

Yet the matter is not so simple. Andrew Zondo is in a real sense a **VICTIM**. He is a victim of a social system which has taught him from childhood that life in South Africa is **CHEAP** – especially black lives. He was born and brought up in a society where the great conflict between oppressor and oppressed has increasingly assumed violent forms. Violence stalks the whole country. Andrew is not the initiator of violence. He is not the cause of that violence. He was simply born in violence and grew up in violence.

All thinking people accept the fact that the cause of violence is the hated system which damns a person to subhumanity for no other reason than that he or she was born with a dark skin. The reform strategy of the Botha Government, though cosmetic and full of windy promises, is nonetheless an admission that there is something radically wrong in this society.

The hanging of Andrew Zondo will by no means resolve the problem of violence. There are millions of potential Andrew Zondos in this country. Even if all the judges, magistrates, policemen, prosecutors and hangmen worked 24 hours a day in dealing with the Andrew Zondos of South Africa, they would not have touched a fraction of a fraction. Gallows will collapse through over-use and fingers will get cramps from signing the death warrants, yet the number of Andrew Zondos will keep increasing.

In a society where there is democracy, where people are free to express their opinions, to form associations, where all children can look forward to a meaningful and satisfying life without the spectre of poverty, why would an Andrew Zondo want to do what he did? Surely it is the sickness of this social system which generates this tremendous violence.

If the death sentence is to be passed at all, let it be passed on this sick social system and not on its victims. Judges, by virtue of their office, loyalty and functions, cannot perform this task.

ONLY THE LIBERATORY MOVEMENT CAN!

PHILLIPINES - OLD DIRT IN NEW DUST-BIN

The corrupt, murderous and tyrannical regime of Ferdinand Marcos is no more. The last days of the ailing dictator were made thoroughly miserable because his trusted patron, the United States, had turned against him. In fact, the U.S. twisted his arm and made him leave the Phillipines.

For years Marcos had been the favoured recipient of billions of dollars of American aid. In return, he allowed the U.S. the use of Phillipine soil for its strategic naval and air bases. Why then, did America turn on her one-time friend and ally?

The state of Marcos' dictatorship had paved the way for the growth of the New People's Army (NPA) and its political wing the National Democratic Front (NDF). Fearful that the NDF would gain power in the Phillipines, overthrow Marcos and instal a people's government, and also fearful that she might lose her strategic bases, as well as her influence in the region, the U.S. stepped in to safeguard all she had paid for so heavily. Marcos was blackmailed into not letting loose a blood-bath. He was hastily removed by a U.S. helicopter from the scene of his crimes, and Mrs Corazon Aquino was ushered in as the "saviour" of her people. Since the murder of her husband by the hired assassin of Marcos, Mrs Aquino has been built up as a democratic leader who would take the people away from tyranny to freedom in one quick leap. What are the facts?

With U.S. help and backing the rich and powerful Filipinos took over the reins of power. Mrs Aquino is a figurehead. People like General Ramos, Juan Enrile and the Governor of the Central Bank, Jose Fernandez, all former allies of Marcos suddenly switched sides. They deserted Marcos like rats from a sinking ship. These are the people who rule the Phillipines. They have no intention of creating a new society which will attend to the needs of the people or the redistribution of its wealth.

During her election campaign Mrs Aquino promised a six months cease-fire and negotiations to bring peace to her country. Instead, she is now threatening to turn the army on the NPA. The new government has made no attempt to bring to justice the plunderers and murderers of the Marcos era. To do so, would mean that it would first have to indict people like General Ramos, Enrile and company.

Mrs Aquino's government has abolished the constitution and National Assembly and has postponed local elections and now rules by decree. The Army and many former Marcos allies show a very high profile in decision-making. The chief concern of the Army is to protect itself against accusations of being involved in the crimes committed during the Marcos era, and also to protect U.S. bases and interests in the region.

As far as we are concerned there has been an exchange of one set of oppressors for another. The real problems of the Phillipines have still to be resolved.