



SAVE A LIFE IN EVERY BARRIO

PALLAHAWAN ARADAIN, a Muslim boy with a serious eye ailment was saved from blindness by the First Lady. He is shown at right being welcomed in Malacañang by President and Mrs. Marcos.

By AL CUENCA

MELETA LOYOLA, a 14-year-old girl from Ragay, Camarines Sur, once lived in fear of the future. Her left eye, afflicted for sometime, had gone completely blind. Worse, it had bulged so big her left cheek was almost covered.

Just when she was about to lose all hope of seeing again, her case was brought to the attention of the First Lady, Mrs. Imelda R. Marcos. Mrs. Marcos was so touched by poor Meleta's plight she arranged for immediate surgery at the Philippine General Hospital.

That was months ago. Meleta now lives the normal life of a teenager, vibrant and full of hope.

Another teenager, 14-year-old Pilgansa Pandunca, broke a leg while playing with friends in Jolo. His leg was amputated and he resigned himself to a life on crutches. Then, by a fortunate coincidence, Mrs. Marcos spotted him in a crowd that met her in one of her visits to Jolo. She took pity on the boy and through her representation to the National Orthopedic Hospital, he was outfitted with a wooden leg. Pilgansa now moves about like any ordinary boy, his morbid fear of having to appear like the cripple that he is with crutches somewhat assuaged if not erased.

The cases of Meleta and Pilgansa are only two instances. Mrs. Marcos has helped several others

all over the country—blind young people, cripples, orphans, homeless old people. All of them have been helped through the "Save a Life in Every Barrio" project of Mrs. Marcos.

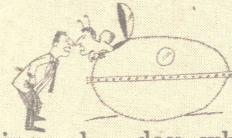
Mrs. Marcos's social welfare projects began when her husband assumed the presidency. No sooner had she settled herself in

Malacañang than she started projects such as the "Share for Progress" (home garden movement), a nation-wide beautification campaign, the establishment of reception and study centers for children, of treatment centers for emotionally disturbed children, of orphanages and youth centers, of community centers, and of homes



A cripple among well-wishers of the First Couple.

UNIDENTIFIED FLYING/WALKING OBJECTS



By FRED D. MANALO



A little patient of the "Save a Life" project.

For needy senior citizens.

"Save a Life in Every Barrio" was a result of several requests for aid coming from rural folk. It was only in 1967, though, after helping two Muslim young men (a blind and a cripple) that she decided to make it as a continuing and nation-wide project. From a modest beginning it now involves several institutions and individuals in both the public and private sectors.

The welfare projects of Mrs. Marcos are so varied that to make them more wieldy and responsive they had to be unified into one single coordinated program — the Integrated Social Welfare Program.

The first of its kind in the country, it frowns on the usual hand-outs and doles which were familiar features of past welfare movements. The orientation of the program is toward self-help, with emphasis on training, guidance and, if necessary, initial financial assistance, to develop a sense of independence on the part of the recipients.

Some skeptics, especially the critics of the administration would like to look at all these as gimmicks to endear the First Lady to the people. But whether or not this is so is beside the point. The fact is that she does help the needy, the afflicted, and the poor. **PM**

UFO (unidentified flying objects) sightings are old hat in the United States. Almost every day a Yankee reports that he has seen a weird object or something. This is not surprising because America teems with weirdos and strange animals.

The most recent UFO sighting was described by a Chicago policeman as a "brilliant white ball that changed shapes and which looked like a harvest moon." If the reporting party was not a cop, he could have probably been hauled in for taking LSD. Nevertheless, "harvest moon" is a hallowed phrase in America and one must take it as seriously as "Mommy" and "apple pie."

One Jerry Zool, a police department dispatcher in Michigan, said he received a report from eight persons who had seen a "red and blue and green flashing object in the sky" one morning. Of course the object could have been a traffic light but Zool failed to determine whether the reporting parties were high on booze or not.

In contrast, reports about UFO sightings are very rare in the Philippines. This is not because Filipinos have poor eyesight or are less imaginative than the Americans (remember Ambassador Blair?). Perhaps it's because we always have clear skies and one can easily distinguish a *maya* from a C-47.

However, there have also been reports about unidentified objects (not necessarily in flight). The following are some of these sightings:

Cornelio Komukoy, 35, of 007 Bond Street, Makati, Manila, said he got the scare of his life when he saw a uniformed weird-looking creature walking in his neighborhood and talking to the people. He said it was the first time he saw such a creature in his life. A check disclosed that the unidentified flying object was a policeman on foot patrol, the first cop to pound the beat on foot in that area.

Miss Alice Diyan, 21, of 123 Botacna, Pasay City, reported an eerie experience to the police recently. She said she was standing in an overcrowded bus the other

day when an unidentified object did something that stunned her. According to Miss Diyan, the creature rose suddenly and offered her its seat! The police assured her that the unidentified object was merely a passenger who was trying to be a gentleman.

Mrs. Pura Lektyur, a school-teacher, said she was walking on her way to school when she came across a group of strange beings whose activities unnerved her and made her rush to the nearest police outpost. After a thorough investigation, the policemen confirmed that strange group was a quiet bunch of students who were not interested in demonstrations and were merely studying their lessons.

There are many reports of happenings in our country. Last night, a neighbor rushed to our house shouting she never realized she had been harboring an alien in her house. It turned out that her son wanted to work as a waiter but she had warned him against the idea "because what would my friends say?" I assured her that his son does belong to a strange breed known as the "New Filipino" who believes in hard work and in the nobility of manual labor.

Perhaps one of the strangest reports received so far is about the man living in the big house near the Pasig who had the guts to declare his earnings and the income tax he has paid in 1968. I understand he has dared his colleagues to follow his example but no one has responded so far.

There is also the case of Albert Kuyakoy of Slum Village who is still undergoing treatment for shock. It seems that he went to this government office to follow up some papers when he was subjected to one of the strangest experiences in his life by one unidentified sitting object. It turned out that a clerk had been very courteous and polite to Kuyakoy, and the effect, according to the psychiatrist, has terribly affected the patient's psychological balance.

If you have seen or heard anything strange lately, why not write about it and send it to *The Philippine Magazine*? The *PM* welcomes such contributions and that again is a weird thing to do. **PM**