Jose Concepcion, businessman of the Republic Flour Mills (RFM) behind the throne in Manila. He industry in the Aquino govern­ and Minister for Trade and In­ by government incompetence and found is, those businessmen who were not enfranchised business class — that life stayed well out of politics. The Council and a board member of the US)-backed National Movement for democracy, summed it up when he said that “we got rid of the Marcos cronies only to replace them with new ones”.

Nevertheless, for the moment at least, there is still a congress to pressure the new cronies and Osmeña’s Blue Ribbon Committee will continue its investigations in July. Perhaps Concepcion will eventually be caught out, but he is only the most obvious example of a government whose corruption and incompetence has rendered it powerless in the face of a disintegrating economic and political system.

Just as Joecon now looks like those cronies he entered politics to fight against, so the general situation in many ways resembles that of the final years of Marcos. The question which arises now from the disintegration of the state under Aquino, is whether the fractured ruling classes can again regroup and come up with a new formation to stop the rot, or whether the national democratic movement can take the initiative and build a truly new system.

Greg Ogle.