inquest at 8:30 or so in the evening at this police substation on the ground floor of the Quezon City Hall? Was I really aware of what was happening? Could it not have been part of a nightmare?

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Finally, am I really behind bars, in a stockade?

But I am, and this seems to be the final touch in the whole farcical rigmarole. I am firmly lodged in a cell with barred windows. I who have never lifted a hand against another man in anger, who cannot even butcher a chicken for the pity I feel for it. Whose millions did I steal? How many did I massacre that I should be penned up like this?

I have never been anything but a newspaperman all these years. I have tried to be a good editor and writer, and I'm still trying. I know how it is to work with a "controlled press" — I have been with it, albeit I have felt like throwing up sometimes — all this time, since 1973. I have compromised, although everything in me said not to, out of sheer necessity — and now I am detained.

Have they run out of people to clap behind bars that they must look for other, lesser victims?

Emotionally, I feel I have been debased.

I cannot even cry. I feel spent, spiritually exhausted. If this thing is actually happening to me, I am inclined to believe that things are worse than they seem. I am asking myself a lot of questions. I will be reflecting on it a lot.

(Sgd.) ANTONIO MA. NIEVA

April 14, 1983

PC-INP Stockade

Camp Crame, Quezon City

Two Captions *

RECAH TRINIDAD

Contrasts abound in Metro Manila. But two events that took place last Sunday and last Wednesday should readily land in a book if an *honest* history of Metro Manila would be written.

Sunday at the Rizal Park, before one of the biggest crowds ever to assemble in the area, grateful brown faces paraded before President and Mrs. Marcos who highlighted the seventh anniversary of the founding of the

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