



Pennie Azarcon-de la Cruz

Filipinas for Sale

An Alternative Philippine Report on
Women and Tourism

**PHILIPPINE
WOMEN'S
RESEARCH
COLLECTIVE**



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The Author

Pennie Azarcon dela Cruz is a journalist who takes special interest in women's issues. She has been freelancing for National Publications since 1979 and has written extensively on women workers, unionism, sex tours, consumerism, the nuclear plant, women's rights and the law, breastfeeding, human rights and political detainees.

She is presently a Veritas News Magazine correspondent, a contributing editor of Women's Home Companion magazine, and the Project Director of the media monitoring project of PILIPINA on the image of Filipino women in media.

After graduating magna cum laude in journalism from the University of Santo Tomas, she plunged headlong into writing, first as a PR for a recording company, an associate editor for a music magazine and a regular contributor to WHO, Life Today and Sunburst Magazines. She likewise edited a short-lived feminist-oriented woman's magazine and was managing editor of Woman's for more than a year.

She is married to Atty. Edwin dela Cruz with whom she has a 2-1/2 year old daughter.

The Artist

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INTRODUCTION

They hailed from various fields and disciplines, these women who heeded the call of PILIPINA, a national women's organization, to discuss an issue that has been haunting them for sometime: what exactly is the women's question and how did it affect, or was affected by, the UN Decade for Women?

The two-day workshop held at a suburban university in late 1984 bristled with insights and analysis as the participants groped and waded through their own experiences and perspectives on the issue. Thus, while the main task was to prepare the Alternative Country Report for the Non-Governmental Organizations' Forum in Nairobi, the workshop likewise resulted in the growth of perception and clearing of doubts among the women present.

Among the points the women agreed upon early on was that (1) the report would document the experience of women from the grassroots as they comprise the majority and most disadvantaged, and would ultimately be the measure of the Decade's gains; (2) it would have a feminist framework; and (3) it would consider as fundamental and integral the three dimensions of women's oppression:

a) national oppression since women comprise half of the Filipino people still victimized by imperialist powers in the economic, political and cultural spheres;

b) class oppression, because women bear the brunt of an exploitative system dominated by foreign corporations and the local elite, as industrial and agricultural workers, as peasants, landless poor and other marginalized sectors; and

c) gender oppression, because cutting across class lines is inequality between the sexes which intensifies the sufferings of grassroots Filipino women.

A Collective Report

With the time constraint, the women decided to share available materials and to work within their sphere of specialization to be able to validate their findings more easily. This sharing and swapping of ideas informally gave birth to the Philippine Women's Research Collective (PWRC). The collective is composed of women coming from research and development, law, journalism, health, film-making, banking, community development, anthropology, and sociology. Each member tackled areas within her persuasion, with the whole group discussing and criticizing each sectoral report as it came in. Thus, the Alternative Country Report is probably the only collective report on women ever done in the country.

While collective analysis did not present a problem, the initial gathering of data did. The group was stumped by the dearth of women-specific research materials and had to do some primary research on women where time and budget constraints allowed. This was true with the reports on rural women and feminist consciousness; the other sectors mainly used blanket percentages and statistics that included men and children.

The economic upheavals of the past decade (which will be discussed in detail by each sector in relation to the individual reports) has trapped the Philippines in a development model dependent on foreign capital and oriented for foreign markets. This model has reduced the country to a producer of raw materials, components and labor-intensive manufactured goods needed by development market economies. It has also pushed the country deeper into foreign debt, amounting to \$26-billion as of 1984. Coupled with this tight financial squeeze is the growing repression and militarization unleashed by the Martial Law regime of President Ferdinand Marcos since September 1972.

How the continuing ferment of the previous decade has affected Filipino women in the rural areas, in the factories

and industrial sector, and how it has pushed women to seek employment abroad as migrant workers or as prostitutes drafted into the trade by aggressive tourism policies, are probed in this Alternative Report. The influence of media's stereotypes of women, the inadequacy of government initiatives especially in the area of health services, and the lack of feminist consciousness even among organized women are other factors that mark the Decade as particularly harrowing for the Filipino women.

This report hopes that by tracing and exposing the roots of the Filipinas's particular oppression and exploitation in the past ten years, solutions and strategies can be effectively shaped and mapped out.

For purposes of fuller treatment and accessibility, the entire report is being serialized into a pamphlet series that would tackle each section separately. The consolidated or complete version is also available at the PILIPINA Office at No. 12 Pasaje de la Paz, Project 4, Quezon City.

In an ironic and unwitting response to the UN Decade of Women, the Filipina found herself bathed in the international limelight the past 10 years. With an image she'd hardly want to acknowledge -- as a mail-order bride, as part of a tourist package, as labor export, as child prostitute, and as shameless denizen of "Sin City: Manila".

The blame site squarely on the martial law regime of President Ferdinand Marcos, imposed in September 1972.

In a bid to create a favorable public image for his one-man rule and to satisfy the economy's yawning need for foreign exchange due to indebtedness and World Bank recommendations, the Marcos government institutionalized tourism as one of the landmarks of its New Society. Barely a year after the imposition of martial law, the Department (now Ministry) of Tourism was established with former presidential secretary Jose Aspiras at the helm.

A Government Policy

With the distribution of a tourism poster featuring then Miss Universe Margie Moran above the blurb, "There's More Where She Comes From", the drive to attract the tourist dollar at all cost was on.

Although the UN agency, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) reported a shift in international travel during the early '70s from North and South America and Africa to the Far East, Southeast Asia and the Pacific, the 45.8% growth rate in Philippine tourism from '72-'73 can also be attributed to the following government-initiated factors:

"1. The introduction of legislation geared to boost tourism like

- * the establishment of the Department of Tourism and the Philippine Tourism Authority (PTA), as its implementing arm
- * the elimination of hotel taxes

- * the inclusion of tourism as an industry entitled to incentives granted by the Board of Investments
- * the requirement of PTA approval on certain development projects and the application of loans to finance their costs
- * the provision of a comprehensive investment incentive program for the tourist industry

2. The DOT likewise announced a 7-point development program in the mid-70's which covered:

- * the development of tourism's physical aspects to prepare for bigger tourist inflow
- * the participation of the private sector in the development of the tourist industry
- * technical and financial assistance for private sector investments along with the drafting of rigid standards for service and business ethics
- * an intensified promotions program abroad through information offices, Philippine embassies, trade missions and incentives to international airlines to promote the Philippines
- * an equally intensive program on domestic tourism
- * further liberation of entry requirements of foreign visitors
- * the professionalism of the tourism department itself.

3. The comprehensive investment incentives scheme for the tourism industry proved to be a big boost for industry. It granted:

- * prospective investors deduction from taxable income, up to 50% of forex earnings for five

years from date of registration; carry-over and subsequent operating losses in the next 10 years of operation to the next 6 years

- * exemptions of real estate taxes on improvements for five years from the start of operations
- * tax exemption from the import of machinery, equipment and spare parts for seven years from registration
- * tax credits on locally-purchased machinery and equipment
- * exemption from the capital gains tax for capital invested in tourist enterprises
- * tax credits for taxes withheld on interest payments on foreign loans
- * exemptions from withholding tax dividends remitted abroad

4. A liberal air policy was declared in 1976 which provided for the granting to foreign airlines or more frequent arrivals in the country, depending on the volume of passengers the airlines could bring in. Previously, a reciprocal exchange of flight frequencies between Philippine Airlines (PAL) and other foreign airlines was required.

A year later, in 1977 an Open Skies policy was authorized by the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) to accept applicants at all airlines asking for landing rights or increased flight frequency to the country, regardless of whether their own countries had air agreement with the Philippines.

States the Five-Year Philippine Development Plan on tourism (1978-1982):

"To make air policies supportive of international tourism development, a liberalization policy will be implemented to encourage more flights to the country. Bilateral air agreements will be undertaken with the respective governments of targeted tourist markets.

Domestic air transport will be expanded through the acquisition of new units and efficient scheduling of flights for maximum capacity utilization... In addition, the required upgrading and construction of airports and infrastructure support will be undertaken."

5. To support PAL in its international operations to promote the Philippines as tourist destination, the CAB also authorized the purchase of three Boeing 747 jets and five Airbus 300's in an expansion program which will gradually replace PAL's YS-11 aircraft."

6. To attract the overseas Filipinos, the country also launched an extensive Balikbayan program (literally meaning, "Homecoming") in 1973, which offered generous 50% discounts on airfares to and from country of origin, tax-free baggage loads and other amenities. Instant fiestas and welcome committees were whipped up on instructions to local governments. To date, some 70,000 balikbayans have availed of the program and though the promotions cost must have eaten into profits, the political value was immeasurable.

7. A similarly generous program directed at Japanese and American tourists and their families was behind the "Reunion for Peace" program launched in 1976 with key destinations defined as the memorial sites of the second World War -- Corregidor, Kiangnan, Ilocos, the old battlefields, etc. Again, 50% fare discounts, 30% off participating hotels, tour discounts and red carpet programs were laid out to these veterans, about 40,000 expected arrivals, MOT estimated.

8. In 1976, the country won the bid to host the IMF-WB convention and thereby triggered the building of five-star hotels out of IMF-WB loans to accommodate the delegates. All in all, 14 hotels were built at a total cost of \$410-\$545-M. In the same period, only \$13-M was spent in the country for housing.

9. A Convention Bureau was also established with the sole purpose of booking and bidding for international conventions to fill up the newly-built Philippine International

Convention Center (PICC), which cost \$150 Million and the Philippine Center for International Trade and Exhibition (PHILCITE), costing \$5 Million.

10. Again, in a bid to keep the tourists coming, the First Lady herself, Imelda Marcos, started an annual celebrity toast, the Manila International Film Festival in 1982, patterned supposedly after the Cannes Festival in France. This all-expenses paid bonanza open to the jet set (Cristina Ford, et. al.) and Hollywood stars (Brooke Shields, George Hamilton, Susan George, etc.) again necessitated the building of the \$10-Million Film Palace, whose hurried construction caused an avalanche that buried alive at least six workers in 1982. The 1982 Film Festival had a budget of \$3-5 Million, mainly for the payroll of the technical staff and guest stars' accommodations.

11. Some 20,000 rest and recreation entertainers and the rest of the 300,000 hospitality girls, massage and bath attendants, performers in sex shows, hostesses and waitresses have been legalized by Article 138 of the Philippine Labor Code as "professionals" in line with the "adoption of the tourism-oriented program", part of the five-year development program of the Philippine government for 1978-1982. Incidentally, this program was dictated by the World Bank-IMF conglomerate as a condition for the Facility Fund.

The Bureau of Women and Minors (BWM) which was reorganized by Presidential Decree No. 1 on September 24, 1972 was assigned to sanitize the flourishing hospitality industry, starting with a change in label from prostitute to hospitality girls, and including seminars/briefing session on personality development, good grooming and strengthening the moral fibers of the girls.

According to the BWM 1981 Annual Report, the briefing sessions were held regularly at the BWM office or any other requested place at the workers' convenience. "Specifically, this project attempts to acquaint the workers with their rights and obligations, benefits and privileges, the art of entertainment, and self-development. The Bureau coordinates with the Metro Manila Business Permits and Licensing Offices (MEMBPLO).."

About 5,000 workers were given briefings until these were discontinued in December 1982, "to assess the content and effects of the Program".

Even Philippine education was restructured to accommodate the needs of the tourist industry. On the strength of a Memorandum of Agreement, the National Manpower and Youth Council conducts training programs for future hotels and restaurant personnel, tour guides and taxi drivers.

Again, the Five-Year Development Plan in Tourism cites the need for Manpower Development in the industry:

"The development of tourism-oriented facilities and infrastructure requires the corresponding development and professionalization of tourism manpower resources. A program of manpower education and training will be undertaken in order to create not only a supply of the rank and file resources but also of managerial, entrepreneurial and technical expertise that can cope with the demands of the dynamic tourism industry.

The Asian Institute of Tourism will spearhead the country's efforts to provide the industry with the necessary manpower resources and to professionalize tourism not only in the country but also in Asia. Moreover, tourism courses and seminars will be conducted in the regions to prepare the base for a skilled tourism-oriented manpower pool in these areas."

Tourism Figures

These aggressive strategies pushed the country's tourism industry to a 30% annual growth in just five years (1972-77), the highest achievement by any country in the world, according to the Pacific Area Travel Association. The statistics read 166,431 tourist in 1972 and 950,000 in 1979, with income from the venture approximating \$400-million in 1979. With those figures, tourism lodged itself as the second or third largest source of foreign exchange for the Philippines.

The Ministry of Tourism rattles off the following figures to note the flux of tourists in the country:

1975	-	502,211	1981	-	938,953
1978	-	859,396	1984	-	860,712
1980	-	1,008,159			

Tourism receipts from the Central Bank also reflect the phenomenal growth rate, conservative estimates when you take into consideration the flourishing blackmarket for dollars which easily rake in up to half of the foreign exchange that go into the country.

1975	-	\$109.63	-	million
1984	-	\$350.00	-	million

What is the typical profile of a tourist to the Philippines during these martial law years?

According to the MOT's 1981 annual report, he would probably be male (66.78%), 30-39 years old (27.10%) or 40-49 (20.17%) or 20-29 (19.63%); either a professional, a managerial or administrative employee (45.51%) or involved in the clerical or sales services (15.24%), who came here, overwhelmingly, for a holiday (71.71%), as against business purposes (12.49%).

Thus, for the male, sexually-active tourist who is out for pleasure, what does the country have to offer?

According to the statistics of the VD control section of the Manila Health Department as of December 1976, the tourist can have his fill of 436 clubs, cocktail lounges and bars or beer houses, 92 massage clinics, 7,003 registered hostesses or hospitality girls, and 2,710 massage attendants in Metro Manila alone.

The Bureau of Women and Minors who has taken charge of the briefing sessions of the issuance of licenses and health certificates to these girls "to ennoble their profession", places the number of 100,000 in Metro Manila alone, not counting those whose marginal lives do not allow means for licenses and permits.

Because, despite the government's reluctance to admit a burgeoning sex trade, a Manila ordinance requires these girls

to submit to periodic health check-ups before they are issued government permits as employees of the hospitality industry. Hostesses, hospitality girls and massage attendants are required to secure the Mayor's permit, NBI and police clearance, professional license and health certificates before they are allowed to work (Ordinance 2961 and 3000).

With all of these resources available, it is not surprising therefore for the government to turn prostitution into a state policy and economic priority. After all, it offers unlimited sources of foreign exchange as part of the tourism package, not to mention the various licensing fees to be collected as part of the scheme of things. Also, it does not need heavy capital or investments while it easily generates employment. The revenues too, being directly paid to the woman and other prostitutes themselves, are likewise directly pumped into the economy.

The government link cannot now be denied.

Mechanics of Prostitution

In a summary report of the first Consulta on the Problem of Prostitution held in September 1980, the participants attempted to define all the fuss that now accompanies this oldest profession.

They agreed that though prostitution has always been with us, it is now of such gravity and scale as to identify the whole country and its women as such. Whereas before, they number about 16,000 and mainly concentrated in the red light districts or around the military bases in Subic Bay, Olongapo and Clark Air Base, Angeles, Pampanga, they now consist of hundred of thousands of women who collectively become the third largest source of foreign exchange in the country.

Whereas before, the practitioner are mostly unwilling victims in their early 20's and 30's, current poverty has now induced even children, boys and girls from six years to join the trade --- sometimes not unwillingly.

And while customers before were drunken soldiers or lonely rejected men in search of momentary pleasures, today's customers are better educated, wealthy tourist, executives, conventioners and other men who use their position to pressure the economically disadvantaged.

Though the Consulta blames the advent of tourism for the even more distorted view of prostitution, "for attracting decent boys and girls to work in the tourism industry ... where the sexual undertones (and the cushioned lifestyles) of the tourist exposed them to a lot of temptation," poverty too has been mentioned as a very big factor.

An initial study on the profile of a typical prostitute in 1981 confirms this. The report covered 514 respondents from Olongapo (168), Angeles (142), Metro Manila (149) and Batangas City (55).

The study reveals that this typical prostitute in the Philippines is a call girl in a bar or disco joint who started out as a waitress or "receptionist", and graduated as a dancer or a table girl, whose fees for the night are negotiated after a couple of drinks with the customer.

Other surveys note that usually, a bar fine of from P50 - P100 is paid by the customer before he can take out the girl. The girl can then renegotiate for her fees after. Other sources of income come from commissions, about half of the cost of drinks ordered by the customer while with the girl. Ago-go dancers are paid a fixed basic wage for dancing and earn separately from drinks and for going out with customers. In Ermita, sources say, most of the bars don't pay the girls anything else aside from the commissions from drinks, half of the bar fine and tips from customers, which explains why there is so much hustling going on at the door, in a frantic grab for customers.

The going rate now is from P50 to P200 for sexual services with some girls demanding an additional P50 for every new trick. Virgins, of course, would fetch more, up to P1,000 for the first time, while high class call girls (faded starlets or movie stars, fashion models, etc.) fetch as much as

₱3,000 from an exclusive clientele. In a "casa" or brothel, a tourist pays ₱400 per girl. If he's Japanese, the girl gets ₱60; if he's Saudi Arabian, her share is ₱80 to make up for his sadism. As many as 40 girls go out every night, netting something like ₱3,600 for the brothel owner daily, excluding board and lodging fees from the girls. The more seeded in the business and those whose looks and age have gotten the better of them sometimes service customers for as low as ₱20, especially in the notorious back alleys of Chinatown and Misericordia (now Tomas Mapa).

Back to the study: the typical prostitute also lives away from home and family, a ride or two from the disco. She has lived or worked in the city either as a factory worker or as a domestic helper before getting the job.

She's young, about 20, and has reached high school, most likely in the province where she came from. There's a big chance that she comes from Eastern Visayas or from a similarly depressed area.

In another forum sponsored by GABRIELA, an umbrella women's organization, slide shows were presented in Samar, one of the most economically-deprived areas in the country. It noted that in 1978, Bicol was the major prostitute-producing province; at present, Eastern Visayas, particularly Samar and Leyte, lead in the dubious distinction. Their own survey of bar girls in Manila yielded statistics that affirm this: 33.78 percent of them come from Samar-Leyte; 16.55 percent from Bicol and 13.79 percent from Central Visayas.

In 1975 alone, it states, 40,000 women aged 15-19 left Region 8 (Eastern Visayas). The reasons for these are varied: increasing militarization, the marginal existence worsened by frequent typhoons, and the government's neglect of the region's basic services. Not surprisingly, with their lack of education and skills, these women land jobs either as domestic helpers or as bar girls.

The study furthers: she's catholic, but indulges in vices more than the church services. Drugs come occasionally but drinks and cigarettes are taken excessively.

As a result of her work, she has undergone either treatment for venereal diseases or pregnancy (could be aborted or not) or both. Most likely, she is single. If married, there's a bigger chance that she's separated from her husband.

Majority of them, about 77%, come from peasant or fisherman families, while the rest have parents who are professionals or small businessmen. About 66% cite their income levels as moderate, while 1/3 view their economic standing as very, very poor.

A combined 62% of them were peasant or agricultural workers, factory hands or seasonal workers or just stayed in the house and helped in the chores.

Prostitution is more of a "forced choice" to many (63.8%) while there are many who were directly coerced or tricked into the business (29.8%), by agents or recruiters who promised them other jobs. Those who made a forced choice cited financial difficulties, or the pressing needs of the family as the reason behind their choice.

The decision to stay is borne out of the need for self-sustenance and the necessity to provide income for the family. Some cite personal problems (30%), family needs (27%), couldn't find other jobs (23%), plain poverty (19%), and the relatively good pay (8%).

Venereal diseases and other sickness, unwanted children and pregnancy are almost inevitable for them. About 23% admitted to being infected with VD at the time of the survey, 14% were raped and/or got pregnant in the course of the job, 18% have had abortions, while 15% bore children from the trade.

Most of the respondents surrender part of their gross earnings to their pimps or those who own or supervise the place (12%); 18% share their income with the madame; many did not know how much they make, most of it on a daily basis.

Prostitutes have very little savings: most of them spend their earnings to support families back home or send siblings to school, while the rest go to occupational expenses like

beauty care, clothes, medicines, extortion fees or protection money.

Foreigners form the bulk of their customers, with the white and black Americans for the Olongapo and Angeles practitioners, and the Japanese, Australian and European tourists for those in Metro Manila.

Most of the girls (57%) keep the job a secret from their families, knowing that ostracism results from being very open about it. Majority feel looked down by society, while 33% feel their occupation is approved by others; while 20% rationalized that others look at them as good earners, who know how to make a living.

Similarly, most of them judge themselves to be sinners (27%) victims (22%) and bad (26%). At the same time, 48% think they are "okey".

About 47% feel sad about their work, 26% feel tired and bored. Only two out of five say they are enjoying their work because this way, they survive.

Majority do not want to stay in the job and plan to look for other jobs or sources of income, to study or put up a business: 31% say they stay because it is difficult to find another job, while 42% are just waiting for an opportune time to leave or escape the trade. Less than 15% actually say they like the job and plan to stay on.

Most of them count on church and their family to assist them go through a change. Very few think that government agencies can help them at all. They'd rather put their trust on civic organizations, religious groups, some foreigners and their companions in the trade for help.

In a similar study conducted by the Bureau of Women and Minors in 1980, a survey on the daily and monthly cash earnings of women workers in the hospitality girls industry was made. The study covered 2,988 hospitality girls briefed by the Bureau from January to June 1979 which are composed of 51% hostesses,

21% waitresses and 18% taxi dancers. The massage attendants comprise 3.3%, the ago-go dancers, 1.3%. Others included are the cashiers, countergirls, floor managers, checkers and singers.

The study confirms the general instability of the industry since 81% were paid daily and only 5.7% were paid monthly. This shows that the tenure of work of most employees in the hospitality industry is good only for one day.

The findings also reveal that most women reached the secondary level of education, with 17.3% of the masseuses working their way through college. Majority are single, and 84.4% are non-members of the Social Security System and the Medicare.

At a time when the minimum wage for factory workers was ₱13, the highest daily rate paid to hospitality girls went to the massage attendants less than 18 years of age. They received ₱51 a day, while a singer below 18 years of age reported being paid ₱50 per stage appearance in the club.

As a group, the ago-go dancers were the highest paid daily at ₱24.27. Lowest paid daily are the waitresses 45-49 years old and taxi dancers 40-44 years old at ₱5, or about 40% of the minimum wage.

Highest paid monthly are the floor managers at ₱400 and the hostesses below 18, at ₱350 each. Lowest paid monthly are the waitresses below 18, at ₱92.85 each.

Forms of Prostitution

1. The military bases

There are about 12,000 registered hostesses and another 8,000 unregistered streetwalkers in Olongapo City. Legitimized, regulated and protected by the state, prostitution has produced an entire city dependent on the R & R industry for its main source of income.

Together, the Clark Air Base in Angeles, Pampanga and the Subic Naval Base in Olongapo, Zambales have a combined area of 40,000 hectares, larger than all the combined bases outside the U.S.

Aside from being a springboard of military intervention for both internal and external affairs since its establishment in 1901 as a US Naval Reservation Area, Olongapo has also caused the obvious degradation of women, the rampant spread of gonorrhoea (17% of Angeles Prostitutes have STD, a Bulletin Today story cited in 1980), and the siring of thousands of Amerasians.

Between 1958 and 1969, an annual estimate of P150 million flowed into Olongapo economy brought about by the escalation of the Vietnam war, an amount that qualified it to be a city in 1966, just seven years since its declaration as a separate municipality.

In 1974, even after the Vietnam War, P100-million out of the P330-million spent by US naval base personnel was channeled to the city's R & R industry, with its network of 503 clubs, bars, hotels, restaurants, sauna baths, massage clinics and other recreational and entertainment facilities. An average of 7,000 servicemen and civilian seek out R & R at the city everyday.

While city officials and business operators claim that the R & R industry is purely entertainment, the transactions, which have been legitimated by various city ordinances, clearly reveal an organized prostitution industry taking place. Among such ordinances and legitimations are:

- * An anti-streetwalking ordinance which considers soliciting of customers in the street punishable. But soliciting customers inside the clubs -- which therefore assures operators of income from various fees imposed on customers -- is not punishable and considered the normal thing to do.
- * The requirement of a Mayor's permit for every employee before they are considered registered/licensed R & R workers. Likewise, business permits are necessary for operators of R & R establishments.

- * The city government maintains and operates a social hygiene clinic which certifies whether an entertainer is free from VD and other communicable diseases.

As per city ordinance, one can start working in the entertainment business only from 18 above, although some manage to start as early as 13 or 14 (or as the celebrated Daniel Dougherty rape case in 1982 reveals, 9-12) through the arrangement of club owners and managers. They earn from 30-50% commission on drinks and bar fines, and from P100-P150 for short time sorties with customers.

There is however a pathetic side to these cities' R & R industry: while most Manila and prostitutes in other areas look at their work on purely monetary terms, in Olongapo and Angeles, the US servicemen's one to two years' tour of duty offers the possibility of marriage to the girls. With it comes a possible escape from poverty and the realization of a usual obsession -- migration to the United States.

The success stories are common enough to continue the flow of women nursing the same dream. A parish priest in Olongapo reports as many as 15 applications for marriage licenses a day for Fil-Am marriages. Some manage to accompany their husbands to the US; others get divorced even before the man's tour of duty is over. Since the most common arrangement is for couples to live together without marriage, most of these women are abandoned -- with illegitimate babies. Government statistics show an average of 30 Amerasian babies registered each month, but many more are unaccounted for.

There is, moreover, a raw quality to prostitution in the base towns that sets it off from prostitution in other cities. The level of violence and drug use is higher than in other cities. And because of intense competition from too many practitioners in the business, many prostitutes resort to lewd and dehumanizing sex acts like coin-sucking, banana cutting, sausage cutting and egg-breaking to continue plying the trade. Live sex acts or dancing in the nude are common attractions.

The city fathers and leaders are all aware of the social, moral and health problems that surround the industry, but the community is assured easy living as long as the US bases remain.

2. The Flesh Export

The ads usually say, "Cultural dancers needed to earn dollars abroad." Who can resist that magic word, "dollars" which at least 18 times the pittance earned by most Filipino workers today?

And so they go, these women who only dream of getting better jobs, earning more for their family, forsaking everything she has put a premium on: family, roots, friends, the comfort of everything dear and familiar. Some would even pawn their dearest possessions to get hold of a visa and to pay the recruitment fees that easily run into thousands of pesos.

In a report on "The trafficking of the Filipino Women", the author deplores the arrangement, because most of these migrant workers would end up as prostitutes in foreign lands. Duped by recruits with false promises or deceived by withheld information, the cultural dancer slot turns out to be for a nude dancer or a live sex performer. And she has no choice.

Because she has surrendered her papers to her employer upon arrival (so he can change the tourist status to a workers' visa, he assures her), she is completely at his mercy. He did not only sell her as a sex performer or a prostitute, he also enslaves her by guarding her very move and threatening to report her as an illegal alien.

There is the story of Mimi, a Filipino ago-go dancer in a Zurich disco who cannot transfer anywhere because in Switzerland, the law restricts residence to the specified locality only. Such ignorance of laws in other countries also add to her exploitation in foreign lands.

Also in Switzerland, a 49-year old German manager forced six ago-go dancers to sign contracts obliging them to work in Swiss bars for two years for a monthly salary of \$450, very meager compared to the lifestyle of that country. The girls are required to strip and to encourage the customers to buy them alcoholic drinks, the commission of which will earn them extra income. The manager asked them to pay \$15,000 if they do not fulfill the contract.

Exposed by the Philippine media is the story of Lolita Piano Bautista who went to work in Jeddah as a domestic helper. Somehow, she was transported to South Korea where she was found crazed, one month pregnant and begging for food near the Seoul airport.

In Japan, Filipinas are found even in the remotest places. There are many documented cases of forced prostitution, with the Japanese mafia, the Yakuza syndicate reportedly behind it all. The trapped Filipinas have to be aided to escape and wend their way back to the country.

A slide presentation by the Asian Women's Association of Japan entitled, "Reaping the Whirlwind; Asian Women in Japan" showed how Filipinas and Thai Women (numbering from 3,000-25,000, according to estimates) are exploited in night clubs and bars.

For a measly \$250-\$300 a month, hopelessly inadequate by Japan's exorbitant standards, the women service the men with their bodies, starting from 6 in the evening until the next morning. The girls are quartered in cramped apartments and are fetched and brought back by the shuttle buses of the club. They have no chance to go out on their own.

Thus, from sexual trauma, the girls suffer culture shock and severe isolation intensified by the language barrier and the winters to which they're unaccustomed to.

In Saipan, 17 Filipinas denounced their employers for forcing them to work as topless dancers instead of as waitresses as originally told them. They revealed that they

were also made to submit to sexual exploitation by customers of the club. They claimed likewise that they were given inadequate accommodations and were locked in their room with no day off and no overtime pay. Their protest were met with threats of employment termination and deportation.

A more recent phenomenon that has similarly hogged headlines is the case of the mail-order bride.

A quick browse through the classified of a Manila newspaper will reveal an unusually extended "Personal" column. And most of the message would sound the same call: "An Australian/Swiss/German/American/Australian, etc. in his 40's, 50's or 60's, is looking for a lifetime companion (or "a friend with view to marriage"). Or "wants to meet petite Filipina, between 20-28 (or 18-29, etc.), beautiful, sexy, etc. I am wealthy, but a lonely (or divorced) man with a flourishing business. If interested, write to:"

In Bulletin Today dated March 6, 1985, a big 6 x 8" ad appeared that minced no words: "Want to marry a Rich Japanese?", it called out to readers, and specified ages, physical assets and other data as per the clients' preferences.

And despite the rather gross and vulgar ads, the response from Filipino women eager to settle abroad is phenomenal. In fact, penpal clubs, mail-order brides and export brides which started as a fad in the late 70's are now full-blown business enterprises with Western or First World men paying membership fees (about \$10-\$50) to join these penpal clubs. The fee entitles them to pick out a girl they fancy from a photo album that lists their addresses, hobbies, physical statistics and other relevant information. A pen-pal relationship starts and depending on whether they hit it off immediately, he may take off to see her and propose marriage. If they don't click, he can pick another girl and start anew.

More recently, the rush of Filipino women to write off to Australians became marked, and distinguished that continent as the latest bride-to-order destination. In fact, sources reveal that 40% of immigrants to that country each year are

brides or fiancées. In figures, that would be some 1,500 marriages.

Sr. Charito Ungson who has lived in that country for 10 years and who has counselled countless Australian-Filipino marriage partners, reveals that the upswing discloses a 303% increase in 1981. From 1596 Filipino women married to Australians in 1976, the figure jumped to 4470 in 1981. Sr. Charito's pilot study of such intermarriages conducted from January 1976-March 1982 is titled "Brides for all reasons". It documents the usual S.O.P. for mail-order brides.

The girls would come first on a 3-month fiancée visa, and should they find the relationship far from ideal, they desperately look around for substitute husbands or partners instead of going home when the period elapses. Needless to say, some of them come to harm with such spurious choices, with rape within marriages, failed expectations, virtual isolation in mining towns, lack of communication because of the age gap, intense jealousy, cases of battering and an occasional murder for insurance cropping up in the union.

More, the girls are often advertised as "meek, docile, submissive, home-oriented and have tremendous capacities in bed", in contrast to more aggressive and self-assertive European and Caucasian females. Thus, right from the start, the male divorcees (aging bachelors, invalids or retirees), are conditioned to expect the women ideal for their idea of marriage. They hardly expect to work at the relationship, most of them believing that offering financial security is all their part in the bargain.

And what security! Most women migrants find themselves without personal allowances much less money to send home as is part of Filipino tradition.

Some in fact, discover that their husbands married them to collect double their retirement pay. Or to avail themselves of free domestic and personal services plus a bed partner.

The whirlwind courtship likewise expose her to culture shock where the language barrier, not to mention the usually isolated mining towns where these aging bachelors abound, result to debilitating loneliness, especially to the Filipina whose close family ties and large families are part of socialization.

Of course, second or third-hand success stories always goad on Filipino women, desperate to better her life, to keep writing and answering those ads. Again, the lure of the omnipotent dollar is too hard to ignore. Plus there is the heroic mission of rescuing her family from poverty.

A disturbing trend recently is the composition of mail-order brides. While three-four years ago they were spinster or provincial lasses who couldn't find suitable local beaux, Sr. Charito and personal interviews by this writer reveal that the candidates now are mostly young, highly-eligible women who are college graduates, personable and ambitious enough to think marrying foreigners will better status and earning capacity.

"Oh I just want to go abroad and this is the easiest way, rather than risking my fortunes with an illegal recruiter. When I find work there, I can always divorce him, right?" nonchalantly dismisses a 23-year old teacher of an exclusive girls' school in Manila who has a 40-year old German boyfriend. No, he won't exploit her, she confidently replies; after all, his brother is married to the cousin of her best friend.

One only hopes she does not fall into a cruel twist to this marriage market game: that of marrying off the gullible Filipina to be able to bring her abroad where she knows to friend or relative of even the language. There, as one German already did, he can marry her and get a sex slave in the process. Sure, he paid \$5,000 in all for her visa and travel fare; but by lending her around to his friends and business associates, he can make up to \$4,000 a month on her.

Unfortunately, it is not an isolated case. And with the Filipina's training to uphold the marriage above all else, chances are that she'll suffer in silence rather than seek justice.

3. Manila's Tourist Belt

When tourist brochures describe a swinging nightlife, most of them refer to Manila's endless strips of clubs, discos and bars situated mainly along M. H. del Pilar, A. Mabini and Roxas Boulevard. The locals simply call it Ermita.

Aside from the massage parlors and the outdoor beer gardens, the establishment along these areas can be generally classified into either girlie bars and ago-go bars.

Girlie bars are mainly staffed by receptionists who sit or dance with customers and can leave with them once the bar fine (about ₱120) has been paid. Ago-go bars employ mostly dancers who dance on the stage for short time, then sit with customers and go out once the bar fine has been settled. The average bar in the Mabini district employ about 30 dancers and/or receptionists.

The typical Ermita Woman who works in the club and bars affirms the characteristics earlier defined in this report. They also receive almost the same compensation: from ₱5-₱10 commissions on drinks, half the bar fines, tips from customers, and basic wages (₱20-₱50) if they are also dancers.

In Ermita, however, an independent survey claims that the women are better off in working conditions and remuneration than the women in other parts of Manila and the country, for that matter. The girls estimate their income at about ₱2,450-₱2,870 a month, as of 1983. True, the dancers also wear skimpy bikinis, but they are allowed to be receptionists in some establishments if they do not wish to dance. Some are also allowed a live-out arrangement, though small rooms or cubicles are available for them and their

customers in most bars. The girls are not accountable for their outside hours.

Many of the bars and clubs in the survey are owned or controlled by foreigners, mainly through their wives or girlfriends. Another study by the Center for Women's Resources (CWR) on 23 random clubs reveals that 12 of them are owned by Australians, 3 by British men, 3 by Germans, 2 by Japanese men and the rest by Americans and Canadians.

Majority of the girls (88%) work in shifts ranging from 6-10 hours, and averaging 8 hours a day. Twelve percent work very long hours, ranging from 12-17 hours daily.

Most ago-go and girlie bars open from approximately 7 p.m. to 3 a.m., although some open from late morning or early afternoon and remain open throughout. In this limited sample, three shifts are discerned: 11 or 12 a.m. to 7:30 or 8:00 p.m.; from 6 or 8 p.m. to 1 or 4 a.m.; and 10 a.m. or 3 p.m.; until 3 to 4 a.m.

As disciplinary action, management has devised various ways of getting girls to toe the line, the most usual being the fine method for different "offenses": coming to work late (P5-P10); getting fingerprints on the mirror above the dancing stage (P5); wearing another garment over one's bikini between dances (P5-P10); using drugs (P50-P100); sneaking out before closing time (the equivalent of a bar fine, usually between P80-P150); and fighting with other girls (temporary suspension).

4. Sex Tours

Technology has literally shrunk the world. Modern travel and more leisure time, reduced air fares due to bigger and more efficient aircrafts, have resulted in a mad grab for passengers and tourists. The package tour is one of the cheapest and most widely available option in travelling.

To beat their competitors and to take full advantage of tourist's predisposition to be adventurous, most package

tours offer extras. In recent years, this extra has come to mean "Female companionship". In Japan and other countries in the early 1980's the extra amenities always meant a Filipino woman's sexual favors.

Coincidentally, the recent years saw the governments eager dash for the tourist dollar. And as the nearest rich country, Japan provided much of the new-found forex source. The local tourist industry thus became particularly accommodating to the Japanese, starting with the Reunion for Peace program in 1977, aborted attempt to lease out a whole island as part of a World Safari Club owned by Japanese investors in 1980, and, the most notorious venture, the sex tours.

Of course this last inducement holds true for other Asian countries as well. Prostitution having been banned in Japan since 1958, free access to women has always been regarded as surefire bait to keep them coming. And because they usually travel in groups (more so when Asian tours were handed out as incentives to groups of outstanding workers by Japanese companies), the Japanese are especially conspicuous when they arrive in foreign countries.

MOT figures reveal that the Japanese came in steadily increasing hordes, from 192,169 in 1975 to 253,717 in 1979. In 1980, the largest single group of tourists in the country are Japanese who made up 25.84%. Most of them are males, about 85%.

Easily becoming the favorites of the MOT, they are among the biggest spenders: in 1977, over 200,000 Japanese visitors spent an average of \$55 a day on food, drinks, shopping and lodging. Plus unreported amounts on the women.

No wonder tour operators streamline their tours to please their Japanese clients!

A typical tour operation will advertise in Japanese newspapers a package tour to the Philippines in cooperation with a Manila agent or a large hotel. The deal, usually just \$300-\$400 includes everything from touring to hotel to women, who are either chosen from picture books in Japan, or selected in person at the clubs in Manila itself.

One tour operator reveals that they'd charter a bus, collect from \$80-\$100 per Japanese tourist and drive over to a big club or exclusive brothel where there are at least 200 numbered women; they choose their partners for the night by pointing or writing down their numbers. The men on tour, sources reveal, pay an average of \$60 for one night for the women, very little of which finally trickle down to them.

A rough breakdown looks like this:

club owner	- \$15	Japanese guide	- \$10
tour operator	- \$15	woman	- \$10-\$20 or \$4-\$5
local guide	- \$10		out of the club owner's share

A queer item found on many transactions is something termed "Joiner's pass". This actually details the close relationship between local capitalists and the hospitality industry. Because most of the hotels in Manila, built in a rush in 1976, can do no better than chalk up a 60% occupancy rate when 85% is needed to break even, they depend on the joiner's pass system for extra revenues.

A big five-star hotel along Ermita owned by a Chinese industrialist has a typical, although unusually explicit way for handling women. The hotel passes out sheets printed in Japanese and addressed "To our Japanese guest with Ladies", laying out the system: the women are to be admitted after 5 p.m. through the employee's entrance; they are to leave the next morning by 8 a.m.; they cannot be taken to any public areas of the hotel and all foods and drinks must be by room service. Finally, the hotel charges a \$10 "joiner's fee" for the right to take the women into the room. One source claims that the hotel admitted to making 40% of its gross income from this system.

The racket is obvious, but policemen look the other way for a \$1.50 protection money forked over by the women. Also, even luxurious hotels such as that which sits by the Rizal Park and Manila Bay is said to yield to tour groups and its devious system in order to survive.

Of course other nationalities are involved in sex tours, but because most Europeans and Americans move by

themselves or pursue women on their own, they are not as glaring as the Japanese whose group of 200-plus on a sexual foray easily remind Filipinos of the second world war's invasion and rape of its women by hordes of Japanese soldiers.

What makes it even more tragic is the analysis that ultimately it is not Philippine economy that profits from the sale of its women; the Japanese companies do.

For example, a tour to the country is organized by one of Japan's travel agencies, in cooperation with a hotel here -- most probably owned by Japanese investors, too. The airlines that carries them is, of course, Japan Airlines. The travel agencies that arrange their visas are all affiliates of travel agencies in Japan, because only two agencies in the country are Philippine agents that cater to them. Guides who take them out for sight-seeing are Japanese people who have lived in the country for some years, and the clubs and bars where they are taken are again financed by Japanese capital. Obviously, very little of the money spent leave Japanese hands.

Because of the protest, demonstrations and adverse publicity initiated by the Japan Christian Temperance Union and the locally-based Third World Movement against the Exploitation of Women (TW-MAE-W), culminating into a symposium and a letter of protest hand delivered to then visiting Japanese Prime Minister Zenko Susuki in January 1981, the sex tours phenomenon tapered off a bit.

The protest led to a drastic decrease in the revenues of airlines, hotels and travel agencies; after the first quarter of the year, the Japanese male tourists were reduced in number by 25% in Bangkok and Manila. A comparison of January to March 1980 and 1981 data reveals an 18.5 decrease in Japanese tourist from 83,664 to 63,184. Japan Airlines had to close two of its daily flights. Hotel occupancy dived, and travel ads in Japan switched from exotic females to landscapes and mountain views.

Another Japanese-sponsored plan to convert Mindoro and Palawan into hunting grounds and a sex paradise under the auspices of the World Safari Club petered off after similar protests and bad publicity.

But there is little cause for celebration. The Manila tourist belt might no longer be invaded by busloads of Japanese tourists. In less numbers, they still come but land instead in Cebu, the cradle of Catholicism in the country. Far from tolerating this, however, the Archbishop down there and a 10,000-strong crowd marched in protest in August 1984.

5. Child Prostitution

The past two years, Manila tabloids and other publications regularly have a reliable headline to perk up sales: that of stories concerning child prostitution. Stories on how a girl of 14 was paid ₱1,200.00 for her virginity, how a 12-year old boy was rescued from a sex ring, how girls aged 9-11 contracted VD, or how a six-years old boy was sold by his parents to strip-dance in clubs may be staple fare for tabloids, but they continue to shock Philippine society where children are traditionally coddled and fussed over.

But the only time when guardians of our morals really marched up to the authorities was when two international porno magazines, Hustler and Penthouse shamelessly exposed "Manila, the Sin City of the World" in their pages. Says Hustler's June 1984 issue:

"If you know the right places in Angeles, you can get sample blowjobs while having beer at the bar. You can even get them as young as 10 years old... no hair at all. The thing is, you've gotta find out straight away whether they're one-holers or three-holers -- that's what they're called in Angeles..."

It is perhaps not so surprising to discover child prostitutes in our midst; most of them only inherit their mother's sorry fate, having been exposed to the lusty ambience of nightclubs from their weaning years. But what is so shocking is how some developed countries, instead of stemming the practice born out of sheer economic desperation, could instead encourage and publicize it to satisfy their own sexual perversions.

A study on women and violence reveal that the predilection for sex with children is a product of western capitalist decay. With everything reduced to consumption patterns, western consumers soon turn to new products, new tastes and new experience. And the capitalist system cannot deny them these. Thus, they turn to children, because being young and helpless, they are easily maneuvered as sex objects. They'd rather use Asian or African children because they think it's exotic to have black and white or brown and white copulation. Lastly, the physical differences from other races help them assuage their guilt. After all, it's not as if these kids are their children; they're so different in looks and physique. Doing it with young boys likewise avoid complications of unwanted pregnancy.

Thus, there are commercial publications in Western countries that advertise the novel pleasure of pederasty. The best-known perhaps is Spartacus: International Gay Guide for Gay Men. Published in Amsterdam, this 600-page guide contains descriptions of sexual mores in every country, followed by names and addresses of those establishments in 150 countries where boys can be taken without risk.

It's author, John D. Stamford, writes of the Philippines: I found a place where homosexuality and bisexuality were accepted as integral parts of life -- I had also been agreeably surprised at the advantageous cost-of-living and the boys' generally uncommercial attitude towards sex -- I left with the feeling that I had discovered the world's most beautiful haven of homosexual peace."

Thanks to that endorsement, hundreds of Caucasian swamped our shores and found willing victims in children aged 7-15 whose parents and pimps sell off for precious dollars.

A May 1981 study established that La Union, the Bicol area, Bacolod, Mindoro, Pagsanjan and the tourist belts are notorious spots for these underage prostitutes. In Metro Manila, the same study cited the Sta. Monica area in Ermita, Robinson's Department Store, Plaza Ferguson, Rizal Park, Sta. Cruz, the Araneta Center, Plaza Raha Sulaiman in Tondo and the Pasay night spots as likely places for these child hookers.

Most of the children are drugged or take drugs willingly, "to anesthetize against the expected pain, to escape conscious knowledge of their acts, or to increase their earnings, because when drugged, they lose all inhibitions and perform better", a CWR study cited.

The same study disclosed that the children earn ₱50-₱300 for two-three hours work or service to their clients, depending on the nature of the service. Oral sex is common, while anal sex is a favorite among young boys. First-timers or virgins earn more, up to ₱3,000. Beating or sadistic acts command up to ₱2,500, while a nude photo session, usually a homosexual show, earns for them up to ₱2,000. Some of the films show the kids mashing each other or having sex while others watch. For all their pains, the kids get only half; their pimps pocket 50%.

The study also classified the clients according to race and came out with a mostly Caucasian stripe: Germans, Swiss, Arabs, French, Americans, English, Australians and Japanese. They are usually in their 40's to 60's, married or divorced and had closet homosexual urges. The most sadistic to the child prostitutes interviewed are the Germans and Arabs who usually force them to perform anal sex and take cruel beatings.

The children are mostly cigarette or flower vendors who are befriended by kids their own age and introduced to foreigners from whom they learn the trade. Soon, they are members of a ragtag Sta. Monica gang of kids who stand and wait for foreigners to frequent the place, catch their eye and say those magic words, "Go with me?"

Some kids themselves do the approaching, or even act as pimps, getting 10% from the others' earnings. A German mestisa, about 16 now, started out when she was 7 and became a madame with her own wards of child prostitutes when she was barely 12.

The kids like the easy money (from ₱20-₱400 a night), the free gifts, (mostly imported items) and the trips out of town (to Pagsanjan, Puerto Galera, Cebu, Zamboanga, Hundred Island, Baguio).

After all, most of them have never had that much money or leisure before, having come from very poor families, according to a study on the subject made by Susan Magno.

Magno's study reveals that there are at least 3,000 child prostitutes in Metro Manila alone, most of them aged 7-15. Most of them come from low-income families with 5-7 kids, migrants from provinces and slum dwellers. Their father would either be a driver, a seasonal laborer, unemployed or an alcoholic, while their mother would probably be a laundry-woman, a vendor, a prostitute herself, or a plain housewife. Such poverty prompts some parents to sell off their children themselves, for cash or tangible assets like educational grants, houses or appliances, or jewelry.

Most of their earnings are deposited into the family's needs, another portion goes to the pimp, or to their personal needs. Their favorite clients are Japanese men who give them extra treats and gifts.

The effects on the children are obvious in their physique: harassed, overworked and approximating an adult's body appearance. Physical abuse is the most obvious price to pay, not to mention intellectual underdevelopment since most of them drop out of school. They have to behave like adults to demand their fees and impose conditions, yet they are merely children too. They get exposed to drugs and glue-sniffing, cigarettes and hard drinks. Some suffer sexually transmitted diseases.

It is in their attitudes and values that the most destructive effect is seen. Most of them are enamored with foreigners and want to live abroad, to be able to enjoy their generosity continuously. Some girls even fall in love with their clients!

Also, because Filipino clients are not as open handed, they begin to hate these users and would rather not be identified with them.

Because of the economic benefits, many confessed to

no feeling of guilt and in fact, feel proud at having contributed to the family coffers. Some say they are enjoying the jobs and derive satisfaction from it.

Because of the undue attention and scandal provoked by these child hookers, the mayor of Manila recently introduced a 9 p.m. curfew of minors, at the same time setting up centers for young vagrants caught for curfew violations.

The Hidden Cost of Tourism

Mass tourism is an international growth industry, expanding faster than world trade as a whole. In fact, tourist spending is the largest single item of the world's trade. In economic terms alone, it is a startling phenomenon. No wonder the New Society of President Marcos gloats so much about putting the country on the tourist map!

But tourism is also a unique industry. It is concerned with people as consumer and commodities and it is in this sense that host peoples and tourist must themselves attempt to calculate the social, cultural and human cost of mass travel.

Nowhere has this growth industry had more impact than in the Asia-Pacific region where in just the decade between 1969 and 1979, tourist figures rose from just over five million to some twenty million.

Ironically, the countries experiencing the fastest growth in international tourism are also precisely the poorest in the region, their poverty presented by tourist brochures as "local color", a new experience for the sated and bored luxury tourist.

How does the sudden influx of consumer-oriented values affect peoples in faltering economies where consumption is limited to survival and not choice? What is the effect of this confrontation to the tourist who suddenly finds he has

enough money to buy off people who hardly earn 1/120 of his daily allowance? Why is tourism suddenly a big word, a key word among capitalist countries who are now planting their stakes in the staggering economies of the third world?

Because tourism, for all its vaunted claims to transporting development and heaving dollars unto our laps, only widens the economic gap between the host countries and the First World guests. Tourism, first of all, fits into the pattern of open, foreign-led development schemes authored by capitalist countries.

Scarce resources are diverted into multi-million dollars infrastructures that do not benefit the majority of the people at all. Only a fraction of the tourist dollar goes to the waiters, the bellboys, the hospitality girls and other denizens of the tourist industry. Much of it land in the hands of hotel owners and managers, usually foreigners affiliated with the international chain of hotels that licensed this local hotel in the first place. More, the hotels are built from foreign loans and at tremendous interest rates that increase the national debt and feed inflation. Natural resources are exploited and destroyed to cater to the tourist's need for new sights and sensational landscapes.

"An important aspect of the problem is the geographical origin of the goods and services consumed by the tourist industry and the social and professional groups which furnish them. Where do they build the planes which carry the tourist, and where do the materials for the hotels which house the tourist come from? Who produces the vehicles, the tires, the petrol, the roll of film, the postcards, the postage stamps? Where do the meat, the mineral water, the wine and the liquor come from? Particularly during its initial phase, tourism has a greater effect on the economy of the industrial countries from which the imports come than on the economy of the host country."

"In the Philippines, the multinational hold is quite evident in the management of local hotels by transnational hotel chains which take care of the hotel design, operations, marketing and sales, services and overseas representation in exchange for a usual "5% of gross operating revenues plus 10% of earnings".

As for the remaining revenues, the World Tourism organization estimates that a minimum of 40% and a maximum of 75% of gross hotel revenues go to imports, interests and profits of multinational corporations that really own and manage the hotels and resorts. And why shouldn't they rely heavily on imported materials and staff in their normal operations when a certain level of competitive excellence must be maintained?

Status hotels, adhering to the international standard set by the Margo Scale, import massive amounts of food, wine, furnishing and fixtures. For Hilton Hotel, about \$204,062 (P1.5-million) has been set aside for furnitures and fixtures, while the amount for food and beverage is \$1,274,716. No wonder so many five-star hotels are losing and have to be bailed out by government funds from the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP). Why should the people's funds be used to pay the excesses of tourists who want to wallow in accustomed luxury in an impoverished country?

The Far Eastern Economic Review (Feb. 17, 1983 issue) mentions for instance that the government's massive program in the early 70's to attract more tourists and conventions preempted some P1.6 billion in revenues, with about 40 hotels receiving loans.

The government-backed DBP lent some P200-M for the hotels in 1977, P345-M in 1978, P157-M in 1979; another P200-M in 1980 and P50-M in 1981.

Some of the hotels eventually had to be foreclosed and let out to leasing companies. All these left the DBP reeling and in need of rehabilitation.

Although tourism can generate resources and valuable foreign exchange, marked dependence on it can likewise create problems of an economic and socio-cultural nature, particularly for a small country. Heavy reliance on revenues from tourism can result in sharp revenue fluctuations since the industry is very seasonal, as well as subject to changes in taste or fashion, feelings of political instability, allegations of health hazards, etc.

A high degree of seasonality also implies considerable social cost in terms of under-utilization of production capacity and in particular, high levels of seasonal unemployment.

High growth rates in tourism, moreover, increase pressure on scarce resources, and may also produce inflationary pressures on land prices and consumer prices because of the sharp increase in the demand for goods and services.

At the international level, dependence on tourist revenue further weakens the ability of Third World countries to exercise full control over their debilitated economies. Not only do the host countries not control the tourist industry, they soon find out that because of their mounting foreign debts, they cannot now do without the foreign exchange that come easily with tourists.

As explained by Renato Constantino, prominent historian and social critic, "Relying on tourism as a means of acquiring foreign exchange is a form of mendicancy because it depends on foreigners who have to be coaxed to come over so that they may shell out a few dollars in curio shops and gambling places. Instead of attacking the core of economic problems in order to assure the valid earning of foreign exchange, the country has been opened to facilitate further begging."

Infrastructural investments like roads, airports, power, etc. to complement resort complexes and luxury hotels also require heavy importation of materials, technical know-how and loans.

For instance, the Ten-Year Development Plan for Tourism identifies some on-going projects supportive of this thrust, by source funds. Foreign loans amounted to \$998,822, minus interests, of course, and inflation.

Name of Projects	\$ Foreign	P Local	Source
Highways	113,858	2,165,725	Japan, IBRD, ADB
Airports/Airways	50,342	129,300	US Eximbank, Netherlands, Italy, ADB

Name of Projects	\$ Foreign	P Local	Source
Portworks	22,592	228,150	US Eximbank, KFW IBRD, UK
Power/electrification	139,580	853,172	ADB, USAID
Irrigation	34,000	499,685	IBRD, USAID
Water Supply	628,450	4,738,685	USAID
Flood Controls	10,000	170,297	OECD, Japan
Total	\$998,822	P8,785,614	

In addition to that are the new projects, like the road system linking new tourist spots in Cavite, while the Asian Development Bank just granted a loan of \$45-million for tourism-oriented development projects in the Southern Tagalog provinces.

There are also the tourist buses which mainly come from Japan worth P228-million; meanwhile, \$49-million has just been released for the purchase of 41 ships for overseas and domestic use.

Massive campaigns to promote tourism on the international level likewise exact a high price. At present, the Bureau of Tourism Promotions maintains five field offices abroad and plans to open three more in countries with tourist potentials. For promotions alone, the MOT invested P18-million in the first three years of operation, mainly for the formation of several trade missions and the expansion of field offices abroad. Special promotions include the holding of fairs and exhibits, and the flooding of tourism literature in the international and domestic markets. Of course, there are also the tourist agents and writers from abroad who are regularly feted by the MOT with free airfares and accommodations. In fact, a journalist based in the US reveals that if he wanted to travel free to the country all he had to do was approach the MOT field office there and say he is a writer in the US; he'd get VIP treatment at once. That seems to be the policy towards the "much-maligned" foreign press.

A recent press release from the Ministry of Tourism itself details this promotions strategy and cites that "the government has been paying almost all the expenses involved in

participation in travel fairs, putting up cultural shows, performing sales blitzes in various regions, etc."

The budget for foreign promotion was likewise listed as \$528,000 in 1983; \$393,000 in 1984 and \$474,000 for the current year. The amount went into "travel fairs and exhibits, foreign sales missions, promotional expenses, production expenses, production of brochures, advertising, public relations, promotions of special interest tours and the invitational program for agents and journalists."

The Social and Cultural Cost

The glaring disparity between the extreme poverty of the host country and the obvious affluence of the tourist is the most dominant cultural confrontation in tourism. Tourists in the Philippines in 1979 spent about \$50 in a country where the urban worker earned ₱50 (\$2.50) a day, and the rural workers less than half of that. In such a situation where people who earn 20-30 times confront people who earn next to nothing, a distorted human relationship is bound to emerge.

First, tourists as a group project a distorted image that can wreck havoc on the self-esteem of a people who are obliged by necessity to serve them. In societies already divided by wealth and class, the free spending style of insensitive tourists can reinforce such divisions.

The physical presence of tourists also make them the handy reference points for local citizens against which to measure their behavior. International tourism may thus be regarded as an important mechanics for the transmission of foreign cultures.

The indulgent consumer lifestyle of tourists can of course be adopted by the local elite, but the values of such profligate spending rubs on the people the tourist meet. No wonder child prostitutes hate Filipinos and idolize foreigners; they can afford more generous tips, PX gifts and Walkmans. With visions of a leisurely world.

trailing at their footsteps, is it any surprise to find so many Olongapo and Angeles women aspire for a GI baby as her passport to those other worlds? Or for the average Filipina to pine for Caucasian people to carry her off to foreign shores?

This mentality breeds an insidious "Tourist First" attitude among our people, in an ironic over-extension of the much bruted about Filipino hospitality which dictates that we lay out our best mats for the visitors and serve him our last chupa of rice. The Puerto Azul case amply illustrates this: to give way to it, many of the original residents of Ternate, Cavite were displaced with the expropriation of thousands of hectares. Fishing boats could no longer fish or land in the vicinity of Puerto Azul. Sentry points were erected along the new public road and the tourist area was fenced off with barbed wire. (Another controversy is brewing in Cebu, where some 300 farmers are protesting against displacement by a big tourist project. Such actual or threatened dislocations, which must surely have traumatic effects on the people concerned, are seldom considered as a "cost factor" in the tourism industry).

Another cost, not yet very well documented, is the negative effect of tourism on the environment, as exemplified by the pollution of beaches and other natural scenic spots. The most recent case of environmental degradation (and corruption brought by tourists) is that of Puerto Galera. There, the destruction of corals, the illicit drug traffic, the blatant display of prostitution, and the proliferation of illegal constructions have elicited much alarm lately.

Of course, tourism advocates would say that a lot of indirect employment is created in agriculture, feed processing and the handicraft industries. However, it is impossible to quantify just exactly how much because the demand for products from these sectors does not only come from tourism but also from the export market and domestic consumers. And then there is the added cost of imports since the big hotels may actually buy unspecified quantities

of food, beverages, furnishing, and other items from abroad.

More brutal of course is the way that tourists, by the very nature of their trips (for holidays, a good time, adventures, etc.) can exploit the locals. It's not just the prostitutes who are treated as commodities to be used and then discarded; it's the whole culture, the traditional arts and crafts streamlined and packaged to suit tourist tastes. Like animals performing in a circus, tribal minorities or even students dressed up in native garb, are asked to act out the cultural and ethnic arts to entertain the tourist. Whole folk traditions are uprooted from distance villages and restaged out of context in westernized stages and carnivals masquerading as Cultural Festivals. The building of a pseudo-culture is thus institutionalized, and a true, evolving culture is stripped of life and power. The folk idioms are in fact so cheapened that a local study revealed that some school children would rather be identified as Japanese nationals than as Filipinos. After all, they probably know more about these cultures than their own.

The trivialization of local culture also results in a commercial attitude among the minorities. No Igorot would don his tribal gear or strike up a pose without money changing hands. Everyone has turned mercenary with an eye peeled out for the tourist dollar. With the way the government defies it, who can blame those who only take their cues from the higher-ups?

For all that, the tourists themselves are exploited and cheated by the way the present tourist industry is organized.

The traveller who accepts the "packaged experience" offered by mass tourism is manipulated and deprived of the very experience which attracts many people to travel in the first place. Rather than escaping materialism and conformity of life at home, he is guided into a pattern of behavior redolent with materialist and consumer values. Especially in an organized tour, the tourist is separated from the people around him by the bus glass windows, the hotel's highrise

structure, and his unreachable status as a moneyed individual. If the purpose of travel is to interact with varied cultures and their people on equal terms, he certainly isn't getting any of it.

They are thus isolated. More than that, with a perception of heightened luxury in such impoverished surroundings, he develops feelings of guilt and superiority, a less than fully human response to his hosts. A new arrogance is built, new tastes for power are born, self-estimates are changed, values challenged and surrendered, and human relationship further distorted.

The worse type of course is the sex-tourism industry where the most vicious form of Western consumerism is imposed on the people. The host country's most vulnerable resources--its women and children--are taken as nothing more than commodities that can be brought by the almighty dollar. Sex tourism imposes on them an existence shorn of dignity and control.

Sadly enough, it is what our kind of tourism has degenerated into.

Government Response

As expected, the government went through the motions of cleaning out Metro Manila's alleys and streets of the offending litter, to refurbish the image of the country before the international community.

With regards to child prostitution, for instance, the Manila Mayor launched a crackdown on the prostitution racket of young boys. The City of Manila imposed a curfew on boys and girls unaccompanied by their parents or relatives at night. These minors are also not allowed to hang around cocktail lounges, bars and disco joints. The anti-vagrancy law has been strictly imposed, which penalizes a person found loitering or roaming around without gainful employment with a fine of P200.

With the fine immediately paid by the child's pimp,

he/she is back on his/her trade just minutes later. Those who cannot pay the fine are usually carted off to barangay or police outposts where they are usually raped or abused while in detention.

Generally however, with protection money amply paid them, the cops conveniently cooperate and look the other way.

On the whole, government's response to the growing prostitution phenomenon has been both slow and inadequate. The chief institution/agency for the problem is the Bureau of Women and Minors which is primarily concerned with enforcing Presidential Decree 148. The PD entitles the workers of the hospitality industry to the benefits of the labor code (after being registered and licensed for a fee, of course) but the dual nature of this step leaves many practitioners unconvinced of government's sincerity. The MOT in fact, refuses to acknowledge the problem, denying the structural link between tourism and prostitution.

The see no evil, hear no evil and speak no evil ambience in most government offices also reflect the duplicity of the regime. For one, the Hotel Code of 1976 requires owners to report prostitutes and suspicious characters to the police, yet municipal governments require all hostesses and waitresses to undergo regular VD checks by government doctors.

Even the approach, though probably sincere, is naive and parochial. Director Lucina Alday for instance cite the cause of prostitution as a neglect from religious and civic groups and general misunderstanding. Their approach therefore was to lecture the women on moral values and proper decorum "so that the men will learn to respect them", while attacking the problem of income-generation by handing out rosary projects for the Pope's 1981 visit. Each rosary will take the women two hours to bead together, after which the BWM will buy them back for national distribution after Papal blessings for P.50 each. That's a grand sum of P2 for eight hours' work!

In a paper entitled "Consulta on the Problem of Prostitution: A reaction from the government -- NCR, MSSD", Leticia Generoso rattled off government programs, as of September 1980:

*Intervention by way of available service existing at the Rapid Treatment Center of the Ministry of Health, and Counselling services and job placement services offered by the Ministry of Social Services and Development.

*Health services and regular examinations are compulsory to this special group. This includes dental services and medical care to prevent the spread of venereal diseases.

*Homelife and residential services which include food, clothing and temporary shelter. "At one time, we had 158 hospitality girls sheltered at the José Fabella Center and 60 housed at the Asuncion Perez Center. During that time we conducted a series of workshops on self-respect by analyzing and looking into their values, on physical hygiene, on the spread of VD, and on the religious aspect. These workshops were conducted with the MOLE, MOH and the MSSD, and the religious sector. After these workshops, we had a 5% success among the clientele; 95% went back to their former occupation."

That should be self-explanatory.

Another instance of government action is the MSSD agreement with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which forbids Filipino children from travelling abroad with foreigners or persons other than their parents or legal guardians unless they have certifications and permits to travel from the MSSD. These same children will not be issued passports, warned MSSD Minister Sylvia Montes, in a reaction to reports on an international sex syndicate victimizing Filipino children.

There are of course the various parliamentary bills filed to impose stiffer penalties on those engaged in sexual exploitation of children, from 5-10 year's imprisonment and a fine of from ₱500-₱10,000 or both according to the courts' discretion. This is MP Edith Rabat's version, while that of opposition assemblyman Orly Mercado is recommending life imprisonment for offenders, corruptors of minors and exploiters of children.

Justice Minister Estelito Mendoza likewise battled for stiffer penalties for exploitation of minors, at the same time revealed that in 1984, some boys who were rounded up in an anti-prostitution campaign were given ₱200 each to serve as capital for starting a livelihood, in a joint project of the barangay and the YMCA. The project reportedly failed a year after, with the children still unable to reform their lives.

For his part, Tourism Minister Aspiras said he felt some aspects of the so-called sex tours and crimes against Japanese travellers were overblown in the media and sensationalized beyond proportions.

"Aware of the true situation, I have kept my silence," Aspiras told the Japanese, "Because I did not want to contribute to the erosion of your image and integrity".

He adds, "More than the economic benefits from tourists, we are committed to the continued flowering of our friendship with you..." Touching on the crime problem, Aspiras said Philippine law enforcement agencies have been quietly conducting a drive which has resulted in a dramatic drop of police cases involving tourists the last four months.

The lawmen have their own excuses for the slip-up on the anti-prostitution drive.

A Manila police colonel said there are four indispensable elements in proving charges of prostitution:

- 1) the couple should be caught in the act;
- 2) the women should have marked money as proof of payment;
- 3) the women uses it as means of livelihood, and
- 4) the practice is habitual.

The court is likely to dismiss the case if one of these is missing, he says, and how easy for the prostitutes to escape through the loopholes!

For one, he cites, most of the girls are in food shops, so how do they catch them having sex in these eateries? Also,

unless decoy is used, marked money is hard to come by. The last two elements are almost impossible to prove, so the most they can charge these women with is vagrancy where the penalties are just 1-30 days' imprisonment, and a fine of not more than ₱2,000, or both. If posted by a bonding company, only ₱50 or ₱150 is needed before they're free again.

Again, the convenient approach of treating prostitutes as criminals and not as victims, only worsen the problem.

NGO Response

The first to react are the civic and religious groups, guardians of our threatened morals in this 85% Catholic country.

The Catholic Women's League, for instance, as headed by the Manila mayor's wife herself, formulated certain measures to counteract child prostitution, among them:

- *the creation of a group that would pinpoint the areas where child prostitution exists
- *involvement of the CB (Citizens' Band Radio) groups to report on child prostitution
- *the campaign against this vice should be carried out on a 24-hour basis
- *creation of a nationwide information campaign on the rising problem of child prostitution in Manila and elsewhere
- *putting up and distributing PD 603 posters and pamphlets in establishments catering to tourists
- *campaign to eliminate rural-urban migration
- *closure of establishment catering to child prostitution
- *fine and/or imprisonment for local and foreign tourists as well as those involved in the racket
- *referral of child prostitutes who are involved to the rehabilitation centers
- *creation of a comprehensive sex education program for students to include an explanation on the nature and purpose of human life, the knowledge of which will be favorable to physical, mental, emotional and moral development.

In the same vein, a civic action group in Pagsanjan, another gathering place of pedophiles, launched an infor-

mation campaign through billboards outlining the penalties for sex violations as provided under the Child and Youth Welfare Code (PD 603) and the Revised Penal Code. The billboards also carried information that the pedophiles transmit highly contagious and incurable sexually-related diseases called AIDS and herpes. However, one of the eight billboards installed was burned allegedly by pedophiles a day after it was set up.

The Council for the Protection of Children in Pagsanjan also said that a survey will be conducted to identify the victims of pedophiles, to know the extent of the problem, and trace its root. They also recommended various measures to government agencies and ministries, such as:

*MOT - issue a directive banning minors from entering lodges and hotels if not in the company of parents or guardians

*Ministry of Education and Culture - harness teachers in the information campaign against the practice of pedophiles

*MSSD - provide materials on how to solve the problem of male child prostitution and assist in setting up livelihood programs for poor families

*Ministry of Justice - facilitate the prosecution of pedophiles and parents of victims who consent to their child's exploitation

*Commission on Immigration and Deportation - deport those found guilty of exploitation

*Ministry of Foreign Affairs - furnish different embassies with the list of pedophiles identified by the Council and stop the issuance of visas to them.

In early February this year, on the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, a Marian rally led by nuns, students from Catholic schools and some civic and religious groups wended its way through the red light district exhorting the women of the trade to mend their ways, to choose between virtue or money, as one of the placards read. The group also recited the rosary while marching along.

STOP, the acronym for Stop Trafficking of Pilipinas, a multi-sectoral group aimed at the prostitution and flesh

export trade, was launched in November 25, 1983, during the celebration of the International Day Against the Exploitation of Women.

Aimed directly against the pimps, protectors, agents, recruiters, managers, brothel owners, financiers-foreign and local -- and other people behind the trafficking in men and women, the group's campaign includes other forms of sexual abuse such as assault as part of torture by the military, and lascivious harassments of women workers in factories and offices.

STOP, according to a paper on the group presented to Vienna in September 1984, involves some 200 private and public organizations. Standing committees have reportedly been formed to take care of 1) rehabilitation services, 2) preventive work, 3) legal aspects, 4) research, 5) education and information.

According to the same paper, STOP reaches the rural areas to warn villagers about the pitfalls of migrating to the city and working abroad, about recruiters and their false promises, about questionable penpals and marriage bureaus.

It likewise informs that STOP chapters are organized in the provinces so that local citizens can form education teams as well as set up income-producing projects to stem the tide of migration.

Another group actively fighting the problem of sex tourism is the Third World Movement Against the Exploitation of Women (TW-MAE-W), a networking organization of women's groups and friends of women. Its initial salvo against this malaise was a forum on Japanese sex tours, which coincided with the visit of then PM Zenko Suzuki in January 1981. The main thrust of this group, it seems, is international solidarity via ties with European and Australian Asian women's groups concerned with migrant workers, entertainers abroad, the marriage bureau, and child prostitution. Its typical activities include talks, seminars, information drives, court actions, parliamentary lobbying, picketing and demonstrations.

An interesting form of protest was initiated by a group of women attending the UN ESCAP pre-Nairobi meeting in Tokyo in March 1984. The group arranged an appointment with Mr. Goto, the President of Sanwa Publishing of Tengoku Hyoryu (Drifting in Paradise) subtitled "Guide for the Night Life of Nymphomaniac Filipinas". In a confrontation led by Civic Assembly of Women of the Philippines' (CAWP) Minerva Laudico, the group protested the offensive publication and handed Mr. Goto a letter citing a UN convention against the exploitation of women ratified by both Japan and the Philippines. The group also demanded strong and immediate measures to curb pornography and prostitution, the most concrete being Sanwa's desistance from further pornographic publications of similar slur. Threatening legal action, the group succeeded in making some points.

Sr. Sol Perpiñan of the TW-MAE-W cited some gains even along the United Nations level, with the official report on the ESCAP March 1984 conference reading:

"102: The trafficking in women both as national and international phenomenon was discussed at length. Some of the causes of prostitution and the international traffic in women were seen as related to the economic condition of large numbers of rural poor women and the effects of the sexual ideology promoted by mass media.

103: It was agreed that to discourage prostitution and exploitation of women, the economic status of vulnerable women should be improved. The meeting felt that what was required were improvements in rural life, the provision of education and training, promotion of rural-based income-generating activities and off-farm employment, and the retraining of unemployed women. Most delegations urged that strong legal measures be taken to punish the exploiters, pimps and traders in sex. Some participants suggested the decriminalization of prostitution, the monitoring of media and propaganda, rehabilitation of the young woman instead of punishing them and strong measures to be adopted by the governments against those involved in the prostitution trade.

In the Asia-Pacific region, an agreement of governments defined the following actions:

*impose stricter penalties through legislation on all those responsible on all levels for the organized prostitution trade;

*raise the problem of prostitution to the regional levels so as to exert pressure of those countries involved in the trade to do their share in the halting of organized prostitution.

CONCLUSIONS/ANALYSIS:

Research on this subject reveals the following:

1) Government's heavy reliance on tourism as foreign exchange source extends to the point of tolerating, even encouraging the blatant use of women as come-ons. Various decrees, memoranda and presidential directives reveal that tourism has become a priority in development plans, and that as adjunct to it, prostitution too has been institutionalized. The professionalization of prostitutes as hospitality girls is one such step.

2) Even as government uses women as tourists baits, it also taxes these women heavily through licenses and permits and medical certificates, which then assure that tourism gets a clean bill health -- for the benefit of the tourists of course.

3) Foreign intervention, funding and exploitation are present in the tourism industry, from the military bases' demand for an R&R industry to service its men, to the foreign funds poured into lavish tourist resorts and hotels, to the ownership of strips, clubs and cocktail lounges, and ultimately, the customers in these joints.

4) A survey on the typical prostitutes' background reveals the marginalization of our women from the countryside, the lack of adequate employment opportunities in the rural areas, and the inability of Philippine society to maximize the productive value of women in gainful employment.

5) Even as women flock to prostitution for lack of other opportunities for survival, and some, for the relatively good pay it offers, a government study on the wages of these women reveal pitiful wages; most of the women's earnings are funnelled back to the brothels, their pimps, the hotels or the travel agents. Again, most of these are foreigners.

6) The economic crisis has worsened to the point that even children, both boys and girls, are drafted into the hospitality trade -- some even by their families, in order to survive.

7) The lack of government initiative and control over recruitment practices abroad result to forced prostitution among our women there.

8) The government's feigned ignorance of the fastering problem of prostitution and its roots only worsen the problem. Reactions have mostly focused on the image of the country abroad, thus the campaign to pick up prostitutes with an imposed curfew, or to jail them out of sight as vagrants; solutions that have no impact at all, but in fact only add to the women's exploitation. Now there are more palms to grease so they can ply their trade.

9) Following government initiatives, religious and civic groups too have attempted to solve the problem, but are limited by their own narrow insights into the country's foreign-dominated economy. Most of them tackle the problem from a moral point of view. Others propose heavier sanctions or punishments for those involved in it: very few would dissect the problem from its roots, namely exposing the whole economic and social system that supports the industry.

In this context, it is important to view the problem as just a symptom of the conditions in Philippine society.

Tracing the roots, we would come up with the following causes:

*an export-oriented economy exposed by the martial law regime which strengthened our dependence on foreign investments and loans to the detriment of local industry.

*the dispossession of the peasantry through an unjust tenancy system, wage slavery and usury by landlords, most of them government officials and cronies.

*uneven development in the rural and urban areas

*the presence of US military bases and its built-in R&R industry which prevents people in those towns from developing other sources of income. Also, these bases tether us to the rental aid at the cost of our sovereignty.

*foreign loans (most of them spent on tourism and infrastructure projects) that resulted in devaluation and galloping inflation.

*a crisis in leadership maintained by militarization and a growing dissident movement especially in the countryside as a result of disenchantment with government.

*a neo-colonial and semi-feudal culture and orientation that peddle woman as commodity, and propagate her status as inferior to men, especially to foreign men.

Any action seeking to eradicate the problem of sex tourism must take all these factors into consideration because they are the very basis of the marginalization of women and children, that eventually drives them to prostitution.

To paraphrase another writer: "The war on prostitution must be a war on the unjust society and government. It must be addressed to the people responsible for poverty that led her to that bar along M. H. del Pilar in the first place... when they wave those placards reading Puri o Pera? (Money or virtue), they must realize that the choice isn't for the women to make. It's been made for them -- by the absence of food at the table and by the cruel lack of opportunity to get it elsewhere."

Because the whole system is involved in the problem, it must also be involved in the solution. Thus, there is an urgent call to link up all sectors and national or local movements to seek changes in the structure of Philippine society. We can start at the most obvious, the foreign domination over our economy, culture and politics.

Some steps in this process have already been articulated in other seminars and workshops but they deserve to be repeated:

"Certainly, one main goal is to make sure that the tourist dollar does not fly away to some other lands. This implies the following measures: strict control of the transnational corporations and other foreign interest in the tourist industry, specially with respect to the repatriation of profits; Filipinization wherever possible, of tourist operations and facilities; use of local materials in all aspects of the accomodation sector, e.g., construction, equipment, furniture, furnishings, food, beverages, etc.; employment of local personnel from the lowest job to the highest managerial position in the tourist industry; and the utilization of Philippine embassies and consulates abroad to handle tourist promotions.

To maximize "multiplier" and "trickle down" effects, trade unions in the tourist industry should be encouraged and supported for the protection and advancement of workers' interests. Local producers should get better prices for their products meant for the tourist market by eliminating the middlemen and handling the marketing themselves through co-operatives. There should be more emphasis on low-cost, domestic tourism to enable the local populace to enjoy the beauty of their country and mix in a meaningful manner with foreign tourists in relatively modest accomodations.

Such interaction should be encouraged through alternative tourism programs which emphasize people-to-people contracts in real-life and not artificial situations.

The People who would be most-directly affected by tourism development should be the very ones consulted, involved in and benefited by it. The inhabitants of a tourist area should not be forcibly displaced and should get preferential treatment in acquiring jobs within the industry. Environmental concerns should be given weight and in this matter, the vigilance of concerned citizens, especially those residing in affected tourist spots is necessary."

In the UN-ESCAP conference last year, the TW-MAE-W presented other subsequent actions and resolutions that groups can initiate:

1) Advocacy work must be undertaken, pressuring governments of member countries to do something about their priorities, programs, policies, legislative measures, etc.

2) Member nations with powerful transnational corporations must be given directives to look into the international division of labor and put an end to the practice of using cheap labor in the Third World.

3) That the UNDP and other entities engage in strategies that will lead to healthier and more stable Third World economies build on real industrialization, genuine land reform and agricultural schemes, and a more equitable allotment of resources.

Our more immediate response can possibly be to attack government policies that encourage the growth of tourism-prostitution, to expose the societal ills that augment this growth and to expose the foreign-dominated business enterprises in the tourism trade, or even the collusion of big business and government to circumvent the law.

Studying alternative legislation that punishes the user and not just the women (who is mainly victim) is also in order.

"All these, needless to say, require a fundamental re-orientation of the very people who lead and man the industry. It is conceded that tourism, to be viable, must be profitable. The drive for profit, however, should not undermine our sovereignty and dignity as a people; it should not negate the positive impact of international goodwill that tourism can create if it is harnessed properly."

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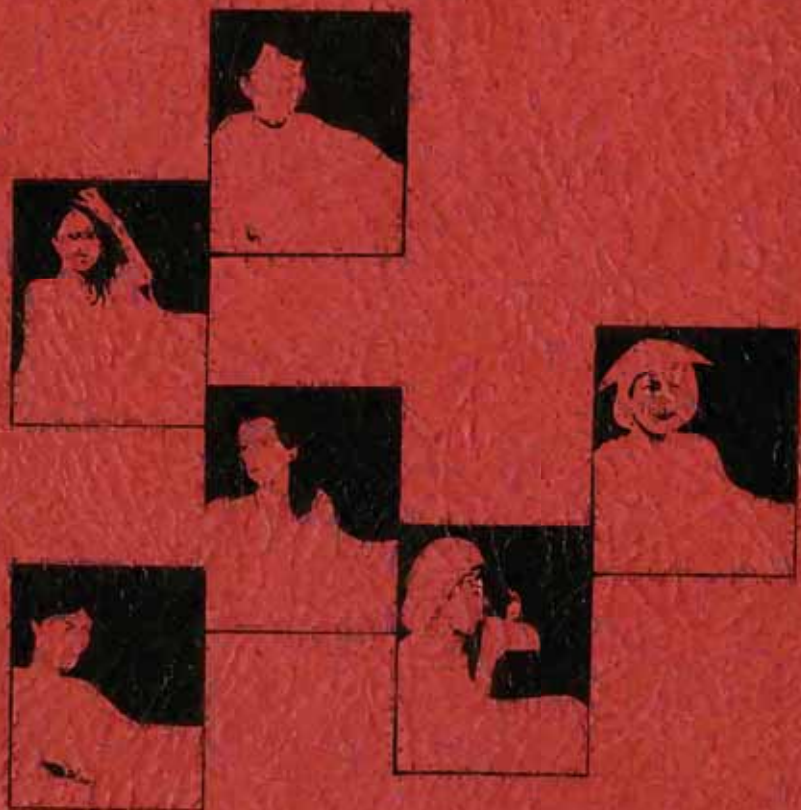
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