

## **MESSAGE FOR THE PHILIPPINE NAVY CENTENNIAL**

1998 is a momentous year for the Filipino people, for it marks the Centennial of the Declaration of the Philippine Independence.

The struggle to win that independence involved a long period of preparation. It took many decades, even centuries, for national consciousness to develop -- helped along by a string of peasant rebellions against colonialism and by the influx of liberal reformist ideas in the latter half of the 19th century.

Those stirrings of nationhood came to a head with the so-called Propaganda Movement of the educated *ilustrado* class and with the creation of the *Katipunan* secret society that sparked the Philippine Revolution in 1896.

The revolution might have easily and immediately failed had the freedom fighters across the archipelago not been tied together by a vital element -- the Revolutionary Navy.

In no small measure, our fledgling navy made the Revolution truly national in scope. It is only fitting, therefore, that our present-day Philippine Navy trace its roots to those patriotic forebears -- marking its centennial in May 1998, a month ahead of the centennial of the declaration of our independence.

That proud moment in our history would be followed by a hundred years of valor, service and professionalism in pursuit of the noble naval mission. It is, therefore, with a sense of deep appreciation of its importance that I enjoin everyone to take part in celebrating the centennial of the Philippine Navy.

*Mabuhay ang Hukbong Dagat ng Pilipinas!*

*Mabuhay ang Sambayanang Pilipino!*

*Mabuhay ang Sentenaryo ng ating Kalayaan!*