

KAPIT BISIG

December 2001, Vol.2, No.3

FILIPINO NURSES TRAPPED BY THE LIVE-IN CAREGIVER PROGRAM

Cielo's story

“I was made to believe that Canada is a land of boundless opportunities...

September 30, 2000, was the red-letter day I set foot here in Canada. My brother sponsored me to be his live-in caregiver. I am the nanny of my nephew who is 5 years old and my 2 year old niece. The first 2 months that I was here were ecstasy. This wonderful country, an entirely diverse world, astonished me. But during the succeeding months, when the fire in me turned to embers, reality awakened me from this dream – I will be a caregiver for 2 years! It's only been a few months now and I miss my work terribly...

I graduated in 1995. From then on, I was able to work in a government hospital in Quezon City. I was assigned to the OB-Gyne/Delivery Room for 2 years and was a neonatal intensive care nurse for 3 years until I left for Canada. It pains me to remember that I opted to leave my work and school just to come here. I was so close to finishing my masters in nursing administration. (I was already into thesis writing.) But choices had to be made, and it was never like me to cry over spilt milk.

After three months of my stay here, news of the nursing shortage became the media's top story. This has driven me further to pursue my profession. I called the Registered Nurses Association of BC and asked them if I could undergo the registration process though I was still under the LCP. They told me that my problem is an immigration matter, so I had to call them. Immigration allowed me to undergo nursing registration. After about three months, I took and passed the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). During this time, a friend of mine handed me a flyer with information about the Filipino Nurses Support Group (FNSG). That's when I started to be involved with the organization

who has been helping nurses under the LCP, like me, to be allowed to work as RNs. FNSG has given me tremendous support by giving me factual information about the accreditation process, the condition of nurses here in Canada, and most specifically the review classes they are giving for those who are going to take the nursing board for FREE!

Now I am starting to believe otherwise...

My blissfulness at passing the October 10, 2001, RN board exam was but ephemeral. I called immigration and asked them if they will allow me to get out of the LCP and work as an RN, considering that I am already licensed and the country is in crisis because of the nurse shortage. "We cannot put one employer over the other," was the mind-boggling reason they gave me. Who do they need most after all, nannies or nurses? Anybody can be a nanny, but not everyone can be a nurse. They also told me that if I leave

Continued on page 2



the LCP, I will imperil my chances of being granted landed immigrant status. So what am I to do but accept my fate?

Right now I am just hoping against hope that nurses like me will eventually be allowed to practise our profession. I pray the government of BC will consider my situation. May it be the start of something good, for as they say, a drop of water causes ripple on the sea..."

Cielo's story is similar to that many Philippine-trained registered nurses who are trapped by the LCP. FNSG has contact with many nurses who have completed the entire accreditation process and are recognized as Registered Nurses in British Columbia, yet they are still denied the right to practice their profession. Like Cielo, they have been informed by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) that if they leave the LCP to practice as a nurse, they will be

to Minister Abbott's attention the presence of Registered Nurses trapped under the LCP, but he did not even respond to our communication until a care facility also wrote to express their dissatisfaction with the barriers to foreign trained nurses practicing here."

While the provincial government claims that the PNP is non-discriminatory, the fact is, Registered Nurses under the LCP are still effectively denied access to the program and to practicing their recognized profession because of immigration barriers. Their basic human right "to free choice of employment" as protected by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is violated. Under the LCP, Filipino nurses are denied their fundamental rights to livelihood, education, and just remuneration. The roots of these violations of human rights lie in the forces that cause Filipino nurses to leave the

Philippines, as well as Canada's demand for cheap, but highly skilled labour, particularly in areas most Canadians would

"Who do they need most after all, nannies or nurses?"

denied landed immigrant status when they apply with CIC.

Even the much touted Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) – which allows foreign-trained nurses and other specified professionals to come to Canada under working visas and have their application for landed immigrant status supported and fast tracked by the provincial government – bars Filipino nurses under the LCP. FNSG has been actively lobbying the provincial government to assert the right of Filipino nurses to practice their profession and enter the PNP program. At a meeting with FNSG members, George Abbott (Provincial Minister of Community, Aboriginal, and Women's Service) promised to address this issue. "Minister Abbott's promise was only lip service though," explains Sheila Farrales of the FNSG. "We have attempted numerous times to bring

not work. Instead of ensuring these rights are protected, CIC and the provincial government have expressed concern over the interest of employers, instead of upholding the interests of workers and the general public who desperately need the nursing shortage resolved in order to access quality health care. The government is reluctant to jeopardize the "lucrative"ness" of the LCP.

"Why does Canada continue to deny occupation points to nurses?" questions Leah Diana, a member of FNSG. "It would not be difficult to change the immigration regulations. It would not even involve parliamentary debate. Not granting points has more to do with privatizing public services such as health care and childcare." Filipino nurses are being used as private health care workers for wealthy Canadian families. Many Filipino nurses in the LCP wind up being on call 24-hours a day doing nursing or other health care duties. The Canadian government uses the LCP to defer protest against the state of health care in Canada and to isolate and marginalize highly skilled workers in order to gain a source of cheap labour for segregated occupations, such as live-in work.

FNSG continues to organize, educate, and mobilize for the right of Filipino nurses to practice their profession and achieve human rights and equality rights here in Canada. "One by one we can be turned away," explains Joyce Lovitos, a non-practicing Filipino nurse. "But together, we are strong."

Thank you!

Contributors to Kapit Bisig:

Susan Brinas, Ana Cagas, Rowena Dalinoc, Leah Diana, Cecilia Diocson, Cielo Ebio, Sheila Farrales, Joyce Lovitos, Adelfa Parinas, Britt Permien, Rachel Rosen

Kapit Bisig is produced by the Filipino Nurses Support Group:

451 Powell St., Vancouver, B.C., V6A 1G7,
P: (604) 255-6870, F: (604) 215-1103,
E: fnsq1995@yahoo.ca

RNABC BARRIERS LEAD TO FEWER REGISTERED NURSES

Applications from foreign-trained nurses on the rise

In a time of a severe nursing shortage, where 1200 nursing positions remain unfilled, it is clear that the crisis will only intensify as the Registered Nurses Association of BC (RNABC) registered 1.6% fewer new nurses this year than last (*The Province*, November 9, 2001). While there is a drop in new Registered Nurses overall, RNABC reports a dramatic 123.6% rise in the number of foreign-trained nurse applicants.

“If there is such a flood of foreign-trained applicants, why then are there fewer new Registered Nurses overall?” questions Rachel Rosen, advocate with the Filipino Nurses Support Group. “Non-practicing foreign-trained nurses, the majority being from the Philippines, face incredible governmental and institutional barriers that bar them from becoming accredited.”

Because Citizenship and Immigration Canada does not recognize nursing as a needed occupation, hundreds of Filipino nurses have come to BC under the Live-in Caregiver Program (LCP) as 24-hour nannies and home support workers, not as nurses.

Under the LCP, they are vulnerable to exploitation and abuse, as they have only temporary status in Canada and are forced to work and live in their employer’s home for at least 2 years. Even though they hold nursing degrees and have years of nursing experience in the Philippines and in other countries, Filipino nurses face discriminatory, costly, and lengthy barriers to become accredited as nurses in BC.

Nurses from the Philippines make up the highest number of foreign-trained nurses registering with RNABC.

(97 new registrants were from the Philippines followed by 23 nurses from the British Isles and Ireland, for a total of 230 foreign-trained nurses.) Yet the numbers of accredited foreign-trained nurses could be higher, if it were not for the barriers. The statistics make it clear that RNABC is doing nothing to remove the bureaucratic red tape of the accreditation process in order to assure quality health care.

The Filipino Nurses Support Group (FNSG) has contact with over 300 Filipino nurses, the vast majority of whom entered through the LCP. Many of these nurses are currently struggling through RNABC’s accreditation process, particularly the costly and irrelevant English exam. A number of them have overcome the barriers and were able to become accredited, yet they are still unable to work and contribute to the health care system.

“I was told by an Immigration official that if I leave the LCP, and practice nursing, I will be denied landed immigrant status,” explains Josie, a member of the FNSG who is an accredited nurse with RNABC but remains tied to the LCP. “I am angered that for another year,

Canada Immigration forces me into modern-day slavery instead of allowing me to contribute my skills and expertise to the health care system”

“The segregation of Filipino nurses into domestic and other low-wage jobs is outrageous, especially in this time of a shortage,” asserts Rosen. “Utilizing and valuing the skills and education of foreign-trained nurses already in BC is part of a cost-effective and long-term solution to the health crisis.”



PLAYING HARDBALL DESPITE CRISIS

Suzette's story

“My name is Suzette. I came to Canada with my husband and children last year under Citizenship and Immigration Canada's (CIC) new Temporary Workers' Programme. A health facility sponsored me to work as a nurse. But when I arrived for my first orientation, I was refused employment because CIC and the health facility did

not ensure that I was registered as a nurse in BC. I believed that my registration in the Philippines was recognized here, as it was for Filipino nurses who came to Canada in the 1960s and 1970s.

Because of the misinformation that led me to migrate to Canada with my family, I had no choice but to proceed with the accreditation process. But because of red tape and irrelevant requirements, I'm still completing my accreditation as a nurse with the Registered Nurses Association of BC (RNABC). I took the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) last June 23, 2001. I did not meet the required score of 6.5 for total band and 7 for spoken English that RNABC requires of all applicants whose first language is not English. I received an overall band score of 6.0 and a spoken band score of 7.0. In light of how close my IELTS total band score was to the required score, I tried to waive my English requirement with RNABC. I sent a letter and submitted two reference letters with convincing evidence of my fluency to the Registration Committee at RNABC. It took three months before I heard the result of my request.

I received a letter from RNABC's Director of Regulatory Services, regarding the decision of the Membership Review Committee. She wrote, "Your application for initial registration and your request to have the requirement for TSE English test waived was reviewed by the Registration Committee. I regret to inform you the Committee decided that your request to waive the TSE English test requirement is denied.

The reasons for the decision are as follows:

1. Your test scores in reading and writing fall below the requirements as set out in the policies.
2. The references submitted are positive but do not sufficiently support your fluency in English considering your low scores."

With the help of the Filipino Nurses Support Group (FNSG), we set up a meeting with members of the RNABC on October 26. My family and members of FNSG attended to support me.





At the meeting, without any greetings, RNABC administrators immediately questioned the presence of four Filipino nurses who attended the meeting to support me. We were shocked by what we felt as harassment.

One of the issues we raised in the meeting was the discrepancy between my request for waiver of my IELTS score, and the response that I received from RNABC regarding a TSE score (an exam I never took). But the RNABC administrators washed their hands clean of responsibility and blamed a secretary's typing error. RNABC claimed that I was denied a waiver of English because I received insufficient reading and writing scores on the IELTS, despite successfully meeting the required score for the speaking component of the exam. But this decision is biased and arbitrary since there is currently no formal written policy regarding the waiving of the IELTS.

Despite my 15 years of specialty nursing experience in the Cancer Unit in Dubai and the comprehensive letters of reference from previous employers whose first language

of the English test requirement as a significant barrier, especially for Philippine-trained nurses with years of education and nursing practice in English both in the Philippines and numerous countries world-wide. As explained in the meeting, it is the English test requirement that holds many Filipino nurses back from becoming accredited as nurses in BC. English fluency is just one aspect of a nurse's competency. It is a shame that RNABC policies of accreditation do not consider and value the years of

nursing experience foreign-trained nurses, like me, have to offer to the BC health care system in the time of a critical nursing shortage that affects all British Columbians.

"Despite my 15 years of specialty nursing experience in the Cancer Unit in Dubai... my right to practice nursing continues to be denied"

is English, my right to practice nursing continues to be denied. I have years of experience working with other foreign-trained nurses in Dubai, including Canadian nurses. I believe my score is just a number and does not speak to my skills and experience.

Given the unsatisfactory responses of RNABC to the issues raised, FNSG members asserted the irrelevancy

The legitimate issues raised by FNSG members however were taken as personal attacks against RNABC representatives, leading them to walk out of the meeting without further discussion or resolution. We believe this action was both insulting and unprofessional. We believe the way these RNABC administrators behaved was racist and devalued the issues brought forth by nurses of colour."

HISTORIC CONSULTATION LAUNCHED

Advancing the rights and welfare of non-practicing Filipino and other foreign-trained nurses



This December 7-9, fifty Filipino and other foreign-trained nurses and advocates from Vancouver to Halifax will gather in Burnaby, B.C. to share experiences and strategize about their struggles. This groundbreaking national consultation is being organized by the Filipino Nurses Support Group (FNSG). Carrying the theme, “Advancing the rights and

welfare of non-practicing Filipino and other foreign-trained nurses”, organizers hope a deeper understanding about the national situation of Filipino and other foreign-trained nurses will emerge. This will allow us to forge a comprehensive and concrete action plan to address the various barriers we face. Also, the level of our efforts to influence public policies and tackle social, political and economic issues will be effectively raised from the local to the national level.

The consultation theme is a reflection of the current situation of both the Filipino community and the state of the health care system in Canada. This consultation recognizes that although Filipino nurses have already made significant contributions to Canada as professionals, we still have much ground to gain to achieve comprehensive human rights for Filipino nurses in Canada. In the midst of the worst nursing shortage Canada has ever experienced, thousands of Filipino and other foreign-trained nurses here in Canada are being denied the right to practice as nurses. Instead, they are trapped and de-skilled in the Live-in Caregiver Program (LCP) and face systemic barriers to accreditation.

Canada has not always had such restrictive policies; in the 1960s and 1970s, Filipino and other foreign-trained nurses were able to practice their profession in Canada by reciprocity agreements. Currently, over 15% of nurses working in B.C. are foreign-trained. The immigration and accreditation policies of today are created as part of the scheme to privatize health care, as Filipino and other foreign-trained nurses are de-skilled and relegated to caregiving and household work in private homes under the LCP and for-profit home support companies.

This consultation will bring together a broad range of individuals and organizations under the spirit of exchanging experiences and forging links at a national level. The panel speakers and resource people represent various cities across Canada from both within and outside our Filipino community. Also, each panel will highlight testimonials of struggle and resistance by FNSG members in their fight to rightfully practice their profession. Recognizing that the situation of

Filipino and other foreign-trained nurses in Canada is not isolated from global events, keynote speaker, Dr. Joseph Carabeo—from the Health Alliance for Democracy in the Philippines—will speak about the international situation of health under globalization.

The issues that will be discussed during the panels and workshops reveal the context of our current situation as a marginalized community and our struggle for health for all in the midst of intensifying globalization. The panel issues will revolve around Migration and Human Rights; Racism and Equality Rights; Migration, Labour, and Globalization; and Health and Globalization.

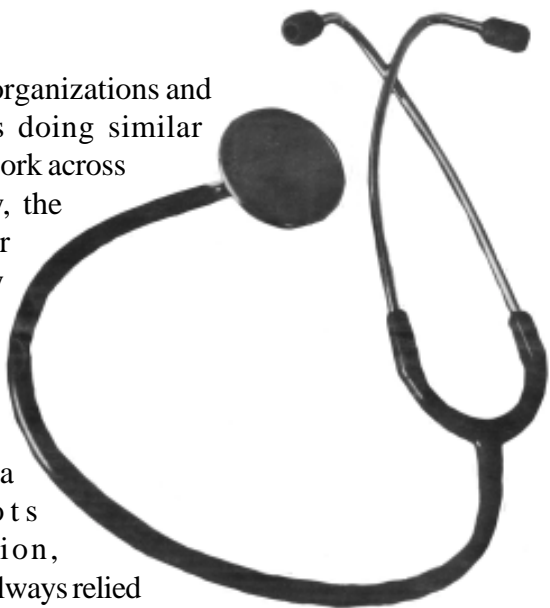
Through the participatory workshops, organizers aim to develop strategies that will enhance the level of the organizing and advocacy work many of the delegates are already doing. For example, since 1995, FNSG has been advocating for the full recognition, use, and valuing of the skills and education qualified Filipino and other foreign-trained nurses have to offer. By establishing viable links

with other organizations and individuals doing similar advocacy work across the country, the lobbying for federal policy changes we undertake will be strengthened.

As a grassroots organization, FNSG has always relied on community support to carry out its numerous activities and programs. This consultation is no different. The consultation has received no corporate or government support.

As FNSG hosts the opening of the Consultation on December 7 at the Hospital Employees' Union Conference Centre to celebrate International Human Rights Day, we extend our warmest greetings and appreciation to the many volunteers and supporters who believe in FNSG's objectives of educating, organizing, and mobilizing non-practicing Filipino nurses. As we undertake the challenges of increasing marginalization of our Filipino community and intensifying attacks on our health care system, we look forward to your continued support for our struggle for our rights and welfare and our genuine equality.

For more information about the consultation or to register, contact Leah at (604) 255-6870 or fnsg1995@yahoo.ca. Proceedings from the consultation will also be published.



QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

FNSG members speak

Q. I have been away from nursing practice for quite awhile, so I'm planning to take a refresher course. But, I don't have financial resources to support myself. Am I eligible for a bursary? How much will I be granted?

The Ministry of Advanced Education offers bursaries (grants) for \$3,500 towards nursing refresher courses. These do not need to be re-paid. Applications are due November 15, March 15, and July 15. A few health regions, such as Simon Fraser, have introduced free refresher programs. But, the Filipino Nurses Support Group (FNSG) has not heard if these will continue.

There is a new educational grant from the provincial government that can be applied to tuition, books, and educational fees for costs related to the refresher course. You can receive up to \$3,500. The application deadline for this grant is February 15, 2002.

Student loans are also available from the Ministry of Advanced Education, but they have to be re-paid upon finishing your courses. In its Nursing Strategy, the provincial government announced that student loans for certain critical areas in nursing will not need to be re-paid.

FNSG has application forms for the grants and bursaries and can help you to complete them. Student loan application forms are available from the school you will be attending.

Q. I have completed all the RNABC requirements to qualify for an Interim Permit (IP) and work as a Graduate Nurse (GN). Why am I having a hard time getting one? What is the process of applying for an IP? How long am I allowed to have it? And, how much will it cost me?

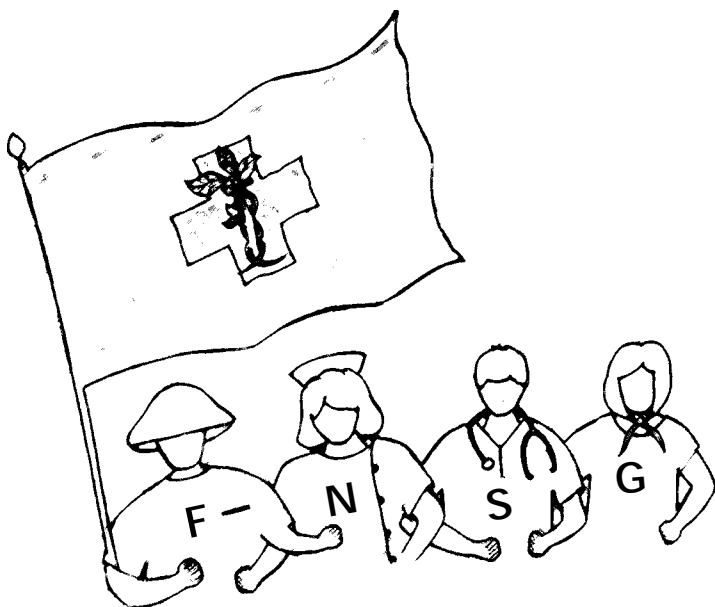
RNABC offers IPs to

British Columbia nursing graduates right after they finish the nursing program and before they have passed the RN exam. Yet, for foreign-trained nurses the issuing of IPs is employer driven. In order for you to apply for an IP you have to find an employer who is willing to hire and supervise you under the IP. Have the employer fill out an RNABC form, submit your application to RNABC, and after few weeks they will issue your IP. There is a fee to get the IP. It will cost you approximately \$23 / month. IPs are issued for a minimum of three months, and usually last for one month after you are scheduled to take your RN exam.

Q. I took the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), but I didn't pass it. RNABC is telling me to take an English as a Second Language course. I already speak English—do I really need to take a course?

Despite the fact nursing education in the Philippines is conducted in English, in the Philippines nurses practice in English, and many FNSG members have also worked in English settings in Canada, any nurse with English as a second language is required by RNABC to take an English exam. RNABC requires a score of 213 on the TOEFL and





50 on the TSE or a spoken band of 7.0 and an overall band of 6.5 on the IELTS. If you do not meet these scores, you may be able to waive the results. FNSG can help you waive your English. We also have a free, biweekly English Support Class based on the IELTS exam.

The RNABC has started pushing foreign-trained nurses who do not meet the English requirements to take a six month ESL class. The course is approximately \$450; although, the last class was subsidized.

Q. I came to Canada under the Live-in Caregiver Program (LCP). Since it can take some time to process my application for an open visa, can I send in my application when I have completed 22 months under the LCP?

According to Citizenship and Immigration Canada, you cannot send in your application for an open visa until you have completed the full 24 months working for a recognized employer(s) under the LCP. This is one reason why most people end up working more than 24 months under the LCP. If you send in your application before you have completed the 24 months, your request will be denied. When you have completed the 24 months you will have to re-apply and repay the processing fee. At the Kalayaan Centre, where the Filipino Nurses Support Group is located, there is a Filipino community settlement worker who can help with your immigration questions and file your immigration papers.

“ It was 8 degrees Celsius outside on a sunny Saturday afternoon when I first set foot on Canadian soil. It was January 10, 1998. For me, my dream was about to come true (at least I thought) starting that day. A Filipino couple sponsored me to work for them under the Live-in Caregiver Program. My female employer was nice at first. Little did I know that she read my letters: both the ones sent to me by my family and the ones I wrote to them. She even went through all my things while I was out somewhere. Not only that, she made up stories to get me in trouble with other members of the family.

Life was already tough for me; I mean being away from my family was not a joke at all. And to be living in a country that is totally different from where you grew up is another challenge, not only for myself, but also for other Filipinos who have migrated to Canada to search for greener pastures.

I hope to develop my abilities further. Yet, here I am with nowhere to go and struggling to process my accreditation as a Registered Nurse. With the encouragement and support of the FNSG members and the Philippine Women Centre, I am now preparing for the nursing board exam.”

“ When I came to Canada, it was so difficult for me to start the accreditation process. It was very confusing. I learned of a group called the Filipino Nurses Support Group (FNSG) through a friend. I called them and inquired about their support services. I was lucky I found them. FNSG provides bi-weekly, free nursing review classes. FNSG also conducts English Support Classes that are open for everyone. And most of all, they give information on the accreditation process. They helped waive my English and provided a list of facilities willing to hire and supervise nurses under the interim permit.”

“ For a while, I was working as a care aide in a nursing home facility. But, I would like to practice my profession as a nurse. I opened a file at RNABC, completed all the requirements, and took the CNAT twice; unfortunately, I did not make it. Intensively, I put all my effort in preparing for my third and last chance to get my license. Without passing the exam I would have to take a refresher course. But getting approval from RNABC to take the exam for a third time was hard. I had to submit a letter to prove that I was constantly preparing for the exam. FNSG gave me a supporting letter showing that I attended the FNSG nursing review classes.

BUILDING UNITY AMONG OUR KABABAIHAN

North American Consultation for Women of Philippine Ancestry

The Philippine Women Centre of British Columbia was happy to be a co-organizer of the first ever “North American Consultation for Women of Philippine Ancestry” which was held on October 5-7, 2001, in Seattle, Washington, USA. It has been over a decade since overseas Filipinos in North America have gathered together to address issues of importance to them. Such a meeting is truly a breakthrough event for women of Philippine ancestry.

In 1999, the Filipino-Canadian Women’s National Consultative Forum “Towards Filipino Women’s Equality” was held in Vancouver. At this time, the need to coordinate and act on a national level on issues pressing to women of Philippine ancestry in Canada was identified. Key issues included that of forced migration, labour export, and traffic in women. Given that these issues bear the same degree of importance to women of Philippine ancestry in the United States, the need to coordinate and act on a North American level was seen as a major priority.

Two hundred women of Philippine ancestry from the United States, Canada, Europe, and the Philippines gathered for this historic event. The Consultation’s theme of “Migration, Labor Export, and Traffic of Women” strikes at the very core of the experiences of women of Philippine ancestry in the United States, Canada, and worldwide. The

overwhelming majority of the participants were young women who came from eleven American states and five major Canadian cities. These young women identified the consultation as a unique opportunity to learn from other overseas women of Philippine ancestry.

The Honourable, Liza Maza, Bayan Muna Party List Representative of the Philippine Congress and Secretary General of GABRIELA-Philippines, opened the gathering by commending the plenary for pushing through with the Consultation, despite the recent tragedy in the United States and the current US-led war on terrorism: “The holding of this Consultation is very propitious especially in the light of increasing violations of the rights of migrants and immigrants in the US and other parts of the world such as Europe and Canada.” In addition to addressing the issues of migration, labor export and traffic in women, Liza Maza challenged the Consultation to also address “the emerging forms of restrictions and violations of the rights of not only our compatriots but immigrants and migrants of other nationalities as well, in the pretext of the so-called crusade against terrorism.”

Panel sessions provided a unique opportunity to deepen our understanding in the areas of labor migration and domestic work, generational perspectives, trafficking of women, and

the role of the women’s movement in social transformation. The speakers were described by one participant as providing “valuable insight” and “depth of knowledge into the issues that concern us.” To address the threat of an all-out worldwide war, a panel session was



incorporated to provide a venue to discuss the issues of war, its impact on women, and the continuing struggle for a just and lasting peace. As one participant shared, “The content was very good—relevant and timely.”

we must also commit ourselves to the long and arduous process of step-by-step educating, organizing and mobilizing of our community. Most importantly, a strong and empowered community of Filipinas, who are working

collectively to assert their rights towards their social emancipation and liberation, must undertake this process.”

Five members of the Filipino Nurses

“The only way to transform society is to firmly grasp the historical and global context of forced migration.”

The participants forged a statement of unity that reflects their consolidated position against forced migration, labor export, and the traffic of women. Solidarity between women of Philippine ancestry in Canada, the United States, and worldwide, including women in the Philippines, was affirmed on key issues identified by the participants and the panels. The participants committed themselves to the struggle against class, gender, race, and all other forms of oppression. They formed a position to stand in solidarity with women in the Philippines in their continuing struggle for women’s and national liberation. Also, the need to stand in solidarity with women of Philippine ancestry worldwide in their struggle for their rights and welfare was affirmed. A strong position against imperialist globalization was taken, with Canadian and US political, economic, and military interventions overseas cited as particular examples. The participants also asserted their commitment to study, learn, and root themselves in both Philippine history and culture, and migrant history and culture.

Plans of action for step-by-step educating, organizing, and mobilizing stemmed from the statement of unity. As Luningning Alcuitas-Imperial, from the Philippine Women Centre of British Columbia, urged: “The only way to transform society is to firmly grasp the historical and global context of forced migration. Armed with this knowledge,

Support Group attended the consultation and contributed the collective stories and experiences of FNSG members to the discussion. They spoke of forced migration, systemic barriers to practicing their nursing profession, and being used as cheap, but highly skilled, labour.

The consultation was an important opportunity for FNSG to raise its profile in North America, make contact with other women of Philippine ancestry—particularly other nurses— and to affirm the commitment of FNSG to the broader struggles facing Filipino people both in the Philippines and in 186 countries overseas.

NATIONAL QUESTIONNAIRE for Filipino nurses

FNSG is currently distributing a questionnaire to all practicing and non-practicing Filipino nurses across Canada. Through the responses, FNSG hopes to identify the barriers to Filipino nurses achieving their human and equality rights and develop effective ways to ensure these rights.

Contact FNSG for a copy of the questionnaire at fnsq1995@yahoo.ca or (604) 255-6870.

CONGRATULATIONS!

FNSG members who passed the Canadian Nurses Association Test in October 2001:

Beverly Simon, Cielo Ebio, Genevive Coloma, Gerald Tangi, Jennie Macalalad, Nanette Suarez, Narcelita Ison

qualify for / have received an Interim Permit:

Charina Caprio, Leo Vergara, Remelinda Pumares, Thess Coronel

starting / enrolled in a nursing refresher course:

Gina Dulay, Josie Carpio, Josie Pamarang, Nylette Illustre

Filipino Nurses Support Group:

Review Classes: Canadian Nurses Association Test (CNAT)

Classes are every other Sunday, by donation.
Call Leah or Ana at (604) 255-6870 for information.

SIKLAB

*an overseas
Filipino workers'
organization*

215.1103

- Attend free workshops
 - Review application for Landed Status
 - Employment Standards Branch & WCB issues
 - Fill out your family class sponsorship application
 - Help on Immigration & EI questions
 - Referrals
- MEET OTHER FILIPINOS!**

HELP SUPPORT FNSG!

Enclosed is my donation of \$ _____

I would like to become a member _____

(enclose \$10 for one year membership fee)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Upcoming events:

**December
7-9, 2001**

National Consultation: *Advancing the rights and welfare of non-practicing Filipino and other foreign- trained nurses*

organized by FNSG for Filipino
nurses, other foreign-trained nurses
and advocates

for information call 604.255.6870

**Friday,
Dec. 15**

Children's Christmas Party:

organized by the Kalayaan Centre
2-5pm at the Kalayaan Centre
for more information call Ana at
604.215.1103

**Sunday,
Dec. 16,
Jan. 6, 20**

Review Classes: Canadian Nurses Association Test (CNAT)

organized by FNSG
2-5 pm at the Kalayaan Centre
for information call Sheila or Leah at
604.255.6870

**Sunday,
Dec. 16,
Jan. 6, 20**

English Support Classes

organized by FNSG
6-7 pm at the Kalayaan Centre
for information call Sheila or Leah at
604.255.6870

**Monday,
Dec. 24**

Kalayaan Centre Christmas Eve Party

at the Kalayaan Centre
for information call 604.215.1103

**Monday,
Dec. 31**

Kalayaan Centre New Year's Eve Party

at the Kalayaan Centre
for information call 604.215.1103

**Wednesday,
January 2**

Tinig ng Masa: *the people's views on Philippine news*

monthly community radio program,
every first Wednesday of the month,
6-7pm
Vancouver Co-op Radio, 102.7 fm
for info call Ethel at 604.215.1103