

## then and now



It may not have been made formal and official, but certainly, 31 years after Ferdinand Marcos imposed martial law, martial rule has returned to the country under the stewardship of Gloria Arroyo, but predictably, hypocritically disguised as a rule of freedom and democracy. **PAGE 4**

## LIFE

### Concealed revelations



Artist Anton del Castillo's figures are invisible under regular or ambient light, but under black light, they appear hauntingly surrealistic. He manipulates them as his own way of staging a "mutiny" against the art world which he himself belongs. **PAGE 16**

## WEATHER

**Metro Manila:** Partly cloudy to cloudy with rainshowers and thunderstorms.

**Northwestern Luzon:** Rains with occasional gusty winds.

**Rest of the country:** Partly cloudy with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming widespread over the western section.

**Temperature extremes:** 24° to 32° Celsius.

## By Jun Vallecera

The truly professional bankers who helped the sequestered United Coconut Planters Bank (UCPB) from completely going under and collapsing as an institution have already left and some are feared to continue leaving soon, although very quietly when they could.

Private bankers, who have noted the silent exodus, wonder how much more government neglect and indifference the tottering bank could take.

Professional bankers are reportedly leaving UCPB not because of lack of talent or inadequate compensation but because of the inadequacy of the number of those who want

to get the bank's financial rehabilitation move forward.

At the policy level, the bank's 15-man board is dominated by nominees of the Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG), who reportedly want nothing more than receive the salaries they are legally allowed to get and enjoy the perks those positions entail.

These nominees number 10 in all, not one of whom gave the bank even just a peso of the P20-billion new money raised by the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. (PDIC) to keep the bank from falling over and into financial ruin.

Against this distinguished line of gentlemen and a women, most of whom claim

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# A tale of two foundations

Two foundations established in the country have received media attention, with both alleged to have links to two Philippine presidents, one of whom is in jail: The Erap Muslim Youth Foundation (EMYF), alleged by government prosecutors to have been the money laundering front of deposed President Joseph Estrada, and the Lualhati Foundation, also alleged by a senator as being a money laundering machine of President Arroyo and her husband, First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo.

But where no withdrawal activity is noted in the EMYF, the Lualhati Foundation has been discovered not only to accept political contributions for Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's candidacy but has even been found to have had some checks in the millions diverted to the Jose Pidal accounts of which Ignacio Arroyo, the President's brother-in-law, has claimed ownership.

In both cases, the claim is that funds deposited in the foundations are private funds. Both the First Gentleman and Mr. Estrada say the foundations are not theirs.

In the case of the EMYF, the documents appear to be in order, with the foundation then run by professionals. Its trustee chairman was George Go, the chairman of the Equitable PCI Bank (EPCIB) where the foundation's funds were deposited; a corporate secretary, who was also the personal lawyer of Mr.

Estrada, Edward Serapio; and a board of trustees composed of respected University of the Philippines academics.

The EMYF was established to provide graduate and post-graduate scholarships to qualified and deserving Moslems and the process was already started but stopped when the Arroyo government charged Mr. Estrada with plunder, with allegations that

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**SPECIAL REPORT**

**PART 1**

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