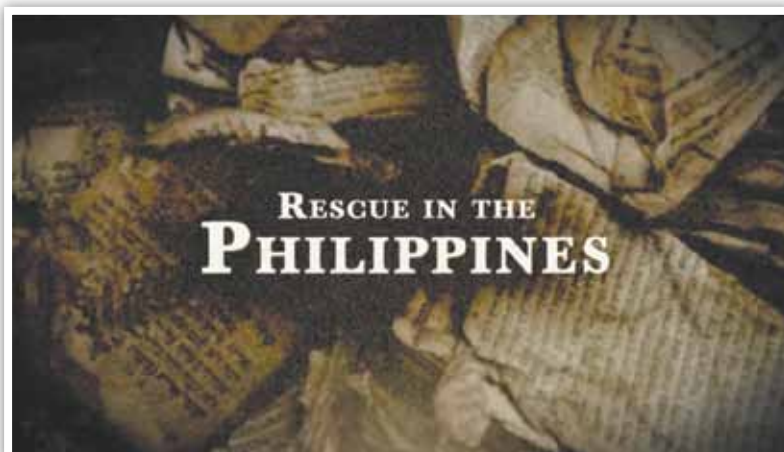




THE PHILIPPINE JEWISH CONNECTION

Kristallnacht brings the Filipino and Jewish communities closer to share the Philippine role in saving Jewish refugees from the Holocaust



It is indeed a night to remember when The Community-Wide Kristallnacht Commemoration celebrates the Filipino's compassionate and humanitarian acts to welcome the more than 1,200 Jewish men, women and children to settle in the Philippines before the Second World War, saving them from the Holocaust.

It was last November 9, at the Berney Theatre, Asper Jewish Community Centre, the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg, and the Manitoba Council of Canadian Filipino Associations Inc. (MaCCFA), The Original Filipino Seniors Association of Manitoba and the Rosalinda Natividad Cantiveros Foundation jointly presented The Philippine Jewish Connection's Community-Wide Kristallnacht Commemoration featuring a documentary film: "The Rescue in the Philippines" a story on how the Jewish cigar makers, together with Commonwealth President Manuel Luis Quezon, US Commissioner Paul McNutt, and Colonel Dwight D. Eisenhower, helped more than 1,200 Jews escape Nazi Europe and immigrate to the Philippines. The event was co-chaired by Rod E. Cantiveros of the Filipino Journal and the Rosalinda Natividad Cantiveros Foundation; and Larry Vickar, President/CEO of Vickar Autogroup Inc.

Kristallnacht is held every November to commemorate

the "Night of Broken Glass, a coordinated deadly attack against Jews throughout Nazi Germany and Austria where the Nazis torched synagogues, vandalized Jewish homes, school and businesses, and killed close to 100 Jews, and arrested more than 30,000 Jewish men who were sent to Nazi concentration camps.

More than 300 guests attended and they shared common sentiments and observations which truly defined relevance and the importance of the commemoration.

"The evening represented a fabulous coming together of Canadians- the Filipino and Jewish Communities. Together we remember the horrors of Kristallnacht but also recognized the courage of the Philippines for opening its doors to more than 1,200 Jewish refugees fleeing from the Nazis when most other doors around the world had been locked tight. As diverse as the Jewish and Filipino communities are, for an evening we became one as we learned this intersection of our histories -a period about which we are both so proud," David J. Kroft, President, Jewish Federation of Winnipeg, said.

"It did happen? I have no inkling that our very own son of Quezon Province, Commonwealth President Manuel Luis Quezon boldly engineered saving more than 1,200 Jewish Refugees before the Second World War. This is a big surprise to me and

to our kababayans," vividly said by Ms. Leah Enverga-Magsino, former president and adviser of the Quezon Province Association of Manitoba. "It has moved me to find out the sanctity of humanity, the cooperative engagement between the Philippines and the Jewish communities in Europe. The documentary shown is opening window to understand more on how to help other people," Leah said.

"I taught Philippine History at the University of Santo Tomas (which became a concentration camp during the Second World War, and where many Jewish refugees were entered) and there is no mention of this very important historical event in our Philippine history books. Unknown to most Filipinos, the saving of more than 1,200 Jewish men, women and children from the Holocaust defines how historians ignored how Filipinos helped other people in time of crises. With this important event, ties between the Filipino and the Jewish community have become strong. This documentary must be shown to our kababayans and to other communities," Rod E. Cantiveros, Filipino Journal and RNCF, said with enthusiasm.

Larry Vickar, CEO/President of Vickar Autogroup, gave a profound statement: "A wonderful example of humanity and one nation extending its hand to other human beings."

And from Hipolito Alibin, Jr., President, Manitoba Filipino Business Council, commented: "Congratulations to everyone for a beautiful event celebrating the rich connection of the Philippine and Jewish communities. The film story is moving, inspiring and compelling - a story to be told to the future generations."

"A very touching and tearful part of our history which I had not known, thanks for this Kristallnacht event. I was very emotional and very proud of

being a Filipino at that moment I saw the love and compassion that the Philippines provided to the 1,200 Jewish refugees caught in between the war, who sought settlement in the Philippines during the time when other countries closed its door to them. The Jewish people who attended the event gave us warm hugs and thanked us with tears in their eyes. I felt so blessed. Congratulations to the organizers. Thank you for allowing us to be a part of this memorable event. Mabuhay!" said Aida Champagne, President of the Filipino Seniors Group and the Manitoba Filipino Street Festival.

"It is very timely that this documentary was shown to both the Jewish and Filipino communities to make us aware of a historical event that had not been known to everyone. The horror of war and suffering that were experienced by people must be understood by all for more understanding of the past. It was a touching moment for both communities sharing love and compassion which was felt by everyone with silent tears in their eyes watching the film. As a former classroom teacher in my younger years, I admit that I didn't know anything about this long-lost part of our Philippine History and I consider this documentary as educational and must be introduced to our future generations," Letty Dugue

Antonio, president of MaCCFA and OFSAM, said.

Joy Lazo, President of Filipino Canadian Arts Council, and one of the guest singers who sang the Philippine National Anthem and co-performed "Oh Canada" with Regina Teplitsky said: The Kristallnacht Commemoration held on Nov. 9th featured a documentary tracing the Jewish-Filipino Connection. It was a testimonial to the Filipino's goodness of heart. By standing for the right thing to do 75 plus years ago by welcoming to the country our Jewish brothers and sisters who were trying to escape the atrocities brought by Hitler's reign of terror, while other countries closed their doors. At that time the world was in darkness and adding that war erupted in the Far East. I watched it with pride being a Filipino as our people took a bold step by opening our doors to welcome the more than 1,200 Jewish men, women and children. This has created a lasting bond of friendship/family between the two cultures. In light of the current events, there is once again sadness and it breaks my heart that people have not learned the lesson of wars. Our world is once again thrown into the abyss of darkness. May we try to bring hope by lighting the world with kindness and helping out those who are suffering the atrocities and abuses done by

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those with misguided ideologies. That people will not become selfish and be overcome by fear and ignorance about opening our doors to those who are truly in need. We cannot allow another Holocaust to happen again."

"The Kristallnacht event was a beautiful and touching moment for both the Jewish and the Philippine communities in Winnipeg. It is a proud moment in our Philippine history and our community should know about it. It is my wish that our bond with the Jewish community will continue and flourish here in Winnipeg and other parts of the world. The Philippine Heritage Council of Manitoba Inc. will continue to present the documentary to our community so more, if not all of us, will cherish and nurture this special relationship we have with the Jewish Community," Perla Javate, President, The Philippine Heritage Council of Manitoba Inc.

Tess Newton, former President of Bicol Association of Manitoba, wrote: "Fascinating story of a country that welcomes and accepts people in search of freedom and refuge. A must-see for everyone who embraces tolerance and humanity. I was mesmerized and spellbound.

"I was surprised to learn for the first time that the Filipinos opened their door to the more than 1,200 Jewish refugees and I was

also impressed with President Quezon's answer to the question: "Why are you doing this?" His answer: "It is the right thing to do," and the two ladies who sang the Israel, the Philippine and the Canadian anthem did a fabulous job," Gordon Pullan, of Pullan Kammerloch Frohlinger law office, said.

Gigi Shand, community volunteer, stated: "I was very happy watching the documentary, very educational and informative. And I congratulate the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg, MaCCFA, OFSAM and the Rosalinda Natividad Cantiveros Foundation for sponsoring this memorable event. And I congratulate Rod E. Cantiveros and Larry Vickar for being the co-chairs of this event. And I do hope that the community at large will see the documentary showing that more than 1,200 Jewish men, women and children found refuge in the Philippines before the Second World War. It is a must-see for everybody. I was moved to tears!"

"My grandmother, Andrea Lipana of Plaridel, Bulacan, and one of the supporters of the 20 Women of Malolos who died at the age of 111 years old in 1999, told me about the President Quezon. According to her, he is most handsome president and responsible for welcoming the Jewish refugees who were driven out by Hitler. The story did stay in my mind, but I felt sorry that this humanitarian work of the Filipinos was not mentioned in

our history books, and I do hope that our history books are re-written to include this chapter. So moving, so compassionate. I did cry even at the beginning when the two ladies sang the three national anthems, and I had to remember my grandma when the film was shown. It was really a true story. I'm so proud as a Filipino. We have to open our doors for those who suffer in war torn countries," said Clarita Nazario, President of the Bulacan Association and vice president of OFSAM.


Gem Anis, former History Professor and columnist, Filipino Journal, writes: "The Jewish Refugee documentary is an international lesson on the power of humanitarian kindness regardless of race and creed. It has proved that there is always room in our hearts where other people, especially the oppressed, can seek to dwell peacefully and sage. A country like the Philippines, whether big or small, rich or poor, can still make a difference so other people can live and survive. The escape from the horrors of Holocaust vividly depicted in the documentary film happened not only because of the grace of God but also from the spirit of humanity. The film deserves to be shown again to a much larger audience. I congratulate all the organizers on this very significant undertaking."

The commemoration program was emceed by Joel Lazer, Chair, Community Relations and Local Partner Council, Jewish Federation of Winnipeg and CIJA.

The national anthems of Israel, the Philippines and Canada were sung by Regina Teplitsky and Joy Lazo; David J. Kroft, President of the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg, gave the greetings from the Jewish Community; Orli Marcelino, Honorary Consul General, delivered the message of Philippine Ambassador to Canada H.E. Petronila P. Garcia. Sigi Wasserman, Holocaust survivor,


gave thanks to the Filipino community. The plaque of gratitude was unveiled by Rod E. Cantiveros and Larry Vickar, co-chairs of the event. Coordination was done by Shelly Faintuch, Community Relations Director, Jewish Federation of Winnipeg and Rhonda Prepes J. Prepes, Community Relations Assistant, Jewish Federation of Winnipeg.





Pasuguan ng Pilipinas **Embassy of the Philippines**

Ottawa



MESSAGE

Ottawa, 9 November 2015

I join the Jewish Community of Winnipeg in commemorating Kristallnacht.


As the Ambassador of the Philippines to Canada, I wish to acknowledge with great honor the Jewish community's recognition of the Philippines' role in saving Jewish lives during this dark period in history.

The Filipino people place great value on human life. We opened our doors to the Jewish people escaping persecution in Europe as our way of helping people whose lives were in danger. With the opening of our doors to the Jewish people, we also embraced new friends – a friendship that would later serve as the foundation of a strong relationship between the Philippines and Israel, a relationship that I had the honor and privilege to nurture during my stint as Philippine Ambassador to Israel from 2008 to 2011.

Our shared Judeo-Christian values, coupled with our peoples' openness to various cultures, are the bridges that connect our people. Like the Semitic diaspora that has spread the Jewish people all over the world, we also have a "Filipino diaspora" – a term we have come to adopt to refer to the growing population of Filipinos living abroad. Certainly, our peoples found each other together in communities in foreign countries.

On this note, I would like to express my great appreciation for the Jewish Federation's thrust to strengthen the bonds between the Jewish and the Filipino communities in Winnipeg. The Jewish community is an older community and more deeply rooted in Canada than the younger community of the Filipinos. There is so much that our peoples could learn from each other and there is good opportunity for partnerships between our two communities. Commemorative events like this, where the history of past engagements between the Jewish people and the Philippines is highlighted, would surely serve to remind our peoples of the great friendship that our ancestors shared and pave the way for a greater friendship between our communities and the later generations of Jewish and Filipino people, not only in Winnipeg, but also all over the world.

I wish the success of your event.



PETRONILA P. GARCIA
Ambassador