

CIVILIANS CHEER AS FIGHTING RAGES AT MANILA MILITARY CAMP.By Joel Palacios and **Chaitanya Kalbag**, Reuters

347 words

28 August 1987

Reuters News

English

(c) 1987 Reuters Limited

MANILA, Aug 28, Reuter - Buildings blazed and streets shook in Manila today in the capital's heaviest fighting since World War Two.

"Advance, advance," civilian spectators shouted to soldiers backing Corazon Aquino as they moved on comrades-in-arms dedicated to overturning the president's government.

Gunfire cracked and the air vibrated to artillery fire around Camp Aguinaldo, a large military installation held since early this morning by the rebels.

Watched by ragged bands of spectators, helmeted soldiers clutching assault rifles and protected by flak-jackets ducked and weaved among coconut trees in running street battles for control of the installation on the outskirts of the Philippine capital.

Civilian shouts erupted regardless of which side attacked. Crowds of young men and boys followed journalists into the camp behind pro-government troops who fought their way inside with armoured personnel carriers.

"Please move away, we cannot move," an exasperated pro-government officer told the onlookers.

The assault was followed by a air raid on the estimated 300 rebels holding the camp.

Seven thousand spectators watched the fighting perched on street lamps, on kerbsides, on rooftops and peering down from windows in buildings overlooking the base, dodging or running for cover whenever bullets whistled overhead.

"There is intense fighting. It looks like street fighting. They look so close to each other," said a witness watching from the 22nd floor of a nearby building.

"I can hear the sound of recoil-less rifles, M-60 heavy machineguns and some grenade explosions," he said.

Smoke poured from two buildings in the camp. When fighting flared in the area this morning, people living nearby dashed from their houses clutching suitcases full of belongings, fleeing the area in cars, mini-buses and on bicycles.

The battle raged in the heart of the area where 18 months ago more than a million Filipinos massed to back a military revolt in the "People Power" uprising that boosted Aquino into power and sent strongman Ferdinand Marcos into exile in Hawaii.

Document lba0000020011204dj8s016tf

- 108 -

