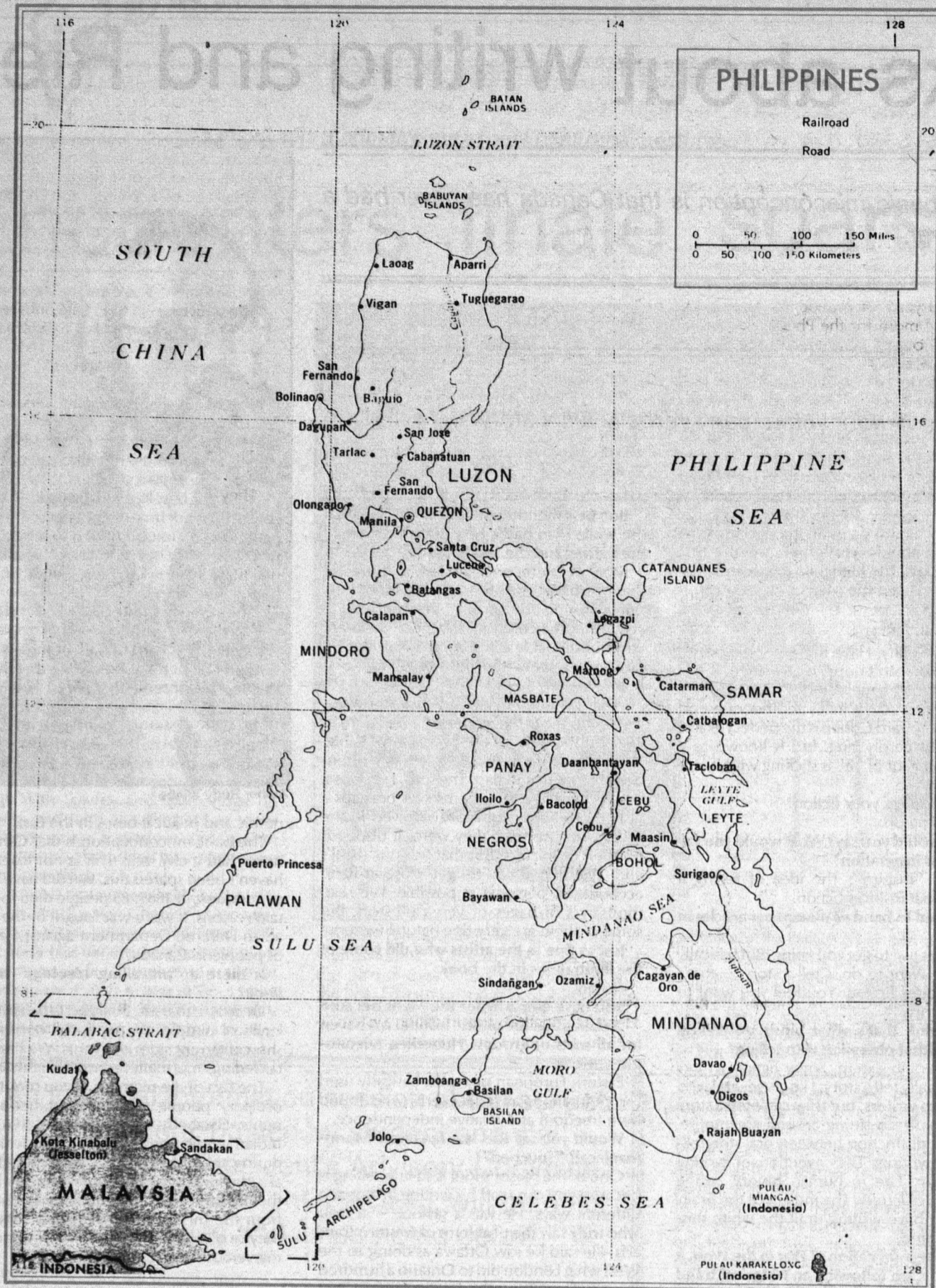


## Change in the Philippines



Courtesy University Map Collection

"How I wish I was in the Philippines right now... so very much," says Rene Abada forcefully.

Rene, a fourth year History student who came to Canada eleven years ago from the Philippines, is one of the four young Filipinos we interviewed for their views on the recent turmoil in the Philippines.

"I would probably be in front demonstrating and throwing myself in front of the tanks just like all the other Aquino supporters," said Rene.

However, his older brother, Adrian Abada, does not think the same way. Adrian was in the Philippines from Jan. 6 to Feb. 25, 1986.

"I wasn't keen on going out there, I felt safer staying at home and I didn't feel that I missed out on anything. They had 24-hour coverage on the situation.

"When I got there, it was really peaceful and quiet. My perception of what was going on in the Philippines changed," said the U of A graduate. "In a way, I was really surprised. People were leading a normal life. Before I left for the Philippines, I felt apprehensive and didn't want to go. Well, I guess it was because of what I read and heard from the news. It's true about the growing insurgencies, but in Metro Manila it was really quiet.

"I was at a wedding when I heard about the defection of Enrile and Ramos to Aquino's camp," Adrian said. "I knew something major would develop so I didn't go to the area where a lot of Aquino supporters camped out. I was frightened that a lot of people might be killed, but in terms of my own safety, no, I wasn't afraid. I am a Canadian citizen. I phoned the Canadian Embassy there, they told me that if something major developed, they had a contingency plan ready.

"Everything was normal though, except for the couple of days after the election result was announced," Adrian remembered. "People were storing canned goods, bought gas, and withdrew money. See, they weren't sure if they could go out on the street or how long the situation would last. On Monday and Tuesday the banks were closed. A lot of the schools were closed too.

"There were only a few minor incidents. One helicopter was destroyed at the Villamor Air Base. Maybe they wanted to show Marcos that they weren't afraid of him. They had a lot more manpower," said Adrian.

"Before the election, when I talked to some of the people there about what was going to happen, they said that they were hoping that Cory Aquino would win... There was a lot of Marcos supporters too... but a lot more supported Aquino."

Back in Edmonton, Rene was disappointed by the lack of interest shown by some of the Filipinos here.

"The Filipino students here should be aware of, if not concerned by, what's happening there. It's a crucial time for the Phi-

- 1898 — After the Spanish-American war, Spain cedes the Philippines to the U.S. for \$20 million.
- 1899 — U.S. troops are used against a guerilla uprising that lasts until 1905.
- 1941 — Japan attacks the Philippines on Dec. 8 and occupies the islands during WWII.
- 1946 — The Philippines gains its independence from the U.S. on July 4.
- 1954 — A rebellion by Communist-led Huk guerillas was put down although political violence continues sporadically in urban and rural areas.
- 1965 — Ferdinand Marcos, running as a social reform candidate, becomes president in a democratic election.
- 1972 — Marcos declares martial law on Sept 21. He blames Communist insurgents and an economic crisis for the restrictive measures. Opposition leader Benigno Aquino was among many dissidents of the Marcos regime to be arrested.
- 1973 — On Jan 17, Marcos proclaims a new constitution naming him as president and giving him unprecedented power. By now, corruption, oppression and death-squad killings had become part of Marcos' domestic policy.

- 1980 — Aquino freed by Marcos to have heart surgery in the U.S.
- 1981 — Marcos lifts martial law on Jan. 17, but uses the constitution to maintain his dictatorial powers. He was elected by 88 per cent of voters in July in an election many believed Marcos tampered with.
- 1983 — Benigno Aquino is assassinated upon his return home. A special investigative task force set up by the Marcos government later cleared Marcos of ordering the killing.
- 1985 — Late in the year, Marcos announces on U.S. network television that he will call a snap election. The moderate opposition unites under Benigno Aquino's widow, Corazon.
- 1986 — On Feb. 15, Filipinos go to the polls. The ballot counting takes days but despite boisterous accusations of election fraud, government officials declare Marcos the winner. Marcos' supporters inaugurate him hours after Corazon Aquino is inaugurated by her supporters. On Feb. 26, after two high-ranking Marcos officials defect to Aquino's side and after massive but peaceful civilian demonstrations, Marcos flees the Philippines.