

"SANDRA BURTON HAS WOVEN HER OWN EXPERIENCE INTO A THRILLING
ACCOUNT OF ONE OF THE MOST DRAMATIC EPISODES OF OUR TIME."

—STANLEY KARNOW, AUTHOR OF VIETNAM: A HISTORY

IMPOSSIBLE DREAM

THE MARCOSES,
THE AQUINOS, AND
THE UNFINISHED
REVOLUTION



SANDRA BURTON

In fact, the Fourth Classmen, as the members of the Core Group were also known, had received information that Marcos had already furnished Ver with warrants for their arrest. Without revealing their own evolving coup plans, the officers turned to the new assistant U.S. defense attaché, Lieutenant Colonel Victor Raphael, for advice. During the period when RAM was emerging into the public eye and receiving its first good reviews from Pentagon officials, they had become close to Raphael's predecessor. When he had been transferred one month ago, he had told Raphael, "These are my boys, take good care of them." Raphael had been able to confirm their suspicions that secret, undated arrest warrants had been issued in September 1985 for those officers who had become publicly identified with RAM.

"That was a turning point," observed Batac. "They were suspecting, correctly, that we were planning to do something against them." Feeling cornered, the Fourth Classmen began looking for ways to defend themselves. Once again Raphael was able to be helpful. He invited his friend Dr. Jeffrey Race, an independent financial risk consultant with close Pentagon contacts, to meet them. Race, who was in Manila at the time on business, had written articles critical of the Marcos regime and an insightful book about America's ill-fated counterinsurgency campaign in Vietnam, which some of the officers had read.

"His insights were fantastic," said Captain Robles later. "He talked about how to deal with the insurgency and Marcos, and how to protect a

mass movement within the military by making alliances with the retired generals and with the Church. We understood that this was a game of alliances, but we were poor at it." From the American perspective, such linkages with civilian organizations and the private business community represented a form of life insurance for the officers, as well as a source of private funds, which would help lessen their dependency on the military or on individuals like Enrile. "The worst way to go about moral regeneration," one American visitor advised the Core Group leaders, "would be to ally yourselves with a political party."