



On the People's Democratic Revolution

jose maria sison

sison
reader
series

4

julieta de lima
editor



Jose Maria Sison
On the People's Democratic Revolution

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Book 4
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Preface

Correspondent to the analysis of Philippine society as semicolonial and semifeudal in *Critique of Philippine Economy and Politics* is the general line or program of the people's democratic revolution. which is defined and elaborated on in this volume, *On the People's Democratic Revolution*.

The problems of foreign monopoly capitalism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism have been priorly identified and laid bare, the people's democratic revolution is put forward as the solution in order to achieve national and social liberation of the Filipino people.

The basic concepts of this revolution are intensively and extensively explained in this book. And the instruments for achieving this revolution are cited but not elaborated on because these are the subjects of forthcoming individual books on the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines.

The Philippine Revolution of 1896 was successful in liberating the Filipino people from Spanish colonialism in 1898, the first time that a Western colonial power was defeated by an Asian nation. But US imperialism interrupted this revolution by waging a war of aggression against the Filipino people.

It was able to impose its colonial rule on the Philippines and evolve a semifeudal economy. The unfinished Philippine revolution was overtaken by the global era of modern imperialism and proletarian revolution.

The objectives of the Philippine revolution to fight for national independence and democracy have continued. But in the current era, it is no longer the liberal bourgeoisie that leads the revolution but the working class.

In the new democratic revolution, the working class prevails over the cooptation of the erstwhile revolutionary liberal bourgeoisie and generates the instruments for winning the revolution against a modern imperialist power and in preparation for the socialist revolution.

The Communist Party of the Philippines is the advanced detachment of the working class and is responsible for ideological, political and organizational leadership in the entire revolutionary process. It is guided by Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. It sets forth the program for people's democratic revolution. It is bound by the principle of democratic centralism.

The New People's Army relies on the basic alliance of the working class and the peasantry in order to wage a protracted people's war, destroy the counterrevolutionary state and enable the emergence and rise of the people's democratic government in the countryside before the nationwide seizure of the cities.

The NDFP as the most consolidated force of the broad national united front ensures that the revolutionary movement gains the support of the broad masses of the people in their millions. It achieves the broadest range of national unity against the common enemy as the narrowest target at every phase of the revolution.

It unites the toiling masses of workers and peasants, wins over the intermediate social classes and strata and takes advantage of the contradictions among the reactionary forces of the exploiting classes in the course of waging the armed struggle and other forms of revolutionary struggle.

The program of the people's democratic revolution seeks to realize the basic demands of the people in the political, economic, social and cultural fields in opposition to imperialism and the puppet state of the subservient local exploiting classes.

In the political field, the main demand is for the realization of full national sovereignty and democracy in favor of the people, especially the toiling masses against imperialism and the puppet state of the subservient local exploiting classes.

The people's democratic state of the worker-peasant alliance under the leadership of the working class must ultimately replace the reactionary state or joint class dictatorship of the comprador big bourgeoisie and landlord class through the people's war.

In the economic field, the main demand is for the economic development of the Philippines through genuine land reform and national industrialization so that the country can rise from the conditions of underdevelopment, extreme exploitation, high unemployment and mass poverty.

In the course of the protracted people's war, the aforesaid demand can be promoted and realized in various ways and by some significant degrees by virtue of the growing strength of the revolutionary mass movement and the revolutionary organs of political power.

In the social field, the realization of the economic demands means the realization of social justice,

improvement of working and living conditions and expansion of social services in education, health care housing, disaster relief; environmental protection and other aspects of the people's well-being.

Even in the course of the people's war, the revolutionary government and mass movement have the duty and increasing capability for achieving social justice and providing social services and thereby prepare the ground for far greater social advances after total victory of the new democratic revolution.

In the cultural field, the main demand is for national, scientific and mass educational and cultural system. This must serve the needs of the entire nation. It must avail of science, technology to advance production and culture. It must serve the broad masses of the people.

The diverse ethnolinguistic communities in the Philippines must be united as a nation-state, respecting their local cultures as well as promoting the national language and culture. Scientific culture must prevail over obscurantism and avail of advances in science and technology. The new cultural and educational system must serve the people, especially the toiling masses of workers and peasants.

The foregoing political, economic, social and demands are all national democratic in character and respond to the immediate basic needs of the people. They are not yet socialist but their realization under the leadership of the working class and its vanguard party paves the way toward the bright future of socialism.

The Filipino people and their revolutionary forces have persevered in carrying out the new democratic revolution for more than half a century. They cannot accept the escalating conditions of oppression and exploitation under the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system in chronic crisis.

The Filipino people and their revolutionary forces will continue to wage the new democratic revolution until they win total victory and fully realize its general program through various forms of struggle and mainly through protracted people's war.

It took more than three centuries for the Filipino people to resist overthrow Spanish colonial and feudal rule. It will take a much shorter time to accomplish the complete the victory of the new democratic revolution under the cumulative development of interimperialist contradictions and anti-imperialist and class struggles in a world capitalist system stricken by a rapidly worsening crisis.

The imperialists, the local exploiting classes and their instruments of suppression bark up the wrong tree when they misrepresent the new democratic revolution as "communism" and vilify it as the chief problem or enemy of the people. They vainly obscure the fact that the armed revolution exists and thrives precisely because of their flagrant antinational and anti-democratic character.

Sounding stronger than the psywar and gunfire of the oppressors and exploiters is the outcry of the people for national liberation, democracy, social justice and all-round development amid the worsening crises of the semi-colonial and semifeudal ruling system and the world capitalist system.

Jose Maria Sison
Utrecht, The Netherlands
August 1, 2021

December 26, 1968

I. The basic condition of the Philippines today

The basic condition of the Philippines today is that of a semicolonial and semifeudal country dominated by the US imperialists, the comprador big bourgeoisie, the landlords and the bureaucrat capitalists. These vested interests mercilessly exploit the broad masses of the people. US imperialism and domestic feudalism are the main problems afflicting the whole nation and from which the masses of the people aspire to be liberated.

The Philippine revolution against Spanish colonialism failed to achieve the goals of national liberation and the elimination of feudalism. The flabby leadership of the ilustrados (liberal bourgeoisie) failed to win the revolution by playing into the hands of US imperialism which brutally massacred the Filipino people and deprived them of their national independence and democratic rights in the course of the Filipino-American war and thereafter.

Since the beginning of this century, US imperialism has made use of feudalism as its social base in the Philippines. With the defeat of the old type of national democratic revolution, which was imbued mainly with the ideas of liberalism, US imperialism has succeeded in employing domestic puppet forces to frustrate the revolutionary aspirations of the Filipino people and deprive them of their national freedom, class freedom and individual rights.

US imperialism has bred and made use of the comprador big bourgeoisie as its principal agency in perpetuating a semicolonial and semifeudal type of economy, culture and political system. The landlord class has persisted as the most important ally of US imperialism and the comprador big bourgeoisie in the perpetuation of feudal and semifeudal relations in the vast countryside. The bureaucrat capitalists have also emerged under the imperialist tutelage for "self-government and democracy" to perpetuate the dominance of US imperialism, the local comprador bourgeoisie and the landlord class in the present reactionary puppet state.

The combined oppression by US imperialism and feudalism involves the inequitable colonial exchange of cheap local raw materials (sugar, coconut, abaca, logs and mineral ores) on the one hand and finished products imported chiefly from the United States on the other and also the investment of US surplus capital in the Philippines chiefly to foster the semicolonial and semifeudal type of economy that exploits the toiling masses of workers and peasants.

During the direct and indirect rule of US imperialism in the Philippines, the Filipino toiling masses have been exploited to serve the excessive hunger for profits of the US monopoly capitalists and the local reactionaries. The acute exploitation of the masses of workers and peasants, a general state of backwardness in society and the corruption and brutality of the bourgeois reactionary state characterize the Philippines today.

The Filipino working class has significantly grown in number and experience since the later period of Spanish colonial rule. But its further growth has been stunted because of the limitations on local industrialization and emphasis on raw-material production for export and, lately, on mere reassembly plants, new plantations, mines and businesses in the grip of foreign monopoly capitalism. The Filipino working class has suffered extremely low wages and the whole nation has suffered lack of opportunity and the remittance of superprofits from the Philippines by foreign monopolies and heavy indebtedness to imperialist banks.

Despite the emphasis on raw-material production, there is the stagnation of Philippine agriculture and the exploitation of poor peasants and farm workers in areas where feudalism persists; and in areas where modern plantations are in operation both regular and seasonal agricultural workers also suffer low wages and sub-human levels of working and living conditions.

The rural poor, composed mainly of poor peasants, farm workers and poor fishermen; and the urban poor, composed mainly of workers, peddlers, poor handicraftsmen and the unemployed living in city slums, comprise together more than 90 percent of the population. Though they are the overwhelming majority in the Philippines, they are now the most deprived and oppressed politically, economically, socially and culturally. They are the vast source of revolutionary power against foreign and feudal exploitation.

The urban petty bourgeoisie also suffers from the state of foreign and feudal exploitation. Though it lives in relatively better comfort than the urban and rural poor, its very limited and usually fixed income is subject to the

pressure of foreign and feudal exploitation. It can easily be won over to the side of the revolution because it is not free from the abuses of the state on its livelihood and democratic rights.

The national bourgeoisie is the most wealthy of the forces that may be won over to the side of the revolution. It is restricted by foreign and feudal domination in its goal of nationalist industrialization. Though it wishes to lead the patriotic and progressive classes through its entrepreneurship and its political actions, its kind of class leadership has already been surpassed historically by the revolutionary class leadership of the working class. The vacillating dual character of the national bourgeoisie should be recognized by the working class while working for a national united front of all patriotic and progressive classes, groups and individuals under the leadership of the working class.

At this stage of Philippine history and world history, it no longer suffices to have the old type of national democratic revolution. The era of modern imperialism has long invalidated the leadership of the bourgeoisie. An exceedingly high stage of the world proletarian revolution has been achieved with the ascendance of Mao Zedong Thought, the acme of Marxism-Leninism in this era. The Communist Party of the Philippines itself can never hope to lead the Filipino people if it does not rid itself of modern revisionism or the bourgeois reactionary line, particularly of the Lavas and the Tarucs, that has marked its history.

The national bourgeoisie and the urban petty bourgeoisie, the latter especially, are allies of the working class within the national united front but they have long become inadequate at leading the Philippine revolution in the era of imperialism as demonstrated as early as the start of the armed conquest of the Philippines by US imperialism when the liberal bourgeois leadership capitulated.

The class leadership in the Philippine revolution is now in the hands of the working class. A proletarian revolutionary leadership, guided by Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought, is what makes the people's democratic revolution a new type of national democratic revolution. By adopting Mao Zedong Thought as the supreme guide for our revolutionary actions, we cleanse the vanguard Party of its weaknesses (as presented by the document of rectification, "Rectify Errors and Rebuild the Party") and strengthen it to become the invincible force at the core of the revolutionary mass movement.

The Communist Party of the Philippines is now reestablished and rebuilt as a Party of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought. It is the most advanced detachment of the Filipino working class leading the Philippine revolution forward. It strives to be a well-disciplined Party armed with the theory of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought, using the method of criticism and self-criticism and closely linked with the masses of the people. It wields the two weapons of armed struggle and the national united front to deal death blows at US imperialism and feudalism.

There is only one road which the working class under the leadership of the Communist Party of the Philippines must take. It is the road of armed revolution to smash the armed counterrevolution that preserves foreign and feudal oppression in the Philippines. In waging armed revolution, the working class must rely mainly on the mass support of its closest ally, the peasantry.

The peasantry is the main force of the people's democratic revolution. Without the peasantry's support, without waging an agrarian revolution that responds to the peasantry's struggle for land, no genuine and formidable people's army can be built and no revolutionary base area can be established. The peasant struggle for land is the main democratic content of the present stage of the Philippine revolution.

From the countryside, the people's democratic forces encircle the cities. It is in the countryside that the enemy forces are first lured in and defeated before the capture of the cities from the hands of the exploiting classes. It is in the countryside that the weakest links of the reactionary state are to be found and the people's democratic forces can surround them tactically before defeating them strategically.

It is in the countryside that the people's army can accumulate strength among the peasants by combining armed struggle, agrarian revolution and the building of revolutionary base areas. The Party and the people's army must turn the backward villages into advanced military, political and economic and cultural bastions of the people's democratic revolution.

A true national united front exists only when it is founded on the alliance of the working class and the peasantry and such alliance has been strongly welded by armed struggle, by the creation of a people's army mainly among the peasants by the working class party, the Communist Party of the Philippines. A true united front is one for carrying out armed struggle.

The urban petty bourgeoisie can join such a united front. The national bourgeoisie can also lend direct and indirect support to it although it always carries its dual character, its contradicting progressive and reactionary aspects. In a national united front of workers, peasants, urban petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie, the proletarian revolutionary party can best guarantee its leadership, independence and initiative only by having the people's army firmly at its command.

In the countryside, a revolutionary anti-feudal united front must also be created. The working class must rely mainly on the poor peasants and farm workers, then win over and unite with the middle peasants and neutralize the rich peasants. In its close alliance with the masses of poor peasants and farm workers, the working class undertakes armed struggle, agrarian revolution and the building of revolutionary base areas to build the strong foundations of people's democracy.

While the old democratic leadership of the bourgeoisie no longer applies to the Philippine revolution at this historical stage, the working class and the Communist Party of the Philippines cannot accomplish both democracy and socialism at one blow. The Party must first achieve a new type of national democratic revolution, a people's democratic revolution in the concrete semicolonial and semifeudal conditions of the Philippines, before reaching the stage of socialist revolution. Socialism cannot be immediately achieved when the Filipino people under the leadership of the working class still have to liberate themselves the foreign and feudal oppression.

The people's democratic revolution rejects the old liberal leadership of the bourgeoisie. US imperialism has long made use of the jargon of liberal democracy to deceive the people. In upholding proletarian revolutionary leadership, the Party does not mean that socialism shall be achieved without passing through the stage of national democracy.

Neither does it mean that such progressive strata of local bourgeoisie as the petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie have no more place in the revolution. They do have a role to play as national-democratic allies of the working class.

Indeed, people's democracy is a new type of democracy because of its proletarian, instead of bourgeois, leadership. But this proletarian revolutionary leadership assumes the present democratic task of waging protracted peasant war, an agrarian revolution, and organizing a national united front of workers in alliance with the peasantry, the urban petty bourgeoisie, the intelligentsia and the national bourgeoisie. The proletarian revolutionary leadership and the worker-peasant alliance are the most important links between the stage of the people's democratic revolution and the stage of socialist revolution.

The immediate and general program of the Filipino people and the Communist Party of the Philippines is a people's democratic revolution and the long term maximum program is socialism. It is dishonest, demagogic and utopian to insist that socialism is the immediate goal under conditions that the people are still dominated and exploited by US imperialism and domestic feudalism.

In the political field, the Communist Party of the Philippines advances the revolutionary leadership of the working class, fights to overthrow the reactionary bourgeois regime and all reactionary classes supporting it and, in its stead, establishes a people's democratic state system, a coalition or united front government of the working class, peasantry, the urban petty bourgeoisie and national bourgeoisie.

In the economic field, the Party fights for a self-reliant economy, a just and prosperous people's livelihood and a national industry and trade emancipated from foreign monopoly capitalism and feudalism which have restricted and exploited the productive efforts of the people including patriotic businessmen, industrialists and petty producers.

In the field of culture and education, the Party fights for the development of a national, scientific and mass culture and education.

In the military field, the Party commands and builds up a people's army that serves as the mainstay of the national and social liberation movement and, consequently, of the people's democratic state system.

II. Program for a People's Democratic Revolution

The Communist Party of the Philippine is determined to implement its general program for a people's democratic revolution. All Filipino Communists are ready to sacrifice their lives for the worthy cause of achieving the new type of democracy, of building a new Philippines that is genuinely and completely independent, democratic,

united, just and prosperous. We are all keenly aware that the present bourgeois state and the reactionary classes that it serves will never surrender their political and economic power without a fight.

The Party is highly conscious that in rebuilding itself as the principal instrument of the leading class and in building a united front of all patriotic and progressive forces, it must build a strong people's army that can weld together the workers and peasants and destroy the local reactionary state and the interventionist forces of US imperialism.

The Communist Party of the Philippines is the core of the revolutionary mass movement against foreign and feudal oppression and for the establishment and consolidation of a people's democratic state. In the exercise of its leadership, the Party hereunder states ten guidelines for its general program:

1. Destroy the forces of US imperialist and feudal oppression in the Philippines.

National sovereignty and democracy can never be obtained without the destruction of the forces of US imperialism and domestic feudalism whose basic interests lie in the continued national and class enslavement and exploitation of the Filipino people. The overriding interest of the Filipino people now is to fight for national liberation and people's democracy.

They must take the road of armed revolution to defeat the armed counterrevolution; and all patriotic and progressive classes, parties, groups and individuals must be aroused and mobilized to isolate and then destroy the power and influence of the US imperialists, the comprador bourgeoisie, the evil gentry, the bureaucrat capitalists and all their political and armed agents. The political power and influence of these exploiters can be isolated, destroyed and replaced by both waging the armed struggle and building the national united front.

As a proletarian revolutionary party, the Communist Party of the Philippines should not be tied down by legalist and parliamentary struggle. The Party should concentrate on building up the people's democratic power in the countryside before seizing the cities and, simultaneously, on discrediting the monopolization of political power by the bourgeois political parties, like the Nacionalista Party, the Liberal Party and others, which actually perpetuate the same single party of class interests.

2. Establish a people's democratic state and a coalition or united front government.

The ultimate goal of the people's democratic revolution is the establishment of a people's democratic state and a coalition or united front government. The people's democratic state is under the leadership of the working class and it includes the participation of all democratic classes, i.e., the workers, peasants, petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie.

Its government is a coalition or united front of all democratic classes. In the course of the protracted people's war, a national liberation front may be created to combine all available forces and elements to isolate and destroy the enemy and prepare for a democratic coalition government.

In the meantime, while a nationwide coalition government cannot yet be established, the masses of workers and peasants under the proletarian revolutionary leadership can establish an armed independent regime in the countryside where they shall learn to govern themselves, defend and advance their independence and democratic gains and manage well their relations with all friends and sympathizers. The armed independent regime is the nucleus of the People's Democratic Republic of the Philippines.

3. Fight for national unity and democratic rights.

The firmest national unity founded mainly on the basis of the class interest of the workers and peasants must be created. On this popular basis, all patriotic and progressive classes, groups and individuals shall enjoy political and economic rights that US imperialism and feudalism have deprived them of.

Individual initiative and enterprise on the part of fishermen, handicraftsmen, intellectuals, the urban petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie shall be respected, encouraged and assisted. All efforts shall be exerted by the state, cooperative and private sectors to provide every citizen a decent livelihood.

All democratic classes, groups and their members shall enjoy all such democratic rights as freedom of domicile, person, thought, belief, religion, speech and assembly in a democratic bill of rights. The interests and rights of overseas Filipinos shall be protected; they shall be allowed to have the amplest contact with their kith and kin in

the Philippines or to return from the United States or elsewhere.

4. Follow the principle of democratic centralism.

The national government shall have central authority over the local government at various levels. The government, however, shall base its decisions on the needs and aspirations of the broad masses of the people and the lower levels of government. This is centralized leadership based on democracy guided by centralized leadership.

At every level of the government (barrio, municipality, city or district, provincial, regional), there shall be elected representative bodies where decisions are taken democratically for every corresponding area. A lower representative body shall be subordinate to a higher representative body.

Any part of the government shall be subordinate to the people's revolutionary congress which represents nationally the sovereign Filipino people. In all elections or voting on any question, the rule of the majority shall be followed.

5. The people's liberation army

There can be no people's democratic state without a people's army whose principal and most essential function is to defend and secure it. The people's army, composed mainly of fighters from the peasantry, must be under the leadership of the working class and the Communist Party of the Philippines.

The most pressing task of the people's army now is to defeat and destroy the reactionary imperialist-created and imperialist-supported Armed Forces of the Philippines and all other kinds of armed power in the hands of the exploiting classes and the reactionary state at all levels.

The people's democratic government can be established only with the triumphant advance of the people's army. The people's army shall be a fighting force, a propaganda force and a productive force closely linked with the masses of the people. It constantly strengthens itself ideologically, politically and organizationally with Mao Zedong Thought.

The armed strength of the people's army includes its regular mobile troops, the guerrilla units, and the militia and self-defense corps and armed city partisans. The Party should see to it that troops are well-provisioned and the welfare of the families of fighters are well taken care of.

6. The land problem

The main content of the people's democratic revolution is the struggle of the peasants for land. The people's democratic revolution must satisfy the basic demand of the poor peasants and farm workers for land. The agrarian revolution is the necessary requirement for the vigorous conduct of the armed struggle and the creation and consolidation of revolutionary base areas.

Land shall be distributed free to the landless. Usury and all other feudal evils shall be wiped out. Plantations and estates already efficiently operated on a mechanized basis shall be converted into state farms where agricultural workers shall establish proletarian power and provide themselves with better working and living conditions. In the whole countryside, mutual aid teams and mutual labor exchange systems shall be created as the initial steps towards higher forms of agricultural cooperation.

Through agricultural cooperation, production shall be raised and well-planned, the sale of produce shall be assured at the best price possible and welfare services guaranteed. The higher purchasing power of the peasantry shall enable the ceaseless expansion of industrial production. The basis of the national economy shall be agriculture because it fulfills the food and raw material requirement of expanding industrialization and because it is mainly the peasantry that absorbs the products of industrialization.

7. The problem of industry

Foreign monopoly capitalism and feudalism which have hindered the growth of national industry are firmly opposed by the people's democratic revolution. All efforts towards the growth of national industry as the leading factor of the economy shall be mustered by the people's democratic government. There shall be three sectors in the national economy: the state sector, the cooperative sector and the private sector.

All major sources of raw materials and energy, all heavy and basic industries and all nationalized enterprises

shall be run by the state sector. The private sector run by patriotic entrepreneurs and merchants shall be given assistance and support by the people's democratic government. All peasants, fishermen and handicraftsmen shall be encouraged to organize themselves into cooperatives so as to increase their productivity and assure themselves of a ready market.

While building up the state and cooperative sectors of the economy as factors of proletarian leadership and socialism, the people's democratic government shall encourage and support all private initiative in industry so long as this does not monopolize or adversely affect the people's livelihood. The people's democratic government shall exercise regulation of capital only to protect the people's livelihood and guarantee a people's democracy.

8. The problem of culture, education and the intellectuals

A people's democratic cultural revolution is necessary to rid the nation of the stultifying dominance of imperialist and feudal culture and education. It must advance instead a national, scientific and mass culture truly serving the interests of the people. It shall see to it that the educational system and the mass media are securely in the hands of the people's democratic forces.

Education at all levels shall be free, irrespective of class, religion, creed, sex or color. It shall promote the national language as the principal medium of communication in Philippine society. It shall give full encouragement and support to scientific experiment and technological progress. It shall see to it that the national language, art and literature shall be given revolutionary content and relate the revolutionary struggles of workers, peasants, soldiers and other participants of the revolution. Old forms as well as foreign forms of art and literature may be adopted so long as these can be given revolutionary content and suit the national aspirations of the people.

The working class assumes leadership in the field of culture and education in line with its leading revolutionary role. But it welcomes wholehearted support of intellectuals for the revolution. All democratic intellectuals are given all the opportunity to serve the people and remold their own thinking. While freedom of thought and religion shall be accorded respect, proper safeguards shall be taken to keep this freedom from being systematically employed to resist the people's democratic revolution or hurt the people's interests. In the course of the protracted people's war, the Party shall transform backward villages into cultural bastions of the Philippine revolution. Illiteracy and superstition among the masses shall be wiped out and the scientific spirit of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought shall prevail.

9. The Problem of national minorities

National minorities in the Philippines have been abused and grossly neglected. US imperialism, the local reactionary government and the Christian churches have too long regarded the national minorities as mere objects of bourgeois charity and Christian proselytization. The four-million people belonging to the national minorities, especially those of Mindanao and the mountain provinces, can be powerful participants in the revolutionary overthrow of US imperialism and feudalism.

The bourgeois government, reactionary scholars and Christian chauvinists talk loud about national integration but they stand in reality for the exploiting classes that are the main sources of abuse and oppression. The main concern of the national minorities is land; the abuses of landlords, loggers and landgrabbers; and exploitation in mines and plantations. A new type of leadership, a revolutionary one must be encouraged to rise among them so as to supplant the traditional leadership that has failed to protect them and has merely contributed to and participated in their exploitation.

With regard to naturalized Filipinos and foreign nationals, the class approach must be firmly taken so as to do away with "Malay" racism and chauvinism. Residents or citizens of Chinese ancestry are very often the target of racist and chauvinist attacks launched by the US imperialists, modern revisionists and other local reactionaries in line with their anti-China, anti-communist and anti-people policy. The Kuomintang comprador big bourgeoisie should be thoroughly exposed and attacked for its class position and for the fact that it is an accomplice of US imperialism, modern revisionism and all reaction.

10. The problem of foreign policy

The foreign policy of the Philippine bourgeois government is dictated by US imperialism and the internal

reactionary classes. The diplomatic relations and foreign trade of the Philippines is dictated upon by the United States, together with its reactionary allies like resurgent militarist Japan. Relations with the revisionist states have been initiated only because of the permission granted by the United States which recognizes modern revisionism as its chief accomplice in maintaining neocolonialism throughout the world, including the Philippines. The imperialists and the modern revisionists are maintaining all-round cooperation to save puppet states like the reactionary puppet state in the Philippines.

The only true basis for an independent and active foreign policy is the overthrow of the internal power of US imperialism and its local lackeys in the Philippines, and the abrogation of all treaties, executive agreements and statutes that define “special relations” with the US government and its imperialist allies. The people’s democratic government shall truly broaden its foreign policy by opening diplomatic and trade relations with its powerful neighbor and friend, the People’s Republic of China, and all other countries willing to have relations in the spirit of mutual respect for national sovereignty and on the basis of equality and mutual benefit.

The people’s democratic government shall give moral and material support to the revolutionary movements of oppressed peoples abroad and shall maintain the firmest alliance with genuine socialist states like the People’s Republic of China and the People’s Republic of Albania. It shall be inspired by the principle of proletarian internationalism and guided by the policy of the international united front. It regards the People’s Republic of China as an iron bastion of the world proletarian revolution and as a reliable friend of all oppressed peoples, including the Filipino people.

III. Our specific program

Our general program will fundamentally remain unchanged during the entire stage of the people’s democratic revolution. But from phase to phase during this general stage, our specific and immediate demands shall change.

Hereunder are our specific and immediate demands:

In the political field

1. Attack, isolate and destroy the bourgeois reactionary state, the US imperialists, the landlords and all local tyrants in our country until their doom;
2. Establish the armed independent regime and develop the people’s ability in the conduct of the government in the course of armed struggle;
3. Purge our ranks of modern revisionists and all other opportunists who sabotage our revolutionary efforts and expose the bankruptcy of bourgeois legalism and parliamentarism;
4. Campaign for a people’s democratic constitution and demand the revocation of the bourgeois constitution and all counterrevolutionary laws, executive agreements and treaties;
5. Expose the curtailment of the political rights of workers, peasants, intellectuals and patriotic citizens who fight against foreign and feudal oppression, and allow the free operation of or support every democratic party or mass organization;
6. Fight the rise of fascism and use of murder and all other forms of intimidation against the people and their revolutionary and democratic leaders and organizations;
7. Punish the evil gentry and corrupt government officials and subject them to public trial by the people’s court whenever possible;
8. Replace or reorganize the barrio councils and promote the leadership of the poor peasants and farm workers through revolutionary barrio committees;
9. Cooperate with all organizations and groups that help build up the national united front and isolate the diehard enemies of the people’s democratic revolution; and
10. Assure low-rank officials and rank-and-file employees in the reactionary government that they shall be

reintegrated into the people's democratic government so long as they do not participate directly in the commission of public crimes and so long as they secretly cooperate with the revolutionary movement.

In the economic field

1. Render ineffective the Parity Amendment, the Laurel-Langley Agreement, the Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement, the Agreement Relating to Entry Rights of American Traders and Investors, Agricultural Commodities Agreements and the Investment Incentives Law and all such legal instruments that bind our country economically to US imperialism and all its local lackeys, and reject the old and new loan agreements made by the bourgeois reactionary government, including the "aid" agreements;
2. Encourage the people and the national bourgeoisie to build a self-reliant economy and at the same time confiscate foreign goods that depress or eliminate the local production of goods by patriotic Filipino citizens while urging the broad masses of the people to boycott imperialist businesses and consumer goods;
3. Outlaw bureaucrat capital and all property gained through corrupt and criminal means;
4. Help improve the livelihood of workers, peasants, farm workers, fishermen and handicraftsmen by exercising price control in base areas and providing work for the unemployed; and organize the peasants, fishermen and handicraftsmen into elementary cooperative units (mutual aid teams and labor exchange systems) and support every movement for the economic emancipation of the people;
5. Compel the reduction of rent and interest rates in guerrilla zones and abolish rent in the liberated areas, abolish exorbitant taxes and miscellaneous levies and establish a consolidated progressive tax, collecting a fair agricultural tax and also a fair business tax from the petty and the national bourgeoisie;
6. Help the workers in the factories, mines, plantations, transportation lines and offices to conduct strikes successfully;
7. Expose the deceptive and reactionary character of the Magna Carta of Labor, the Agricultural Land Reform Code and such other bourgeois measures pretending to support the economic and social struggle of the exploited masses;
8. Protect and encourage Filipino-owned commerce and industry by providing market guarantees, protection, credit and tax relief;
9. Support the national minorities in their fight against landlords, landgrabbers, mining companies, logging concessionaires and plantations; and
10. Safeguard the people's health and expand medical services.

In the military field

1. Organize and train units of the people's army: armed propaganda teams, guerrilla units, regular mobile troops, militia and armed city partisans;
2. Campaign against the US military bases and US. military assistance and all treaties (US.-RP Military Bases Treaty, Military Assistance Pact and Mutual Defense Treaty, the SEATO, etc.) that bind the reactionary government and army to the US imperialists, and also against the anti-democratic intent of "civic action," the "Peace Corps" and other counterinsurgency projects of the US imperialists;
3. Destroy the military units of the reactionary government and of the US imperialists and capture useful military equipment;
4. Punish the spies and all subversive agents (especially members of the CIA and DIA.) of US imperialism and their local reactionary cohorts;

5. Campaign against the drafting of youth, workers and peasants by the reactionaries for military camp training and service and also against the PMT, ROTC. and Philippine Military Academy because of their reactionary orientation;
6. Eliminate cattle rustling and piracy, banditry and all other activities that prey on the poor;
7. Destroy the terror squads like the Home Defense Corps and the “Monkees,” and disarm and disband the bodyguards of bureaucrat capitalists, civilian guards of landlords and strike-breakers;
8. Organize the oppressed national minorities to take up arms against imperialist and feudal oppression;
9. Wage a war of annihilation but exercise leniency on captured combatants so as to demoralize the enemy; and
10. Cooperate with all other armed movements or groups fighting against imperialist and feudal oppression.

In the cultural field

1. Develop a national, scientific and mass culture responsive to the needs and aspirations of the Filipino people;
2. Campaign against imperialist and feudal or Church control and influence over the educational system and mass media;
3. Propagate the national language as the principal medium of instruction and communication;
4. Develop a people’s democratic culture and put revolutionary content in art and literature while combating the decadent literature of “universal humanism,” pessimism, escapism, class reconciliation and all other pernicious bourgeois trends;
5. Combat Christian chauvinism against the national minorities;
6. Support the progressive movements and actions among students, teachers and all intellectuals;
7. Guarantee the better livelihood of teachers and other staff members of educational institutions and guarantee academic freedom;
8. Respect the freedom of thought and religious belief and use patient persuasion in gathering support for the people’s democratic revolution;
9. Denounce imperialist study and travel grants; and
10. Fight for free education at all levels and wipe out illiteracy and superstition among the masses and rouse them to a revolutionary and scientific spirit.

In the field of foreign policy

1. Base Philippine foreign policy on the Filipino people’s sovereignty and self-reliance, and cooperate with all friendly revolutionary people’s governments and movements on the basis of mutual respect and mutual benefit;
2. Fight against all unjust treaties and agreements imposed by US imperialism;
3. Develop the firmest relations with the People’s Republic of China, the People’s Republic of Albania and all revolutionary governments and peoples;
4. Support the revolutionary struggles of all oppressed peoples in Asia, Africa and Latin America; and all

neighboring oppressed peoples of Vietnam, Laos, Indonesia, Thailand, Kalimantan Utara, Malaya, Burma, Korea and others;

5. Expose the United Nations as a tool of US imperialism and its revisionist renegade accomplices in the crime of neocolonialism;
6. Oppose every treacherous maneuver of all revisionist states and parties in their collaboration with US imperialism;
7. Resist the attempts of US imperialism to make use of Japan and the revisionist renegade cliques led by the Soviet Union as tools in the exploitation of the Philippines;
8. Oppose such “regional” arrangements as the Asian Development Bank, Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Asian Pacific Council (ASPAC) and the like that reinforce the SEATO and other long-standing instruments of US imperialism in the region;
9. Campaign against the imperialist advisers and survey missions in the bourgeois reactionary government; and
10. Uphold the spirit of proletarian internationalism and the policy of the international united front.

IV. Conditions for revolution are excellent

The objective conditions for the implementation of our general and specific programs are excellent. US imperialism, modern revisionism and all reactionary forces are receiving crushing blows from the oppressed peoples of the world and are in a state of disintegration.

Increasingly, armed struggles in the countryside of the world, Asia, Africa and Latin America, are ever intensifying and expanding to tear apart and destroy the overextended power of US imperialism and all its reactionary allies. In the close vicinity of the Philippines, the tide of people’s war is ever rising under the powerful inspiration of Mao Zedong Thought. The heroic peoples of Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, Indonesia, Burma, Malaya and others are fighting US imperialism and feudalism. The Filipino people and the Communist Party of the Philippines are fortunate to be within the storm center of the world proletarian revolution.

Because of its losses in the Vietnam war, because of its expensive but futile aid to its puppet governments and because of its failure to further expand its foreign trade, US imperialism is rocked in its very heartland by a serious crisis that is now agitating the American workers and youth, both Afro-American and White, who refuse to be carried away into imperialist wars of expansion and to be abused economically and politically at home. The deepening internal and external crisis of US imperialism is clearly depriving the Filipino reactionaries of a significantly great amount of imperialist protection and support.

The crisis of over-production severely afflicts the entire world capitalist system today and is profoundly agitating its own working class and youth that it viciously exploits. All capitalist countries are now engaged in cut-throat competition because each is trying to save itself from economic and political crises at the expense of the other. Although all capitalist countries are united in manipulating the revisionist renegade states and parties and shifting the burden of their financial crisis on the backs of their colonies and semicolonies, they only aggravate the hopeless situation of their puppets and intensify the aspirations of the oppressed peoples to be freed of their imperialist yoke.

Modern revisionism spearheaded by the Soviet revisionist clique is failing to be an effective accomplice of US imperialism in their mutual crime of neocolonialism. The Soviet revisionist renegade bloc is fast disintegrating. The Soviet aggression against the Czechoslovak people has demonstrated the treacherous character of modern revisionism. While US imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism collude in claiming their respective spheres of influence, they also struggle to redivide the same.

While US imperialism and modern revisionism are in deep crisis, the People’s Republic of China has consolidated itself as an iron bastion of socialism and the world proletarian revolution by carrying out the epochal Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and by holding aloft Mao Zedong Thought to illumine the road of armed revolution throughout the world.

Also, in the Eastern European heartland of modern revisionism, the People's Republic of Albania stands forth as an advance post of the world proletarian revolution and Mao Zedong Thought and is encouraging all the oppressed peoples and Marxist-Leninists there to rebel against the ruling revisionist renegade cliques.

The most significant development in the entire history of the Filipino people so far is the reestablishment and rebuilding of the Communist Party of the Philippines as a party of Mao Zedong Thought. This occurs at a time when world and national conditions are extremely favorable for revolution under the leadership of the proletariat.

The Philippine reactionary state can no longer rely on the "unlimited" support of the crisis-stricken US imperialism and the world capitalist system. What the United States and other capitalist powers are vainly trying to do is to shift the burden of their economic and financial crisis on the backs of colonies and semicolonies like the Philippines. This will only aggravate the foreign and feudal oppression of the Filipino people and will only goad them to take up arms.

The Philippine reactionary state is increasingly unable to rule in the old way. Armed opposition to it by the Filipino people under the leadership of the Communist Party of the Philippines is sure to doom foreign and feudal oppression. It is both a patriotic and internationalist duty to fight US imperialism and all its reactionary allies. Defeat of US imperialism and modern revisionism and all domestic reactionaries in the Philippines is bound to have far-reaching world significance because our country has long served as a bastion of all these evils in this part of the world.

**Ratified by the Congress of Reestablishment
of the Communist Party of the Philippines
26 December 1968**

Part I General Principles

Article 1. The People's Democratic Government is led by the proletariat and is based on the toiling masses of the proletariat and the peasantry. It has at the same time a united front character, with all democratic classes, including the petty bourgeoisie, the national bourgeoisie and others, supporting it and participating in it.

Article 2. The People's Democratic Government shall adopt all policies and carry out all measures which are necessary to bring victory to the people's democratic revolution against US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. These policies and measures shall cover the political, economic, military, cultural and all other spheres of popular activity and shall pave the way for the establishment of a people's democratic republic embracing the entire country.

Article 3. The system of the People's Democratic Government shall be based on the principle of democratic centralism. Individuals are subordinate to the government and general welfare; the minority is subordinate to the majority; the lower level is subordinate to the higher level of government. Functionaries of the government shall either be elected by popular vote or be appointed according to law.

Part II The System of Government

Chapter I The Central People's Government

Article 1. The National People's Congress shall be the highest governmental organ of the People's Democratic Government. It shall formulate and issue the necessary proclamation and laws to govern and shall delegate its authority to the Supreme People's Council which it shall elect.

Article 2. The National People's Congress shall be composed of delegates elected by the conference of the provincial people's governments and other leading representatives of democratic classes, parties and groups that may be recommended by the National Democratic Front and approved by the delegates of the provincial people's government.

Article 3. The National People's Congress shall be called as soon as possible after the liberation of a considerable part of the country or after the nationwide victory of the revolution.

Article 4. The National People's Congress or the Supreme People's Council shall create the necessary central organs and ministries of the People's Democratic Government.

Article 5. The National Democratic Front shall make recommendations regarding the reorganization and retention of personnel under the People's Democratic Government.

Chapter II The Local Organs of Government

Article 1. The basic unit of the People's Democratic Government shall be the barrio people's government. The highest authority at this level shall belong to the general meeting of the barrio people called either to elect the barrio revolutionary committee or the organizing committee or to discuss policies and projects undertaken by either committee.

Article 2. Between the general meetings of the barrio people, the highest governmental authority in a barrio in a stable base area shall be the barrio revolutionary committee or in a guerrilla zone, the barrio organizing committee. Either committee shall elect its officials from its own ranks. A barrio organizing committee shall cease to exist whenever a barrio revolutionary committee shall have been elected.

Article 3. The barrio revolutionary committee shall take general charge of all organizational, educational, economic, defense, cultural and health work in a barrio; implement land reform program; organize the people's militia; participate in the work of the people's court; collect taxes and voluntary contributions; and give all possible support to the revolutionary cause.

Article 4. Five subcommittees on organization, education, economy, defense and health shall definitely be established under the barrio revolutionary committee and as much as possible under the barrio organizing committee.

- a. The subcommittee on organization shall take charge of creating and coordinating the mass organizations like those of peasants, workers, fishermen, merchants, youth, women, teachers, children and cultural activists.

- b. The subcommittee on education shall take charge of developing revolutionary class consciousness, administering the schools (elementary schools and mass schoolings) and promoting various types of cultural activities.
- c. The subcommittee on the economy shall take charge of the implementation of land reform, production and cooperation; and collection of taxes and voluntary contributions for the support of the People's Democratic Government and the New People's Army.
- d. The subcommittee on defense shall take charge of organizing the barrio people's militia, keeping internal public order and security, and combating the people's enemies in coordination with the New People's Army.
- e. The subcommittee on health shall take charge of public hygiene, local medical work and transport of the sick and wounded to medical stations or clinics.

Article 5. Above the barrio people's government shall be the municipal, district and provincial levels of local government. People's conferences shall be held at these higher levels of local government to determine policies and plans, enact rules and regulations of local application, examine reports of the various governmental organs and elect people's councils after deciding on the appropriate number of council members.

Article 6. Delegates to the municipal people's conference shall include officials of the barrio revolutionary committee and the barrio organizing committees. Delegates to the district people's conference shall include the chairman and vice-chairmen of the people's municipal councils. Delegates to the provincial people's conference shall include the entire or main part of the people's district councils.

The number of delegates as well as the time for a conference shall be decided by the people's council immediately responsible for such conference. These shall be subject to the approval of a higher people's council, except in the case of provincial people's conference before which the provincial people's council shall seek the approval of the Central People's Government or its current and effective equivalent.

Article 7. The people's council shall be responsible for governmental leadership and shall be the executive organ in its defined territory. Every people's council shall elect among its members a chairman and five vice chairmen responsible for mass organizations, education, economy, defense and health. Plenary council meetings shall be held as often as necessary. However the chairman and the vice-chairmen shall compose themselves into a standing committee of the people's council and administer affairs on a collective basis and in accordance with decisions of the plenary council meetings.

Article 8. The term of office of the barrio revolutionary committees or barrio organizing committees and people's councils at every level shall normally be four years, unless a higher people's council or conference decides otherwise or the people make a petition that results in the dissolution and replacement of a council or committee. A committee or council may make appointments whenever vacancies arise in its ranks. These appointments shall be subject to the approval of a higher committee or council.

Article 9. National minorities shall be entitled to autonomy in provinces, districts, municipalities or barrios where they are in the majority. Autonomous governments shall be adapted to the wishes of the majority of the people of the nationality or nationalities but shall conform basically to the system of government herein presented. In areas where they are in the minority, the national minorities shall be entitled to proportionate representation in conferences and councils, with no prejudice to their representatives assuming positions higher than those held by others.

Article 10. All local organs of government, from the barrio to the provincial level, shall be established under the guidance of a higher political authority that has prior existence and with due regard to the need for maintaining the united front.

Chapter III The People's Court

Article 1. The Central People's Democratic Government shall create the Supreme People's Court as the highest judicial authority. The People's Democratic Government may also create special courts as may be required by special circumstances.

Article 2. The provincial, district, municipal and barrio people's governments shall create people's courts at their respective levels. In minor and simple cases, there shall be a panel of at least three judges. In major and complex cases especially those involving the death penalty, there shall be a panel of at least nine judges.

Article 3. The people's court shall require specification of charges and sufficient investigation of the case prior to trial and shall always inquire into the side of the complainant as well as the accused. The opposite sides of any case shall be given ample hearing and shall be entitled to counsel as well as the presentation of witnesses and evidence.

Article 4. Trials shall ordinarily be held in public, with anyone from the ranks of the people free to stand up and give his opinion on the case. Whenever necessary, the people's court shall seek the assistance of any pertinent organ of the People's Democratic Government in order to shed light on the issue at bar.

Article 5. Decision on every case shall be arrived at through the process of voting among the judges. Each judge shall explain his vote to his colleagues. Ordinarily, a case may be decided by a simple majority of votes. However, a clear two-thirds majority shall be necessary in decisions meting out the death penalty. All decisions shall be announced and explained through the presiding judge.

Article 6. The decision of a lower people's court shall be appealable to a higher people's court. However, a people's court may accept a motion for reconsideration of its own decision. Cases involving the death penalty shall be automatically on appeal to the highest political or judicial authority in a region and if possible shall be automatically referred to the Supreme People's Court or its current and effective equivalent.

Part III Fundamental Rights and Duties of Citizens

Article 1. All citizens are equal before the law and are therefore entitled to equal rights.

Article 2. Citizens who have reached the age of eighteen have the right to vote and stand for election irrespective of sex, race, nationality, occupation, social origin, property status, education, religious belief, or length of residence. Only insane persons and persons declared by law as enemies of the people shall be excluded from this right.

Article 3. Citizens have the right to exercise the freedom of speech, freedom of association and assembly in order to advance the revolutionary cause of the toiling masses. The facilities necessary for the enjoyment of these freedoms shall be made available to citizens.

Article 4. Citizens have the right to enjoy the freedom of conscience and religious worship.

Article 5. Freedom of the person of citizens is inviolable. No citizen may be arrested without sufficient legal basis.

Article 6. The homes of citizens are inviolable and privacy of correspondence is protected by law. Citizens are entitled to the freedom of domicile and the freedom to change residence.

Article 7. Citizens have the right to work, to enjoy better working and living conditions, to have personal property and to keep, use or invest personal savings according to law. They also have the right to rest and leisure and the benefit of common welfare funds, social insurance, retirement pension and the like that shall materialize under the People's Democratic Government. The agrarian revolution and the nationalization of the economy are undertaken to change the relations of production and liberate the productive forces of the country and guarantee to the people the enjoyment of the fruits of economic progress.

Article 8. The right to free public education is guaranteed. Schools and other cultural institutions shall be maintained and expanded to undertake the physical and mental development of the people, especially the youth.

Article 9. The freedom of citizens to engage in scientific research, technological invention, literary and artistic creation and other cultural pursuits is safeguarded and promoted, with the end in view of developing a national, scientific and mass culture.

Article 10. Women have equal rights with men in all spheres of political, economic, cultural, social and domestic life. Marriage, the family and the mother and child are protected by law.

Article 11. Citizens have the right to bring complaints against any person in authority for transgression of law or neglect of duty. Anyone suffering damage or loss of anything due to infringement by persons in authority of his

rights as a citizen has the right to compensation or indemnification.

Article 12. Citizens must abide by this Guide and all laws emanating from it. They must uphold discipline at work, keep public order and respect the rights of others.

Article 13. Public property is sacred and inviolable. It is the duty of every citizen to respect the property of the People's Democratic Government.

Article 14. It is the duty of citizens to pay taxes on the basis of their ability to pay and in accordance with the law.

Article 15. It is the sacred duty of every citizen to render military service according to law and make every possible contribution to the defense of the people against foreign aggressors and local oppressors.

Part IV Flag, Emblem and Capital

Article 1. The national flag of the People's Democratic Government is a red flag with three great stars in gold to signify Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao.

Article 2. The national emblem is similar to the national flag.

Article 3. The capital of the People's Democratic Government shall be decided according to circumstances.

The People's Alternative Towards National Freedom and Democracy

Message to the College Editors' Guild of the Philippines

May 2, 1984

(Paper prepared for the Forum on the People's Alternative Towards National Freedom and Democracy during the 20th National Student Press Congress and 45th Annual Convention of the College Editors' Guild of the Philippines, Jaro, Iloilo City, May 27 to 31, 1985.)

I am exceedingly glad to be able to participate in this forum on the people's alternative towards national freedom and democracy, notwithstanding the fact that I am under maximum security conditions of detention by the fascist dictatorship.

It is certainly gratifying that you have provided me with an excellent opportunity to assert and exercise my freedom—free-dom to address a highly intelligent audience that is committed to the people's struggle for national freedom and democracy, and is determined to promote this struggle with a mighty weapon such as the pen.

I hope that I can contribute a bit to the clarification of the people's alternative. I am delighted to know that you are eager to raise your ideological and political level so that as editors and writers you will be better able to apprise your student readers of the critical facts of our national life, guide them with the correct ideas and set them into motion in concert with the rest of the people.

The People's Alternative: The National Democratic Program

In a semicolonial and semifeudal society such as Philippine society, the people's alternative cannot but be the national democratic program.

It is a program that seeks to continue and complete the revolutionary struggle for national freedom and democracy which started in 1896 but was frustrated by US imperialism through the Filipino-American War of 1899-1902.

As a result of the defeat of the old democratic revolution led by the liberal bourgeoisie, US imperialism has been able to rule the Philippines at first directly and then indirectly, and to retain feudalism as its local partner in evolving a semicolonial and semifeudal society.

Philippine society is in constant crisis, afflicted as it is by three grave illnesses: foreign monopoly capitalism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. This sick society had definitely reached its terminal stage when out of these grave illnesses a fascist dictatorship grew as a desperate attempt of the ruling system to suppress the people's irrepressible demand for national freedom and democracy.

A new type of national democratic revolution is rapidly growing in strength and advancing. A nascent Philippine proletariat through its party is leading the people in this revolution under historical conditions of modern imperialism and proletarian revolution.

By people, we mean the working class, the peasantry, the urban petty bourgeoisie and the middle bourgeoisie. They are rising against the fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique and, in the process, accumulating the strength with which to defeat US imperialism and the joint class dictatorship of the comprador big bourgeoisie and the landlord class.

The Democratic Coalition Government and the New Democratic Republic

The ultimate political objective of the people is to establish a democratic coalition government and a new democratic republic as instruments of national sovereignty and democracy.

These instruments will be founded on the basic alliance of the working class and the peasantry, who compose at least 90 percent of the people, in further alliance with the middle strata, which compose a small but important part of the people.

The sovereign will of the people will be upheld as paramount. They will fully enjoy basic democratic rights. Government will be truly representative of the people; and representation will be achieved through consensus, election and appointment.

There will be no monopoly of political power by any class, party, group or individual. All patriotic and progressive classes, sectors, parties, organizations and individuals will be encouraged to give full play to their initiative

and participate in the making and implementation of decisions.

The most important democratic advance will be the elimination, in principle and in fact, of the US imperialists and the local reactionary classes' prerogative to oppress and exploit the people in the supposed pursuit of individual rights in the abstract.

In keeping with the classic advance from feudalism to modern democracy, the peasant majority will be emancipated politically and economically through genuine land reform and cooperativization. The main content of the democratic revolution is the solution of the land problem.

As the main component of state power, the armed forces will belong to the people, especially the toiling masses; will be free from the control of any foreign power or local exploiting class; and will not be dependent on alien sources of funds and support.

The territorial integrity of the country shall not be allowed to be violated by foreign military bases nor by any vessel or instrument of any foreign power. If the people have been capable of defeating US imperialism, there is no reason why they cannot defend and secure Philippine sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Towards the establishment of a democratic coalition government and a new democratic republic, a broad national united front is being developed by the people as they wage all forms of revolutionary struggles on all fronts against the fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique.

This united front is led by the proletariat through its revolutionary party; relies mainly on the basic alliance of the working class and the peasantry; is participated in by the middle strata; and takes advantage of the contradictions within the reactionary classes for the purpose of isolating and destroying the enemy.

The legal democratic organizations and alliances and the local organs of democratic power are among the various instruments of the people. These are laying down and developing the basis for the democratic coalition government and the new democratic republic.

Genuine Land Reform and National Industrialization

Genuine land reform plays a pivotal role in carrying forward and winning the national democratic revolution. The peasant majority are thereby liberated as they enthusiastically join the revolution.

The key to the growing success of the revolutionary party of the proletariat and the people's army, in the countryside and the entire country, is the integration of land reform with armed struggle and mass base building. At present, the armed revolutionaries are in the main engaged in the reduction of land rent, controlling interest rates, arranging fair prices and such other measures.

The ultimate step in the solution of the land problem is the free distribution of land to the landless tillers and the abolition of feudal and semifeudal exploitation. With the success of land reform, agriculture will serve as the main basis for the rapid development of the economy.

The millions of owner-cultivators will raise food production for the entire people and raw material production for industry; engage in rising levels of cooperation; and constitute a large market for the products of industry.

National industrialization will be the leading factor of genuine economic development. Industries will be put up to process locally produced raw materials and to produce basic metals, chemicals, machine tools, precision instruments, agricultural machinery and so on. The backward, agrarian character of the economy will be radically changed through Filipino-controlled industrialization (or industrialization spurred by Filipino ownership).

The dependence of the Philippine economy on the production of raw materials for unequal exchange with finished products from abroad will be terminated. Enterprises which have been creating the illusion of industrialization by repacking or assembling basically finished components from abroad, either for the domestic market or for reexport, will give way to light industry integral to and bridging local agriculture and heavy industry.

The US and other transnational corporations and banks will cease dictating Philippine economic policy through the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Their extraordinary privileges in the extraction of superprofits and usurious interest rates will be ended.

The people's democratic government will nationalize the assets of antagonistic imperialist firms and fascist traitors; repudiate most foreign debt; and seek to recover all ill-gotten wealth stashed away abroad by the traitors.

The state will own or control the strategic enterprises and major sources of raw materials; practice economic planning in order to have a balanced, well proportioned and orderly development of heavy industry, light industry and agriculture; and ensure an equitable sharing of income among the people.

Apart from state ownership of productive assets, joint ventures of the state and private sector, private

corporations, industrial cooperatives, agricultural cooperatives, partnerships and individual enterprises will also be allowed. Filipino ownership will be the rule. However, certain limited areas of investment may be left open to foreign entities, provided these are helpful to Philippine economic and technological progress.

Normal trade and economic relations will be maintained with all countries. However, we must ensure that the economic sovereignty of the people and national economic development are enhanced rather than hampered by these external economic relations.

A National, Scientific and Mass Culture

A national, scientific and mass culture will be fostered through the educational system, mass media and all other cultural institutions and means that reach the people both directly and indirectly, formally and informally.

The degrading, humiliating and decadent culture promoted by fascism, imperialism and feudalism will be repudiated and replaced with a new revolutionary culture by cultural workers among the people. The sources of antinational, antidemocratic and anticommunist propaganda will be condemned through mass campaigns and other appropriate measures.

The national sovereignty, the national purpose and the characteristics and style of the people will be reflected in the various forms of cultural activity. The revolutionary tradition and cultural heritage of the nation will be cherished and will be made to serve the present needs of the nation. The national language will be promoted as the principal medium of information and education.

To promote the national culture is to make a distinctly Filipino contribution to world culture and to be ready to receive from abroad things and influences that serve present needs of the nation. A healthy national culture resists unhealthy influences from abroad, especially the bourgeois decadence of imperialist culture.

The scientific outlook and method will be propagated. The Filipino intelligentsia and the people will be imbued with the scientific spirit and attitude and will thereby take advantage of the advances in the natural and social sciences throughout the world. The most useful will be adopted and applied concretely in the development of the country.

Proletarian revolutionary cadres will take the lead in various cultural and social fields. A large corps of natural scientists, engineers, technologists and skilled workers will be trained to push national industrialization, agricultural development and other endeavors requiring scientific and technical expertise.

The new culture will be made to serve the people, especially the toiling masses of workers and peasants. It will promote national development and foster democracy.

The public school system will be continuously expanded at all levels to admit the children of workers and peasants in ever increasing numbers. Enough public funds will be made available to enable more students to enroll and adequately compensate teaching and nonteaching personnel.

Health work and facilities will be expanded and improved. Doctors, nurses and other medical personnel will be increased; motivated to serve their own people; and sufficiently compensated. Paramedic personnel will be trained on a wide scale to serve primary health needs at the level of the village and the urban neighborhood.

Proletarian revolutionary cadres and the intelligentsia in general will work together in serving the people. There will be cooperation of Marxists and non-Marxists on common patriotic and progressive grounds and there will be common enjoyment of the freedom of thought and belief.

An independent foreign policy

The new democratic republic will pursue an independent foreign policy. It will enhance its national sovereignty and all-round development by its external relations. It will develop such relations on the basis of independence, equality, mutual respect, mutual benefit and non-interference.

It will oppose domination, interference, intervention and aggression by imperialism or any other foreign entity. It will refuse to be involved in the selfish, narrow rivalries and quarrels of superpowers or other countries. It will not allow one superpower to use another as the excuse for violating Philippine sovereignty and territorial integrity.

It will foster diplomatic and trade relations with all countries, irrespective of ideology or social system. It will welcome social, political, economic, cultural, scientific and technological exchanges with all countries.

It will participate actively in the United Nations and other multilateral organizations and agencies in order to perform its share of responsibility in pushing forward the cause of world understanding, peace and progress. It will support the struggles of countries, peoples and nations against all forms of oppression.

It will participate actively in the movement of the third world for a new international economic order as well as

all other movements which seek to enhance the independence and all-round progress of developing and underdeveloped countries.

It will have close fruitful relations with all countries in Southeast Asia as well as other neighboring countries. It will strive for a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality in Southeast Asia, and a zone free of nuclear weapons and foreign military bases in the entire Asia-Pacific region.

The United States, despite its record of oppressing and exploiting the Philippines as a colony and then as a semicolony, can be allowed to maintain normal trade and diplomatic relations with the new Democratic Republic of the Philippines after having been made to give up its imperialist privileges.

Towards the adoption of an independent foreign policy, the Filipino people are now struggling hard to topple the fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique and to liberate themselves totally from US imperialism and bureaucrat capitalism.

In this regard, the Filipino people are seeking the moral and material support of all freedom-loving peoples, countries, nations, movements and organizations abroad. The external relations being developed now by the national democratic movement serve to prepare the future foreign relations of the new democratic republic.

Conclusion

The national democratic program can be totally accomplished only by putting an end to the fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique and in the process building the strength to put an end to the entire semicolonial and semifeudal system.

The accomplishment of the national democratic program makes possible the start of socialist revolution and construction.

Given the time constraint, I have presented the national democratic program in general terms. In the course of the open forum, points of current and long-term interest can be further discussed.

I hope that what I have said here today will somehow enable you to have a firmer and better grasp of the pen as you wield it in the service of the Filipino people's struggle for national freedom and democracy.

Thank you.

Onward with the Struggle for National Democracy: Unite to Dismantle the US-Marcos Dictatorship and Establish the Democratic Coalition Government

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In only one year of existence, the National Alliance for Justice, Freedom and Democracy has won significant victories in striving to united the broad masses of the people to uphold, defend and advance their own national sovereignty and all democratic rights against the fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique and the long-standing evils of US imperialism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

These victories in political education, organizational work and mass mobilization have been due to the adoption and militant implementation of the general line of the national democratic revolution under the favorable objective conditions of the rapidly worsening political and economic crisis of the semicolonial and semifeudal system as well as the general decline of the US and the world capitalist system.

The officers and members of the National Alliance deserve the warmest congratulations for their victories. They have won these victories through hard work, militant struggle and selfless sacrifices. The enemy's vicious attacks on the Nationalist Alliance are a futile reaction to its growing success.

In its one year of existence, the Nationalist Alliance has endured the murder of some of its leaders and members in the provinces, the illegal arrest and detention of its deputy general secretary and members of his staff, the physical assaults on the persons of its national chairman and others stalwarts during mass actions, a raid on its national headquarters and the illegal seizure of its papers and other effects. These are part of the price we have to pay for freedom, and can only signify the desperation of the fascist regime.

The struggle for national democracy—the mission that the Nationalist Alliance (has imposed upon itself)—is an extremely serious one. The Nationalist Alliance is determined to dismantle the US-Marcos dictatorship and establish a democratic coalition government. To accomplish this task, the National Alliance has to keep on raising the level of its national-democratic consciousness and militancy i the face of escalating terror perpetrated by a treasonous, bloodthirsty, corrupt and bankrupt regime.

1. The struggle for national democracy

In the struggle for national democracy, the aspect of national liberation means the people's assertion of their national sovereignty and independence against US imperialism which dominates the country politically, economically, militarily culturally and diplomatically through the Marcos puppet regime.

The aspect of democracy means mainly the solution of the problem of feudalism and the emancipation of the peasant majority of the people. It also means the assertion by the entire people of their civil and political rights against fascism, which is the open rule of terror by a big bureaucrat-comprador-landlord clique and is the outgrowth of foreign and feudal domination.

The struggle for national liberation and the struggle for democracy are therefore inextricably bound together. The antinational and antidemocratic forces of US imperialism, fascism and feudalism combine and assist each other in oppressing and exploiting the people. It is only when the people have achieved national sovereignty and independence that they can amply and fruitfully enjoy their civil liberties and political rights.

The struggle for national democracy is a continuation of the struggle of our revolutionary forefathers for national liberation and democracy, which US imperialism and its local reactionary lackeys have opposed and frustrated time and again since 1898.

The old type of national democratic revolution, initiated by the Katipunan in 1896, was led by a nascent native bourgeoisie in the context of the world bourgeois liberal revolution. It was in the context of the world bourgeois liberal revolution. It was victorious against an old-type colonialism—Spanish colonialism—but was defeated by US imperialism which proceeded to retain feudalism and further promoted comprador or mercantile capitalism dependent on the exchange of foreign (mainly US) manufactures and local raw materials, the products of an agrarian economy.

Today's revolutionaries are now carrying out a new type of national democratic revolution under the leadership of the proletariat in the context of the world proletarian-socialist revolution. These are revolutionaries in our

country are striving to compete the struggle for national freedom and democracy in the era of modern imperialism and proletarian revolution. Upon the completion of the national democratic revolution, it is possible to start the socialist revolution.

The backward pro-industrial and semifeudal society that has been maintained under direct and indirect US colonial rule is a society in constant crisis, afflicted by the persistent problem of domestic feudalism and the deleterious impact of foreign monopoly capitalism. These two moribund forces—domestic feudalism and foreign monopoly capitalism or imperialism—are extremely counterrevolutionary. The severe processes of feudal and imperialist exploitation and oppression hinder the social, economic, political and cultural progress of the entire nation and people.

Since the beginning of US domination there has not been a single decade unmarked by grave social unrest and outright repression of the people. The chronic crisis of the semicolonial and semifeudal system, however, was destined to reach its final stage. Thus, in 1972, a fascist dictatorship arose and wiped out every semblance of bourgeois-liberal democracy. The final stage of the crisis of the ruling system began in 1972 with the imposition of the fascist dictatorship.

A ruthless puppet autocracy has replaced the 1946 puppet republic and has aggravated and deepened the chronic crisis of the system. This open rule of terror signifies the inability of the ruling system and the ruling classes of big compradors and landlords to rule in the old way. The people desire revolutionary change, and an armed revolution is in fact growing in strength, led by a revolutionary party.

In the 1970s, the US-Marcos dictatorship seemed in full control of the Philippines situation as the imperialist banks poured in enormous amounts of loan capital for pseudodevelopment and anti-industrial purposes and whole revolutionary armed struggle was still in its phase of strategic defensive.

In the 1980s it is starkly clear that the US-Marcos dictatorship has merely served to bring the ruling system to its final crisis. The imperialists, fascists and other reactionaries can offer no solution to their own problems other than more of the very same things which in the first place caused their problems. Thus, to solve the debt crisis, they must sink the Philippines deeper into the debt trap; to solve the land problem, they must exacerbate it through "agribusiness."

The broad masses of the people are undergoing intolerable political repression and economic suffering. The basic masses of workers and peasants are sinking to the level of starvation. Even the majority of the middle strata of society are slopping into a life of want and misery. Under these circumstances, the stage of strategic defensive in the people's war is rapidly maturing and can enter the stage of strategic stalemate.

The Nationalist Alliance is correct in comprehensively taking the anti-imperialist, antifascist and antifeudal line. Its national democratic program systematically covers immediate and long-term tasks in the fields of politics, economy, culture and external relations.

All progressive and anti-imperialist forces must unite the entire people towards dismantling the fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique, do away with its imperialist and feudal underpinnings and establish a democratic coalition government. This is our fundamental political task. US imperialism and its fascist stooges must be held responsible for all their crimes against the people.

The fundamental task in the economic field is to carry out national industrialization and genuine land reform. National industrialization will end our captivity by the imperialist banks and multinational firms, generate employment and higher incomes and give full play to Filipino entrepreneurship. Genuine land reform will break up feudalism once and for all and liberate the peasant majority of our people in an all-round way.

The fundamental task in the field of culture is to promote a national, scientific and mass-oriented system of culture and education. Institutions and means of information and education must favor progressive trends. The ethnic minorities must be able to make all-round progress on the basis of self-determination or autonomy, with full respect accorded to their cultural identity.

The fundamental task in external relations is for the Philippines to play an active independent role so as to enhance her own sovereignty and that of other countries; work for a new international economic order; oppose foreign domination, interference, intervention and aggression; and help create a world of justice, freedom, peace and progress.

In seeking to unite the people for the national democratic struggle, it is correct for the National Alliance to help build a united front of all patriotic and progressive classes, sectors, parties, organizations, circles and individuals.

We must specially concentrate on classes because there is no group or individual that can escape social clarification.

To become a strong democratic force, the Nationalist Alliance must put emphasis on organizing or helping organize the basic alliance of the working class and the peasantry. These two classes constitute the overwhelming majority of the people (at least 90 percent) and have the most acute interest in the national democratic struggle.

The Nationalist Alliance must also help win over such social strata as the urban petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie to the side of the basic alliance. These strata continue to carry the progressive impulse of the old national democratic revolution; their current interests are in harmony with those of the toiling masses.

In times of severe social crisis, the urban petty bourgeoisie is conspicuously one of the basic democratic forces together with the toiling masses. The middle bourgeoisie has both progressive and reactionary tendencies but the progressive tendency can rise and become dominant, since national entrepreneurs, increasingly exploited and repelled by the policies of the imperialists and fascists, are attracted by the growing strength of the national democratic movement.

Other social strata that can be won over are the rich peasants and enlightened gentry. They are attracted to the anti-imperialist and antifascist content of the national democratic struggle. The enlightened gentry are amenable to the rent reduction and anti-usury campaign; and the rich peasants, to fair wages for farm workers. The final stage of the crisis of the ruling system has become so virulent that there are serious splits among the reactionary classes of big compradors and landlords. the fascist clique of big compradors and landlords headed by Marcos is so rapacious that it continues to grab businesses, land and privileges from the rest of the reactionary classes. Thus, the latter are desirous of undercutting the ruling clique. In certain ways, the national democratic movement can take advantage of the splits and utilize these in its favor.

On a national scale, the Nationalist Alliance must rely mainly on the workers and peasants, win over the urban petty bourgeoisie and the middle bourgeoisie, tackle advantage of the splits among the big compradors and landlords in power in order to isolate and destroy the enemy—the US-Marcos clique.

In the countryside, the Nationalist Alliance must rely mainly on the poor peasants and farm workers, win over the middle peasants and farm workers, win over the middle peasants, further win over the rich peasants and enlighten gentry, and take advantage of splits among the landlords in general in order to isolate and destroy the enemy—the despotic landlords who are attached to the US-Marcos clique.

All forces that can be united must be united. The Nationalist Alliance can help coordinate the broadest possible range of forces against the narrowest target and make short shrift of the US-Marcos dictatorship.

II. Dismantling the US-Marcos dictatorship

It is the sovereign right of the Filipino people to wage armed struggle and all other forms of struggle against tyranny. This is a fundamental principle upheld in the advance of modern democracy. This is affirmed in common by liberal-democrats and by Marxist-Leninists. Even in religious lore, whether Christian or Islamic, tyranny is a transgression of divine authority. Thus, tyrannicide is justified. A war waged against oppression is a just war.

A regime that uses its monopoly of the instruments of violence to trample upon the people's sovereignty and all democratic rights compels the people to wage armed struggle in order to defend and liberate themselves. The daily violence built into the system of exploitation, a violence that continues to intensify—combined with direct dramatic acts of terror systematically carried out by the state as it intensifies oppression has become intolerable and has driven the people to resistance.

At any rate, it is up to the people to decide what forms of struggle to wage against the US-Marcos dictatorship as well as which form is the principal and which is the secondary. All these forms of struggle can only be successful as they are willed and carried out by the people under correct and courageous leadership.

It is a matter of public knowledge that the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army and the National Democratic Front have been waging a protracted people's war against the US-Marcos dictatorship. Although the armed struggle is their principal form of struggle, they do not dispense with the nonarmed forms of struggle. They fight wielding and coordinating both armed and nonarmed forms of struggle to distant the dictatorship.

The armed national democratic revolution is the correct response to the armed fascist puppet counter-revolution. The prior advantage of the US-Marcos dictatorship in its monopoly of the instruments of violence can be overcome by the justness of the revolutionary cause—the basis for the application for the strategy of people's

war, the agrarian revolution and the building of the mass base.

The Marcos fascist autocracy is ground enough for the people to decide on armed struggle as the most effective form of democratic struggle. This despotism established itself by an armed coup against the established system of government in 1972. Since then, it has continuously waged a fascist counterrevolution.

Ruthlessly using the reactionary armed forces, it has perpetrated the most dastardly crimes against the people—massacres, assassinations, torture, arbitrary arrests and detention, illegal seizure of property, forced eviction and mass evacuation, bombardments and so on—to keep itself in power. Subject only to the dictates of his US imperialist master and in complete contempt of the people's sovereignty, the autocrat Marcos has usurped supreme executive, legislative and judicial authority. Fascist laws and acts of terrorism have victimized the workers, peasants, fisherman, ethnic minorities, students and youth, teachers and other professionals, businessmen, religious and the rest of the people.

Sham plebiscites, referenda and elections have been held only with the single objective of legitimizing and further entrenching the puppet autocracy. The rules and the results of these exercises are always rigged.

The monopoly of power has also meant the unbridled looting of the social wealth of the nation by the US-Marcos clique. The co-called crony corporations have been the principal local assistants of the US and other transnational firms exploiting the people and plundering the resources of the country.

Morally afraid of being made to account for its grave crimes, the Marcos fascist gang is determined to escalate violence against the people in order to remain in power. As dramatically evidenced by the Aquino assassination, this gang cannot tolerate any serious political challenge even within the system. It cynically describes as maximum tolerance the brutal dispersal of city demonstrators and the far more brutal and barbaric torture and summary executions of peasants and other democratic activists in the countryside and now increasingly even in urban centers.

Marcos has declared time and again that he shall wipe out all opponents before he can be overthrown. He has arrogantly rejected every plea that he reconcile himself with the people whose rights he has so grievously violated.

Even some US officials who are inclined to reduce his powers and improve the facade of the US-Marcos dictatorship publicly say that the tyrant will not relinquish power except when he is already in a coffin. But the US continues to prop up the fascist dictatorship in the name of anticommunism and is peddling the bizarre notion that the puppet autocrat himself is now "revitalizing democratic institutions and processes."

The fascists are still flaunting their license to kill and gloating over their bloody crimes. In a psywar scheme plotted by his US imperialist master, Marcos has absolved himself from the Aquino assassination through the Agrava Board and has consigned the two reports of the board to a notorious clutch of placement close to the accused.

In the face of fascist tyranny, the broad masses of the people are joining and supporting the armed revolution. A fact now perceived by everyone is that the people's war being waged by the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army and the National Democratic Front has been the most effective form of struggle against the US-Marcos dictatorship.

The armed revolutionary movement is wiping out enemy troops in ever larger numbers, seizing arms from them, establishing local organs of democratic power, carrying out genuine land reform and building revolutionary mass organizations. Fascist power and authority is being displaced by the people's democratic power in ever widening areas all over the country.

The CPP, NPA and NDFP are demonstrating that political power can be won cumulatively through a protracted people's war. the armed revolutionary movement grows in strength in the countryside and from the countryside encircle the cities until the situation is ripe for a general offensive resulting in the total overthrow of the reactionary state.

As a result of the rapid growth of the revolutionary forces, an end to the US-Marcos dictatorship is now foreseeable. Either the US will junk Marcos or it will sink with him in an accelerated overthrow of the entire ruling system. But even if the US changed puppets, the ruling system would remain hopeless and incapable of solving its final crisis.

The fascist dictatorship of the US-Marcos clique reflects not only the interests of the autocrat, his clique or the US and the local reactionary classes but most significantly the final crisis of the entire ruling system. By its unbridled use of the coercive apparatus of the state against the people, this tyranny compels the people to accomplish

nothing less than the armed overthrow of the state.

The Nationalist Alliance is a legal democratic organization and is committed to employing legal methods for advancing the national democratic cause. Its officers and members have various degrees and ways of appreciating the relationship between armed and nonarmed forms of struggle.

But whether one likes it or not, the revolutionary armed struggle is an essential and growing factor in the overall conflict between the national democratic forces and the fascist puppet forces. The armed and nonarmed forms of struggle help each other in advancing the national democratic cause against the common enemy.

The US-Marcos dictatorship will come to an end within a few years by virtue of all forms of militant struggle, armed and nonarmed. The fascist regime is already caught in a pincer by the revolutionary armed struggle and the legal democratic movement. In consonance with the healthy commitment of the National Alliance to wage legal mass struggles without denying the people's sovereign right to armed revolution, there are quite a number of legal forms of struggle that can be fruitfully waged. The Nationalist Alliance has already made significant gains in the regard.

It can continue to conduct campaigns of political education on its national democratic program and on the burning issues of the day. This can be done through rallies, conferences, seminars and other gatherings as well as through the issuance of publications. It can thereby raise the fighting will and consciousness of the people.

It can continue to expand and consolidate its own organizational strength by engaging in the rapid recruitment and basic political education of members and thus develop more leaders of the national democratic movement at every level—national, regional, provincial, district, city or municipal and barangay.

It can continue to mobilize ever larger masses of the people for direct democratic action, and take the initiative in launching mass campaigns on a wide scale on the most fundamental and critical issues. With its nationwide membership, the National Alliance can undertake sustained mass campaigns.

It can either boycott an entire political exercise rigged by the US-Marcos dictatorship or expose such an exercise as a fraud but allow democratic elements to gain what they can on the basis of the unbeatable and uncheatable strength of the people in particular areas. It can turn certain weapons of the enemy against himself. It can encourage and develop democratic elements within the civil bureaucracy and in the reactionary armed forces.

It can wage a campaign of civil disobedience such as a tax boycott, boycott of crony enterprises and their products and so on. As a legal organization, the National Alliance will have to exert a great deal of political education and moral suasion. But when the armed revolutionaries participate in these boycotts, they can add to these methods certain reasonable acts of interdiction and even confiscation after sufficient warnings.

The range of possible mass campaigns to weaken and cause the dismantling of the US-Marcos dictatorship is wide. Your comprehensive program, practical experience, further research and studies can indicate far more kinds of mass mobilizations to undertake.

The organized strength and ability of the National Alliance to rally the people to the national democratic cause will continue to grow in stride with the rapid deterioration of the political and economic conditions of the fascist regime.

The National Alliance has already proven its ability to take on a major role in bringing millions of people to the streets of major cities on certain days of national protest. It can aim higher. It can strengthen itself so that in times to come it can play a major role in bringing the people in their tens of millions to coordinated actions in all cities and towns in a single campaign or even in a single day of reckoning against the US-Marcos dictatorship.

III. The democratic coalition government

The armed revolutionary movement has long been making preparations for the establishment of a democratic coalition government, with effective power on a nationwide scale, by creating the National Democratic Front as a broad united front for armed struggle, by building local organs of democratic power and by supporting such democratic coalition government.

The National Democratic Front is the most comprehensive united front organization underground. Its scope extends beyond the guerrilla fronts. It embraces all democratic forces in the country which are determined to overthrow the fascist dictatorial regime and establish a democratic coalition government.

The National Democratic Front includes movements, parties, organizations, circles and individuals from the working class, peasantry, urban petty bourgeoisie and the middle bourgeoisie. In principle, it encompasses the local organs of democratic political power established by the armed revolution. It enjoys a high prestige not only

in the country but also abroad.

The National Democratic Front is expected by the armed revolutionaries to facilitate the participation of all democratic forces, both inside and outside of its present organized framework, in the struggle to seize power from the people's enemy and establish the democratic coalition government. Since the inception of the people's war, local organs of democratic power have been established upon the initiative of the Communist Party of the Philippines, and the New People's Army. These are units of the people's self-government created along the united front line. These local units of the people's self-government now exist in the overwhelming majority of the provinces in the country, especially in guerrilla fronts.

Insofar as these local people's governmental organs have been established in the rural areas, they stress the antifeudal united front in connection with the comprehensive antifascist, anti-imperialist and antifeudal line.

The antifeudal line of the united front involves the main reliance on the poor peasants and farm workers; winning over the middle peasants and further winning over the rich peasants and the enlightened gentry; and taking advantage of the splits among the landlords in general in order to isolate the despotic landlords close to or members of the fascist clique.

Each local organ of democratic power has an overall leading committee with subsidiary committees in charge of organization, education, land reform, improvement of the people's livelihood, defense, health arbitration and so on. Such an organ of government is supported by mass organizations of workers, peasants, women, youth, children, cultural activists and so on.

The militia under the defense committee serves as the local police to maintain internal order and security. The fullfledged guerrilla units of the people's army move from one local area to another within its jurisdiction to attend to problems of defense beyond the capacity of the militia.

As the strength of the armed revolutionary movement grows, the level of the people's self-government that can be established will also rise from the barrio to the municipality, from the municipality to the district, until the democratic coalition government can be established.

Whether one likes it or not, a new people's government along the national democratic line of the united front is growing in the country even while the urban-centered fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique pretends to be full control of the situation in the whole country and while in fact losing control of more and more extensive areas in the countryside.

From the viewpoint of the armed revolutionaries, the optimum kind of democratic coalition government to aim for is one led by the working class and its revolutionary party, founded on the basic alliance of the working class and the peasantry and further strengthened by the participation of the urban petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie. Even some big compradors may be accommodated if they have a record of supporting the revolutionaries and are willing to convert their merchant capital into industrial capital and thereby change their class character.

This type of democratic coalition government can arise as a result of the complete overthrow of the reactionary state—the fascist puppet dictatorship and the reactionary classes of big compradors and landlord—or in other words, the total victory of the broad masses of the people by armed revolution.

The national democratic revolution is completed and socialist revolution begins. In place of the dissolved counterrevolutionary state are the organs of the people's democratic government created in the protracted process of revolutionary struggle on the basis of the revolutionary united front led by the proletariat. The people's army becomes the main component of state power.

The new state will be republican and truly representative of the people. It takes the form of a stable democratic coalition government. There will be processes of election and appointment to fill up the organs of government at every level so that all patriotic and progressive classes, sectors, parties, organizations, circles and individuals are represented.

But between the present status of strength of the revolutionary forces and the optimum kind of democratic coalition government, there is still a long and tortuous road to traverse. These are graded possibilities of some less developed kind of democratic coalition government (if we may use this term to denote some significant degree of democratic content in such a government).

The possibility of any kind of democratic coalition government depends on the historical circumstances, the balance of forces and what advantages there are to be gained by the people. There are enough instances that can

be cited from world history regarding the combination of Left, Middle and Right forces in a coalition government.

The Left can participate in this coalition if together with the Middle it can significantly carry forward the national democratic line. The Left cannot participate in such a government if the parameters and conditions are so designed that the Right can unilaterally and arbitrarily manipulate the Middle and the Left to carry forward an anti-national and antidemocratic line.

Under the present circumstances and by all indications, the Marcos fascist gang is not in any position nor is it willing to even attempt any kind of coalition government. The Marcos game is monopoly of political power by brute force and sheer deception against the people.

As before, the US is colluding with the Marcos fascist clique in trying to bait the Middle into what is called the "revitalization of democratic institutions and processes." The puppet autocratic regime is being misrepresented as a democratic one. The US is trying to shore up the fascist dictatorship in the face of the surging legal democratic mass movement and the armed revolutionary movement. The fixed position of the US-Marcos dictatorship towards the Left is to exterminate it by a combination of brute force and deceptive measures. In fact, there is a US scheme to use the Marcos fascist clique first in an anticommunist killing rampage, including the execution of some political prisoners, before the US casts this clique away.

The post-Marcos US scheme is to put up a new set of taskmasters from the Right and inveigle the Middle into a revival of the two-party system, in which two sets of politicians subservient to itself and essentially representative of the big compradors and big landlords take turns in oppressing and exploiting the people.

The US and the local reactionaries completely miss the fundamental changes in the Philippine situation. The chronic crisis of the semicolonial and semifeudal system has reached the final stage; and the armed revolutionary movement will continue to grow at an accelerated rate. It is no longer possible for any regime of the Right to become stable as in the pre-Marcos period.

Instead of the Right being able to inveigle the Middle into an anti-Left combination, the Left and the Middle will continue to develop their democratic unity and ability to isolate and then defeat the Right. The relatively most reasonable groups and sections of the Right may possibly seek cooperation with the left and the Middle in a coalition government.

The broad term Left is being used here to allow grades of possible Left participation in a Right-Middle-Left coalition government. One kind of coalition would be one in which only the legal Left organizations participate. Another would be one in which representatives of the CPP participate together with other Left organizations but with adequate precautions.

In any case, it must be assumed that the CPP will never dissolve the NPA and put the people and itself at the complete mercy of the Right, especially the ultrarightists instigated by US imperialism and connected with the worst elements of the reactionary armed forces. The CPP will be needed in a democratic coalition government precisely because of its armed revolutionary strength and its effective defense of the people's national and democratic interests.

Even as the possibility of a Left-Middle-Right coalition government is considered, the contrary possibility of outright military rule of the Right is not being discounted. After all, the ruling system is in the final stage of its chronic and insolvable crisis and is bound to unleash increasingly worse but desperate assaults on the people. The escalation of counterrevolutionary violence will only serve to hasten the total victory of the national democratic revolution and the resurgence of the people's democratic republic taking the form of a democratic coalition government.

Patriotic Leadership in Manila in the 1970s
***Paper read at the conference on “Manila: History,
People and Culture,” at the De la Salle University***
held on April 11-12, 1986

April 11, 1986

Let me first define patriotic leadership as that type of political leadership which has a program of asserting national sovereignty and the civil rights of the people; pushing for national industrialization and land reform; promoting a national, scientific and mass education and culture; and stressing an independent foreign policy.

With this program, patriotic leadership seeks to change the semicolonial and semifeudal society into a society that is patriotic and democratic. US imperialism and the local reactionary classes of big compradors and landlords react to and are adverse to this program and want to preserve the present society which they dominate. Thus, the patriotic leadership exposes and opposes them and seeks to undo their dominance.

There are social classes whose conditions, demands and aspirations are reflected in the program of the patriotic leadership and which serve as its source of strength. These are the working class, the peasantry, the urban petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie. These classes have the dignity of being called the people.

Among these classes, the working class is the most progressive political and productive force. It deserves to be the leading class. It has the revolutionary party through which it exercises leadership. It is the leading party with the theory, program and organization capable of mastering the past, present and future of not only the most progressive class but also the entire Filipino people.

At any rate, the various patriotic classes can contribute through parties, organizations and individuals to the formation and development of the national leadership.

Being the political, economic and cultural center of the Philippines, Manila has been the single most important locale for the articulation and actions of the national leadership. Every major phenomenon in Manila pertaining to this leadership has had national or even international dimensions, even when these are not intended.

Manila was a raging battlefield between the leadership and forces of the patriotic movement and those of foreign and feudal domination during the 1970s. The battles were carried out aboveground and underground.

The decade opened with a big bang. While the newly established New People's Army led by the Communist Party of the Philippines intensified the armed struggle in Tarlac, the First Quarter Storm broke out in Manila and lashed at the ruling system in 1970. The more the reactionary authorities used truncheons and bullets against demonstrators the more the youth, workers and other urban poor raised a storm of protest against the system.

The evils of US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism were condemned. And the youth and workers roused themselves to ever rising fury with the battlecry, “Makibaka, huwag matakot!”

The patriotic movement derived inspiration and guidance from such works as the *Struggle for National Democracy* and *Philippine Society and Revolution*. Anti-imperialist and antifeudal rallies, discussion groups, publications of all types, cultural performances, murals and wall slogans flourished.

The patriotic leadership operated through the Kabataang Makabayan; the Samahang Demokratikong Kabataan; the patriotic Students' League; the Malayang Kilusan ng Bagong Kababaihan; the student governments; the organizations of teachers and other professionals; community organizations; and the labor unions at the US Tobacco Corporation, Northern Motors and others.

Under the influence of the rising anti-imperialist movement, more and more members of the Philippine Congress took the patriotic stand and criticized the US-Marcos regime for its puppetry on a wide range of issues.

In 1971 the patriotic youth movement continued to advance and catch national attention, especially with the Diliman Commune of February 1971 and the long marches of youth, workers and peasants from Central Luzon and Southern Tagalog regions to Manila. The workers' strike movement advanced.

Patriotic blocs within the Philippine Congress and the Constitutional Convention were ascendant. The Supreme Court came out with patriotic decisions on the Quasha and Luzteveco cases in 1971 and 1972. The press

bitterly attacked the US-Marcos regime for its failures and betrayals.

Not satisfied with brutal actions against the workers, peasants and students, Marcos engineered petty bombing incidents and eventually the Plaza Miranda bombing which almost wiped out the entire opposition party, the Liberal Party.

This dastardly incident laid the ground for the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus. A number of patriotic professors and students were arrested.

The Movement of Concerned Citizens for Civil Liberties arose to demand the restoration of the writ. Despite the writ suspension, mass actions were held. Activists who had been blacklisted started to go underground and stayed there.

In early 1972 the writ of habeas corpus was restored as a result of public pressure. The patriotic organizations became even more emboldened to launch mass actions, like demonstrations in the city and long marches towards the city from Central Luzon and Southern Luzon.

The biggest event of the year was the declaration of martial law under Proclamation No. 1081 after a series of petty bombing incidents. Patriotic leaders in political parties, education, student movement, labor movement, press, business, church and other sectors were arbitrarily arrested and detained. patriotic organizations, which had grown rapidly in Manila were outlawed.

Thousands of activists flowed into the underground in order to escape the dragnet of the enemy and wage a fierce struggle against it. Many joined the city underground and many others went on farther to the countryside to join the armed struggle.

The Communist Party of the Philippines assessed the new situation and set new tasks for the entire revolutionary movement of the people against the full-blown fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique.

In 1973 the CPP expanded its Manila underground organization with highly qualified personnel from the outlawed mass organizations. These mass organizations tried to ensure the safety of their offices and members and sent them systematically to the countryside through the CPP.

The CPP initiated the organization of the Preparatory Commission of the National Democratic Front. The objective was to arouse, organize and mobilize the broadest possible united front against the fascist dictatorship.

The year was one of mastering the new situation, deploying more and more cadres to the various regions of the country and developing both the city underground and the armed struggle in the countryside. There was close cooperation and coordination between these two areas of struggle.

The enemy seemed to be benefiting much from martial law. But in fact an avalanche of people were volunteering to wage armed struggle. The difficulty of the revolutionary movement then was scarcity of arms to give to highly qualified people pouring into its ranks.

In 1974 efforts to revive aboveground the labor, student and urban poor community movements were undertaken against great odds. New cadres not in the enemy blacklist were developed.

It was evident that the US was bent on propping up the Marcos fascist regime with heavy doses of foreign loans. These would increase from year to year to finance infrastructure and other showy projects, to cover deficits in foreign trade and balance of payments, and to build up the military machinery.

The regional organizations of the CPP and NPA were all in place to cover the entire country. That of Manila was the most developed and had the largest membership. Even when Central Committee members of the CPP were arrested, the CPP and NPA regional organizations acquired more strength.

Thinking that he had conquered the people and wanting to save on prison expenses, and, of course, warding off increasing criticism by international organizations, like Amnesty International, about detention without charges, Marcos released a considerable number of political prisoners, including those who would later participate in the open revival of the patriotic movement. Fascist atrocities and abuses were exposed in the country and abroad from Manila by revolutionaries and religious progressives. Work for the legal defense, welfare and release of political prisoners was systematized, especially after the formation of Task Force Detainees.

In 1975 the La Tondeña strike signaled the widespread strike movement in 300 workplaces, mostly in Manila. Community organizing was done more vigorously. ZOTO (Zone One Tondo Organization) was the pioneer of community mass actions.

Human rights organizations intensified their work, with Manila as their headquarters. More religious progressives arose to assist the city underground of the workers, urban poor and the students.

The city underground continued to be incensed by the atrocities and abuses of the military and paramilitary forces but was enthusiastic over the expansion and intensification of the revolutionary armed struggle.

“The Specific Characteristics of People’s War in the Philippines” by Amado Guerrero was issued to provide the latest comprehensive guidance for the nationwide armed revolution.

In 1976 the armed struggle advanced vigorously. The enemy was not reporting in its press the victories of the NPA. But the Manila underground was well-informed on these through underground publications.

The most important revolutionary document to come out in the year was “Our Urgent Tasks.” This would guide the growth of both the legal democratic movement and the armed struggle in the years to come.

The workers, urban poor, students, religious and other sectors continued to develop their respective movements legally and openly in defiance of the fascist leadership.

In 1977 both the legal democratic movement in Manila and other urban areas and the armed struggle in the countryside advanced tremendously. Every regional organization of the CPP and NPA was growing rapidly. The NDFP was gaining adherents in Manila and other urban areas.

Arrests made of Central Committee members of the CPP since the previous year, culminating in the arrest of yours truly in late 1977, encouraged the fascist dictator to claim that he had crushed the revolutionary movement.

In 1978 Marcos called for the election of the interim Batasang Pambansa. LABAN (Laban ng Bayan) was formed under the leadership of Sen. Lorenzo Tañada to fight the KBL (Kilusang Bagong Lipunan) in Manila. The election served as an occasion to project the nationalist line on issues, especially because the country was already in an economic crisis due to excessive foreign borrowings for nonproductive purposes.

The fascist regime rigged up the electoral rules, process and results. As a result, a mighty noise barrage burst out in Metro Manila. It brought to the fore the people’s overwhelming hatred of the regime.

Riding on the antifascist wave and outrage over the sham election, the patriotic movement could have rapidly advanced and launched further mass actions in 1978 and 1979. But the patriotic leadership failed to override internal differences over the elections.

In 1979 the second oil shock hit the fascist dictatorship. The deleterious effects of foreign borrowing became obvious. The agricultural exports of the Philippines—the main dollar earners—fell into a dismal state.

The Marcos regime could still borrow but at far more onerous terms than before. And it would use the new loans to accelerate the salting away of foreign exchange.

The leaders of the patriotic movement could see the trend that Manila would be the center of turmoil and upheaval in the 1980s. Revolutionary efforts of the patriotic leadership in the 1970s laid the foundation for the overthrow of the Marcos fascist dictatorship in 1986.

The New Democratic Movement

Sixth in a series of lectures on

Philippine Crisis and Revolution

May 4, 1986

The new democratic revolution of the Filipino people is underway. It is a continuation of the old democratic revolution of 1896 for national liberation and democracy. But it is a new type of national democratic revolution because it is now led by the working class and it is being conducted in a semicolonial and semifeudal country in the era of modern imperialism and world proletarian-socialist revolution.

The old type of democratic revolution was led by the liberal bourgeoisie and was guided by bourgeois-liberal theory which was the revolutionary ideology most applicable to the Philippine colonial and feudal society in the late nineteenth century. That revolution won nationwide victory against Spanish colonialism. But US imperialism, a new type of colonial power, conquered the country; and it was beyond the comprehension of the liberal bourgeois leadership of the revolution.

The world went into transition from the era of bourgeois capitalist revolution to that of the proletarian-socialist revolution. It would take the great Lenin to extend the Marxist critique of capitalism to a critique of modern imperialism and explain the requirements of social revolution in the East.

In semicolonial and semifeudal Philippines, the working class has grown significantly from its rudiments in the late nineteenth century, and has become the most advanced productive and political force. It has formed not only trade unions for economic struggle but also a party for revolutionary political struggle as early as 1930 when the CPP was originally founded. This party is guided by the revolutionary theory of the working class, which is Marxism-Leninism, and applies this theory on the concrete conditions of the Philippine revolution in order to make a practical program of new democratic revolution.

New Democratic Program

The new democratic program seeks the liberation not only of the working class, but of the entire Filipino people from oppression and exploitation by US imperialism and by such local ruling classes as the comprador big bourgeoisie and the landlord class.

The classes composing the Filipino people are the working class, the peasantry, the urban petty bourgeoisie, and the national bourgeoisie. All of them have a common interest in the new democratic program, which is essentially the revolutionary struggle for national liberation and democracy against US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

The new democratic program covers comprehensively such fields as politics, economics, culture and international relations.

In politics, the main demand is for the assertion of national sovereignty and the free exercise of civil liberties; in economics, for development through national industrialization and land reform; in culture, for a national, scientific and mass-oriented culture; and in international relations, for an independent foreign policy.

The ultimate political objective of the new democratic revolution is the establishment of a people's democratic state which is led by the working class through its party, and is based on the broad alliance of the working class, peasantry, urban petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie.

The people's democratic state replaces the neocolonial state and realizes fully the new democratic program. US imperialism and the local ruling classes cease to oppress and exploit the people, especially the toiling masses of workers and peasants. Upon the victory of the new democratic revolution a constitution is instituted.

The people's democratic state is republican in character and is truly representative of the various patriotic and progressive forces. The people enjoy civil liberties and elect their leaders. No longer are the exploiting classes allowed to take cover under the classless abstraction of individual liberties in order to monopolize and manipulate political parties and the electoral processes.

The most respected political organizations and leaders are those who shall have proven to have been the most resolute, the most effective and the most loyal to the people in the course of the new democratic revolution. The

civil bureaucracy shall have been reoriented and reorganized. And the main component of the state, the Armed Forces of the Philippines, shall have been replaced by the people's armed forces.

But, of course, there is no straight road to the total victory of the new democratic revolution and the full accomplishment of the new democratic program.

The neocolonial state is used by the ruling classes and their foreign master to attack the organized forces of the new democratic movement and the entire Filipino people and squelch the new democratic demands.

The neocolonial state has been used to render illegal and suppress the most resolute and effective organizations and leaders of the new democratic movement and has therefore justified the people's war waged by the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army, and the National Democratic Front.

Notwithstanding the brutal essence of the reactionary state, there are those political organizations and leaders persevering in a legal struggle for basic reforms towards the attainment of national liberation and democracy.

The national democratic movement is not, after all, the monopoly of the armed revolutionaries. It is a broad movement of the toiling masses of workers and peasants and the middle social strata, the political Left and Middle forces, and the armed and unarmed revolutionaries. They are waging various forms of revolutionary struggle—legal and illegal.

The class leadership in the new democratic movement belongs to the working class. But this is not enough. This would be isolated and futile if not buttressed by a series of supports: the basic alliance of the working class and peasantry; the combination of the working class, peasantry and urban petty bourgeoisie as the basic forces of the revolution; and the broad national united front of these basic forces with the national bourgeoisie.

The neocolonial state is not really awesome and unbeatable. It is rotten to the core. The political and economic crisis of the ruling system has already resulted in a fourteen-year fascist dictatorship and continued to worsen and provide the basis for the possible reemergence of fascist dictatorship despite the current democratic tendency of the new regime.

The destruction of the neocolonial state is not only due to the growth in strength and advance of the annihilative forces of the new democratic revolution, but also due to the self-disintegration of the ruling system through increasingly violent contradictions of factions within the ruling class.

Thus, in addition to building the broad national united front of all patriotic and progressive forces, the revolutionary forces take advantage of the increasing violent conflicts within the ruling classes in order to isolate and destroy the enemy.

The People's War

The Communist Party of the Philippines was reestablished on December 26, 1968 on the theoretical foundation of Marxism-Leninism. Its congress of reestablishment repudiated and rectified the errors of the Lava and Taruc-Sumulong cliques in the old merger party of the Communist and Socialist parties of the Philippines; and made a correct analysis of Philippine history and current conditions in order to set forth revolutionary tasks.

The CPP proceeded to rebuild itself ideologically, politically and organizationally; and to create and employ its two weapons, which are the armed struggle and the united front. On March 29, 1969, it established the New People's Army and discreetly paved the way for a united front organization, the National Democratic Front, whose Preparatory Commission was established on April 23, 1973 in the wake of the imposition of martial law and fascist dictatorship in 1972.

Within the range of the national united front, the rural united front was formulated by the CPP. The rural class line was for the working class through its revolutionary party to rely mainly on the poor peasants and farm workers, win over the middle peasants and neutralize the rich peasants and enlightened gentry in order to isolate and destroy the power of the despotic landlords.

Since the beginning, the CPP has been determined to conduct armed struggle, agrarian revolution and mass-base building as integral components of the protracted strategy of people's war—encircling the cities from the countryside and eventually advancing on the cities.

The NPA has only 35 firearms and was located in the second district of Tarlac in 1969. It had only 350 high-powered rifles and was concentrated in Isabela but was present in small areas of twelve provinces in six regions of the country at the onset of the fascist dictatorship in 1972.

In 1986, according to press reports, the high-powered rifles of the NPA run up to so many thousands in several scores of guerrilla fronts in the overwhelming majority of the Philippines provinces. The CPP is now in 63

provinces.

The fascist dictatorship did not only fail to crush the CPP and the NPA but served to fan the flames of the revolutionary armed struggle. Furthermore the tyranny provoked the Moro National Liberation Front and the Moro people to wage an armed struggle for national self-determination.

The NPA has been on the strategic defensive but has been waging tactical offensives in order to accumulate strength. The AFP has been on the strategic offensive and has been hit at precise moment and places that only the NPA knows beforehand. The full-time fighters of the NPA, in varying unit strengths, have been able to seek and create opportunities for ambushes, raids and other forms of offensives. The strategic stalemate is now foreseeable and is based on cumulative victories.

Wherever it is, the NPA is deeply loved and enthusiastically supported by the peasant masses because it has been able to carry out land rent reduction; push out landgrabbers and punish despotic landlords and bad elements; eliminate usury; arrange fair farm wages and fair prices for farm products; and help raise agricultural production.

The NPA is not yet redistributing land at no cost to the landless tillers, except in areas where it succeeds in driving out the despotic landlords and landgrabbers or in persuading landlords to let peasants and farm workers use idle land. The agrarian revolution depends on the armed strength of the NPA. The peasant masses appreciate this principle.

The NPA also gives priority to demanding higher wages for workers in capitalist enterprises in the countryside. Never are the interests of workers prejudiced by the tax obligations of capitalists who are also allowed to operate at a reasonable or tolerable rate of profit.

While the neocolonial state still exists, the CPP, NPA and NDFP are already creating a people's democratic government in the rural areas. The relatively most stable organs of democratic power are the revolutionary barrio committees, with supporting committees for organization, education, defense, land reform, finance, livelihood, health, arbitration, cultural affairs, and others.

Also supporting the organs of democratic power are the mass organizations for workers, peasants, youth, women, children, cultural activists and so on. These mass organizations have general and specific functions. The able-bodied members are organized and trained as the people's militia, the deep reserve and support of the guerrilla fighters of the NPA.

The backward villages are being turned into advanced political economic and cultural bulwarks of the new democratic revolution. Upon the multiplication of guerrilla zones, guerrilla fronts have increased and have already expanded to cover town centers and portions of provincial cities.

The big problem for the ruling classes is that they cannot save the political and economic crisis of their own system and the armed revolutionary movement is ceaselessly growing in strength and advancing.

The Legal Struggle

The cause of the new democratic revolution is just. It is the cause of the entire Filipino people. It can be legally espoused and acted upon by any patriotic and progressive entity – a party, organization or individual – without having to be a communist.

The reactionaries characteristically commit the error of reacting violently to the espousal of the new democratic cause. It is against their class character as big compradors and landlords to preempt the communists by taking up the new democratic cause or responding to the basic demands of the new democratic movement. And their big problem is how to separate the proletarian revolutionaries and progressive liberal democrats. Both are bound by the just cause of the new democratic revolution.

Thus, the reactionaries have been unable to suppress the legal forces of the new democratic movement. Not even the fascist dictatorship could. The legal struggle of the new democratic movement advanced precisely because of the repressive regime, even if in the first two years of martial rule it appeared that the movement had been successfully repressed.

One of the big failures of the Lavaite leadership in the revolutionary movement after World War II was its failure to invigorate the legal urban mass movement beyond 1950. Even after opting for parliamentary struggle as the main form of struggle and ordering the remaining units of the Hukbong Mapagpalaya ng Bayan in the mid-50s to convert themselves into organizational brigades, which did not materialize, the Lavaites failed miserably to launch militant forms of legal struggle in the urban areas.

It would only be on March 15, 1961 that the first anti-imperialist and civil libertarian mass action could be held. 5,000 UP students together with some faculty members organized by the Student Cultural Association of the UP and the Inter-Fraternity and Sorority Council, stormed the Philippine Congress to protest the CAFA witchhunt against certain constituents of the UP for certain writings and other activities allegedly in violation of the Anti-Subversion Law.

There were smaller rallies along the new democratic line from 1962 to 1964. These were capped by a militant rally of 3,000 workers and students at Malacanang Palace against the Parity Amendment and the Laurel-Langley Agreement.

But after the formation of progressive study groups in the trade union movement and several universities and colleges, and the founding of the Kabataang Makabayan on November 30, 1964, the militant legal struggle of the new democratic movement advanced at an accelerated rate to make the 60s a decade in sharp contrast to the 50s in terms of carrying forward the anti-imperialist and antifeudal movement.

Demonstrations, each exceeding 10,000 participants, were initiated by KM, and participated in by a peasant association, the Socialist Party of the Philippines, and the Movement for the Advancement of Nationalism.

The marches and rallies were the dramatic manifestations of the steady ideological, political and organizational work conducted by proletarian revolutionaries who eventually repudiated the Lavaites in 1967.

The unprecedentedly militant and large mass actions of the First Quarter Storm of 1970 were the outcome of the worsening crisis of the ruling system and the resurgence of the new democratic movement since the 60s. The legal struggle of the new democratic movement surged forward until the imposition of martial law on the country in 1972. However, in late 1974 there were already steps taken to put up new legal organizations in various sectors to uphold the people's interests and denounce human rights violations.

The spell of the fascist dictatorship in the cities was broken when in 1975 the workers' strike movement broke out at La Tondeña and spread to 300 factories and other work places all over the country. Other workers, urban poor and students would take the cue and participate in demonstrations defying the fascist dictatorship.

The noise barrage which swept Metro Manila after the 1978 Interim *Batasang Pambansa* election should have been taken as a signal for the new democratic movement to take the remaining years of the 70s by storm. But the opportunities for advancing the legal struggle of the new democratic movement were not fully availed of.

At any rate, new democratic organizations and coalitions in various sectors emerged in the early 80s. Denunciations and demonstrations against the fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique became more frequent and stronger. The people's war in the countryside also made dramatic advances.

The outrageous assassination of Benigno Aquino, Jr. would ignite the colossal mass actions that raged from 1983 to 1986, up to the military revolt and people's uprising from February 22 to 25, 1986, which sealed the fate of the US-propped Marcos fascist dictatorship. The scandalous electoral fraud and terrorism in the 1986 "snap election" pushed all forces to the left of Marcos to converge on him and bring him down.

The long-term struggle of the national democratic movement had discredited and weakened the fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique. And the US and the local reactionaries outside of the Marcos clique were mortally afraid of the swift advance of the revolutionary movement if Marcos stayed in power any longer. So they decided to let him fall even as the forces of the new democratic movement participated in the February events.

From 1980 to the downfall of Marcos, the economic and political crisis of the ruling system resulted in acute social discontent and turbulence. Although Marcos is already overthrown, the crisis of the ruling system continues, and the people's democratic struggle goes on to complete the dismantling of the structures of the fascist dictatorship, and to pursue the anti-imperialist and antifeudal line.

People's Participation in Nation Building: A Macro Perspective

Lecture delivered at the symposium organized by PROCESS (Participatory Research Organization of Communities and Education towards Struggle for Self-reliance) Foundation at the UP College of Law on August 12, 1986

It is an honor and privilege for me to speak before you on the subject of people's participation in nation-building.

I do so in the context of the general theme of the symposium which is the people's participation in decision-making: a review of people's power over the past 150 days.

Let me start by reaffirming the principle that the people are the main motive force and real makers of history. I make this declaration in opposition to the notion that outstanding individuals—presidents, technocrats, generals and the like—are solely or mainly responsible for the existence and development of a society.

In the building of any nation, the people are at the socioeconomic base creating the means of consumption and production, including the surplus product that sustains the superstructure consisting of politics and culture.

When the progress of a nation is hindered by a foreign power and by local exploiting classes, the patriotic and progressive classes—the toiling masses and the intermediate social strata—unite as one nation and people to overthrow the oppressive and exploitative ruling system.

A revolutionary class, a revolutionary party, a revolutionary army and outstanding revolutionary leaders arise to take the lead in a social revolution. But this is impossible without a broad and militant unity of the oppressed and exploited people. Revolution or development is a mass undertaking against the structure of oppression and exploitation.

People's participation in Filipino nation-building

Filipino nationhood was forged in the crucible of armed revolution. By asserting their national sovereignty and striving for democracy, the Filipino people had to launch an armed revolution against the colonial and feudal system in 1896.

The national democratic revolution of the old type was led by the liberal bourgeoisie (the ilustrados). But the broad masses of the people—the urban plebeians, the peasant masses and the nascent middle class—had to carry out a revolution. And they were victorious against a decrepit colonial power.

The revolution would ultimately fail against the intervention and aggression of the United States not only due to the military superiority of the enemy but, more importantly, due to the inadequacy of bourgeois liberal ideology in seeing through the guile of a modern imperialist power.

Thus, the national and democratic aspirations of the people were frustrated. The United States superimposed monopoly capitalism on domestic feudalism. In the interaction of these two forces, a semifeudal socioeconomic system would become a semicolonial one in 1946.

Afflicted by both foreign monopoly capitalism and domestic feudalism, the semifeudal system has been chronically in grave crisis. There has always been the necessity and opportunity for the Filipino people to pursue and complete the struggle for national liberation and democracy.

The objective of the Philippine revolution remains the same. It is to end foreign and feudal domination. Without accomplishing this objective, the Filipino people cannot go far in building a nation that is free, democratic, just, prosperous and progressive.

It must be understood that the national democratic revolution is being carried out under conditions in which the class composition of Philippine society has changed since the beginning of the century and in a world era of modern imperialism and proletarian revolution. The national democratic revolution today is of a new type. It is led by the working class under the guidance of its revolutionary theory and through its revolutionary party, the people's army and a united front of the toiling masses of workers and peasants and the intermediate social strata of the urban petty bourgeoisie and the middle bourgeoisie against US imperialism and the local reactionary classes of big compradors and landlords.

But whether we agree or not that the working class is the most progressive productive and political force capable of revolutionary class leadership today, there are certain demands of the national democratic revolution which are undeniably valid and worthy of the entire people's support. The fulfilment of these demands spells

nation-building.

In the political field, we fight for the national sovereignty and independence of the Filipino people against US imperialism and its local lackeys. In the economic field, we seek to accomplish economic development through genuine and thoroughgoing land reform and national industrialization. In the cultural field, we promote the national, scientific and mass orientation. In foreign relations, we push forward an independent, neutral and non-aligned foreign policy.

There is absolutely no point in seeking or allowing the preservation of the semicolonial and semifeudal system. This system is already in the process of rapid self-disintegration and the continuing growth in strength of the national democratic movement in both the urban and rural areas seals its doom.

People's power in the February events

There are certain forces and individuals who believe that the fourteen-year fascist dictatorship of Marcos was merely the passing aberration of what is a viable democratic society, if not of an individual with an excessive lust for wealth and power.

Of course, they equate democracy with the dominance of US imperialism and the local reactionary classes of big compradors and landlords, with abstract individual rights which are blind to the reality of exploiting and exploited classes and with institutions and processes that are in fact monopolized and manipulated by a foreign power and the local exploiting classes.

It should never be obscured that the Marcos dictatorship was the outgrowth of foreign and feudal domination, that this was a manifestation of a moribund ruling system and that so long as that domination persists, fascist restoration is always possible.

The Marcos dictatorship was supported for a long time by the US and the local reactionaries in the vain hope that it could destroy the armed revolutionary movement and preserve the ruling system with tremendous amounts of foreign borrowing. The foreign debts were for stabilization and anti-industrial purposes and for spinning off a big budgetary allocation for military buildup.

In the end, the US and the local reactionaries had to drop Marcos because his despotic rule had only succeeded in fanning the flames of armed revolution by the people, ignite violent contradictions among the factions of the ruling classes and plunge the country further into bankruptcy.

The overthrow of the Marcos dictatorship and the ascendance of Cory Aquino to the presidency were made possible by the long-term revolutionary struggle of the people, by the fear of the US and the local reactionaries that if Marcos stayed longer in power the armed revolutionary movement would advance faster; and by the dramatic convergence of antifascist forces and spontaneous masses on the hated regime last February.

The uprising and power of the people protected the Enrile-Ramos military group that broke away from the fascist dictator; prevented the Marcos-Ver camp from launching an effective offensive as well as the Enrile-Ramos camp from setting up a military or military-civilian junta; and made way for Aquino to assume the presidency and set up a civilian government.

The claim that the people's revolutionary movement had absolutely no share in the overthrow of the Marcos regime is completely untrue. This overlooks not only the long-term antifascist, anti-imperialist and antifeudal struggle of the people and the fear of the US and the local reactionaries that the civil disobedience movement called by Cory Aquino would merge with the welgang bayan campaign of the national democratic movement; but also the immediate and direct participation of the national democratic organizations in mass actions at EDSA, MBS-Channel 4, Nagtahan bridge, Malacañang Palace and elsewhere. In fact, it was the national democratic organizations that exerted constant pressure on Malacañang Palace and hastened the flight of the fascist dictator.

But it is also true that the general character of the EDSA happening is that of an antifascist people's uprising, that another set of upperclass politicians and technocrats has taken over, that the military machinery of the state remains intact, that the anti-imperialist and antifeudal demands of the people are far from being satisfied; and that people's power is being spoken of by the US and the local reactionaries as mere people power like manpower or horsepower for convenient use by the upper classes who masquerade as middle class.

The nature and problems of the Aquino government

The Aquino government is not a liberal democratic government but a pro-imperialist and reactionary government with a liberal democratic tendency or facade. It has not shown any determination to leave the confines of foreign and feudal domination.

The key positions in the Aquino cabinet are held by pro-imperialist and reactionary elements like Enrile in the ministry of national defense, and Ongpin, Fernandez and the like in the economic ministries and offices. The so-called nationalists and liberal democrats are holding less important positions in the cabinet.

The Aquino government is operating within a ruling system that is wracked by an ever worsening political and economic crisis. There is no solution in sight to this crisis.

The US is using a coup threat and financial squeeze to compel the Aquino government to make an early commitment on the extension of the US military bases beyond 1991, comply with the policy dictates of the World Bank and IMF and reduce the number and influence of the so-called nationalists and liberal democrats in the cabinet.

To advance their respective self-interests, the Marcos, Enrile and Laurel factions are exerting pro-US and reactionary pressures on the Aquino presidency which is itself conservative. The most dangerous threat to the Aquino government is still the Marcos faction which has tremendous financial, military and political assets.

The Enrile faction which is dominant in the AFP has been trying to strengthen its position by taking advantage of the continuing main conflict between the Aquino and Marcos factions. These three factions have their respective groups within the AFP. To make itself more potent than it is, the Laurel faction has lately been threatening to link up with the Enrile faction. The internal weaknesses of the Aquino government include the inherited financial bankruptcy and the factionalism and demoralization within the civil bureaucracy and military machinery. Every faction in the ruling system and in the Aquino government is insecure and is maneuvering to protect and advance its own interests.

The Aquino government's hope of achieving economic recovery is based on securing further foreign financing and complying with policy dictates from the IMF and World Bank. So, the people can expect to suffer more of the same that they suffered under the Marcos fascist regime.

Aside from hoping for economic recovery to stabilize and improve the situation, the Aquino government hopes to allay tensions within the ruling system through a new constitution and new elections and to outwit and destroy the armed revolutionary movement through ceasefire negotiations and armed combat.

The new constitution being drafted is proving to be largely a return to the 1935 constitution with some flimsy safeguards against abuse of presidential authority with regard to the declaration of martial law and suspension of the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus. Such basic problems of the people as US domination and feudal exploitation are not being addressed by the new draft constitution.

The game plan of the US and the AFP with regard to the ceasefire negotiations is to discredit the revolutionary movement by making false charges of ceasefire violations to pressure and drive it into a capitulationist position, to effect a loss of momentum in the revolutionary armed struggle, induce divisive trends within revolutionary ranks and give the fractious and demoralized AFP time and opportunity to retrain, reorganize and consolidate its combat units. But the National Democratic Front and its component organizations are obviously prepared against the US and military game plan and will press for a lasting peace involving the solution of basic social problems.

Though it may still be conceded that the overthrow of the Marcos fascist dictatorship has resulted in the substantial restoration of civil liberties and some political relief and democratic space, especially to the urban middle class, there is yet no complete satisfaction of the antifascist demands of the people.

The same military machinery used by the Marcos fascist dictatorship to oppress the people has not been reoriented, reorganized and reduced. Militarization in extensive rural areas is unabated. Military offensives have been intensified. The peasant masses and farm workers and other urban poor are also being subjected to military and police brutality.

Despite the widely acclaimed failure of the so-called military solution, the coercive apparatuses of the state continue to be used to preserve the semicolonial and semifeudal society and prevent the victory of the national democratic revolution.

Raising people's power to a new and higher level

As it is, the Aquino government cannot be expected to comprehensively satisfy the anti-imperialist, antifeudal and antifascist demands of the people. It cannot solve the basic problems of the people without the cooperation

of the national democratic movement.

All efforts must be exerted to raise the level of consciousness, organization and militancy of the people along the general line of the national democratic revolution against foreign and feudal domination. Only thus can the people liberate themselves.

To build national unity capable of ridding the country of foreign and feudal domination, we must consciously rely mainly on the basic revolutionary alliance of the working class and peasantry; win over the urban petty bourgeoisie to the side of the toiling masses as one more basic revolutionary force; further win over the national bourgeoisie to the side of the basic revolutionary forces to form a national united front; and take advantage of the splits among the reactionary factions in order to isolate and destroy the enemy who is the most rabid agent of US imperialism and local reaction.

All forms of organizations must be formed and strengthened along the national democratic line. These may include political parties, mass organizations and alliances.

All forms of struggle must be waged and won along the national democratic line. The legal democratic movement must advance all forms of legal struggle. The persistence of systematic violence against the people justifies their perseverance and militancy in all forms of extralegal struggle.

The struggle against the structures of fascist dictatorship must be completed and the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal struggle must be intensified. Left alone to the pressures of US imperialism and the local reactionaries, the Aquino government would succumb to these completely and degenerate into an unmitigated tool of foreign and feudal domination. But because of the impending negotiations between the Philippine government and the NDFP, there is some hope that the basic social problems of the people can be addressed and that lasting peace can be worked out.

As of now, the Aquino government has a dual character, principally pro-imperialist and reactionary and secondarily liberal democratic.

The progressive forces must therefore pursue the dual tactics of unity and struggle.

The people must support and encourage the progressive policies and criticize and oppose its reactionary policies. They can side with the Aquino government in fighting any attempt at fascist restoration by the Marcos faction or any military coup. But they must be ready to oppose every policy or action taken by the Aquino government to serve foreign, feudal and fascist interests.

Under the weight of worsening political and economic crisis and increasing pressures from the US and local reactionary interests, the Aquino government is in the process of finally revealing its character. It may choose to become rigid and repressive, to seek accommodation with the people's revolutionary forces or to give way to another reactionary faction.

The Filipino people must be ready for every eventuality. They must always uphold their own national and democratic rights and interests, maintain their own initiative and build their own power.

September 8, 1990

A grave crisis is now gripping the Philippines. Conditions are rife for unprecedentedly gigantic mass actions and even for an unarmed mass uprising capable of causing the downfall of the reactionary ruling clique.

The Aquino ruling clique is increasingly isolated and is in desperation as a result of its servility to foreign interests, its rapacity in favor of narrow family, factional and class interests and its violent reaction to the national and democratic demands of the broad masses of the people.

The Aquino regime is mortally afraid of the upsurge of mass resistance by the oppressed and exploited people; and the coup threats of armed rival factions within the same rotting ruling system of big compradors and landlords. Thus, the regime has made rhetorical pleas to both its revolutionary and reactionary opponents for dialogue, truce and cooperation with the calculated objective of defusing the explosive situation and riding out the crisis.

As they uphold their integrity and stand for the national and democratic rights and interests of the people, the patriotic and progressive forces have no choice but first of all to launch powerful mass actions and other forms of offensives against the ruling reactionary clique and its foreign master, the United States.

This is the only way to further strengthen the people and the progressive forces and increase their weight in any kind of negotiations. Without the upsurge of the mass movement against them, the Aquino regime and the Armed Forces of the Philippines will continue to be arrogant, demanding that the revolutionary forces surrender principle, people, territory and arms.

Upon the upsurge of the mass movement, the crisis of the ruling system will certainly further worsen. There are a number of probabilities. Aquino might declare martial law and will be undercut by her own vice commander-in-chief General Ramos. The armed reactionary and exploited people; and the coup threats factions opposed to the Aquino and Ramos factions might intensify their coup threats and actually carry these out. Ramos might make his own coup in the guise of a counter coup. The United States and the Catholic Church might also try to work out a compromise among all or most of the reactionary factions.

These probabilities, especially the ones involving the threat of martial law and barefaced military rule, should not frighten the progressive forces into paralysis or clinging to the skirt of the floundering Aquino regime. It is a matter of obligation to the broad masses of the people, especially the workers and peasants, for the progressive forces to carry out ever larger mass actions and other forms of offensives on a wide range of anti-imperialist, anti-feudal and antifascist issues in order to gain strength in the course of struggle. To do otherwise is to lose initiative, be in default and lose the support of the people. In this case, the Aquino regime would have the chance to muddle through and further wreak havoc on the lives of the people until 1992.

At this point in time, most people should be disabused of the illusion that the Aquino ruling faction is necessarily better than those reactionary factions which threaten to launch one more coup attempt; and in that connection the progressive forces are automatically obligated to become the ally or camp follower of the Aquino regime at whatever cost. The record shows that the policies and actions of the ruling reactionary faction have done more harm to the people than the armed reactionary factions that wrought destruction in their 1987 and 1989 coup attempts. Aquinoism is Marcosism without Marcos.

The point here is not to speak better of the anti-Aquino reactionary factions but to stress that the people and progressive forces owe nothing to the Aquino regime and ought to exert their own efforts to mobilize the people and push forward the movement for national liberation and democracy before considering how any reactionary faction can be dealt with in a new way.

The progressive forces and the people can take advantage of the split among the reactionaries either by finding common cause with one faction against the other or simply letting the two factions slug it out without the need to side with one against the other. The reactionary factions of the ruling system may also act as they may decide in common or separately. They can temporarily settle their contradictions by violent means or by compromise. Either way the crisis of the ruling system will continue to worsen and make the ground fertile for the further growth of popular resistance.

The high costs of the policy of maintaining a large military organization and launching of anticommunist campaigns of suppression have already weakened the reactionary system to the very core as never before. The imposition of martial law and outright fascist dictatorship on the people will only aggravate the all-round crisis of the ruling system. Whichever reactionary force rules the Philippines can only aggravate the crisis.

The fundamental problems of the people, the grave social crisis can neither be solved nor allayed to any significant extent without the agreement and participation of all the patriotic and progressive forces, especially the revolutionary movement, in a consensus of national unity against US domination and the worst evils of the social system. Such a consensus becomes feasible only after and not before the clear demonstration of the strength of the people and the progressive forces who are constantly looked down upon, repressed and subjected to schemes of deception.

Upon the clear demonstration of the strength of the people and progressive forces and the recognition of this strength by other forces, I hope that conditions for my return to the Philippines can arise so that I can contribute what I can to the cause of promoting and realizing the best interests of the entire nation and people. I intend to return to the Philippines when the conditions permit, and if the further advance of the cause of national liberation and democracy can be aided by my return.

The Philippine Revolution and the Nationality Question February 15, 1996 May I convey warmest greetings of solidarity to all the participants in the International Seminar on the Nationality Question. I am deeply pleased and honored to be invited as one of the lecturers. And I am thankful to the All India People's Resistance Forum for the invitation.

I regret that for an unavoidable reason I cannot attend the seminar. However, I am contributing a paper about the Philippine revolution and the nationality question.

The nationality question can be dealt with only in historical terms. It involves correctly relating the political, socioeconomic and cultural aspects of nationality as well as the whole national formation, its parts and the world. In its origination and development, Philippine or Filipino nationality is first of all a political concept that has arisen and developed from the necessity of uniting and activating the entire people of various social conditions and cultural traits in the anticolonial and then the anti-imperialist struggles for national independence and democracy.

To this day, the Marxist-Leninist teachings on the nationality question are our best guide. There is yet no experience more advanced than that of Lenin, Stalin and Mao in successfully dealing with the nationality question in the course of overthrowing the counterrevolutionary state and establishing and building socialism. It is to the credit of all the great Marxist-Leninist builders of socialism that it took the modern revisionists a considerable period of time and effort both in the social-imperialist center and in its neocolonies to completely destroy the national formations under proletarian class dictatorship and to cast away the bonds of proletarian internationalism.

1. The Philippine Revolution of 1896 and Filipino nationality

The Philippine revolution of 1896, whose centennial the Filipino people are celebrating this year, had the distinction of being the first bourgeois democratic revolution to overthrow a Western colonial power in Asia. It was guided by the bourgeois liberal ideology. It was for national liberation against Spanish colonial domination and racial oppression. It was for democracy not only in terms of civil and political liberties for individuals, associations and the people but also in terms of being opposed to the feudal oppression inflicted on the people, chiefly by the Spanish religious corporations, the biggest landlords in the country then.

As a concept and historical force, Filipino nationality was originally the product of the revolutionary movement of the people led by the revolutionary organization Katipunan. Previously, the Spanish colonialists referred to their colonial native subjects as indios or indigenes and to the Philippine-born Spaniards as Filipinos. It was in a manifesto that the revolutionaries categorically appropriated the term Filipino to refer to the entire colonized people of various ethnolinguistic communities in the struggle for national liberation. Previously, the Katipunan leaders and common people often referred to themselves as Tagalog, Malay, or lahing kayumanggi (brown race) and the reformists in the propaganda movement in Spain as indios bravos (noble indios).

Filipino nationality was first of all a political-revolutionary term and at the same time it all-roundly carried political, socioeconomic and cultural significance and content. It denoted the revolutionary will and movement of the people to establish the first nation-state encompassing the entire archipelago. It was essentially in the manifestos and decrees of the Katipunan and the Philippine revolutionary government, in the proclamation of Philippine independence on June 12, 1898 and in the Philippine Constitution of 1899.

The Philippine Revolution of 1896, which lofted the concept of Filipino nationality, was the product of a long series of armed uprisings of the people in various localities through more than 300 years of Spanish colonial rule. More than 200 uprisings had taken place, at first sporadically and then increasing in scale, intensity and duration. The Spanish colonialists could continue their colonial rule for as long as there was yet no national consciousness and no nationwide revolutionary mass movement to wage the anticolonial resistance. It was in the 19th century, especially within its last three decades, that Filipino national consciousness spread throughout the archipelago.

National consciousness arose in response to the intensification of colonial, feudal and racial oppression. The people started to realize that they must rise up as a new nation in armed revolution in order to liberate themselves from the foreign oppressors. National sentiment and aspirations became defined in terms of achieving national independence from Spanish colonialism and establishing a modern nation-state. This was in repudiation of the reformist demand in the Propaganda Movement for the Philippines to become a regular province of Spain in order to enable the native people in the archipelago to acquire rights and duties under the 1812 liberal Cadiz Constitution of Spain.

In the course of the revolutionary struggle against Spanish colonialism from 1896 to 1898 and then against US imperialism from 1899 onward, the Filipinos of the Malay race, the mestizos (with Chinese and Spanish blood) and non-Malay ethnic communities united and participated in the struggle for national liberation and democracy. They were bound by socioeconomic relations, by a lingua franca and growing mutual respect for each other in every region and by a long-running resentment over and resistance to colonial impositions.

Upon the coming of Spanish colonialism, the Malay people, who according to anthropologists, had been in the Philippines around 500 BC with an iron age culture, comprised more than 85 percent of the one million population and inhabited the seacoasts and banks of big rivers. Generally, they had small scale communities of the patriarchal slave form of society. They belonged to more than 100 ethnolinguistic communities but the overwhelming majority of them belonged to the biggest eight ethnolinguistic communities: Ilocano, Pangasinan, Kapampangan, Tagalog, Bisaya, Ilonggo, Waray and Maguindanao.

It was possible for the Spanish colonialists to conquer by armed force and convert some communities into Christianity and then conscript troops from one locality in order to further carry out the conquest and conversion of another locality from the late 16th century onward because the native people were characteristically divided into so many independent small societies and scores of ethnolinguistic communities.

The highest sociopolitical formation attained in the archipelago before the coming of the Spaniards were the Islamic sultanates in southwestern Mindanao whose population then comprised around 4 percent of the population of the entire Philippine archipelago. These sultanates had been established since at least the 15th century. They carried the elements of slave and feudal societies and were the most conscious and best organized to engage in prolonged armed resistance against the Spanish conquest. The Spaniards derisively called them Moros in recollection of the Catholic reconquista against the Moors in the Spanish peninsula and for a long time systematically roused the Christianized population against them.

The Spaniards also had great difficulties in extending their rule to the upland hill tribes which comprised some 10 percent of the population. They were in the main descendants of pre-Malay inhabitants (the so-called Austronesians with a neolithic culture) who had started to be in the archipelago since at least 5000 BC. Like the Moros of southwestern Mindanao, the Igorot tribes (currently presumed to have been in the archipelago since the first Christian millennium) continuously resisted attempts of the Spaniards to occupy the Cordilleras in Northern Luzon and to open gold mines there until the last quarter of the 19th century.

Also, the Spaniards simply did not have enough troops and priests to go into the areas of the Lumads in Mindanao and found no necessity to conquer and proselytize among the nomadic forest-based and food-gathering aborigines, the Negritos, who comprised less than one percent of the population. The Negritos or Aetas are the most probable earliest people in the Philippines. Archaeological evidence shows that the islands were inhabited by people since 22,500 BC. But human fossils and associated artifacts of the Tabon cave man do not indicate the racial stock.

Long before the coming of Spanish colonialism, the people in the Philippine archipelago had commercial and cultural connections with the rest of the Malay people, who were earlier and more heavily influenced by Hindu and Arab culture, and with the Arab, Indochinese and Chinese traders. Islamic proselytization had been extended from southwestern Mindanao to the Visayas and Luzon only a few decades before the coming of the Spanish

colonialists. Trade with the Chinese became so brisk that a few of them stayed on as permanent residents, very often intermarrying with the native women.

The Spanish colonialists encouraged the residence of Chinese traders and artisans. They were most interested in the trade of goods between Mexico and China via the galleon trade via the Manila-Acapulco route long before the opening of the Suez Canal in 1815. But almost every 30 years on the average they roused the native population to engage in racial pogroms against the Chinese in the environs of the walled city of Manila.

To achieve their oppressive and exploitative purposes, the Spanish colonialists imposed a centralized system of administration on the colonized people and laid out a network of Spanish lay administrators and priests to control them. In more than 300 years of colonial rule, Spain developed a colonial and feudal society in the Philippines. The owners of the best and biggest estates were the religious corporations and the colonial bureaucrats, the religious corporations and the foreign merchant companies dominated commerce, especially foreign trade.

At the end of Spanish colonial rule, the social structure of the native population was as follows: the top class were the landlords who concentrated on the production of staple crops; the intermediate strata, which included the small entrepreneurs, master craftsmen, merchants and the few professionals; and the basic exploited classes, which included a huge peasant class comprising more than 90 percent and a working class comprising no more than 5 percent and consisting of workers in transport, printing, wood, tobacco, food processing and the like.

2. Filipino nationality under US imperialism

The bourgeois-democratic revolution of the old type led by the liberal bourgeoisie in alliance with the native landlords against the Spanish colonialists and religious landlords was eventually frustrated by US imperialism. The US prevailed in the Filipino-American war from 1899 to 1902 by using its military superiority, directly and indirectly causing the death of 10 percent of the seven million Filipino people, and by issuing the proclamation of "benevolent assimilation" which promised autonomy and liberal reforms in order to coopt the dominant bourgeois liberal ideas in the revolutionary leadership and to split the revolutionary movement.

The main forces of the Philippine revolutionary army were broken in 1902. But armed resistance continued or reemerged in substantial parts of Luzon and the Visayas until 1910. When this dwindled, the US military forces increasingly paid attention to the Moro provinces. The Moro people fought heroically but were completely defeated in 1916 and brought under US colonial administration.

The US imposed its own colonial rule on the Philippines, banned all expressions of Filipino patriotism and promoted a blatantly counterrevolutionary political party of native puppets that espoused assimilation into the US federal state. Due to the people's irrepressible resistance and demands for national independence, however, the US colonial regime would subsequently allow the formation of a political party among another set of puppet politicians who grabbed the slogan of "absolute, immediate and complete independence" but who in fact pushed the reformist line of begging for the grant of national independence by the colonial master in order to avert armed revolution.

The revolutionary concept of national independence along the bourgeois liberal line in 1896 was at first suppressed, then reinterpreted and divorced from the requisite of armed revolution and ultimately became subordinated to a pro-imperialist kind of bourgeois liberalism, masking the power of US monopoly capitalism. The prevailing framework was for the US to teach "democracy" to the Filipino people and train them in self-rule before nominal independence was to be granted to the US-trained puppet politicians, bureaucrats and professionals. The US cleverly used the public school system and the Catholic and Protestant missionaries to bring the people in the remotest areas under US colonial administration and counter the influence of the Philippine revolution.

A pro-imperialist bourgeois-liberal concept of Filipino nationality prevailed under US colonialism as the US developed a semifeudal type of society. The US promoted the more efficient production of certain agricultural crops for export, opened mines and introduced US companies in the manufacture of certain products for domestic consumption. It improved the system of transport and communications. It expanded and encouraged the public and private educational system in correspondence with the expanded requirements of the bureaucracy and business under modern imperialism. Unlike old-type colonialism, which engaged in sheer plunder to serve the primitive accumulation of capital in the West, foreign monopoly capitalism delivered surplus goods and capital from abroad in order to extract maximum profit from the colony.

The social structure among the people changed. The comprador big bourgeoisie among the natives and permanent residents, including the Spanish and Chinese descendants of the colonial ruling class, arose as the

most wealthy and powerful basic exploiting class and acted as the principal financial and commercial agent of the foreign monopoly capitalists. At the same time, the landlord class was retained and remained as the more widespread basic exploiting class. The intermediate social strata expanded and included the national bourgeoisie limited to light manufacturing of goods for domestic consumption and the urban petty bourgeoisie. Among the basic exploited classes, the working class expanded but the peasantry remained as the most numerous exploited class.

Inspired by the national consciousness as Filipinos, the people of various ethnolinguistic communities, religions and races, persevered in various forms of struggle for national independence. The struggle for national independence against imperialism favored and forged a revolutionary sense of national unity. From decade to decade under US colonial rule, the most progressive of the workers and peasant organizations carried the political demand for national independence in combination with their social and economic class demands. They launched strikes and other forms of mass actions. There were outbreaks of armed resistance in every decade.

When organized for the first time under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism in 1930, the Communist Party of the Philippines made the call for national independence but simplistically focused on the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. It neither stressed sufficiently the need to gain genuine national independence nor succeeded in making a profound analysis of Philippine society and revolution. Nonetheless, in a few months' time, it was suppressed. When it was legalized in 1937 and it merged with the Socialist Party in 1938, it accepted the US-approved Philippine Constitution of 1935 and the Commonwealth government as the transition form of government towards the US grant of independence in 1946, as provided for by the US Tydings-McDuffie Law of 1935.

Among the Filipino communists, there was yet no complete clarity about all the basic requirements of the new-democratic revolution both in theory and in practice. However, in opposition to the Japanese invasion and occupation of the Philippines in World War II, the merger party of communists and socialists were able to take the political lead against imperialist Japan in the Central Luzon region, waged armed struggle and carried out land reform. As a result of the armed struggle against the Japanese invaders, the revolutionary forces became strong enough to be considered by US imperialism and the local reactionaries as the principal threat to them. And yet the merger party never withdrew its reformist support for the US grant of independence and readily adopted the slogan of "peace and democracy" after World War II.

In the course of the patriotic armed resistance during World War II, the Filipinos of various ethnolinguistic communities, including the aboriginal Aeta clans and hill tribes of the Itnegs, Igorots, Mangyans, Lumads and the like, participated actively and fiercely in the guerrilla warfare against the Japanese collaborators. The Japanese grant of nominal independence to the Philippines ahead of the US version failed to deceive the people and only incited them to fiercer national resistance.

As soon as the US imperialists returned to the Philippines within the last year of World War II in the Pacific, they carried out a policy of using their troops and their puppets to suppress the armed revolutionary movement, reconcile the pro-US and pro-Japanese reactionaries, dismantle the provisional provincial and municipal governments proclaimed in Central Luzon by the revolutionary movement and undo the land reform carried out there by the revolutionaries during the war. As if blind to the determination of the US and local reactionaries to wipe out the revolutionary movement, the old merger party of communists and socialists decided to convert the People's Army against Japan (Hukbalahap) into a veterans' association and a legal peasant association to engage solely or mainly in parliamentary struggle.

In the aftermath of the 3-year Japanese occupation of the Philippines in World War II, the US granted nominal independence to the Philippines on July 4, 1946 and thereby shifted from direct colonial to indirect semicolonial rule over the Philippines. Responsibility for administration was turned over to the representatives of the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords. At that time, the Philippine population had risen to 17 million, despite the loss of one million Filipino lives in World War II.

The US had no choice but to grant nominal independence in 1946 not only because it was bound by the Tydings-McDuffie Law and the long historical train of popular demand for national independence but also because it wanted to head off the armed revolutionary movement for national liberation. This became more assertive and militant after the imperialists and local reactionaries frustrated the reformist and revisionist line. They expelled from Congress the elected communist and progressive noncommunist representatives who had run for office under the banner of the Democratic Alliance in 1946. A patriotic war for national liberation and democracy, led by

the merger party of communists and socialists, ensued until the main revolutionary forces were defeated in the early '50s.

In granting sham national independence, the US retained its all-round economic, political, military and cultural power over the Philippines. It preserved and expanded the property rights of US corporations and citizens in the Philippines; it kept its military bases; it made the armed forces of the neocolonial state dependent on the Pentagon; it continued to manipulate the reactionary parties and advise and direct the bureaucracy; and in so many ways it superimposed cultural imperialism on the Philippines. The US kept the Philippines in neocolonial subordination not only in the framework of bilateral relations but also in the framework of regional and global relations under the hegemony of US imperialism.

Among the colonies in Asia, the Philippines was the first to be granted nominal independence by a Western colonial power after World War II. For 25 years the US touted the Philippines as the show window of democracy until 1972 when martial rule was imposed on the Filipino people upon the instigation of the US. Nonetheless, the Philippines continued to be the model of neocolonial subservience to foreign monopoly capitalism.

3. *The new-democratic revolution and Filipino nationality*

Since the '60s, the proletarian revolutionaries responsible for reestablishing the CPP on the theoretical foundation of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought have clarified as never before the character of Philippine society as semicolonial and semifeudal, the character of the Philippine revolution as national-democratic of the new type, the motive forces of the revolution such as the proletariat, the peasantry and other patriotic and progressive strata of Philippine society, the targets of the revolution such as the comprador big bourgeoisie and the landlord class, the national-democratic and socialist stages of the revolution, the current national-democratic tasks and the socialist perspective of the Philippine revolution.

The ongoing national-democratic revolution in the Philippines is a resumption of the old democratic revolution in the sense that it struggles for national liberation and democracy in the entire Philippines. But the struggle is at a new and higher level. The class leadership no longer belongs to the bourgeoisie or any of its stratum but to the working class whose advanced detachment, the Communist Party of the Philippines, follows the ideological line of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and pursues the general line of new-democratic revolution through protracted people's war. In the era of modern imperialism and proletarian revolution, it is only under the class leadership of the proletariat that the struggle for national liberation can be completed and that the struggle for land reform can be realized as the main substance of democracy.

At this time, the class proportions in the structure in Philippine semicolonial and semifeudal society have become as follows: the basic exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords are a mere fraction of one percent, the intermediate stratum of the national bourgeoisie is some one percent and that the urban petty-bourgeoisie is 6 to 8 percent and the basic exploited classes of workers and peasants are 14 percent and 76 percent, respectively. This class structure has basically persisted from 1968 when the Philippine population was still 36 million to the present when the population is already 71 million, especially because of the deterioration of the socioeconomic conditions during the Marcos and post-Marcos regimes.

The CPP adheres to the line that the big comprador-landlord state must be overthrown through armed revolution and replaced by a people's democratic state. Accordingly, the character of Filipino nationality must change politically, socially and culturally. The CPP criticizes and repudiates the counterrevolutionary line of the imperialists and the local exploiting classes that the bourgeois concepts of nation-state and Filipino nationality are unchanging and irreplaceable, that these permanently transcend, gloss over or reconcile exploiting and exploited classes and that these are expressible only in abstract terms such as individuals, associations and the state, with constitutional rights and duties unrelated to imperialism and the exploiting classes.

The CPP and the revolutionary movement of the Filipino people are fighting for the overthrow of the existing counterrevolutionary state which is the joint class dictatorship of the comprador big bourgeoisie and landlord class and for the establishment of a people's democratic state under the leadership of the working class. The character and concrete content of Filipino nationality under the people's democratic state are radically different from those under the big comprador-landlord state.

It is of crucial importance to know the differences because there are reformists and revisionists who masquerade as Marxist-Leninists and who cannot think of nationality beyond the confines of the big comprador-landlord state because in the first place they do not wish to overthrow such a state and do not recognize at all the

need to establish the people's democratic state. Every time there is resistance to the existing counterrevolutionary state, they denounce this automatically as an attack on national unity which is in fact the social system ruled by the exploiting classes.

The CPP's Program for a People's Democratic Revolution clearly defines what constitutes the Filipino nation and the Filipino people, as including all the patriotic and progressive classes and strata and excluding the comprador big bourgeoisie and landlord class whose loyalty is to foreign monopoly capitalism and to themselves.

In waging the national-democratic revolution through a protracted people's war, the CPP is building the people's army as the main component of democratic state power and is building the local organs of democratic political power among the people. It is building a new state even while the big comprador-landlord state is still well-entrenched in the cities. Since 1972, the building of revolutionary state power has been guided by the Rules for Establishing the People's Democratic Government.

There are now thousands of local organs of political power, especially at the village and municipal levels. At levels higher than those at which organs of political power have not yet been organized, the CPP Central Committee is responsible for governmental leadership. The National Democratic Front has the task of assisting in the formation of the organs of political power and has also been authorized to engage in diplomatic and other international relations.

The CPP considers the political revolution as the most important prerequisite to the making of the people's democratic state and the new Filipino nationality. In connection with the political revolution, which involves the overthrow of the old counterrevolutionary state and the establishment of the new revolutionary state, the socioeconomic and cultural revolutions are carried out. The political, socioeconomic and cultural aspects of the people's democratic revolution result in the further revolutionary development of the character and content of Filipino nationality.

In the social revolution, the relations of production are so arranged that foreign monopoly capitalism and the local exploiting classes are overthrown and cease to exploit the working people and that the forces of production are liberated. The land problem is solved and national industrialization is carried out. The nationalization of the industrial means of production, sources of raw materials and major lines of distribution, land reform and cooperativization of agriculture and the temporary concessions to small and medium producers are done to facilitate and not to obstruct and delay the socialist transformation of the economy and society.

In the cultural revolution, a national, scientific and mass culture is promoted under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism. The national cultural heritage must be cherished to serve the present. The scientific outlook and education must be propagated to let the nation learn and benefit from the outside and advance materially and spiritually with the rest of the world and must combat imperialism, chauvinism, religious obscurantism, bourgeois decadence and racism. Culture must serve the people, especially the working people.

The national language, which is Manila-based Tagalog, and the literature in this language must be vigorously promoted to replace English as the principal domestic language in the Philippines and the local languages and literature must be respected, cherished and promoted and not to be the target of any chauvinist discrimination. However, English may still remain as the No.1 foreign language of the country for international intercourse.

So far, the reactionaries have used the English language, rather than the officially designated national language, as the principal medium in bureaucratic communications, legislation, judicial proceedings, education, public information and all other fields and as an instrument for the exploiting classes to browbeat and discriminate against the exploited classes.

The revolutionaries have promoted the use of the national language to facilitate nationwide revolutionary communication and understanding in opposition to the absurd primacy of English over the national language within the country. They have demonstrated that the national language is a beautiful language in literature and is a precise language in any kind of discourse.

At the same time, they use and promote whatever is the language of any locality because the point is to arouse, organize and mobilize the people immediately for the new-democratic revolution. So far, in recent times, the imperialists and the local exploiting classes have failed to generate any widescale communal conflicts from ethnolinguistic, racial, religious or other cultural differences by way of dividing and ruling the people. The people have a high sense of Filipino nationality as a consequence of the old-democratic revolution, the continuing opposition to foreign domination be it old colonial or modern imperialist and, of course, the new-democratic revolution.

Discrimination due to ethnolinguistic differences is subdued by the development of social, political, economic and cultural relations and by the now widespread acceptance of the national language in addition to the much earlier acceptance of a lingua franca on a regional or provincial scale.

Malay chauvinism, usually against Negritos and the Chinese is subdued by a number of factors. The Negritos stand up for their rights and participate in the revolutionary movement against the oppressors and exploiters. Some Chinese have adopted Filipino nationality in an all-round sense, whether or not they retain their distinctive cultural traits. Other Chinese have legally opted for citizenship in the People's Republic of China since the latter half of the '70s. The Chinese have their own cultural and commercial associations and tend to cluster in residential and commercial areas in various cities.

Christian chauvinism is usually directed against the Muslims and the animists who are derided as heathens. But it is counteracted by the forces of the national-democratic revolution movement and by the people of various religious beliefs who uphold the freedom of belief. They have so far frustrated every major attempt of the reactionaries to rouse Christian chauvinism against the Moros. But the imperialists and their local agents persist in trying to build political parties and movements based on religion and directed against the new-democratic revolution.

In principle, policy and concrete practice, the CPP has exerted the utmost effort to put into full play in the new-democratic revolution the unity and militant participation of the Filipino people with diverse customs, race, languages, religious affiliation and other cultural traits. In more than 27 years of revolutionary struggle since its reestablishment on December 26, 1968, the CPP has surpassed all previous revolutionary and patriotic movements in going to the remotest areas and going deep among the native inhabitants and the poor settlers there.

The reasons are obvious. The people there are the most oppressed, exploited and neglected by the counterrevolutionary state and are exceedingly interested in the new democratic revolution. Even as they are being rapidly dispossessed of land and other natural resources by the foreign monopoly capitalists and the local exploiting classes, they still inhabit an extensive and rough terrain suitable for guerrilla warfare in the protracted people's war. They have valiantly fought against the enemy and withstood the most brutal campaigns of suppression and genocide, including bombardments, arson and forced mass evacuations.

The CPP and the revolutionary movement unite the native inhabitants and the poor settlers against the foreign and domestic agrocorporations, the bureaucratic and military landgrabbers and speculators, the logging firms, the big ranchers, the mining firms and other types of "development" aggressors who grab the land and despoil the environment. The right of the native inhabitants to their ancestral land is upheld and defended. At the same time, the poor settlers who have come to the hinterland and stayed for generations are accommodated.

4. The right to self-determination among the minorities

The CPP and the revolutionary movement recognize the right to self-determination of the national minorities, including the right to secede from an oppressive state and the right to autonomy under a nonoppressive state. The principle of self-determination is an inalienable right. The right is always there to be invoked and exercised whenever there is the need to struggle against oppression, to promote the legitimate interest of a community and to demand and undertake affirmative action.

But the right cannot be justly invoked nor exercised in order to deliver a community to the imperialists and the counter-revolutionaries or to serve micro-chauvinism, ethnocentrism, racism, counterrevolutionary localism, cultural nationalism, religious and other cultural prejudice against the common interest of the Filipino nation. The forces of the national-democratic revolution criticize and repudiate those imperialist and reactionary forces that superimpose cultural nationalism on political and social questions in order to slander and attack the revolutionary movement and prevent the people with various cultural traits to participate in the national-democratic revolution.

In opposition to the revolutionary political concept of Filipino nationality as encompassing all the people in the Philippine archipelago of whatever ethnolinguistic, religious, racial or other cultural affiliation, some ideologues and propagandists of the imperialists and reactionaries try to drum up the notions that only those who have been Christianized, Hispanized or Westernized are Filipinos and that, according to their counterrevolutionary definition, Filipinos are intrinsically chauvinist or colonialist (relative to the upland people and the Moro people) even when promoting the national revolutionary consciousness and unity of the entire Filipino people against the imperialists and their local lackeys.

The objective of the enemies of the national-democratic revolution, in whipping up Filipino chauvinism or

some micro-chauvinism against the revolutionary concept and reality of Filipino nationality is to divide the entire people of the Philippines now and in the future and undermine the Philippine revolution. The enemies of the Philippine revolution seek to manipulate the differences in the cultural traits of the people and to disrupt the course of the political, socioeconomic and cultural revolution.

Historically and currently, the imperialists and the local reactionaries have directed and funded the ideologues, publicists and so-called NGOs (nongovernmental organizations) who push the line that ethnicity is beyond the range of communists and the anti-imperialist and class struggles. At the moment, the imperialist-dominated UN is pretending to be concerned about indigenous people. In fact, the imperialists and their agents have been responsible for the most dastardly forms of oppression and exploitation as well dispossession and destruction of the environment at the expense of the indigenous peoples.

The forces of the national-democratic revolution have consistently championed the right to self-determination of all the peoples in various ethnolinguistic communities against the chauvinism and national oppression and exploitation perpetrated by the counterrevolutionary state, the foreign monopolies, the local exploiters, the Catholic church and other dominant institutions. The principle of the revolutionary movement is to rely on the masses everywhere in the Philippines, to respect their cultural characteristics and to put into full play their all-round initiative.

While the necessary number of outside cadres are utilized in order to open any new area of revolutionary work, the unwavering purpose of the CPP and the revolutionary movement is always to let the local masses assume responsibilities in the revolutionary struggle for their own social benefit and to develop revolutionary cadres and organizations among them. In the building of organs of political power of whatever scale, there is always a special regard for the particular characteristics and interests of minorities and for local autonomy and proportionate representation whenever there is a mixture of people with different ethnic characteristics.

In doing revolutionary work among the hill tribes and other upland people, the cadres and forces of the national-democratic revolution do rigorous social investigation, integrate themselves with the local people and their way of life. They show respect for the local customs and beliefs and avoid bureaucratism and roughness in dealing with these. Even in combating superstition, they use the most persuasive means of education and the good results of appropriate scientific alternatives to put forward the new ideas and practices.

They have respected traditional but benign forms of local leadership, like the council of elders, and have acted as facilitators and guarantors of unity and peace in intertribal relations even as the new mass organizations and organs of political power are established. They have also recruited, trained and transformed the local warriors as people's militia auxiliary to the New People's Army.

There are scores of ethnolinguistic communities or national minorities in the upland. They comprise around 10 percent of the Philippine population (excluding the Moros). They include such communities as those under the generic names of Aetas, Itnegs, Igorots, Mangyans, Lumads and the like.

Revolutionary organizations have arisen among the national minorities, such as the Cordillera People's Democratic Front (CPDF), the Revolutionary Organization of the Lumads, Moro Revolutionary Organization (MORO) and are allied organizations within the National Democratic Front of the Philippines. At the same time, there are legal progressive organizations of national minorities, such as the Cordillera People's Alliance (CPA), the Federation of Indigenous Peoples in the Philippines (KAMP), the Central Luzon Aeta Association (CLAA), the Subanen Union of Lumad Organizations (SULO) and the Tribal Association of Mangyans in Mindoro.

The various ethnolinguistic communities are not known to easily invoke the right to secede for obvious reasons. Their respective population and social economies are small scale. They are interconnected with the existing social system in the country. They have repeatedly joined up with the lowlanders in patriotic armed struggles against foreign oppressors. Their way out of oppression and exploitation is bound up with the new-democratic revolution of the rest of the Filipino people.

So far, only one significant force has arisen from among the ethnolinguistic communities or national minorities to invoke the right to secede. This is the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF). It had its historic distinction of adopting the political concept of Moro nation to encompass some 13 small ethnolinguistic communities in southwestern Mindanao, with the current population of some 3 million and with Islam as the common dominant cultural characteristic. Originally, the MNLF was a petty-bourgeois radical organization trying to combine Moro nationalism, Islam and Marxism. From 1972 to 1976, it waged an armed struggle strong enough at its peak to

absorb 30 percent of the combat effectives of the reactionary armed forces and was objectively helpful to the new-democratic revolution when the NPA was still germinal in most parts of the Philippines.

The forces of the national-democratic revolution have always supported and encouraged the MNLF and other Moro organizations to act according to the Moro people's right to self-determination, including the right to secede, as a weapon against the counterrevolutionary state, national oppression and Christian chauvinism. It is in the common interest of the Filipino people, including the Moros, that the Moro organizations wage armed struggle, for self-determination.

The CPP and the revolutionary movement have therefore repeatedly offered revolutionary alliance, cooperation and coordination with the MNLF and other Moro organizations and have held in prospect regional autonomy under a nonoppressive unitary or federal state of the future. At the same time, they have taken definite steps to organize the Moro masses and develop cadres among them wherever the MNLF and other Moro organizations are not doing revolutionary work.

The Christians for National Liberation (CNL), which is a major allied organization in the NDFP, have been active since the early '70s in counteracting and frustrating every scheme and attempt of the counterrevolutionary state to rouse Christian chauvinism among the Filipino people in general against the Moro nation in particular. Contrary to the view of Moro micro-chauvinists, the Filipino people in general and the Moro people in particular need each other in the common struggle against foreign monopoly capitalism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

Moro chauvinism, which denounces even Filipino revolutionaries as colonialists, needs the puncturing of its arrogance. It circulates the myth that the Moros have never been conquered by any foreign power and are different from and superior to the rest of the Filipino people. While it is true that the Moros have retained Islam as the dominant religion among them, it is not true that they have never been conquered.

The heroic prolonged resistance of Sultan Kudarat was subdued in the 17th century by the Spanish colonialists. Equipped with iron-sided gunboats, the Spaniards forced the sultanate of Sulu to agree to the deployment of Spanish garrisons in the Sulu archipelago in the middle of the 19th century. The US imperialists subjugated all the Islamic sultanates by force of arms after the defeat of the forces of the old democratic revolution in Luzon and Visayas. Thus, the Moro people were put under US colonial rule and subsequently under the existing counterrevolutionary state.

From the viewpoint of the national-democratic revolution, the MNLF has contradictory characteristics. Even if led by petty-bourgeois radicals who use nationalism and Islam as their rallying points, it is progressive in fighting for self-determination against a counterrevolutionary state. But it is also reactionary because it has a negative attitude towards the new-democratic revolution of the entire Filipino people and does not have any clear democratic program for the benefit of the Moro people. It has nothing to say against the Moro big bureaucrats, big compradors and landlords conniving with the existing counterrevolutionary state.

The MNLF leadership has verbally attacked the forces of the national-democratic revolution as those of what it defines as Filipino colonialism. And yet it has repeatedly gone into accommodations with the counterrevolutionary Philippine state. In 1976, it signed with the Marcos regime the Tripoli Agreement, whose first provision requires the MNLF to submit itself to the principle that the Moro problem be solved within the framework of Philippine "sovereignty and territorial integrity". It chose to capitulate in principle to the Marcos fascist regime at a time that the Filipino people, including the Moro people were under extreme oppression by that regime.

The MNLF leadership has also gone into accommodations with the succeeding Aquino and Ramos regimes. It entered into a truce agreement with the Aquino regime and renewed this with the Ramos regime. It has solicited from both the privilege of ruling the whole of Mindanao in utter contempt of demographic facts. The 1990 population of the Moro nation is 2.6 million, only 4.3 percent of the total Philippine population of 71 million and only about 19 percent of the entire Mindanao population of 13.9 million.

Even as it has gone into peace negotiations and agreements with the counterrevolutionary state, the top leadership of the MNLF has repeatedly refused to negotiate and enter into alliance, cooperation and coordination with the forces of the national-democratic revolution. On several occasions, it has even issued hostile statements to the effect that the forces of the national-democratic revolution are even worse as an enemy than the counterrevolutionary state.

The forces of the national-democratic revolution have avoided making any hostile statement towards the

MNLF. They have consistently supported the Moro people's struggle for self-determination, have repeatedly urged the MNLF and other Moro organizations to wage revolutionary armed struggle against the oppressive state and have exerted efforts to cooperate with the MNLF at any level. However, they are aware of the anticommunist influence exercised on the MNLF by its supporters among the oil-producing Islamic countries.

When the new-democratic revolution wins in the Philippines, it is highly probable that the imperialists and the reactionaries abroad will utilize the pro-imperialist and reactionary forces all over Mindanao and in particular in the Moro areas against the people's democratic state. It is therefore absolutely necessary for the forces of the national-democratic revolution to arouse, organize and mobilize the Moro people in concert with the rest of the Filipino people and develop truly revolutionary forces and cadres among the Moro people.

5. Concluding remarks

After the basic completion of the new-democratic revolution through the nationwide armed overthrow of the big comprador-landlord state, it becomes necessary and possible to proclaim the people's democratic state and begin the socialist revolution even as bourgeois-democratic reforms are still undertaken in the transition.

Under these conditions, the people of various nationalities, ethnolinguistic communities, religious affiliation and other cultural traits, will become united in a revolutionary modern nation-state of a higher type than the one envisioned and struggled for in the Revolution of 1896. Filipino nationality or citizenship in the people's democratic state means national liberation from imperialism, freedom from class exploitation and the enjoyment of individual and collective rights in the political, social, economic and cultural spheres.

The socialist revolution will strengthen the national cohesion and integration of the entire Filipino people. The unity of the international proletariat and the cooperation of socialist countries under the principle of proletarian internationalism will also strengthen the entire nation against chauvinism at any level in the country and against imperialism from without.

The defeat of the imperialists and the local exploiting classes will certainly drive these evil forces to multiply their resistance to the revolution, in ways more clever than before, when the opportunities for a violent return to power are not immediately available. They will use sugarcoated bullets. As already demonstrated by the experience in socialist countries, where capitalism has been restored through a gradual process of peaceful evolution, revisionism can arise and prevail if unchecked by proletarian revolutionary vigilance and militancy despite all socialist achievements.

The most clever counterrevolutionaries will attempt to undermine the proletarian ruling party, the state, economy and the whole of society by misrepresenting revisionist ideas as proletarian, spreading cynicism against socialism and the masses and ultimately claiming that the working class has accomplished its historic mission or that the class struggle is dying out and all that needs to be done is to develop the forces of production. The revision of the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism is carried out and the policies are adopted to dissolve socialism.

When socialism and proletarian internationalism are lost in a country, the most reactionary centrifugal forces reemerge in society. The imperialists and their agents now misrepresent the preceding period of revisionism and capitalist restoration as a period of socialism and blame socialism for the reemergence of unbridled bourgeois nationalism, ethnocentrism, racism and religious obscurantism. But they cannot really conceal the culpability of the bureaucrat monopoly capitalists as well as their own culpability for the ever worsening national disorder and disintegration in the former revisionist-ruled countries.

The crisis of overproduction in the world capitalist system is accelerated by the competitive use of high technology and the most abusive methods of finance capitalism. It is wreaking unprecedented havoc in the industrial capitalist countries and more so in the neocolonial client-states. It is generating social turmoil and armed warfare and is pushing the exploiting classes to use nationalism, ethnocentrism, religious fundamentalism and fascism as their tools of political rivalry and mass deception. Nevertheless, economic crisis and war create the conditions favorable to the revolution.

A new round of revolutionary struggle is bound to develop under the initiative and leadership of the proletariat against imperialism and the local reactionaries. When the forces of national liberation and socialism resurge, they shall be led by the revolutionary parties of the proletariat that are guided by Marxism-Leninism-Maoism because these are at a vantage point to comprehend the previous experience of socialism, the betrayal of modern revisionism and the current world disorder and are in the best position to further develop in theory and practice,

under the new global conditions, the requirements for national and social liberation at a new and higher level.

One Hundred Years of Struggle against US Imperialism

Address to the International Conference

Sponsored by the Congress of Teachers and Educators

for Nationalism and Democracy (CONTEND)

February 3, 1999

In the spirit of anti-imperialist solidarity, I convey warmest greetings to all the participants in the International Conference on 100 Years of Struggle Against US Imperialism.

We recall the outbreak of the Philippine-American War on February 4, 1899 and we celebrate the people's revolutionary struggle against US imperialism. We draw inspiration from our revolutionary forebears, honor our people who persevere in the struggle, learn lessons from the past and current circumstances and define the tasks for completing the struggle for national liberation and democracy.

In celebrating the 30th anniversary of its reestablishment, the Communist Party of the Philippines has expressed the resolve to continue the national-democratic revolution through protracted people's war against US imperialism and the local reactionaries even if this revolution should take another hundred years.

For as long as the Filipino people remain under US imperialist domination, we do not cease to wage all forms of revolutionary struggle for national liberation and democracy. As the enemy never gets tired of oppressing and exploiting them, the people can never get tired of resisting oppression and exploitation and fighting for national and social liberation.

The absence of genuine national independence and the reign of greed and terror in our country are the bitter consequence of the successful US war of aggression. The US destroyed the Philippine republic that issued from the armed revolution against Spanish colonialism. The US imposed its own colonial rule on the people and granted them nominal independence only after making sure that it could continue to profit from semicolonial rule through the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords.

I commend CONTEND for celebrating the Filipino people's armed resistance against the US war of aggression and the continuing US imperialist domination. This celebration comes into sharp contrast with that of the big comprador-landlord state which has spent a lot of tax money in order to gloss over the people's revolutionary struggle and the need to continue it.

The US war of aggression

Since the beginning of its alliance with the Aguinaldo-led revolutionary movement against Spain, the US had been driven by its monopoly capitalist interests to deceive and betray the Filipino leaders, wage a war of aggression against the Filipino people and take over the Philippines as its own colony. It coveted the Philippines as a strategic post for turning the Pacific Ocean into an American lake and for allowing US monopolies to take a slice of the Chinese melon.

The historians present in your conference can tell you all the facts about the double-faced dealings of US agents in Singapore and Hongkong, the arrogant and clever military maneuvers of the US forces in Manila, the pre-arranged surrender of the Spanish authorities and the mock battle for Intramuros, the Proclamation of Benevolent Assimilation, the US-Spanish Treaty of Paris on December 10, 1898 ceding the Philippines to the US for USD20 million, and the US provocation at San Juan bridge on February 4, 1899.

To impose themselves on the Filipino people, the US aggressors arrested, tortured and killed hundreds of thousands of Filipinos. Millions of our people suffered forced relocations and food blockades. The genocidal methods previously used against the American Indians were used in the conquest of the Philippines and would be used again and again in the '40s and '50s and from 1969 to the present. The same methods were also used against the Vietnamese people during the '60s and '70s.

The estimate of Filipino casualties from the US war of aggression ranges from 250,000 to one million or more than 10 percent of the entire population. General Bell testified before the US Congress that at least 600,000 Filipinos were killed in Luzon alone. Until now, there has been neither the full satisfaction of the people's demand

for revolutionary justice nor official apology from the US government over its dastardly crimes against the Filipino people and entire humanity.

Moved by the spirit of patriotism and by democratic aspirations, the Filipino people fought heroically against the US imperialists. The Philippine-American war lasted from 1899 to 1902 when the main forces of the revolutionary army were destroyed or their leaders capitulated. But the armed resistance, including that of the Moro people, continued in many regions up to 1916.

At great cost to Filipino lives and property, the US imperialists were able to conquer and impose direct colonial rule on the Philippines. This persisted until the Japanese imperialists invaded and occupied the country in 1942. The interimperialist war was a big opportunity for the people to build their own independent revolutionary armed strength. But the subjective forces of the revolution could develop strength only in Central Luzon, Manila and Southern Tagalog.

Continuing US domination

The US reconquered the Philippines in 1945. In advance of the grant of bogus independence to the country, it made sure that US military bases and US property rights and privileges would persist. And yet it tried vainly to postpone the shift to semicolonial rule. However, confronted by an armed revolutionary movement, it relented and gave way to such a rule in 1946, with national administration conceded to the politicians and bureaucrats of the big compradors and landlords in subordination to US imperialism.

The key factors for continued US control over the Philippine neocolonial state are the following: the conversion of the economy into a semifeudal one since the beginning of the century, dependence of the coercive apparatuses of the state on US indoctrination and military supplies, the pro-imperialist training of puppet political, business and cultural personnel and the merger of imperialist and feudal culture.

In the semicolonial political system, the people have suffered a series of puppet regimes. The US is the most responsible for the prolonged the oppressive and exploitative policies of all these puppet regimes, from Roxas to Estrada, and for the prolonged Marcos fascist dictatorship. The US dictates all major policies either bilaterally or through US-controlled multilateral agencies like the IMF, World Bank and WTO. The US remains as the No. 1 imperialist power dominating the Philippines even as it even as it has found it convenient since the '60s to take cover behind multilateral arrangements.

The US military bases have been closed down since 1992 because after all US military control is effected through the puppet military and police forces, and US military bases in nearby countries and spy satellites are being used as additional instruments for US control over the Philippine archipelago. In addition, there is the US-Japan security partnership. But the US is always interested in multiplying its military control over the country. Thus, it is pushing the Visiting Forces Agreement, which the people are now vigorously opposing.

So far, US imperialism has succeeded in keeping the Filipino people under its domination, not only because of its superior military force but also because of its capabilities for deception. In the face of US imperialism, the old democratic revolution was not only limited by its inferior arms but was confounded by a foreign power that used bourgeois liberal slogans to advance its monopoly capitalist interests.

To this day, US imperialism misrepresents itself as the teacher and prime example of democracy and its Filipino marionettes in the political, economic and cultural fields echo and ape the misrepresentation. In this regard, we have always taken pains to distinguish the official ideology of pro-imperialist conservative liberalism from the anticolonial and anti-imperialist progressive liberalism that has characterized the best of petty-bourgeois thinking since the old democratic revolution.

US imperialism and the local reactionaries use the subjectivist and opportunist ideology and language of the petty bourgeois to sugarcoat imperialist as well as subservient policies, trample upon the basic national and democratic rights of the toiling masses of workers and peasants and attack the new-democratic revolution. They talk about free enterprise and individual rights in the abstract to obfuscate the reality of imperialist and class exploitation and oppression.

The neoliberal language of so-called globalization is nothing but a recycling of the antiquated bourgeois-liberal catchphrase, "free marketplace of goods and ideas". It is calculated to assail and put aside the Marxist-Leninist critique of modern imperialism, exactly at a time that the rapidly rising social character of the productive forces through the adoption of higher technology by the imperialists in their own countries makes the capitalist relations of production and the relations of the imperialists and the oppressed peoples more untenable than ever before.

In a conspicuously sinking "emerging" market like the Philippines, the mainstream exponents of "free trade" globalization insist on using neoliberal language. But marginal though special ideological and political agents of the ruling system tout globalization as an irresistibly new fact of life, as something that supposedly makes the anti-imperialist and class struggle irrelevant and outdated and as something that can be reformed for making a "civil society".

Since the late '70s these pseudoprogressive recruits of imperialism and local reaction from the petty bourgeoisie have claimed that the Philippine social economy is no longer predominantly agrarian and semifeudal but an industrial capitalist one because of the supposed economic development under the big comprador-landlord Marcos regime. Since the coming to power of Ramos in 1992, they have proceeded to claim that the Philippine economy is so tightly integrated into the global economy that the question of national sovereignty and independence has become passe.

The current worsening crisis of the world capitalist system is bringing to the surface the basic contradictions between the imperialist countries and the oppressed peoples, among the imperialist countries themselves, and between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the imperialist countries. The illusion of free trade globalization is dissipating. The reality of nation-states and distinct modes of production are more conspicuous than ever before. The whole world is now in social and political turmoil. This is the eve of social revolution on an unprecedented scale.

We are clearly still in the era of modern imperialism and the proletarian revolution and not in a nebulous era of "globalization" or in a utopia of liberalism where everything is for sale and the invisible hand of self-interest peaceably settles everything in the market. In fact, the crisis of overproduction is already driving the imperialists to wrangle over the shrinking market.

Most important development

So far in Philippine history, the most important development by way of continuing the unfinished democratic revolution against the imperialists and the local reactionaries is the reestablishment of the Communist Party of the Philippines under the guidance of the theory of the revolutionary proletariat and its adoption and implementation of the general line of new-democratic revolution through protracted people's war.

In representation of the revolutionary proletariat, the CPP brings to a new and higher level the revolutionary struggle of the Filipino people for national liberation and democracy. It is armed with the ideological weapon to contend with and defeat the fallacies and lies of imperialism, revisionism and reaction. It has also proven in deed for more than three decades that it has an effective strategy and tactics to preserve and accumulate the revolutionary armed strength of the people.

Without the ongoing new-democratic revolution through protracted people's war, there is no hope for the Filipino people to liberate themselves from the clutches of foreign and feudal domination. Foreign domination would continue for another 400 years and US domination would continue for another hundred years if all that we did in that course of time were to seek accommodation, reforms and civility from a ruling system that is inherently oppressive and violent against the toiling masses.

For the Filipino people to achieve national liberation and democracy, there must be organized forces, including a revolutionary party, a people's army, mass organizations and organs of political power to carry on the struggle and defeat the enemy. Fighting the enemy also involves fighting its special ideological and political agents who are used either to penetrate and liquidate from within the revolutionary forces or attack them from the flanks or behind.

The Second Great Rectification Movement within the Communist Party of the Philippines is of great importance not only for the Party itself but also for the broad masses of the people. It is an educational movement to heighten revolutionary resolve against the enemy and to rectify both malicious and honest errors. It is also a practical constructive movement to further strengthen the revolutionary forces and the people in their struggle.

In the new-democratic revolution, there is always the need for an echelon of alliances: the basic alliance of the workers and peasants, the progressive alliance of the toiling masses and the urban petty bourgeoisie, the patriotic alliance of the progressive forces and the middle bourgeoisie and, whenever possible and necessary, the unstable temporary alliance with sections of the reactionaries—all for the purpose of isolating and destroying the power of the enemy, the most reactionary puppet of the imperialists.

Front runner in the anti-imperialist struggle

By staying on the road of new-democratic revolution through protracted people's war, the CPP builds the strength of the people to win victory and march further on to socialism. In the whole world today, the Filipino people are among front runners in the revolutionary struggle of the oppressed peoples for national liberation and democracy against imperialism and the local reactionaries.

In the past, the Filipino people had the distinction of being the first nation in Asia to wage and win the old democratic revolution against a colonial power. Again, they have the distinction of being among the most persevering and most successful in waging the new-democratic revolution through protracted people's war. They serve as a torch bearer of international significance in the transition from the 20th to the 21st century.

This transition is one from a century of great victories of socialist and national liberation movements, temporarily defeated due to revisionist betrayal, to a century of greater struggles and greater victories of the world proletariat and oppressed peoples. It is pure nonsense to think that history ends with monopoly capitalism and bourgeois liberalism.

The scientific basis for our revolutionary optimism is the chronic and ever worsening crisis of the world capitalist system and the irrepressible efforts of the revolutionary forces to learn from history, to resist oppression and exploitation and to carry the revolutionary struggle forward.

US Imperialist Plunder and War and People's Resistance

Keynote Speech to the Conference of Bayan-USA and PUSO

to Promote Participation in the ILPS Second International

Assembly Seattle, Washington State

October 9, 2004

Fellow Activists,

May I thank first BAYAN-USA and the Philippine-US Solidarity Organization (PUSO) for inviting me to keynote this conference, which is meant to promote the participation of US-based mass organizations in the Second International Assembly (SIA) of the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS).

The ILPS appreciates your efforts to encourage mass organizations of various classes, sectors and nationalities in the US to send delegations to the SIA. They shall have full opportunity to discuss and decide important issues in the plenary sessions and workshops of their interest. I presume that the registration forms and information material on the assembly have been disseminated among you.

I stand in solidarity with all the delegations attending this conference on the people's struggle for liberation and democracy against imperialist plunder and war. I admire your resoluteness and courage in standing up and acting against the No. 1 imperialist power and No. 1 terrorist, right within the bloated belly of the beast.

It is quite fitting and proper that we recall the time in Seattle in 1999 when I delivered the keynote speech at the People's Conference Against Imperialist Globalization (whose main slogan was No to the WTO!) and announced the forthcoming foundation of the ILPS.

The announcement spread with reports about the battle in Seattle and the marked failure of the imperialists to paper over their contradictions within the WTO at the expense of the third world and retrogressive countries. Many mass organizations began to see the ILPS as the rallying point for the growing mass movements for liberation and democracy against imperialism and all reaction.

Since the Battle of Seattle, the ILPS has gathered 247 participating organizations on a global scale. The First International Assembly was held in May 2001 in Zutphen, Netherlands. And we are now preparing and are close to holding the Second International Assembly on November 10-14, 2004 in Eindhoven, Netherlands

Imperialist plunder and war

Since the founding of the ILPS in 2001, the crisis of the world capitalist system has worsened in a big way. No less than the United States has been struck hard by the global crisis of overproduction and by financial crisis of unprecedented proportions. These crises have brought about round after round of economic and social devastation throughout the world, in the underdeveloped and dominated countries as well as in the imperialist countries.

The Bush regime has merely aggravated the crisis by further squeezing the American proletariat with policies that have brought about the current high unemployment rate, reduced incomes and cutbacks on social spending. On the other hand, the same policies have favored the monopoly bourgeoisie with tax cuts and pushed military production. The regime has launched wars of aggression such as those against Afghanistan and Iraq to acquire sources and supply routes of oil and other raw materials, markets, fields of investment and spheres of influence.

The attacks of September 11, 2001, involving the killing of 2800 civilians, have been used by the US imperialists as the pretext for their own grand-scale terrorism, killing so many times more civilians and destroying the social infrastructure and livelihood of millions of people in wars of aggression. The US terrorizes entire peoples with hightech weapons of mass destruction and push the repression of the people in its own homegrounds, in other imperialist countries and in dominated countries.

The rulers of the US are big war criminals. They have invaded and occupied Iraq and destroyed the lives and properties of the Iraqi people in wanton violation of the UN charter which prohibits preemptive wars, wars of aggression and wars without the explicit and clear decision of the UN security council to carry them out for reasons of collective security. Even the UN secretary general Kofi Annan, an old trustee of the US, has been compelled by circumstances to declare that the US war against Iraq is illegal

The Bush regime lied and misled the American public about the presence of weapons of mass destruction in

Iraq in order use its own weapons of mass destruction against Iraq and the Iraqi people. The US attacked Iraq precisely because it knew that this country had no weapons of mass destruction to counter US aggression. And its overriding objectives are the seizure of the oil resources and the so-called reconfiguration of the entire Middle East in order to further control the global oil market and the flow of oil to Western Europe and to the East Asia. In both global regions are the countries that the US imperialists fear most as their current and potential rivals. Thus, the US drive to further control the flow of oil to these regions.

The US is obsessed with maintaining its global hegemony, its sole superpower role, through the possession of high technology and hightech weaponry and through the control of oil which it describes the lifeblood of the global economy. It does everything to prevent the flow of oil to Central Europe and China from their sources by far more direct pipelines beyond US control.

The US has dubbed the Philippines as the “second front” of its so-called war on terror because it wants to fortify its position in this country for the purpose of grabbing and controlling all the oil resources of Southeast Asia. Together with its British and Dutch allies, the US has started to exploit the gas and oil resources of the Philippines. You are of course aware of the Malampaya project, controlled by the Texaco-Chevron-Halliburton combine and the Royal Dutch Shell. The US imperialists find it convenient to use the Abu Sayyaf as the pretext for military intervention. In the same way that the chieftains of Al Qaida were in the hire of the CIA in the 1980s so were the Abu Sayyaf in the first half of the 1990s.

The people's resistance

The crisis of the world capitalist system is rapidly worsening. All major contradictions are sharpening. These are between the oppressed nations and people on one hand and the imperialist powers spearheaded by the US, between countries and governments assertive of national independence and the imperialist powers, among the imperialist powers themselves and between the proletariat and monopoly bourgeoisie in the imperialist countries.

We can simply speak of a single contradiction in the world, one between the proletariat and peoples on one hand and the imperialist powers headed by the US on the other hand. The ILPS is conscious of such contradiction. But it is necessary to recognize and understand the major types of contradictions because they involve various types of social conditions and relations, various degrees of exploitation and oppression and various types of resistance. The ILPS thereby knows where lies the main contradiction and where are the weakest points of imperialism.

To know different circumstances in different parts of the world under the single law of uneven development is to know what strategy and tactics can be adopted and applied in certain categories of countries. The extreme conditions of exploitation and oppression and chronic crisis in certain countries, such as those that obtain generally in third world and retrogressive countries, allow protracted people's wars for national liberation. In imperialist countries, the conditions for protracted people's war do not exist. But at the moment, neither are there conditions of urban insurrection in the imperialist countries, although militant mass protests are spreading.

In stating clearly what are the major contradictions in the world, we can point out what is the main contradiction in terms of the severity of oppression and exploitation, the scale of those oppressed and exploited, the magnitude of profits extracted by the imperialists and the intensity and effectiveness of resistance. At this point, we can identify as main contradiction that between the imperialist powers and the oppressed peoples and nations in the third world and retrogressive countries.

In this type of countries, so many kinds of resistance are now running. It is important for the ILPS to know and understand these even as it is determined to develop the legal forms of struggle along the anti-imperialist and democratic line. Most of the struggles are legal forms of struggle by the organized masses. But sometimes there are spontaneous outbursts of the hungry and outraged masses. The mass protests are spreading and mounting in various continents and countries because of the worsening crisis. But the armed forms of resistance are the ones that address most directly the question of national liberation or social revolution, which is the question of seizing political power.

There are armed movements for national liberation such as those in Iraq, Afghanistan, Colombia, Nepal, India, Philippines, Palestine, Turkey and Peru. Some are led by Maoists and others are not. At any rate, their resistance objectively help each other, even as each armed movement has its own strategy and tactics and its own immediate and long-term goals.

Among the current armed struggles, the most focal is that between the Iraqi people on the one hand and the

US and its puppets on the other hand. In this struggle, US imperialist troops are getting killed and wounded in significant numbers. The stakes for each side are high. The US expects to keep the oil resources of Iraq and use its military bases in Iraq to control the entire Middle East. The Iraqi people have no choice but to fight for their own national salvation, dignity and liberation. The governments and peoples in neighboring countries also feel the threat of recolonization by the US.

The US imperialists can effect the massive destruction of lives and properties in the most cowardly manner with the blitzkrieg use of cruise missiles, airplanes, tanks and like. But for the US to get the spoils of war, it must deploy on the ground troops and related personnel who are vulnerable to rifle fire, grenades, rocket-propelled grenades, roadside improvised explosive devices, mines, mortars, artillery and so on. After the blitzkrieg of invasion, the fixed positions and supply lines of the occupying power become vulnerable to guerrilla warfare. Moreover the Iraqi people can repeatedly disrupt and destroy the oil pipelines and other facilities. Thus, the US occupation and the use of the puppet government are rendered unprofitable.

Whether Bush remains in power or Kerry replaces him, the US will continue trying to maintain US military bases in Iraq and own the oil resources of Iraq. The Iraqi people will have no choice but to inflict severe casualties on the US and puppet troops and blow the oil pipelines and other facilities until the US realizes and decides that it is unprofitable economically and politically to occupy Iraq under any pretext.

In addition to developing their own strength, the armed movements for national and social liberation can benefit from the anti-imperialist resistance of countries and governments that are assertive of national independence (especially China, North Korea and Cuba). They also benefit from the contradictions among the imperialist powers. Contradictions with France, Germany and Russia plus China have exposed the extreme greed and aggressiveness of the United States. The exposure of the contradictions and weaknesses of the imperialist powers have encouraged the proletariat and people to carry out anti-imperialist mass actions in imperialist countries and elsewhere.

Concluding remarks

The national liberation movements, the countries and governments assertive of national independence, the proletariat and people in the imperialist countries can take advantage of the sharpening contradictions of the imperialist countries over economic, finance, trade, security and other issues. As the anti-imperialist struggles in the third world and retrogressive countries advance, so can those of the proletariat and people in imperialist countries. They can build their own strength and use it to fight for democracy against racism, fascism, plunder and war.

At this time, the US is still heading the imperialist powers in misrepresenting and attacking as “terrorist” movements for national liberation, countries and governments assertive of national independence, peoples engaged in revolution and their anti-imperialist leaders. By intensifying oppression and exploitation, US imperialists are the very ones most active in rousing the people to fight ever more resolutely and vigorously for their own national and social liberation.

The important role of the International League Peoples’ Struggle is to advance the solidarity of all peoples struggling for liberation and democracy against imperialist plunder and war. In the whole world and in any part of the world, the sovereign will and organized strength of the people are the main driving force for all kinds of resistance against imperialism and all reaction. The broadest possible united front of the organized forces of the people can be developed in order to mobilize the greatest numbers of people who are as yet unorganized.

Keynote Speech to the National Conference

of Filipino Youth in Canada

November 25, 2005

Dear Fellow Activists and Friends,

I thank the Ugnayan ng Kabataang Pilipino sa Canada/Filipino-Canadian Youth Alliance for inviting me to deliver the keynote speech in this conference, which is the culmination of a campaign to remember and emulate the First Quarter Storm of 1970 and rally the Filipino students and youth to the call "Continue: Living the Storm".

I congratulate Ugnayan for undertaking the campaign and organizing this conference. I feel honored and privileged to speak before the delegates as well as the distinguished guests, whom I personally know and who participated in the FQS. We are all bound by a high sense of unity, as we celebrate the 35th anniversary of the FQS and the 10th anniversary of Ugnayan. May I also cite that Kabataang Makabayan (KM), which played a key role in the FQS, will have its 41st anniversary on November 30.

My participation in FQS of 1970

When the First Quarter Storm of 1970 broke out in Manila on January 26, 1970, I had already gone underground and based myself in the countryside. But through radio and printed media reports and direct participants in the storm, I was able to monitor closely the preparations, conduct and direction of the mass actions. I analyzed and summed up every major mass action and, under the nom de guerre Amado Guerrero, issued a statement for the purpose of shedding light on the character, conduct and course of the mass movement.

The newly reestablished Communist Party of the Philippines had anticipated in 1968 that the combustible social conditions would soon generate a sustained upsurge like the FQS. But it could not say in advance when such a phenomenon would begin, proceed and end. The FQS began in front of the reactionary Congress when Marcos, in reaction to the throwing of a mock coffin in his direction by a group other than the KM, ordered the police to attack some 50,000 demonstrators, mostly student and youth.

Consequently, there was public outrage over the brutality of the police. A bigger number of youth and workers running into several tens of thousands mobilized for the militant rally on January 30, 1970. The military and police could not stop them from marching to the front of the presidential palace. And they fired at the demonstrators, killing a number of them. Upon the initiative of the KM, the Movement for a Democratic Philippines was quickly formed as an alliance against the US-Marcos regime.

Marcos tried to stem the momentum of the mass movement. He invited to the palace the leaders of the mass organizations and trade unions involved in the mass actions. He offered some "reforms" and some immediate concessions. At the same time he asked the mass leaders to stop the mass actions and threatened that should the mass protests continue he would not be able to stop the military from massacring the demonstrators. Some mass leaders agreed to recess the mass movement.

The FQS would not have taken full shape had Marcos succeeded in dissuading the mass leaders from carrying out the mass protest slated for the first week of February. The general secretary of the KM came to me seeking for advice and reported what transpired in the palace. I said that if the meeting with Marcos succeeded in stopping the protest actions, the mass movement would be profoundly undermined for a long time. The solution was to go on with the next mass action but take pains to keep it peaceful. Thus, the FQS proceeded to take full shape.

It gained in Metro Manila ever bigger number of participants ranging from 50,000 to 100,000 per mass action, almost every week up to March 1970. It rapidly spread to scores of provincial cities and capitals. It increased in intensity on a nationwide scale even as the US-Marcos regime became more and more violent and disruptive of the mass actions.

Historical significance of FQS

The outbreak of the FQS of 1970 signified the clear beginning of the renewed struggle to end the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system of the big compradors and landlords servile to US imperialism. This system had been in chronic crisis but this time it entered the final stage of decomposition. The crisis became so deep and aggravated that it cried out for the people's democratic revolution through people's war.

The frontier areas for absorbing the sideward migration of the surplus rural population had become exhausted in the previous decade. Jobs available for the surplus labor from the countryside were scarce. There was no way to relieve the system of the rapidly worsening crisis. The imperialists, headed by the US, and the local exploiting classes concurred in preventing genuine land reform and national industrialization.

In its first term from 1965 to 1969, the Marcos regime had gone into heavy foreign borrowing under the auspices of the IMF and the World Bank for the purpose of going into an infrastructure program of building roads and bridges and setting up milling facilities for sugar, coconut and copper ore. These foreign-funded projects were graft ridden and were Marcos' source of the loot that he stashed away in foreign bank accounts as well as the till money that he used for electioneering in 1969.

By 1969 the rate of unemployment had become extremely high. The prices of basic goods and services soared. The repeated hikes in oil prices as well as Marcos' heavy spending for winning the elections stimulated inflation. Social unrest was widespread. The regime had a propensity to use state violence to intimidate and attack the toiling masses and even the legal critics and oppositionists from the middle social strata and the exploiting classes.

The Communist Party of the Philippines correctly described the situation by stating that the crisis of the ruling system had become so severe that the ruling classes could no longer rule in the old way, that the broad masses of the people were desirous of revolutionary change of government and that the time had come for the revolutionary party of the proletariat to arise and lead the people in an armed revolutionary movement.

The national democratic mass movement that had grown in the 1960s became the basis for the reestablishment of the CPP in 1968. The young activists that had abounded in the FQS came from the Kabataang Makabayan. They avidly studied Struggle for National Democracy in the late 1960s. And likewise they studied Philippine Society and Revolution as it came out in mimeographed form in 1969 and in printed form in 1970.

At least the leading activists were infused with a high level of patriotic and progressive consciousness. They were aware of the semicolonial and semifeudal character of Philippine society, the national democratic character of the current stage of the Philippine revolution, the basic political, economic and cultural demands of the people, the class factors and class adversaries of the revolution and the tasks to be carried out in the current stage and in the future socialist stage of the revolution.

The FQS was a distinctive revolutionary phenomenon. It was the beginning of a sustained cultural revolution of the Filipino youth along the line of the national, scientific and democratic mass culture. The young activists conducted social investigation, engaged in study groups and created and presented their cultural works in streets, factory sites, farms, plazas and community centers. Manila was the focus of the unprecedentedly huge mass actions. But these rapidly spread to many provincial cities and capitals, where the youth held marches, rallies and cultural performances against those in power.

Continuing relevance of FQS

In 1970 the FQS became the occasion for arousing, organizing and mobilizing so many thousands of the youth. From their ranks came so many of the cadres and ardent members of the revolutionary party of the proletariat, the people's army and the mass organizations. To this day, the veterans of the FQS and their successors in the youth movement are loyal to the FQS as a revolutionary tradition. They carry forward the FQS as an ever growing living force.

The FQS has a continuing relevance to all of us Filipinos, whether in the Philippines or abroad. We recognize it as a response to the challenge posed by the ever worsening chronic crisis of the ruling system. It continues to inspire us to fight for the national and democratic rights and interests of the Filipino people, to overthrow the incumbent oppressive and exploitative system and build a Philippines that is completely independent, democratic, socially just, progressive and peaceful.

The national democratic movement would have made bigger strides since 1970 if not for serious erroneous trends of the ultra-Left and Rightist varieties that ran in the 1980s. These had to be confronted and corrected through a rectification movement. This has been successful. Thus, the national democratic movement has resumed in its advance. Clearer than ever before is the general line of struggle for national liberation and democracy against foreign monopoly capitalism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

By continuing to implement policies dictated by the imperialist powers and the multinational firms and banks, the post Marcos regimes of Aquino, Ramos, Estrada and Arroyo have deepened and aggravated the crisis of the ruling system. The Philippines is maintained as an underdeveloped country dependent on the export of raw

materials and low value-added semimanufactures. It is ever afflicted by budgetary and trade deficits and mounting foreign and local public debt. These are incurred for the most counterproductive purposes, such as the repatriation of foreign capital, remittance of superprofits, bureaucratic corruption and military overspending.

The conditions of mass unemployment, low incomes, poverty and lack of socioeconomic development have forced more than 8 million or nearly 10 per cent of our compatriots to leave the Philippines, their families and friends, in order to earn a living abroad. They become cheap labor abroad. They are compelled to receive levels of compensation far lower than those for the host people. They do not have the rights of the host people. They are exposed to all kinds of racism and discrimination.

The foreign exchange remittances of Filipino migrant workers amount to more than USD 8 billion every year. This is a huge amount which ought to be mustered for the socioeconomic development of the Philippines. But the state and the exploiting classes misappropriate this huge amount through the banking system to serve the most counterproductive purposes. No other Philippine export is more lucrative than the export of people, especially women. But the state wastes the income from this resource.

The mass exodus of people seeking employment abroad reveal the desperate social conditions in the Philippines. The country is now the top labor exporter in the entire world. Sixty five per cent of Filipino migrant workers are women. They are exposed to all kinds of discrimination, disadvantages, risks and pressures. Their absence has disintegrative consequences to their families. But difficulties still abound even in the relatively few cases where other family members or the entire family are able to follow and reunite abroad.

Relevance of FQS to Filipino youth in Canada

Many Filipinos driven out of the Philippines by the crisis conditions have found their way into Canada. There are nearly half a million of them. They are concentrated in the major urban centers of Toronto, Vancouver, Winnipeg and Montreal. The majority of our compatriots in Canada are women. Their proportion is bound to increase as the Live-in Caregiver Program attracts more women, despite all its bad features.

The general conditions of the Filipino youth in Canada are directly linked to and are circumscribed by the forced migration and cheap-labor status of their parents and families. They face systemic racism and discrimination. They experience identity crisis in not being recognized as Canadians but not knowing their Filipino heritage.

They lack access to education. Sixty per cent drop out from high schools because of alienation and racism in the school system. They are bothered by the problems of family separation and reunification. They are humiliated by racial profiling and prejudice in the justice system. The majority of them do not finish high school and become the new generation of cheap labor, limited to taking the bottom jobs.

The Filipino youth in Canada can grasp the relevance of FQS by becoming aware of the fact that the crisis conditions that brought about the FQS drove their parents out of the Philippines and delivered them to another set of crisis conditions in Canada. They must be conscious of the fact that monopoly capitalism is an ever exploitative and oppressive force that keeps on shifting the burden of crisis to the working people in the Philippines and Canada.

Imperialism has become more abominable than ever under the slogan of "free market" globalization as well as under the slogan of "war on terror". The rights of the working people and their hard-won social benefits are eroded or eliminated. The imperialist state delivers the resources to the monopoly bourgeoisie and embarks on state terrorism and wars of aggression in order to attack the people, the national liberation movements and countries assertive of independence.

The crisis of the world capitalist system is ever worsening. The people are resisting imperialism and reaction and are fighting for a new and better world. The crisis of the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system is ever worsening due to its own debility and imperialist plunder. The Filipino people are intensifying their resistance. They seek to overthrow not only the US-directed Arroyo regime but the entire ruling system. The Ugnayan and other Filipino alliances and organizations in Canada have joined and supported the Filipino people's struggle for national liberation and democracy.

In defining the relevance of the FQS, the Filipino youth in Canada must recall how the Filipino youth campaigned and fought for national and democratic rights and interests during the FQS. They must resolve to emulate the FQS and rise to a new and higher level of revolutionary consciousness and militancy in dealing with their problems in Canada. In this connection, it is fine that the Ugnayan has engaged in an educational campaign about

the FQS in preparation for this current conference.

The Filipino youth in Canada must trace their roots in the Philippines, cherish their Filipino heritage and understand how the evil trio of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism drove their parents out of the Philippines. At the same time, they must understand what is exploiting and oppressing them in Canada and they must educate, organize and mobilize themselves to fight for the rights and welfare of the youth and the entire Filipino community in Canada.

It is of great significance and far-reaching consequence for the Filipino youth in Canada to link up with the youth in the motherland and engage in various forms of cooperation and mutual support for strengthening the struggle of the Filipino youth and people in the Philippines and Canada. They can learn from each other their respective histories, circumstances, needs, roles and tasks. They can share with each other their experience in educational, organizational and campaign work.

The Filipino youth in Canada can best imbibe the Filipino revolutionary spirit and sense of patriotism if they go to the Philippines and stay there for some time in order to live and work with their fellow youth and learn the conditions, needs, struggles and direction of the Filipino people. When they return to Canada, they would have a higher sense of dignity and purpose as Filipinos and they would be more animated than before in relating to and working with their compatriots among the Filipino youth and community in general.

I am aware and gratified that quite a number of the officers and members of Ugnayan have already been carrying out what I now urge you to do. They have gone to the Philippines in order to live, study and work with their fellow youth, learn from the toiling masses of workers and peasants and participate in their struggles. They come back to Canada with a more comprehensive and profound understanding of their national roots and their progressive sense of unity with the Filipino people back home and with the Filipino community in Canada. Renewing their links with the motherland has energized them to do mass work among the Filipino youth in Canada.

I hope that as a result of the present conference the Ugnayan can respond to the challenges and carry out the urgent tasks more effectively than ever before in order to further strengthen the Filipino youth movement in Canada along the line of the national democratic movement in the Philippines. At the same time, I urge you to always maintain and heighten your spirit of internationalism and cooperate with the Canadians of various nationalities in fighting for the common good of the people in Canada. I urge you to promote and strengthen the solidarity and mutual support between the people in Canada and the Philippines in the struggle for national and social liberation.

Keynote Address to the Fourth Congress of Migrante International

December 27, 2005

I am deeply pleased and highly honored by your invitation for me to keynote the Fourth Congress of Migrante International. This is an occasion for me to express my solidarity to the leaders and members of Migrante International and to congratulate you for your achievements since the previous congress.

I also take this opportunity to thank you for helping the International League of Peoples' Struggle acquire reality in various countries and for undertaking actions and issuing statements in my defense against the false accusations of the Arroyo regime and against the unjust "terrorist" blacklist of the US, Dutch, European Union and other governments.

Filipino migrants and Migrante International

You are playing a crucial role in seeking to arouse, organize and mobilize an important section of the Filipino nation, the more than 8 million Filipinos who have gone abroad to 182 countries to earn a living for their families in the absence of employment for them in the Philippines. The Filipino migrants may be categorized as contract workers (3.05 M), immigrants/residents (2.74 M), undocumented workers (1.62 M) and refugees (500 T, mostly Moro in Kalimantan). They are concentrated in North America (2.5 M), Middle East (1.3 M), Asia-Pacific (1.1 M) and Europe (425 T).

The foreign exchange remittances of the Filipino migrants have gained tremendous importance for the Philippine economy since the beginning of the labor export policy of the reactionary government in 1974. As of 2004, Filipino migrants remitted USD 8.5 B. They are expected to remit this year USD 10.3 B. The 2004 remittances exceed the export value of the top five merchandise exports or by 100 times the flow of all foreign direct investments. The amount is more than half of the government budget or is 25 per cent of the 2004 GNP.

By your efforts, you have maintained and further strengthened Migrante International as the most outstanding rallying point for the Filipino migrants. You have led them to fight for their jobs, fair wages, rights and welfare. And you continue to rouse and mobilize them with the general call to fight for these.

You are faced with tremendous odds posed by the US imperialist policy of suppressing workers' rights and pushing down wages and the Philippine puppet government policy of keeping down the wages of its labor export in expectation supposedly of attracting more foreign employers. Amid the ever worsening crisis in the world, the need is ever more urgent to reinvigorate and further advance the struggle for the rights and welfare of our Filipino compatriots. Migrante International and the Filipino migrants have to take care of themselves and take initiative in their own struggle before others can help them.

I am glad to know that you have made breakthroughs in recruiting Filipino migrants and that you are expanding and consolidating membership of the overseas Filipinos and their families in Migrante International. You also help to strengthen the anti-imperialist movement of migrants from various nationalities and races.

I am aware that all your efforts to arouse, organize and mobilize the Filipino migrants run along the general line of the Filipino people's struggle for genuine national independence and democracy. In this regard, all of us find revolting the Arroyo regime's puppetry to US imperialism and its policy of fleecing the migrants but failing and even refusing to serve their interest and contributing to the transgression of their rights.

Without the foreign exchange remittances of the Filipino migrants, the reactionary government would have nothing with which to guarantee additional foreign loans, to pay for consumer imports and dissemble the bankrupt condition of the Philippine economy. The reactionary government also obtains more than PhP 13 billion from the migrants through various fees, including birth certificate, NBI clearance, OWWA membership, Medicare, Overseas Employment Certificate, Artist Accreditation, passport and renewals.

The reactionary government has been quite efficient in exacting and raising fees. It has also maintained several bureaucratic agencies under the department of labor and employment (DOLE) and the department of foreign affairs (DFA) that pretend to serve the migrants. The fact is that OWWA funds are squandered in maintaining the bureaucracy and other forms of misappropriation. On top of everything, these agencies deliberately refuse to

stand up for the rights and interests of the migrants.

The reactionary government condones and encourages the most exploitative terms of employment\). It allows the most humiliating and even deadly abuses practiced by foreign governments and employers against migrant workers. It is obsessed with the objective keeping down the wages of Filipino migrants, attracting foreign employers, exacting fees and grabbing the foreign exchange remittances.

The global and domestic crisis

The crisis of the world capitalist system is ever worsening. It has aggravated and deepened at an accelerated rate since the adoption of the so-called free market globalization. This has further devastated the economies of the overwhelming majority of countries that are underdeveloped, dependent on raw material exports, deficit-ridden and overburdened with foreign debt. Since the 1997 Southeast Asian financial crisis, the economies reexporting semi-manufactures and other so-called emergent markets have also been ruined.

Further on, the US "high tech bubble" burst and the so-called US "new economy" of the late 1990s went into decline and followed since 2000 the path of stagnation earlier trodden by Japan, Germany and other industrial capitalist countries. The monopoly capitalists from the imperialist countries extract superprofits from the underdeveloped countries through some direct investments, trade of surplus goods, foreign loans, debt service, licensing fees and other financial transactions. They have thus undermined their own home and overseas markets. By squeezing the income of the working people the world over, they shrink the global market.

The US imperialists are desperately trying to stimulate the US economy by stepping up military spending and war production. They have taken advantage of the 9/11 attacks in order to generate the hysteria for unleashing wars of aggression and promoting state terrorism all over the world. The Bush regime has been using US high-tech military power, to take preemptive action against rivals and potential rivals, take over vital resources, open markets and impose democracy on other countries.

Under the present conditions in the world capitalist system, the crisis of the semicolonial and semifeudal system is worsening faster than ever before. The traditional raw-material exports have long been squeezed due to global overproduction and the unequal exchange of raw-material exports and manufactured imports. The low value-added semimanufactures for reexports (like semiconductors, garments, etc) have high import content and yield little net export income. They are now adversely affected by global oversupply. Even food production for domestic consumption is already undermined by the dumping of subsidized agricultural surpluses from the imperialist countries under the auspices of "free market" globalization.

The Philippines is sinking further in the swamp of underdevelopment. The Arroyo regime is so subservient to the dictates of the US and the IMF, World and WTO, under the policy of "neoliberal" globalization, that it cannot even dare pretend that it is for national industrial development and land reform. Aside from depending on the foreign exchange remittances of Filipino migrants, the regime has to continue begging for foreign loans at ever more onerous terms just to be able to service the old debts and has to increase the tax burden on the people despite their depressed incomes due to the severe economic crisis.

The toiling masses of workers and peasants and the urban petty bourgeois (more than 90 of the population altogether) are victimized by the rising level of unemployment, the erosion of real incomes, the soaring prices of basic goods and services and the deterioration of social services. Eighty-eight per cent of the people live below the poverty line. Fifty-five per cent of the people live on less than USD 2. Under the current circumstances, an increasing number of workers, peasants and petty bourgeois are driven to go abroad and find work for the survival of their families.

The ruling system is in a state of severe crisis and rapid decomposition. The ruling classes of big compradors and landlords are more than ever incapable of ruling in the old way. The business magnates, political bosses, military and police officers are bitterly divided among themselves. The ruling Aquino clique is using armed force to harm and intimidate the opposition parties which in turn find it necessary to have allies within the armed forces and the police. At the same time, the legal democratic mass movement and the revolutionary armed movement are growing in strength and clamoring for revolutionary change.

Trends in overseas employment

While an increasing number of people are driven by the worsening economic and social conditions in the country to seek employment abroad, we should consider that the crisis of the world capitalism and the crisis in the heartlands of imperialism will limit the types and number of Filipino migrants that can find employment abroad.

At the moment, we notice that an increasing number of migrant workers from other countries in Southeast Asia and South Asia are competing for the bottom jobs in Asia and other regions. We also observe an aggravation of the phenomenon of degrading and deskilling of Filipino professionals. Not only are teachers being reduced to menial servants abroad, but so are doctors of medicine to being nurses; nurses to being "care givers" and young engineers and highly skilled workers to being "apprentices".

About 70 per cent of workers exported are women. They are preferred as domestic servants, entertainers, nurses, care givers, workers in electronic sweatshops, seamstresses, hotel workers, shop attendants. The large numbers of women, working as domestic servants and entertainers, are the most vulnerable to abuses and human rights violations, including mental and physical maltreatment, rape and murder.

In connection with the US invasion and occupation of Iraq, Filipinos have been recruited as drivers, security guards, construction workers and the like in order to reduce the number of US casualties as well as the costs for wages, death and injury. Recruiting agencies deliberately recruit far more than enough Filipinos for available civilian jobs in Saudi Arabia and the emirates and then the excess recruits are redirected to war-related jobs in Iraq under pain of losing what they paid to be able to get the previous job prospect. The issue of war-related jobs has been brought about by the global capitalist crisis that has given rise to imperialist aggression and war.

The crisis of the world capitalist system can take such a turn that the room for employment can become smaller even for cheap Filipino labor in factories and public works jobs, contrary to the wish of the Arroyo regime to export one million Filipino workers a year. Filipino migrants may be willing to take the 3-D jobs (dirty, difficult and dangerous jobs) but cannot be accommodated when the particular economies abroad or the entire world capitalist system contracts further. Political factors, such as the "anti-terror" hysteria, racism and all sorts of discrimination can further work against Filipino migrants.

The imperialists are pushing Mode 4 of GATS under the WTO to further deprive migrants of rights and make them vulnerable to worse conditions under the notion of labor flexibility. They are bent on suppressing trade union rights, shortening contracts, lowering wages, preventing immigration and permanent residence and rotating the migrant workers all for the one-sided benefit of the multinational firms.

What is to be done

It is absolutely necessary for Migrante International to propagate the general line of Filipino people's struggle for national independence and democracy. Only by pursuing this line can national industrial development and land reform be carried out. If there were development and jobs in the country, Filipinos would certainly choose to work here and be with their immediate families and friends. They would rather be here to further develop their own country and avoid the grave risks and complications in going abroad and in leaving their families behind.

There is no lasting solution to the problem of large scale exodus of Filipinos but the attainment of national independence and economic development of the Philippines. However, in the meantime, Migrante International must lead the Filipino migrants to fight for their rights and welfare. It must demand better working and living conditions for the migrant workers. It must require foreign employers to comply with their obligations. It must prevent the abuses inflicted on the migrants. It must help the migrants and their families to solve their problems.

Migrante International must engage in chapter building wherever Filipino migrants are. Priority may be given to the twenty countries with the most Filipino migrants so that they can serve as the resource base for organizing those in other countries. In building chapters abroad, Migrante International has gained rich experience, learned the relevant national statutes and international law regarding migrants and developed relations with local trade unions and other organizations of the host people and international organizations and institutions that are helpful to migrants.

Your chapters abroad would grow stronger if in the motherland the family members of Filipino migrants are also organized into chapters. Your chapters in the Philippines can become effective in developing the mass base and influence for defending the rights and interests of the Filipino migrants. They must press the reactionary government to cease and desist from serving the interests of foreign governments and employers against the rights

and interests of Filipino migrants. Migrante International must have its own base in the Philippines for undertaking campaigns against the wrong policies and practices of the reactionary government. It must also prepare for the 2007 elections.

As chairperson of the International Coordinating Committee of the International League of Peoples' Struggle, I call on Migrante International to play a key role in the ILPS Study Commission that deals with migrant workers and to avail of the founding assembly of the International Migrant Alliance in October 2006 to engage the most significant and largest organizations of migrant workers from various countries. I hope that Migrante International on its own account and in cooperation with other organizations tackle the GATS/Mode 4 problem posed by the WTO.

Migrante International must conduct mass campaigns in the Philippines and abroad on all issues affecting the Filipino migrants and the Filipino people. You must persevere in the campaign to oust the puppet, corrupt, brutal and mendacious Arroyo regime. You must condemn and repudiate all the plunderous imposition of the US and IMF, World and WTO on the Philippines. You must expose and oppose the human rights violations becoming committed by the regime in collaboration with the US under the slogan of "war on terror". You must strengthen your relations of solidarity and cooperation with the host peoples and their organizations so that both can be mutually effective.

Mabuhay ang Migrante International!

Mabuhay ang lahat ng migrante at mga pamilya nila!

Mabuhay ang sambayanang Pilipino!

Maraming salamat.

(Article for the December 2006 issue of *i Report*,
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November 30, 2006

Introduction

The ruling system in the Philippines is semicolonial and semifeudal. It is dominated by foreign monopoly capitalist countries headed by the US and Japan. It is ruled by the comprador big bourgeoisie and the landlord class and managed by their political representatives. The foreign and local exploiters collaborate against the national and democratic rights and interests of the Filipino people.

The ruling system has its inherent weaknesses due to the backward, agrarian, pre-industrial and semifeudal character of its social economy and is subject to the policy impositions of the US and other imperialist powers. These powers keep the Philippines as a reliable source of cheap raw materials and labor, a lucrative market for surplus goods, a field of investments for surplus capital and a source of superprofits. The illusion of development conjured by low value-added semi-manufacturing for re-export and the boom in private construction has been shattered since the 1997 financial crisis.

The ruling system is in a chronic and ever worsening economic and social crisis. It is prevented from accumulating the capital for national industrial development because the surplus product of the country is appropriated by the imperialist super-profters, the local exploiting classes and the corrupt government officials. The toiling masses of workers and peasants and the middle social strata are subjected to an ever rising level of exploitation. The entire nation is made to suffer ever bigger budgetary and trade deficits and ever mounting levels of debt and tax burden.

The socioeconomic crisis has been aggravated and deepened by the US-imposed policy of "neoliberal globalization". The gravity of the socioeconomic crisis has resulted in an unprecedentedly serious political crisis, involving far sharper contradictions among political factions of the exploiting classes within the civil bureaucracy and within the military and police apparatuses of the state.

The ruling faction of Gloria M. Arroyo is detested not only by rival factions within the reactionary classes but by the broad masses of the people because of its illegitimacy based on electoral fraud, rampant corruption and gross human rights violations. It has taken advantage of the US-dictated war of terror in order to take the initiative of using military force and against the entire range of opposition forces and broad masses of the people. Thus, the growing conditions of violence and instability in the country.

I. Prospects of reform up to 2010

The sharpening socioeconomic and political crisis generates popular demands for reforms as well as for revolution. The basic reforms most in demand are meant to uphold, defend and promote national sovereignty and independence, economic sovereignty and the national patrimony, genuine land reform and industrial development, a patriotic, scientific and democratic system of culture and education and independent foreign policy. These are demanded by the patriotic and progressive reformers within the ruling system as well as by the revolutionary forces.

But the Arroyo regime is deaf to the demands. It continues to raise funds for all its counterproductive and corrupt purposes by seeking foreign loans at commercial rates, by increasing the local public debt and making heavier the tax burden of the people. Such financial irresponsibility has clear limits. The Philippine economy has actually been depressed since 1997. A bigger wave of economic disaster is currently on the way from the direction of the US economy. The unsustainability of high consumption based on borrowed funds, the bursting of the housing bubble and the limits of high military spending as economic stimulus are moving towards an unprecedented US recession and drastic drop in US consumer demand for goods from China, the whole of Asia and the rest of the world.

The Arroyo regime has always construed as the needed reforms what are the dictates of US imperialism under the rubric of "neoliberal globalization." It has also misrepresented as "political reforms" the changes it wants to make on the 1987 constitution. At the maximum, it wants to imitate Marcos by pretending to shift from the presidential to a parliamentary form of government in order to concentrate powers on Arroyo as a transitory president and to get the support of the US by according national treatment to all kinds of foreign monopoly investments and by allowing the return of US military bases. At the minimum, the regime has hyped the campaign for "charter change" in a futile attempt to distract the attention of the opposition and the people from seeking to oust Arroyo. Up to now, Speaker Jose de Venecia is pushing a "constituent assembly" without the approval of the Senate as a distinct body. Such unconstitutional assembly will either be foiled by the Supreme Court or if somehow pushed through it will generate political turmoil.

Because of the extremely reactionary and violent policies and actions of the Arroyo regime, the honest reformers who are patriotic and progressive find themselves completely frustrated in seeking reforms within the reactionary system. Thus, they increasingly appreciate and welcome the revolutionary movement as a pressure on the ruling system. Even the reformists, who denounce the revolutionary movement and wish to use reforms for counterrevolution, find themselves totally discredited. They are best exemplified and embarrassed by the clerico-fascist Norberto Gonzales, the national security adviser, who long misrepresented himself as a social-democratic reformer.

Revolutionaries are necessarily reformers even as they are definitely not reformists. They seek reforms in being open to peace negotiations with the reactionary government. They also wish the better elements in the reactionary government to prevail over the bad ones on the matter of reforms. The Hague Joint Declaration of 1992 clearly states the basic economic, social and political reforms that the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) seek in order to address the roots of the armed conflict in negotiations with the reactionary government (GRP).

The NDFP has already demonstrated that it is capable of arriving at a comprehensive agreement on respect for human rights and international humanitarian law. And it has demanded that the economic, social and political reforms be negotiated and agreed upon. But the Arroyo regime has treacherously sabotaged the peace negotiations by collaborating with the US in putting the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), the New People's Army (NPA) and the NDFP chief political consultant in the so-called terrorist list and in launching Oplan Bantay Laya in order to carry the extrajudicial killings, abductions, torture, massacres and so many gross human rights violations.

II. Prospects of revolution and outcome of armed struggle

The Arroyo regime has repeatedly declared that it has no interest in peace negotiations with the NDFP and that it is determined to destroy before 2010 the revolutionary mass movement led by the CPP. In view of the intransigent position of the regime, the revolutionary forces and people cannot pursue the peace negotiations and have no choice but to defend themselves and defeat the all-out war policy of the regime.

It is out of a narrow-minded kind of self-interest that the Arroyo regime wants the civil war to continue and rage in the country. Arroyo herself has publicly admitted several times that the all-out war policy is intended to

rally and unite the military and police forces under her baton and in order to gain economic and military support from the US in line with its policy of "war on terror". She has deliberately pushed higher the level of US intervention from year to year.

There are yet no clear indications that she wants to resume the formal talks in the peace negotiations. She seems to be unaffected by the fact that the Bush war of terror (wars of aggression and global promotion of fascism) has been repudiated by the American electorate. It is very likely that the regime will continue to escalate the military and police campaigns against the people in suspected guerrilla fronts and the cowardly extrajudicial killings and abductions of unarmed progressive party list leaders, workers, peasants, women, youth, journalists, lawyers, religious and human rights activists.

Because of its fear of impeachment and conviction by Congress, the Arroyo regime is hell bent on either pushing the unconstitutional "constituent assembly" in order to cancel the 2007 elections of congressmen and senators or cheating in these elections in order to control Congress. Either way there will be political turbulence. Arroyo is determined to use violence against the opposition and the people in order to keep herself in power.

In response to the all-out war policy and Oplan Bantay Laya of the regime, the CPP, NPA, NDFP and the broad masses of the people have resolutely and militantly fought back. They have issued publications (see www.philippinerevolution.net) informing us that they have been able to frustrate the military and police campaigns of the regime and to launch various forms of tactical offensives within the strategy of defense. They are successfully waging an intensive and extensive guerrilla warfare based on an ever widening and deepening mass base. They have seized more arms from their enemy, often without firing a single shot. They are therefore increasing the number of their fighting units and are forming more guerrilla fronts, organs of political power and mass organizations.

They are becoming stronger from year to year. They can contribute significantly to the ouster of the Arroyo regime before 2010 or they can at least help ensure that the Arroyo regime is finished in 2010. They expect to deliver the hardest blows on the worst rascals of the regime as these become more brutal and vicious but are fast weakening or about to exit from political power. They look forward to resume the formal talks in the peace negotiations with a new regime, especially because this will be a product of the struggle against the Arroyo regime by a broad united front of patriotic forces and by the broad masses of the people.

III. Direction of the Filipino people in 2010

The Filipino people will demand more strongly than ever before that reforms be made to advance national independence, democracy, social justice, all-round development and peace. By then, the socioeconomic and political crisis of the ruling system shall have become worse, despite the loss of power by the Arroyo ruling clique. The reforms can be arrived at and implemented through peace negotiations between the revolutionary movement and a government that is more enlightened and more reasonable than the present one. Otherwise oppression and exploitation will persist at intolerable levels. Thus, the revolutionary forces and people will continue to wage armed revolution for national liberation and democracy against US imperialism and its local lackeys.

Contribution to the World People's Youth Conference

March 4, 2007

On behalf of the entire International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS), I express warmest greetings of solidarity to all the delegations participating in this World People's Youth Conference. I congratulate the ILPS Youth Commission for successfully undertaking this conference.

I wish all of you the utmost success in exchanging views on the oppression and exploitation of the youth and people by imperialism and local reaction, sharing the experiences of the youth in anti-imperialist and democratic struggles in various countries, and arriving at general conclusions and practical agreements for unity, cooperation and coordination in the struggle for the rights and better conditions of the youth all over the world.

I feel at home with you because I started my political activism in the youth movement. I am deeply pleased that you have asked me to be one of the panelists on the subject of imperialist aggression, anti-terror laws, migration, social destruction and youth and to focus on the particular topic of anti-terror laws with due attention to the context of the said subject of the entire panel.

Quick historical background

Since time immemorial, despotic rulers who in the first place maintain a reign of terror against the people have used the word "terrorism" as an emotional and political cussword to demonize popular resistance. In modern times, the fascist rulers have been the most adept at labeling the opposition as "terrorist" and in adopting so-called anti-terror laws to curtail fundamental democratic rights and repress the people with the brute force of the state.

In the aftermath of the defeat of the fascist powers in World War II, the imperialist states stressed anti-communism as a catch-all slogan against the socialist states, the national liberation movements, the communist parties and all progressive forces. The imperialist propagandists hurled the label of "terrorism" more at the national liberation movements engaged in armed revolution than at any other political force.

For a while, the imperialist-lining policy makers, think tanks and academicians in the US raved about the "moderation" of monopoly capitalism being at the center of a political scale, whose supposed extremist ends are the "radicalism" of the Right (fascism) and the "radicalism" of the Left (communism). But steadily, they developed and promoted the term "terrorism" as an ideological and political category for stigmatizing all revolutionary opponents of imperialism.

They exaggerated as examples of "terrorism" the cross-border acts of violence like plane hijackings and hostageing of civilians by certain groups in retaliation to the unbridled and far larger acts of violence (especially massacres) by the US-Zionist alliance against the Palestinian people inside and outside of Palestine. But special operatives of the US (especially the CIA) systematically built the anti-communist Islamic fundamentalists groups in the course of the Cold War. They instigated the formation of terrorist groups that would eventually run out of control and become Al Qaida in several countries and Abu Sayyaf in the Philippines in particular.

Even as such "terrorist" groups are no longer under direct US orders, the US can still induce them to act in certain ways, manipulate them or simply take advantage of their outrageous criminal acts as pretext for the undertaking of the largest and worst acts of terrorism by the US and other imperialist powers. Thus, Bush has been able to use 9/11 to whip up war hysteria in the US and the whole world, launch wars of aggression in Iraq and Afghanistan and military intervention in the Philippines and elsewhere and push the adoption of fascist executive and legislative acts in the name of anti-terrorism on a global scale.

The biggest terrorists in the world

At this juncture, let me clarify that "terrorism" can be properly used as a political term to refer to systematic and deliberate violence used solely or mainly against civilians or entire communities of people. The largest and worst kind of terrorism is the imperialist war of aggression launched by imperialist states. The number of less than 3000 civilian death casualties in 9/11 is so small in comparison to the 1.5 million Iraqi death casualties in the

US-UK war of aggression and sanctions against Iraq and the more than 650,000 Iraqi civilian death casualties in the second war of aggression and occupation of Iraq. State terrorism or the rule of open terror within particular states is another big form of terrorism. It usually entails the repression of the entire people through massacres, assassinations, illegal detention and torture and the displacement of people from their homes and land with the use of armed force

The imperialists and their puppet states are the worst terrorists in the world. Their terrorism through the use of state power is to preserve and aggravate their system of exploitation and plunder. To deflect the condemnation of their terrorist character which is on the grand scale, they preemptively apply the label of "terrorists" on private groups and individuals that engage in small-scale terrorism and more importantly on those movements, organizations and leaders that stand and fight for national and social liberation. They have generated massive confusion, arbitrariness and errors in legal systems by using "terrorism" as a legal term to refer to the supposed crimes committed exclusively by private groups and individuals purportedly against civilians and communities, even as the US imperialists sometimes accuse certain states of being "rogue states" allegedly sponsoring "terrorist" groups.

By inventing "terrorism" as a supercrime that is too vague and too broad, the imperialists and their puppet states have messed up the clear distinction between common crimes and political offenses. These are sufficiently encompassed by the criminal code which defines and punishes common crimes such as murder, kidnapping, robbery and the like, and likewise political crimes such as rebellion, sedition and the like. The punishment for political crimes is usually lighter than common crimes because the former are considered socially motivated rather than driven by self-interest and may be open to political solution through negotiations and satisfaction of social demands. But the US has made it a point to define terrorism as the threat or use of violence against persons and property to "advance social and political objectives". It is hell-bent on criminalizing as "terrorism" the people's struggle for national and social liberation.

To deal with war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide in time of war and in the aftermath, there are the Geneva Conventions and its protocols and related laws of war which set the norms for humanitarian conduct and requires respect for human rights. These prohibit and punish crimes against the civilian population and against soldiers who have surrendered or have become incapacitated to fight. It is entirely wrong and criminal for the US and its camp followers to deprive prisoners and "terrorist" suspects of their rights enshrined in the International Humanitarian Law and the International Bill of Rights. The practice of torture, murder and other gross human rights violations by US military personnel and puppets in Iraqi homes and streets and in such US prisons as Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo are utterly condemnable and outrageous.

The anti-terror laws

Until now, there is no clear legal definition of the crime of terrorism. Attempts to define it in anti-terror laws in various countries involve characterizing it as worse than murder for seeking to realize social and political objectives through the use of threats or violence against persons and property, exaggerating the element of sowing of fear and enumerating certain crimes that have existed in the criminal code and the laws of war and making extremely vague, broad and loose the scope of criminal acts (including writings, speeches, strikes and protest actions) and ways of acting criminally (committing, conceiving, planning, facilitating, supporting, etc.). In any case, private groups and individuals are deprived of their basic democratic rights and the overwhelming power of the state is increased in the name of national security and combating terrorism.

The anti-terror laws that have been enacted since 9/11 are not only dangerous surplusage but are outrageous outright violations of the basic civil and political rights of the people and their organizations. They follow the example and signals of the USA PATRIOT ACT and the Military Commissions Act of 2006 and certain anti-terror resolutions that the US has succeeded in pushing in the UN Security Council. They presume that only private individuals and organizations are capable of terrorism, ranging from sowing of fear among the people by the most limited means to wielding imagined weapons of mass destruction for threatening or destroying the people.

They cast away the time-tested democratic principle won by the people in the advance of constitutionalism that their rights must be guaranteed in a bill of rights against the high potential of rulers doing a lot of mischief and damage with the concentrated and absolute power of the state. The anti-terror laws presume that the state is incapable of terrorism and they serve to strengthen the state in the name of national security to combat terrorism. They allow the state to disregard the writ of habeas corpus, to torture and even to kill prisoners and suspects, to arrest without judicial warrant and detain people indefinitely on the basis of mere intelligence reports, to prevent

access to lawyers and evidence, to intrude into privacy and family life, to deprive people of their means of existence and to subject them to grave threats and damage to personal integrity, honor and reputation through defamation and stigmatization as "terrorists."

The anti-terror laws attack and violate the right to freedom of thought and belief. In my particular case, US authorities have threatened an American publishing firm for publishing the book, *At Home in the World: Portrait of a Filipino Revolutionary*, and have frozen the bank remittance of royalty payments to me. The presumption is that "terrorism" is heinous and obnoxious supposedly because it is destructive to life and property by having an ideological, political or religious motive. Thus, before any crime has materially occurred and before there can be any criminal suspect, there is already a highly emotional political bias and preemptive criminalization of the Marxism-Leninist ideology, the political line of national liberation and the Islamic faith. Islamic fundamentalism and jihadism are conveniently invoked most often to justify the attack on the freedom of thought and belief. There is indeed a retrogression to the times of medieval inquisition and Hitlerite fascism, rolled into one.

Even if there is no single material act of terrorism that can be imputed, any organization or individual can be listed as "terrorists" by state authorities on the mere say-so of the intelligence agencies of the US, allied or puppet states of the US. In violation of the rights to the presumption of innocence, to due process and to defense, those listed are made to suffer punitive sanctions, including detention or "rendition" to another country (where they can be tortured or even murdered), the freezing of bank accounts and other financial assets, prohibition from work, termination of social benefits, and so on. They are stigmatized as "terrorists" and their freedom, life, means of livelihood and honor are damaged by the state.

When you are put in the list, it is impossible or almost impossible for you to get out of the list. In my particular case, I have been in the list since 2002. The cynical argument of those in power is that I am merely subjected to temporary administrative restrictions. But I am in fact falsely accused of the heinous crime of terrorism and subjected to the violation of my rights under the European Convention on Human Rights. The rights violated are as follows: the right to life and to enjoy one's possessions (referring to my paltry bank account and social benefits), the right to the presumption of innocence, the right to due process, the right against inhuman and degrading treatment, the right to private and family life, the right to the equal protection of the law and against discrimination and the right to one's physical and moral integrity against physical threats and defamation.

As a result of stigmatization as "terrorist" by several states and by the dominant mass media, I often get hate mail and death threats via phone calls and email and via feedbacks to my website and YouTube film clips. The psywar and intelligence agencies and their paramilitary assets wish to generate a chilling climate as in a police state. Fascism is a growing monster in the world under the guise of anti-terrorism whipped up by the biggest terrorists, the imperialists and their puppet states.

Worsening conditions and growing resistance

In the US, Europe and other imperialist countries, the states have adopted anti-terror laws in order to make it appear that so-called terrorism is the no. 1 problem and not imperialism or monopoly capitalism which is the cause of the economic and social crisis, including high levels of unemployment and underemployment, the rapid erosion of income and social benefits, the undermining of democratic rights, political repression and involvement in wars of aggression. The imperialists claim that these anti-terror laws are directed against suspected members of Al Qaida and Islamic jihadist groups. But they are in fact being used far more widely to intimidate, control and violate the rights of the immigrants, the workers and the youth and generate jingoism, racism and fascism. As the crisis of monopoly capitalism worsens, we can expect more repressive and more exploitative conditions.

The US and its imperialist allies have used the hysteria about "terrorism" at home and abroad in order to launch wars of aggression and military intervention in the underdeveloped countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America and expand economic territory as sources of raw materials (especially oil and other strategic minerals), markets, fields of investment and spheres of influence. The imperialist powers unite and collude with each other at the expense of the proletariat and the people of the world. But they also compete and contend with each other. The US is overbrimming with arrogance as the No. 1 imperialist exploiter and terrorist power. It is the most active in pushing its imperialist allies as well as puppet states to adopt and implement anti-terror laws. It has laid the legal foundation for state terrorism and fascism on a global scale.

The crisis of the world capitalist system is daily worsening under the auspices of neoliberal globalization and the global war of terror. The broad masses of the people are suffering the rigors of the crisis. But they are goaded to fight back against their oppression and exploitation. All over the world, revolutionary parties of the proletariat, mass organizations of workers, peasants, women and youth and people's movements of national and social liberation are surging forward against imperialism and reaction. The youth play an outstanding role. They are courageous and militant in bringing forward and spreading the revitalizing ideas of the anti-imperialist and democratic movement and in generating organized strength and bringing about a new and higher level of struggle.

***Implications and Consequences
of the Global Financial Crisis to
the People's Anti-Imperialist Movement***

Contribution to the Forum on Global Financial Crisis,
Third International Assembly, Hong Kong
June 19, 2008

I wish to comment on the gravity of the current financial crisis of the world capitalist system and on the impact of this in the various major contradictions in the world, with special attention to the people's resistance in Asia, Africa and Latin America and in the imperialist countries.

Gravity of the global financial crisis

The economic and financial crisis of the US and world capitalist system has worsened to a new and unprecedented level since the Great Depression. This signifies the utter failure of the attempt of the US and other imperialist powers to overcome the problem of stagflation under Keynesianism with the policy shift to neoliberalism. Instead, the latter policy has aggravated and deepened the crisis of overproduction in the real economy and has given free rein to the abuses of finance capitalism.

The states of imperialist and other countries have adopted the policy to press down wage levels and cut back social spending. They have allowed the monopoly bourgeoisie to accelerate the concentration and centralization of productive and finance capital in its hands through the denationalization of underdeveloped economies, privatization of public assets, liberalization of investments and trade and deregulation at the expense of the working people, women, children and the environment-all in the name of "free market" globalization.

The consistent result has been the actual contraction of the world market, as the purchasing power of the working people has declined and has limited the demand for the products of expanded production. Ever intent on maximizing profits by raising the organic composition of capital (constant capital over variable capital), the monopoly bourgeoisie has reduced industrial employment and regular employment in imperialist countries by shifting production to a few other countries, like China, India and the Southeast Asian countries, in order to avail of cheap labor.

The illusion of economic growth has been conjured for the entire world capitalist system through the wanton expansion of money supply and credit. The imperialist states and nearly all other states have gone into unrestrained local and foreign borrowing to cover trade and budgetary deficits. The state and private banks have expanded credit and the private corporations have gone into heavy indebtedness by getting bank loans and issuing corporate bonds. To maintain the US as the biggest consumer market, US households have been given a seemingly endless flow of credit, culminating in the housing bubble and ending in the ongoing mortgage meltdown.

The truth about the US economy is now out. The sordid facts about the con game of the lead economy of the world capitalist system are being exposed. The debts of the US federal government, the private corporations and households are unsustainable and cannot be paid back. And yet the US policy makers continue to expand the money supply and lower the interest rates. The industrial decline and the runaway federal debt of the US have undermined the long-touted role of the US as the engine of global economic growth and the global market of last resort as well as the value of the US dollar as the reserve currency of the world.

The US economy has become dependent on credit provided by certain oil producing countries and by countries supplying consumer goods. It has fallen into a prolonged state of camouflaged recession since 1999 when the high tech bubble was about to burst. Some US economists now describe the US economy as being in a state of inflationary recession and is halfway into an hyper-inflationary Weimar Republic-type of depression that has a high potential of leaping into Great Depression II. The other industrial capitalist economies are being pulled into the vortex of the global financial crisis that the US chiefly has stirred up.

The few other countries from which the US imports cheap consumer goods face decreasing orders, a credit crunch and the declining value of the US dollar. The chronically depressed underdeveloped countries in the third world find themselves in a far worse situation than before. The overwhelming majority of them have become net

fuel and food importers. Their peoples are grievously victimized by the manipulated shortages and price gouging by the global and regional cartels directed by the monopoly capitalists in the US and other imperialist powers. The entire world capitalist system can be summed up as being in a state of depression, especially if we fully take into account the actual social and economic conditions of the oppressed peoples and nations.

Consequences of the global financial crisis

The gravity of the economic and financial crisis of the world capitalist system is such that we can expect the worsening and sharpening of contradictions between the imperialist countries and the oppressed peoples and nations, between the imperialist countries and certain countries that invoke national independence, among the imperialist powers themselves and between the monopoly bourgeoisie and the working class in the imperialist countries.

The crisis of the world capitalist system inflicts social devastation at its worst and suffering at its most painful on the oppressed peoples and nations in Asia, Africa and Latin America. It is therefore understandable why we see here the most widespread spontaneous and organized actions of mass protest and the revolutionary armed struggles that seek to end imperialist domination and overthrow the puppet regimes. The main contradiction in the world is that between the imperialist powers and the oppressed peoples and nations.

The extent of existing revolutionary armed struggles is already formidable, as we observe those in Iraq, Afghanistan, Colombia, Peru, Brazil, Nigeria, Philippines, Turkey, India and other South Asian countries. The potential is high for the revolutionary armed struggles to arise in more countries in several continents. The crisis of the world capitalist system generates the favorable objective conditions for the further spread of people's wars for national liberation and democracy.

Since the end of World War II, many new national states have arisen from the colonies and semi-colonies either as a result of the revolutionary movements for national liberation or as a result of neocolonial compromise. Most of them are now in the clutches of neocolonialism and neoliberalism. But there are some states which invoke bourgeois nationalism or socialism and assert national independence against the imperialists and their agents. Those states born from successful national liberation movements, such as China, North Korea and Cuba, have been the most effective in asserting national independence and preventing US aggression.

We have also seen the Yugoslavia of Milosevic and Iraq of Saddam resisting the worst of imperialist impositions and being subjected to wars of aggression launched by the US. Currently, there are other countries whose governments stand up to imperialist domination and move to nationalize imperialist enterprises. Venezuela of Hugo Chavez is a prime example. As the crisis of the world capitalist system worsens, we are going to see more dramatic events in the contradictions between the imperialist countries and the countries that assert national independence.

The imperialist powers collude with each other against the oppressed peoples and nations in general. But they compete with each other for sources of cheap raw materials, markets, fields of investment and spheres of influence. As a result of the full restoration of capitalism in former revisionist-ruled countries, imperialist countries competing with each other and seeking to redivide the world have increased in number. The world has become more cramped than ever for the competitions and rivalries of the imperialist powers.

The US is increasingly resented by other imperialist powers for presuming to have sole hegemony over the whole world and for trying to grab the lion's share of spoils in every continent. At the same time, it is already overextended and weakening in certain parts of the world. Contradictions are developing between the US and Russia and China jointly or separately. So are those between the US and the European Union. These contradictions involve economic, financial, political, security and other issues. As the crisis of the world capitalist system worsens, the contradictions among the imperialist powers will sharpen and generate conditions favorable for the rise of revolutionary movements.

Within imperialist countries, contradictions are surfacing between the monopoly bourgeoisie and the working class. Under the auspices of neoliberalism, the wage and living conditions of the working class have deteriorated drastically. Job security for most workers has evaporated. Worker youth, women and immigrants are discriminated against, exploited and oppressed. Social benefits won over a long period of time have been gravely eroded. Trade union and other democratic rights have been undermined and curtailed.

As the crisis of the world capitalist system worsens, the monopoly bourgeoisie will try to further exploit and oppress the workers. It will pit one section of the working class against another. For the purpose, it will use

chauvinism, racism, religious bigotry and fascism. But it is precisely the escalating exploitative and oppressive acts of the monopoly bourgeoisie that will drive the workers to fight back and wage revolutionary struggle. The class struggle in the imperialist countries has never been eliminated. It has only been suppressed for quite a long while. It is now resurgent.

The Policy of "Neoliberal" Globalization and Worsening Economic Crisis in the Philippines

September 11, 2008

Thank you for inviting me to speak on the policy of "neoliberal" globalization and the worsening economic crisis in the Philippines on the occasion of the 31st anniversary of the founding of the League of Filipino Students (LFS). I congratulate the LFS in Baguio City for its achievements. I appreciate the cooperation of the LFS with the Anakbayan, UP Baguio-University Student Council, the Nationalist Corps and the Politically Inclined Students in bringing about this important forum.

"Neoliberal" globalization

First of all, let me explain what the policy of "neoliberal" globalization is all about. It is a policy of deception, misrepresenting monopoly capitalism as "free market" capitalism. It has been adopted since 1980 supposedly to solve the problem of stagflation, the phenomenon of stagnation and inflation going together and the vicious cycle whereby the attempt to solve either one of them aggravates the other.

In pushing the policy, Reagan and Thatcher identified Keynesian and social democratic state intervention as the root cause of stagflation for generating wage inflation and "excessive" social spending. They therefore espoused giving full play to the "free market" and giving the monopoly bourgeoisie and the giant corporations all the opportunities to raise capital resources, make profits without restrictions and get big tax cuts supposedly to develop the economy, generate jobs and make the working people less "dependent" on government.

To achieve the "neoliberal" or "free market" objective, the imperialist states headed by the US have launched an unrelenting attack on the hard won rights of the working class to job security, trade union organization and social benefits. Wage levels have been pushed down. Full-time regular jobs have been replaced to a great extent by part-time jobs. Indirect wages as may be in the form of social insurance, medical insurance, educational benefits and social services have been cut back or cut off. The real incomes of the working class have relentlessly fallen.

However, the "neoliberal" policy has given the multinational banks and firms of the monopoly bourgeoisie all the opportunities to accumulate capital and reap profits through the liberalization of investments and trade, the privatization of state functions and assets, the deregulation at the expense of the working people, women, children and the environment and the denationalization of the economies of underdeveloped countries.

According to the "neoliberals" or "free marketers", it is wrong to use the direct hand of the state for pursuing economic development and ensuring social welfare. But it is perfectly correct to hand out state resources, state contracts, subsidies, investment insurance and tax exemptions to the giant corporations and likewise to engage in accelerated military spending. No to social welfare but yes to corporate welfare. No to social spending but yes to military spending.

The "neoliberals" have missed the essential point about the problem of stagflation. When it arose in the 1970s, it was because Germany and Japan, which had been ruined in World War II, had reconstructed under the Marshall plan and all imperialist powers were once more caught up in a serious crisis of overproduction as a result of competition and profit-making at the expense of the workers. All capitalist economies were pressing down the wage levels in order to maximize profits and counter the falling rate of profits in the course of expanding production. At the same time, the US led the way in undertaking inflationary activities, including the profuse flow of US dollars abroad, the global deployment of US military forces and the war of aggression in Indochina.

The crisis of overproduction is consistently at the base of the crisis of the US and world capitalist system. By pushing down wages to maximize profits, the monopoly bourgeoisie unwittingly contracts the market for the products of expanding production. The crisis of overproduction becomes conspicuous when large stocks of goods cannot be sold, production has to be cut down and workers are laid off.

From decade to decade, since the late 1960s, the crisis of overproduction has become worse, with the problems of unemployment and inflation becoming more sticky and the growth rates actually stagnant. But since the official adoption of the "neoliberal" policy, the trick to conceal the economic problems has been to increase the money supply and make credit easy for the giant corporations and for the consumers in the huge American

market. As a result, we now see a gigantic financial crisis generated by the US.

The US has lived off the people of the world by abusing confidence in the US dollar as global currency. It has gone into industrial decline by heavily importing consumer goods from East Asia. It has incurred trade deficits and has become the world's biggest debtor. It has also gone into heavy budgetary deficits and domestic debt by rapidly increasing expenditures for military production contracts and global deployment of military forces, especially in Iraq and Afghanistan.

It is not only the US federal government that is heavily indebted but also the giant corporations and households. All of them are unable to pay their debts and are the major factor in the current financial crisis afflicting not only the US economy but the entire world economy. Twice have the US households been victimized in a big way since 1995 through credit and financial manipulations.

First, fund managers invested the pension funds of US workers on the hightech bubble which lasted until it burst in 2000. US households were enticed to purchase stocks on margin. At least 40 per cent of them did so. Subsequently, in a more sweeping way, US households were encouraged to buy on credit into the housing bubble which began to burst in 2006. The "neoliberal" policy makers and managers of the US economy had devised the housing bubble to provide US households an artificial source of further credit for consumption, keeping up their role as the biggest consumer market of the world despite the decline of industry and regular employment in the US.

But the US mortgage meltdown, which has become conspicuous since last year, has exposed not only the wobbly US financial system but also the financial plague the US had spread all over the world. The US banks and hedge funds, in concert with the Fannie May (Federal National Mortgage Association) and Freddie Mac (Federal Home Loan Mortgage Association), the two biggest state-backed mortgage banks, had repackaged the bad mortgages into collateralized mortgage debts and asset-backed securities and sold them to the biggest banks in various countries. Not only is the mortgage meltdown exposed but the whole range of economic and financial crisis in the US and in the world.

The current financial crisis, which is the worst since the Great Depression, has resulted in the tightening of credit, economic recession in the imperialist countries and depression on a world scale. The underdeveloped countries are victimized by the tightening of credit and decreased orders from the imperialist countries for raw materials and semi-manufactures.

Despite global economic depression, some sectors in imperialist countries have found ways of raking in superprofits and conjuring the illusion of positive growth rates in imperialist countries and even on a global scale. They are the giant corporations in fuel and food, which are the most basic necessities of all countries. They are inflicting terrible and intolerable suffering on the people of the world, especially those in the underdeveloped countries.

Impact on the Philippines

As a semi-colonial and semi-feudal country, under foreign and feudal domination, the Philippines has an inherently and chronically crisis-stricken economy and society. The only way it can end the underdeveloped, agrarian, pre-industrial and semifeudal character of the economy is to undertake national industrialization and land reform. These were previously prevented by the World Bank-sponsored Keynesian fiscal policy of promoting infrastructure-building to serve raw material production and commerce.

The current "neoliberal" globalization policy of denationalization, liberalization, privatization and deregulation has been far more aggressive in preventing industrial development and land reform. Under this policy, the Philippine economy has become more deeply underdeveloped and more rotten than before and become more vulnerable to the worsening crisis of the world capitalist system.

The "neoliberal" policy is imposed on the Philippines by the US through its puppets. It expressly prohibits the leaders of the reactionary government from upholding the key role of the state in mobilizing the people and economic resources for national industrialization and land reform. These twin objectives are supposed to be decided by the market rather than by the state and the people. Under the influence of "neoliberalism", puppet leaders in the Philippines talk more often about the "free market" than "development" as state-supported industrial development.

The expression "free market" is actually used to mean leveling the field of competition with the bulldozers of the foreign monopolies and flattening the people to the ground. The expression "development" is limited to mean

infrastructure-building with the use of onerous foreign loans and foreign supplies as in the time of the Marcos regime. None of the succeeding regimes since that of Aquino, which hyped trade liberalization, have paid even the slightest lip service to a well-founded and comprehensive industrial development, through the cooperation of the state and the Filipino entrepreneurs.

The 1987 constitution of the reactionary state has reduced land reform to a "free market" transaction, with the landlord selling his land voluntarily, demanding current market value or offering the stock distribution option. The principle of state intervention in order to realize social justice, such as the expropriation of landlord estates for affordable redistribution to the tenants, has been laid aside. The landless tillers are given the cynical advice that if they wish to own land they are free to buy even a piece of Forbes Park or buy stocks from Hacienda Luisita of Cory Aquino or from any of the many agricultural corporations of her cousin Danding Cojuangco.

Under the Ramos regime, the so-called medium term development program did not provide for national industrialization and land reform. But it pushed for the denationalization of the economy to benefit the foreign monopolies and big compradors. It violated the principles of economic sovereignty and conservation of the national patrimony. It removed the restrictions on foreign investors in banking, mining, agriculture, domestic trade and other types of enterprises. It allowed the unrestricted flow of foreign capital in and out of the country and the big comprador exporters of raw materials to stash away foreign exchange abroad. It ran far ahead of the schedule set by the WTO for lowering the tariff on all types of products.

The reactionary government incurred huge local public debt and foreign debt for infrastructure, especially in graft-ridden power generation projects conceded to foreign companies. It went into a privatization spree, selling off state assets and prime public land to foreign investors in order to cover trade and fiscal deficits. It created a boom in the private construction of office and residential towers and golf courses with the use of foreign commercial loans and favored the expansion of low value-added semimanufacturing of consumer goods under the auspices of giant corporations and big comprador firms, whose foreign debts are guaranteed by the state.

The financial crisis of 1997 brought down the Ramos regime's claims to economic success. By the time Estrada became president, the reactionary government had gone bankrupt and foreign credit dried up to the extent that he was compelled to serve his corrupt appetite by taking payoffs from jueteng and using social security funds of government and private employees for the shadiest of deals. He was reduced to begging for infrastructure loans from Japan, which wanted to extract excessive trade and investment privileges.

When the turn of Arroyo came, she renewed the orgy of local and foreign borrowing and the frenzy of implementing the "neoliberal" economic policy which she had strongly pushed as a senator. The imperialists were pushing another wave of easy credit in accordance with the "neoliberal" dictum that economic and financial problems are solved by scooping money from the central bank into helicopters for these to pour out on the problem.

Under the "neoliberal" economic policy, the semicolonial and semifeudal character of the Philippines has been aggravated and deepened due to the absence of national industrialization and land reform, the unrestricted freedom of the foreign monopolies to dump their surplus products and to extract superprofits, the ceaseless landlord and corporate accumulation of land, bureaucratic corruption, the limitation on the country to produce for export only raw materials and slightly processed goods, the ever growing trade and fiscal deficits and the ever mounting foreign debt.

Like the Ramos regime, the Arroyo regime has been strenuously insistent on the denationalization of the economy. It has made so many attempts to have the 1987 constitution amended so that nationality requirements and restrictions on foreign investors can be removed from the economic provisions. At any rate, it has pushed further legislation as well as multilateral and bilateral treaties and executive agreements to promote investment and trade liberalization in favor of foreign investors to the detriment of economic sovereignty, the national patrimony, the working people and the environment.

It has allowed the dumping of foreign surplus manufactures and agricultural products on the country and has thereby undermined and destroyed the domestic production of these. It has continued the privatization of state assets and public lands. These have been sold to foreign corporations and to cronies. Laws seeking to protect the workers, women, children and the environment have been eroded or circumvented in the "neoliberal" spirit of deregulation for the profit-taking purposes of foreign monopolies and the big compradors.

The Arroyo regime has gone into unbridled deficit spending and foreign and local borrowing, mainly for the purpose of profit-taking by the imperialists and the big compradors, bureaucratic corruption and upper class

consumption. Statistics of these go into the absurd game of conjuring the illusion of an annual economic growth rate. Counterproductive activities and borrowings which bankrupt the state and the economy are misrepresented as factors of development. Even as the economy is bankrupt and depressed, the Arroyo regime is giving top priority to servicing the foreign debt and is raising the tax burden on the people.

The Arroyo regime is overbrimming with loyalty to its imperialist masters. But now it is faced with the severe problems generated by the crisis of the US and world capitalist system. International credit has tightened. Foreign orders for raw materials and consumer semi-manufactures have decreased. To make matters worse, the prices of fuel and food imports are soaring. The giant oil and food companies have fabricated the media tales of fuel and food shortages in order to make a big killing in the "free market."

The regime does nothing to restrain the foreign monopolies from ceaselessly hiking the oil price and inflating the prices of all basic commodities. For so long under the policy of trade liberalization, it has allowed the dumping of rice from abroad and has thus destroyed local rice production. It has made the Philippines the No. 1 rice importer of the world. It has also been utterly stupid in failing to build its reserve rice stocks and thus in having to buy rice from the world market when the prices are soaring.

Tasks of Filipino students

The Philippine economy and society are plunging from one level of crisis and depression to another. The Filipino students are suffering the rapidly rising costs of study and living and need to cope with so many problems arising from the oppression and exploitation of the entire people by foreign monopoly capitalism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

It is of urgent and great importance for the League of Filipino Students and all other patriotic and progressive youth organizations to arouse, organize and mobilize the student masses in their millions. You must unite and fight against "neoliberal" globalization and all other inimical policies of imperialism and local reaction. These are detrimental to you as students and youth because you now face not only the current rising costs of study and living but also the dire prospects of unemployment in an increasingly crisis-stricken and rotten ruling system.

You must also fight the US-instigated war of terror. This has taken the form of state terrorism and direct US military intervention in the Philippines and the US wars of aggression in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere. The violence that the US has unleashed all over the world is aimed at forcing the people to submit themselves to exploitation. It is the complement to "neoliberal" globalization. US imperialism is behind the gross and systematic violation of human rights by the Arroyo regime and its armed minions. We can expect the escalation of exploitation and oppression, under the US-instigated policy of "free market" globalization and the US global war of terror.

You must conjoin with the broad masses of the Filipino people in the struggle for national liberation and democracy against US imperialism and the local exploiting classes. You must carry out all possible and necessary forms of struggle to advance the revolutionary cause. We can prepare for and proceed to the socialist revolution only by completing the new democratic revolution, by victoriously finishing the unfinished Philippine revolution initiated by our revolutionary forefathers. The people have high hopes in the Filipino youth as a resolute and militant force for revolutionary change.

Message of Solidarity to Makabayan

on its Founding Assembly

April 11, 2009

My dear compatriots,

Having been the chairman of the Preparatory Commission that founded in 1986 Partido ng Bayan, which the ultrareactionaries subsequently repressed, I am happy about the remarkable success of the progressive party list groups in the 2001, 2004 and 2007 elections and their current initiative to establish the Makabayang Koalisyon ng Mamamayan or in brief Makabayan. I convey warmest greetings of solidarity to all of them, their national and regional officers, the personages and the hundreds of mass activists from various people's organizations that are now gathered in this founding assembly of Makabayan.

This is a historic occasion that signifies, particularly in the field of electoral struggle, a major advance of the people's movement for genuine national independence, democracy, social justice and all-round development. I commend and congratulate Bayan Muna, Anakpawis and Gabriela for initiating the building of Makabayan as basically a coalition of parties for uniting the broad masses of the people and mobilizing them for meaningful change in accordance with their national and democratic rights and interests.

The founding of Makabayan is timely. It comes as a consolidation of the achievements in electoral struggle of the progressive party list groups and related mass organizations. It is a prompt preparation for the elections in 2010. It counters the schemes of the US-Arroyo regime to push charter change, to prolong the power of the Arroyo clique or to rig the 2010 elections in favor of the worst reactionaries. It contributes to the strengthening of the broad range of opposition forces against the detested regime.

Makabayan is a formidable combination of patriotic and pro-people forces in comparison to the fractious state of the traditional political opposition. Even at this very moment, it can be described as the strongest opposition force in terms of being the most principled instrument of the people, having the most cogent patriotic and progressive platform, gathering the most dedicated and most active volunteers in the service of the people and enjoying the strongest and most reliable mass base on a nationwide scale.

At the core of Makabayan are the progressive party list groups and their leaders and members who have proven their integrity and effectiveness in serving the people. They are in sharp contrast to the traditional politicians. They are well tested in resisting the temptations of puppetry and corruption. They have been subjected to the most vicious forms of vilification and repression. They have prevailed over these and have become ever more determined to fight for the national and democratic rights and interests of the people.

Under the guidance of its Declaration of Unity and Rules of Organization, Makabayan is bound to grow ever stronger. Your principles and general program respond to the people's demand for the politics of fundamental change and substantial reforms, for good governance, for uplifting the poor, for pro-Filipino economic development, for saving the environment, for upholding national sovereignty and adopting an independent foreign policy, for defending the people's democratic rights, for promoting Philippine culture and for attaining justice and peace. Your cause is just and compelling.

In the face of the rottenness and much worsened crisis of the domestic ruling system and the world capitalist system, the theme of your founding assembly is of great importance and acute urgency: Pilipino para sa pagbabago! Pagbabago para sa Pilipino! [Filipinos for change! Change for Filipinos!] This clarion call is well amplified by your proposed platform for the 2010 elections. You stand for the politics of change and reforms against the politics of the status quo and reaction. You have not only the general principles to guide you in the long run but also the concrete plans for serving the immediate needs and demands of the people, especially at this time when they are suffering extremely from oppression and exploitation.

The US-instigated policies of neoliberal globalization and global war of terror have brought about an unprecedented economic and political crisis on a global scale since the end of World War II. The Arroyo regime is despicable for having been subservient to such policies and for having aggravated the rottenness of the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system. We are now confronted by a socioeconomic and political crisis of unprecedented

proportions since World War II.

The socioeconomic crisis is wreaking havoc on the lives of the broad masses of the people because of rapidly rising unemployment, sinking levels of income, soaring prices of basic commodities and services and other intolerable conditions. The political crisis is characterized by the ruling clique's vicious attacks on its intrasystemic rivals and on the broad masses of the people. The people are suffering escalating levels of exploitation and oppression. These drive the people to fight back and seek to change not only the current regime but the entire ruling system.

In my view, it is not possible to make a fundamental change of the ruling system through periodic elections under the rules set by the exploiting classes and their political agents. There are various forms of mass struggles for revolutionary change that can be carried out by the people. But the electoral form of mass struggle is important and necessary whenever it becomes possible for the patriotic and progressive forces to participate and push forward basic reforms that respond to the immediate needs and demands of the people.

The electoral form of struggle can be a major part of the movement to arouse, organize and mobilize the people to achieve immediate basic reforms or the ultimate aim of social revolution. There is no error of electoralism or parliamentarism when there is no foreclosing of other forms of struggle that the people have the sovereign right to adopt and wage. There is also no error of reformism when there is no pontification that the struggle for reforms is the sole option of the people.

Makabayan is inspired by high principles and must firmly adhere to them. But it must be flexible in policy in order to wage electoral struggle effectively. It is broad enough in having as mass base the toiling masses of workers and peasants, the middle social strata and major sectors such as the women, youth, the various types of professionals and the social activists in various concerns such as human rights, development, peace, environment and so on. But you must be ready to further broaden the united front formally or informally by availing of the cooperation of certain sections of the ruling classes in order to isolate and defeat the worst of the reactionaries at every given time.

As I have earlier pointed out, Makabayan is by itself a strong coalition in several respects. But it also has limitations. Its highly motivated activists and mass base may be strong in number and capabilities in certain areas but it may be less strong in other areas. Definitely, Makabayan does not yet have the financial and other material resources to field its own complete slate of national and local candidates. There is therefore a need for you to go into further bilateral and multilateral alliances with other entities, such as coalitions, parties, groups, personages and candidates.

On its own account, without going into any broader coalition, Makabayan can field some candidates for the Senate and many candidates for the House of Representatives and for local executive offices. But certainly broadening the coalition or alliance at the national level is necessary in order to co-determine the best possible presidential and vice presidential candidates and to ensure the victory of Makabayan-chosen candidates for the Senate. Broader regional, provincial, district and municipal alliances are also necessary in the choice of the best possible candidates for the House of Representatives and the executive offices from the level of governor downwards.

To be truly a political force advancing the politics of change and reforms, Makabayan should always be close to the people, especially to the toiling masses of workers and peasants, learning from them, trusting them and relying on them. By following such mass line, you can learn how best to engage in political education, increase your organized strength and mobilize the masses for denouncing the oppressive and exploitative character and policies of the reactionary government and demanding immediate basic social, economic, political and cultural reforms in the direction of fundamental social transformation.

Makabayan must always seek to empower the people and must do its best to represent and serve them in what is still a reactionary government under the control of the political agents of the exploiting classes. Substantial reforms are possible only when the patriotic and progressive elements from Makabayan and other enlightened groups in the government draw strength and support from the protests and demands of the mass movement and when the politicians of the status quo and reaction become increasingly discredited and isolated.

I wish your founding assembly the utmost success in deliberating and ratifying the basic documents, in assessing the current and potential strength of the coalition and its components, in exploring the arena of the electoral struggle, in beginning to fill up your organizational structure and in inspiring your rapid growth and further alliances with other political forces. I am confident that Makabayan will carry forward the politics of change on a

patriotic and progressive course and bring to a new and higher level the unity and fighting capabilities of the people for national and social liberation.

- Long live Makabayan!
- Carry forward the politics of change!
- Long live the Filipino people!

Current Philippine Situation and Prospects of the NDFP

26 April 2008

It is fitting and proper that we are exceedingly jubilant over the 35th anniversary of the founding of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines on 24 April 1973 when its 10-point Program was promulgated. Since then, the NDFP has won great victories in the application and development of the policy and tactics of the united front in advancing the people's democratic revolution against foreign monopoly capitalism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

The NDFP is the most consolidated and most powerful united front of revolutionary forces in the Philippines. It has succeeded in gathering, harmonizing and coordinating the revolutionary forces and winning over the millions of people to the cause of armed revolution. It has promoted the growth of all its allied organizations, the revolutionary mass movement and the organs of political power. It has served as the base for various types of alliances.

The revolutionary forces, the people's revolutionary government and the broad masses of the people have authorized the NDFP to represent them in peace negotiations with the reactionary government. In this regard, the NDFP has upheld the integrity of the people's revolutionary government and the revolutionary movement. It has worked fruitfully for the unity of compatriots abroad and for international solidarity at the popular and diplomatic levels.

Let me discuss the current situation in the Philippines and the prospects of the NDFP.

Current Philippine Situation

The character of the Philippine ruling system has remained semi-colonial and semifeudal. This system is in chronic crisis. It is ever ripe for a national democratic revolution. The Arroyo regime has aggravated and deepened the crisis by escalating the exploitation and oppression of the people under the US-dictated policy of "neoliberal globalization" and "war on terror".

It is hostile to the national and democratic rights and interests of the Filipino people and to the development of the economy through national industrialization and genuine land reform. It is extremely servile to the US and other imperialist interests. It has allowed free rein to plunder of the economy by foreign corporations and by the big compradors and landlords. It knows no bounds for its bureaucratic corruption, the practice of electoral fraud and rampant human rights violations.

It has kept an agrarian and pre-industrial economy that is dependent on the production of raw materials for export and low value-added semi-manufactures for re-export. The income from these always falls far short of import payments. The regime has engaged in a wanton spree of foreign and local borrowing, in combination with a policy of regressive taxation and the appropriation of the remittances of overseas contract workers. This is to cover the growing trade and budgetary deficits, service the accumulated debt and make false claims of economic growth and poverty alleviation.

The Arroyo regime and preceding regimes have allowed the destruction of Filipino-owned manufacturing enterprises and local food production by adopting the policy of trade liberalization. This policy has allowed the dumping of foreign products on the country even while the income from the export of raw materials and re-export of semi-manufactures has decreased due to the global glut. Now with the unprecedented deep and ever worsening economic and financial crisis of the US and the world capitalist system, the Arroyo regime is at a loss as regards to getting the funds to pay the debt service and the import of food, fuel and other necessary goods.

There is an international credit crunch that has arisen from the prolonged abuse of credit under the policy of "neoliberal globalization". The US industrial decline, unemployment, the drastic contraction of the US consumer market and the unsustainable national, corporate and household debts further cramp the global financial system. They have resulted from the ever worsening crisis of overproduction and runaway financial speculation. All these adversely impact on the Philippine economy as international credit tightens and orders for its raw material and semi-manufacture exports are drastically reduced. The export of live labor is also decreasing discernibly. The costs

of imported food, fuel and other necessities are rising relentlessly.

The dramatic bankruptcies of US households and an increasing number of major US corporations, especially in the financial sector, through the mortgage meltdown have a depressing effect not only on the US economy but also on the entire world economy. They signify the grave loss of demand due to reduced income and suppressed rights of the working people and the failure of neoliberal policy to stimulate the economy with the most irresponsible expansion of the money supply and credit, tax cutbacks for the corporations and wealthy and unbridled military spending.

The worsening of the socioeconomic crisis has resulted in the sharpening of the political crisis in the Philippine ruling system. The ground for amicable mutual accommodation among the reactionaries has increasingly become constricted. The Arroyo ruling clique has increasingly monopolized the spoils of power. The rising bitter rivalries within the ruling clique have resulted in the exposure of many outrageous cases of bureaucratic corruption. The intra-systemic political rivals of the ruling clique and the broad range of the opposition, including the patriotic and progressive forces, are inspired by the people's outrage and are emboldened to expose and oppose the regime.

Discontent with the Arroyo regime is ever rising even among the military and police forces. But the regime is trying hard to preoccupy and rally them with bloodthirsty calls for the strategic defeat of the revolutionary forces by 2010 under Oplan Bantay Laya 2. It is deliberately displaying and using brute force in order to maintain the loyalty of the chain of command, obtain increased US military assistance, intimidate the broad range of legal opposition and of course to whip up the psywar against the revolutionary movement.

At any rate, the ouster of the Arroyo regime before 2010 is a distinct possibility. Despite the brutal efforts of the regime to curtail rights and suppress the opposition, the organized forces of the workers, peasants, urban petty bourgeoisie and the middle bourgeoisie are working hard to enlarge and make more frequent their protest mass actions in the national capital region and in the provinces. They invoke the democratic right to speak and assemble in order to counter the attempts of the regime to preempt, discourage and disrupt the protest mass actions.

Significant sections of the reactionary classes are already vocal and active within the broad united front against the Arroyo regime. But the most decisive event is still to come, which is the pouring out of hundreds of thousands of people into the streets of the national capital region in order to signal the anti-Arroyo military and police officers and personnel to withdraw support from the Arroyo regime and give way to a new civilian government.

While the broad legal united front of opposition forces are working hard to oust the Arroyo regime through mass mobilization in the streets of urban areas, the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines are noticeably striving to further isolate and weaken the Arroyo regime through the intensification of the revolutionary armed struggle in the countryside. The broad masses of the people expect that even as the broad legal united front does not yet succeed in ousting the Arroyo regime, the armed revolutionary movement continues to gain strength and advance against the crisis-ridden ruling system.

Prospects of the NDFP

The rapidly worsening crisis of the ruling system inflicts terrible suffering on the broad masses of the people. But it also incites the people to fight back. It serves as the favorable objective condition for the advance of the subjective forces of the revolution, particularly the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), the New People's Army (NPA) and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP). These are the three magic weapons of the Filipino people for carrying out the new democratic revolution through protracted people's war against the oppressive and exploitative forces of foreign monopoly capitalism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

In its recent message to congratulate all Party cadres and members and celebrate the 39th anniversary of the CPP, the CPP Central Committee summed up the accumulated victories of the CPP in the ideological, political and organizational fields and described these victories as the basis for still greater victories on time for the 40th anniversary of the CPP. Also in its more recent message to congratulate all Red Commanders and fighters celebrate the 39th anniversary of the founding of the NPA, the CPP Central Committee summed up the accumulated political and military victories of the NPA and described these as the basis for still greater victories in the protracted people's war along the line of the new democratic revolution on time for the 40th anniversary of the NPA.

The National Council of the NDFP has summed up the accumulated victories of the NDFP in serving as the

people's instrument for developing various types of alliances and for arousing and mobilizing the people in their millions. All the 17 allied organizations of the NDFP are growing in strength and advancing. Thus, the NDFP has a solid basis for winning greater victories in further developing various types of alliances, generating mass campaigns and attracting the broad masses of the people to the revolutionary cause against the Arroyo regime and the entire ruling system. Indeed, the NDFP has bright prospects so long as it carries out the tasks that it has set forth.

The NDFP is tasked to further develop the revolutionary united front for armed struggle. In this regard, it employs the basic alliance of workers and peasants, the alliance of the progressive forces, the alliance of patriotic forces and the broad alliance with certain sections of the reactionary classes in order to rally the people in their millions to isolate and destroy the worst reactionary force at every give time and increase the capacity of all the three weapons of the armed revolution to overthrow the ruling system.

The NDFP is tasked to further develop the revolutionary mass movement in the countryside in order to support directly the armed revolutionary movement and inspire the legal democratic mass movement in the urban areas to develop on their own distinctive account. It is by ensuring, promoting and assisting the building of the revolutionary mass organizations of workers, peasants, women, youth and other related forces that the NDFP prepares the way for the building of the organs of political power from the village level upwards.

As widely reported, the current joint plan of the CPP, NPA and NDFP is to increase the number of guerrilla fronts from the level of 120-130 to a new level of 173 in order to cover every congressional district in the provinces and to start developing the leadership of regional and provincial Party committees in relatively stable base areas on the basis of the guerrilla fronts. In this regard, the special task of the NPA is to destroy the armed power of the reactionaries and build more fighting units. That of the NDFP is to facilitate, assist and oversee the further development of the revolutionary mass organizations and organs of political power at various levels.

The Arroyo regime is hell-bent on using Oplan Bantay Laya 2 to destroy or inflict strategic defeat on the revolutionary movement by 2010 and is intransigently against the resumption of formal talks in the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations unless the NDFP capitulates under the guise of an indefinite ceasefire agreement. In response, the CPP, NPA and NDFP declared their determination to intensify the people's war, especially because the broad masses of the people want to overthrow the Arroyo regime and the entire ruling system.

The unreasonable and hostile position of the Arroyo regime leaves the revolutionary forces and people no choice but to intensify the armed revolution. Conditions are exceedingly favorable to them and unfavorable to the entire ruling system. They encourage and enable revolutionary forces and people to raise the people's war to a new and higher level and to make more effective demands for the resumption of formal talks in the peace negotiations.

The ceaseless worsening of the crisis of the world capitalist system and that of the Philippine ruling system is favorable to the international work of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines. This involves political work among the overseas Filipinos in order to defend their rights and promote their welfare. It also involves work to further strengthen and develop solidarity and mutual support between the Filipino people and other peoples through their respective mass formations and coordinating committees. It further involves proto-diplomatic and diplomatic relations with particular governments or inter-governmental agencies.

The success of the all-round international work of the NDFP will depend upon the victories of the revolutionary movement at home and the resolve, militancy and competence of NDFP personnel abroad. In advancing the Philippine revolution, the revolutionary forces and people in the Philippines play the primary role. They need the solidarity and support of the people and progressive forces abroad. The people of the world need to unite and support each other against imperialism and reaction. These are their common enemies in the struggle for national liberation, democracy, social justice, development and peace.

On the Current Economic Crisis and the Struggle for Democracy and Socialism against Imperialist Globalization

Interview by Steve Da Silva

Editor, BASICS Free Community Newsletter

August 9, 2009

On August 9, 2009, the BASICS Free Community Newsletter Editor Steve da Silva interviewed José Maria “Joma” Sison, the chief political consultant to the National Democratic Front of the Philippines, a founder of the central organizations of the revolutionary movement in the Philippines – namely, the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People’s Army – and the current Chairperson of the International League of People’s Struggles, an alliance of more than 350 people’s organizations from more than 30 countries.

BASICS linked up with Joma at the NDFP office in Utrecht, Netherlands to talk about the current economic crisis and the international struggle for democracy and socialism against imperialist globalization. The following is an edited transcript of the interview.

BASICS: *Joma, thank you for meeting with BASICS.*

Joma: Thank you too for having me.

B: The past year has been witness to the unfolding of one of the most grave crises in the history of capitalism, and this coincides with the worsening of the capitalist world food crisis, military aggression and occupations, and a scale of environmental destruction approaching catastrophic proportions. What are the economic roots of these crises and how can they be resolved?

J: The current economic crisis comes after a series of worsening and deepening crises over the decades. The monopoly capitalists thought that they could overcome the phenomenon of “stagflation” of the 1970s by adopting the policies of neoliberal globalization. This means, simply, blaming the working class and social spending by governments for the phenomenon of “stagflation”. The monopoly bourgeoisie has carried out a fierce class struggle against the working class [in recent decades]. They have been cutting back wages and social spending for education, health, housing, and so on. But despite all these attempts to maximize profit by reducing the incomes of the working people, economic crisis has repeatedly emerged. The pressing down of the wage only exacerbates the crisis of overproduction in capitalism.

In capitalism, production is constantly expanding, especially with the adoption of higher technology and with “outsourcing”, which has made more goods available at cheaper prices by using the cheaper labour of oppressed countries. But if the policies are to reduce the incomes of the working people and to degrade the economies of so many countries in the world, then what happens is a constriction of the market. But the imperialists have been able to conceal this constriction of the market by using means devised by finance capitalism.

In the United States, we see heavy debt financing for households while workers are being thrown out of their regular jobs and are compelled to take on part-time jobs and have their incomes stagnate. But with the expansion of consumer credit – credit cards and with mortgages offered at teaser rates to working class people – the level of consumption in the US. has kept up. But, as we are now seeing, debt financing could not go on forever.

The producer corporations and financial corporations have generated large funds by using bonds and all sorts of financial devices – such as derivatives in the financial world – and the state has also engaged in excessive borrowing to cover up the basic problems. So you have this borrowing to cover up the basic problems, and so it becomes a continuous process of trying to resolve the problem of overproduction by pressing down the real wages while using debt financing instruments to keep up consumption. But the accumulating debts could not go on forever – capitalism is not Santa Claus. At any time the interest rates can be reduced to encourage people to borrow, but there comes a time for raising the interest rates and demanding payments, taking over properties, and in effect reducing the consumption of the people. These are some of the basic problems we see in the US., and the unemployment and under consumption in that country is affecting the whole world capitalist system. As the demand in the US. is declining, the production in those countries where it has been outsourced to is also declining.

B: Will the capitalists be able to resolve this crisis and the contradictions that it entails?

J: It is difficult or impossible for the capitalist system to reduce this problem to a manageable level. This crisis is going to worsen and deepen as the policy makers of the imperialist countries stick to neoliberalism. They are giving bailouts to the very financial corporations and banks that have caused the problem. There's not even the programs that were done under Roosevelt [in the 1930s] with the New Deal, generating jobs with the use of the work projects. But now public funds are being funneled to favored corporations so that they can cover their losses and wherever possible to continue making profits, and all this is being done at the expense of the public. The corporations are not even creating jobs with these funds. So what we see is the continuing rise of unemployment and the contraction of the market.

B: So if capitalist imperialism can't recover from such a crisis – or in any way that is peaceful or acceptable to the people – then the task of recovery seems to rest on the democratic, anti-imperialist, and revolutionary peoples of the world. What must be done by people who are struggling around the world? How can we build a society a different society that doesn't contain these contradictions?

J: Well, the people have to organize themselves. But to enable the people to organize themselves, there must be systematic campaigns of information and education to let people know what are the causes of the crisis. By knowing the roots of the crisis the people can then think of the solutions. Real problems are solved through knowledge of the internal factors in a problem – the solution can only be found once the real problem has been identified. With an increased level of understanding of the crisis as a problem, then people will get organized.

Naturally, we must prioritize the working class, since it is the most progressive force in productive and political terms. It is the agency for change up to socialism. But in the industrial capitalist countries, you also have the urban petty-bourgeoisie, which is a large class as well. They have to be organized. Those are the two basic classes to be organized.

But at the mass level, there is a real mix-up of ideas among the classes. The monopoly bourgeoisie makes it a point to deceive people by presenting monopoly capitalism with petty-bourgeois dressing: monopoly capitalism is described as “free enterprise” or “the free market”. That's a big lie, no!?!...

When the workers and the petty-bourgeois are organized together, and when they understand the nature of the problems and are ready to fight and struggle, they will understand that what is to be done is revolutionary struggle.

B: What about in the majority of the countries in the world, in the semi-colonized / neocolonized? What are the revolutionary class forces there and where in the world do we see these organized class forces making revolutionary struggle?

J: In many countries, the working class is in the minority and so there has to be consideration of the role of the peasantry. In countries like the Philippines, which is semifeudal, you have the peasantry as the majority class. Then there are also the intermediate social strata – those petty-bourgeois in character. In many countries, the workers, the peasants, and the petty-bourgeois comprise the basic forces of revolution. In the Philippines, these comprise the potential and real basic revolutionary forces against the big comprador agents of imperialism and the feudal lords.

So to look at the whole world, the industrial proletariat is still in the minority. The majority are still peasants. Only 20% of people in the world live in industrialized capitalist countries, while the other 80% remains underdeveloped.

B: Where in the world do we see these three basic forces of the semifeudal, semicolonial countries making revolution?

J: In addition to the Philippines, you have India, Colombia, Peru... In Nepal, there is a diversion towards parliamentary struggle. The Nepali Maoists are still trying to capitalize on what they gained through ten years of protracted peoples' war [in the countryside], and they hope to be able to make a people's uprising by testing the limits of the parliamentary struggle and by discrediting their opponents through that process.

But overall you may say that the revolutionary potential as a result of the current crisis has not yet realized itself. The current conditions are so favorable to revolution. This crisis will run for at least ten years before there is any temporary reduction of the severity. In the absence of revolutionary struggles, the imperialists can manage to reduce the level of gravity of the crisis, even while the crisis remains grave and unresolved. The degradation of the economies of the world can go on and on. But there will come a time when the people will rise up. In fact, the Director of National Intelligence of the US., Admiral Dennis Blair, has already expressed fears that there may be a return to the violence of the 1920s and 1930s [when workers were rising up and fascism was being established to

deal with them].

We must understand that there is a price to be paid for the betrayal of socialism by the revisionists [those so-called communists who led the great socialist countries back into capitalism]. Because of that betrayal it seems as if capitalism will go on forever and that socialism is hopeless. But now, with imperialists in total control of the world, you're going to have an escalation of this kind of economic crisis, with fascism and wars of aggression.

The world is becoming much tighter with more imperialist powers being added to the mix. There's Russia. Russia went from social-imperialism [in the second half of the twentieth century to regular imperialism by the 1990s]. And the same goes for China, which is itself aiming to become a major imperialist power. But if you look close at China it is still a poor country, with sweatshops on the eastern coast supplying consumer products to the US. and other imperialist countries. If you look at the per capita GDP, China is not even in the top 100 countries.

B: History teaches us that the other major threat that looms in times of economic crisis is the threat of inter-imperialist war, or world war. The First World War and the Second World War broke out when the imperialists were in crisis and so decided to go to war with one other in order to redivide the colonies of the world. And with China and Russia asserting themselves more forcefully today...

J: That's right, the world is becoming tighter with the increase of imperialist powers and there is an intense competition and desire to redivide the world, as all of the imperialists struggle to have more access to cheap labour and raw materials, markets, fields of investment, and fields of influence. The danger of war comes out of this contradiction.

Because of the powerful weapons that are in the hands of the imperialists, they first wage war against one another by proxy [or through their neocolonies]. The most effective counter to the possibility of world war – which runs the risk of nuclear war – is the rise of revolutionary civil wars. A nuclear superpower becomes paralyzed when the people themselves amass and prevent imperialists from using their nuclear weapons. But before we can have a coming to the brink of nuclear war, what we will see more and more, from year to year, is the intensification of inter-imperialist struggle through their proxy wars.

B: Let's talk about resistance and organizing, then, which is what is necessary in this time of crisis. Joma, you are the Chairperson of the International League of People's Struggles (ILPS). What is this organization and how can other people and people's organizations get involved?

J: Well, first of all, people should be aware of the main concerns of the ILPS. There are 18 main concerns of the ILPS, and they include: national and social liberation for all peoples of the world; economic development for underdeveloped countries; human rights; the cause of peace against imperialist war; the promotion of trade union rights; agrarian reform; women's rights; the rights of children; and so on. And of course, there is the problem of ecological destruction by the imperialist powers. There is no major issue that is not covered by the ILPS.

With all these concerns, all entities, be they organizations of whatever size, or still unorganized people, can come forward. Genuine mass organizations can join the ILPS. Currently unorganized people can join existing mass organizations. Or people can form organizations that dedicate themselves to becoming member organizations of the ILPS. Applications for membership can be found through the International Coordinating Committee on the ILPS website.

If in a country, there is already a national chapter of the ILPS, then mass organizations can file their applications with that chapter.

B: Why is this level of international level of coordination necessary for people's organizations?

J: The ILPS was conceived of in expectation of the worsening of the crisis of the world capitalist system. Even before 1999, when the formation of ILPS was announced, while the [anti-globalization protests of the] "Battle of Seattle" were going on, it was already seen that world capitalism was going to enter into grave crisis.

B: And while the anti-globalization has come and gone with its summit-hopping protests and rebellions, the ILPS has survived this period and has grown much larger, has it not?

J: Yes, we have grown from 240 organizations at our founding in 2001 to more than 350 organizations.

B: To conclude then Joma, do you have any final thoughts for the people struggling in Canada right now in this time of crisis?

J: I would wish that the people of Canada...

B: And I should also mention that this includes the indigenous peoples, who are setting an example of how to

struggle and fight for their rights...

J: Yes, I wish that the people of Canada of various nationalities, and of course all the indigenous peoples, fight against imperialist globalization. They can play a very important role, because they are right next to the imperialist monster, the US., and of course that of the ruling class of Canada. The ruling classes in US. and Canada work together to oppress the people of the world and the people in their own countries. So I would wish that progressive organizations work hard and succeed in arousing, organizing, and mobilizing the people of Canada – of various nationalities and ethnicities – against monopoly capitalism and for democracy and socialism.

B: Well, Joma, thank you very much for meeting with BASICS Free Community Newsletter and Radio BASICS.

J: Thank you too.

Keynote Address to the International Conference

on Education, Imperialism and Resistance

Shih Hsin University, Taipei, Taiwan

August 10, 2009

From the International Coordinating Committee and entirety of the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS), I convey warmest greetings of solidarity to all the educators and social activists now gathered. I express high appreciation to the ILPS Working Group on Teachers, Researchers and Other Educational Personnel for organizing this international conference on education, imperialism and resistance and to the International Center for Taiwan Social Studies for hosting it.

Thank you for affording me the honor and privilege of delivering this keynote address. The theme of your conference is urgent and of great importance to the educators, the youth and the people of the world. We need to underscore the decisive importance of education in the service of the people, to criticize and condemn the depredations of imperialism and all reaction and present the anti-imperialist and progressive perspectives of struggle for a new and better world. I keep in mind that the participants of this conference come from advanced industrial economies as well as from underdeveloped ones.

1. The decisive importance of education

The availability of formal education at the basic and higher levels to comparatively larger numbers of people differentiates the modern world of the bourgeoisie and working class from the ancient world of the slave masters and feudal lords. The wider extent of education is made possible by the larger amount of surplus product created by the modern forces of production and is required by the greater need for mass literacy, professional and technical skills to maintain as well as to advance the level of material and cultural development.

Every exploitative ruling class in modern society, be it the monopoly bourgeoisie in imperialist countries or the bourgeoisie in combination with the landlord class in the underdeveloped countries, always puts its class imprint on the character and content of education and lays stress on the preservation of the ruling system and continuing exploitation of the working people. In opposition, the revolutionary forces of the people lay stress on the transformative character and content of education for the purpose of national and social liberation, all-round development and the attainment of socialism.

In large historical terms, capitalism has outlived its progressive character in opposition to feudalism in the industrial capitalist countries. It has reached the stage of monopoly capitalism or modern imperialism since the beginning of the 20th century. It has been responsible for ever worsening levels of economic and financial crisis, state repression, fascism, colonial and neocolonial domination, inter-imperialist global wars, wars of aggression against independent countries, damage to the environment and the use of the most backward forms of reaction, including racial, religious and gender biases.

Critique of imperialism

You are absolutely correct in declaring that imperialism is at the root of the suffering and misery of billions of people throughout the world. Indeed, imperialist banks and corporations reap superprofits from the exploitation of the working people in both imperialist and underdeveloped countries and do so far more in the latter countries. The gap between rich and poor countries is ever widening. Widespread poverty and unemployment are deliberately maintained in order to keep ever available a large pool of cheap labor for super-exploitation. Concomitantly, environmental destruction proceeds unabated for the same purpose of extracting superprofits.

In recent decades, it has seemed as if capitalism and imperialism were perpetual and as if the cause of national liberation, people's democracy and socialism were hopeless in the face of the betrayal of socialism by the revisionists, the full-scale restoration of capitalism in revisionist-ruled countries and the imposition of "neoliberal globalization" on the world by the imperialist powers and their local puppets. With Russia having shifted from social-imperialism to rejoin the ranks of the traditional imperialist powers and with China aiming and trying hard to be a major imperialist power, the contradictions within the world capitalist system have intensified, such as those between the imperialist powers and the people of the world, among the imperialist powers themselves and

between the bourgeoisie and the working class in the imperialist countries.

The slogan of "free market" or "neoliberal globalization" stands for the systematic attack by the monopoly bourgeoisie on the working class and the rest of the people. It blames supposed wage inflation and social spending by government for the stagflation that surfaced in the imperialist countries in the 1970s and manifested the crisis of overproduction and the financial crisis in the imperialist economy. Since then, the imperialist countries headed by the US have gone on a rampage of pressing down the real wage level, cutting back on social spending for education, health and other social services and curtailing the rights and hard-earned social benefits of the working people.

The imperialist powers have pushed the underdeveloped countries to denationalize their economies, liberalize investments and trade in favor of the foreign monopolies, privatize state assets and social services and deregulate all previous restrictions on foreign monopoly capital and on the exploitation of the working people, women, children, migrants and the environment. The essence of the policy of "neoliberal globalization" is gobble-ization of the world by the monopoly banks and corporations. It unleashes the insatiable greed of the monopoly bourgeoisie.

I. Such monstrous policy has degraded and devastated education. Government spending for public education has been reduced. Teachers, researchers, and other education personnel suffer the consequences of stagnant and decreasing real salaries as these do not keep up with the rising costs of living. Large numbers of education personnel are laid off as governments close down schools and universities. As the academic and non-academic employees and the student masses become restive, they are subjected to repression by state authorities.

II. The imperialist powers keep on tightening their grip on education on a global scale. They use the WTO General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) to treat education as a commodity for profit-making in the so-called free market and to push the privatization of public schools at all levels. The purpose, content and conduct of teaching and research are made to serve the interests of the imperialist powers and local reactionaries. These factors of miseducation design and produce the curricula, study materials, education and research programs and institutional structures. They use the combination of schools, mass media and other means of information and education as tools of imperialist domination in the cultural field as well as in the socioeconomic and political fields.

The adoption of higher technology in combination with the pushing down of the incomes of the working people in order to maximize corporate profits have engendered a series of worsening crises of overproduction under the policy of "neoliberal globalization". Every rise of production has been accompanied by the reduction of wage incomes and the shrinkage of the market. The attempt of monopoly capitalism to override the crisis of overproduction and the tendency of the profit rate to fall through massive doses of debt financing, the creation of financial bubbles and the financialization of the economy have served to aggravate the crisis.

We are now faced with the worst financial and economic crisis of the world capitalist system since the Great Depression. If we look at the drastic fall of economic growth, unemployment and trade on the global scale since the second half of 2007, we can say that the current crisis follows a trajectory which is already worse than the Great Depression. But the officials and propagandists of the US obfuscate the severity of the crisis by calling it euphemistically as the Great Recession and merely focusing on some temporary effects of the huge bank bailouts in the US.

The downward trend of the US economy continues. It is most evident in the rise of unemployment and the concomitant decline in consumption. The Obama regime continues the neoliberal bias of the Bush regime for bailing out the banks and feeding the greed of the finance oligarchy. The funds that are supposed to stimulate the economy are channeled to certain monopoly corporations that use them to make profits rather than to expand production, create jobs and revive consumer demand. The US will continue to generate crisis in the world capitalist system, worsen the conditions of the working people and even the middle social strata, cause political turmoil within the ruling systems and incite the people to wage all forms of resistance.

The worsening crisis of the world capitalist system leads to the escalation of state terrorism and wars of aggression. The imperialist powers continue to band together to shift the burden of the crisis to the working people and the underdeveloped countries. But the broad masses of the people are bound to fight back for national and social liberation. The imperialist powers become ever more driven by greed as the financial and economic crisis constrains their profit-making. Their struggle for a redivision of the world is bound to intensify as they scramble

for the sources of cheap labor and raw materials, markets, fields of investment and spheres of influence. The worsening crisis, the rise of fascism and the imperialist propensity for war are driving the workers and the rest of the people to fight back and move for a radical change of social system in various countries.

Struggle for a new and better world

To be able to fight for a new and better world, the people need to be aroused, organized and mobilized by the revolutionary party and progressive alliances in every country. In this regard, the revolutionary party analyses the global and domestic situation and sets forth the general program of action and the strategy and tactics. The people must be aroused through information and education work. They must be organized on the basis of class or sectoral affinity as well as on the basis of major social issues. They must be mobilized through mass campaigns and through sectoral and multisectoral alliances.

The teachers and researchers play a crucial role in the struggle of the people for a new and better world. They must develop and utilize knowledge and research against the imperialist domination of these and for the liberation of the people from national and class oppression, for the realization of democracy, for all-rounded development in the service of the people, for world peace and the protection of the environment. They must promote and realize a new type of education and culture that is anti-imperialist, scientific and pro-people.

It is of urgent necessity that the teachers and researchers put forward a critique of imperialist ideology. Such a critique is an important instrument for defining the targets and tasks in the struggle for a radical transformation of society. We must be able to confront imperialist globalization and its terrorist complement of state repression and wars of aggression. In this regard, we must be able to build ever stronger the solidarity of the people of the world and advance their struggle to defend their rights and welfare, including the people's right to education, and advance in stages the struggle for a new and better world of greater freedom, justice, development and peace.

I am pleased to know that participants in this conference are urged to contribute to the critique of any aspect of imperialism and education and are encouraged to make interdisciplinary approaches to such concerns as access to education, the so-called neoliberal reforms in the education sector, the right to education and livelihood, the political economy of education, the politics and theories of knowledge, production and research, the impact of privatization and liberalization on educators and students and adverse effects of neoliberal reforms in education on societies.

The organizers of this conference guide well all the participants by setting forth certain tracks of discussion and calling for papers under each track. I look forward to the publication of the papers on education and imperialism, dealing with historical perspectives, the relation of imperialist globalization to the basic and higher levels of education and the relation of debt and so-called aid to education; to the papers on education and markets, dealing with the relations of education with industry and imperialist globalization, free trade agreements and transnational education; and to the papers on education, oppression and resistance, dealing with the relations of education to social movements, the cause of national liberation, the issues of race, ethnicity and gender and the rights and welfare of educators and related personnel.

The direction, scope and content of your conference are comprehensive and take up the most important issues and concerns. I wish you the utmost success. I am confident that your conference will be very successful not only in interpreting the world but also in proposing how to change it.

Thank you.

Capitalist Crisis Makes Socialism Necessary

Statement on the 20th Anniversary

of the Fall of the Berlin Wall

9 November 2009

Since the fall of the Berlin wall on November 9, 1989, the world capitalist system has sunk deeper into crisis. It is now undergoing its most severe crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s, with some commentators calling the present crisis “the Greater Depression” in terms of its effects on the jobs and livelihood of the workers and peoples of the world.

After emerging as the world’s sole superpower in the wake of the collapse of the former Soviet Union, the US itself is wracked by a severe crisis and is further plunging the world with it. The imperialists and its propagandists perorate on how value and value-creation in the economies of the socialist states and then the modern revisionist regimes were distorted by the state bureaucracy.

Now all the countries of the world in varying degrees are reeling from a crisis driven by unbridled private greed under the slogan of “free market globalization” involving the fantastic accumulation of immense wealth by the financial oligarchy and monopoly capitalists through unrelenting super-exploitation of the working people, financial manipulation and the berserk generation of fictitious capital.

Since the fall of the Berlin Wall, the social conditions of the workers and peoples of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union have plummeted under the conditions of unbridled capitalist exploitation, oppression and violence. Poverty levels have risen due to massive unemployment and depressed incomes. Inflation has been cutting down the value of wages, pensions and savings.

State investment in production and job creation has been significantly reduced. Public allotment to education and other social services has plummeted. The educated have difficulties finding work and illiteracy is spreading. The workers’ and peoples’ health have taken a beating, causing severe malnutrition, stunting growth among the youth and shortening the average life span of people.

The number of children living in the streets and left to fend for themselves in these very cold countries has multiplied. The suicide rate has grown among them by significant percentages. The situation of the street children and society at large is being further aggravated by the current financial and economic crisis.

The anger and discontent of the workers and peoples of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union are becoming manifest in different ways. Parties of the Left are becoming popular and are gaining strength in national elections. The workers and people are speaking out against the accelerated escalation of exploitation, oppression and violence of the big bourgeoisie.

Survey after survey shows that the people feel they are plunging deeper into poverty and that they are increasingly disillusioned and angry with capitalism and its unfulfilled promises. With the onslaught of the current economic and financial crisis, there is rising interest in and study of Marxist and progressive writings. The imperialists and the local ruling classes are responding to this by deflecting the workers and peoples from the class struggle and anti-imperialist solidarity by promoting divisions and hatred based on chauvinism, racism, ethno-centrism and religious bigotry.

The Comecon is gone. But all the former revisionist-ruled countries are now in the tight grip of the US-controlled world capitalist system and are caught up in the turmoil of the gravest economic crisis since the Great Depression. The crisis is whipping up fascism and aggressive wars. The room for inter-imperialist competition has become more cramped and more intense, with Russia and China joining in as big power players.

The Warsaw Pact is gone. But the NATO has been expanded as to include the former revisionist-ruled countries in Eastern Europe, reaching the borders of Russia. Most of the former revisionist-ruled countries are potential hotbeds of fascist repression and aggressive wars as already indicated by the violent disintegration of Yugoslavia by a series of wars instigated by the imperialists and by wars involving Chechnya and Georgia. Mercenary forces from the former revisionist-ruled countries have been deployed by the NATO to distant lands like Iraq and Afghanistan,

The crisis of monopoly capitalism has brought ever-greater suffering among the workers and peoples of the

world. The imperialist-controlled multilateral agencies underestimate world hunger when they report that only 1 billion people go hungry out of the more than six billion human population. They say that this is the largest number of people going hungry in history, and the same number of people suffer from malnutrition.

This situation is bound to get worse, as world economic output is predicted to decrease this year, the first time since World War II. The contraction of employment is estimated to last for another eight years. The number of people living on less than \$2 per day will increase by hundreds of millions. Decreasing demand for consumer goods, semi-manufactures and raw materials impacts heavily on millions of workers and peasants in neocolonial economies.

The workers and peoples of the world are waging various legal and illegal forms of organized action to protest the anti-people policies of imperialism. International gatherings of the monopoly capitalists, the finance oligarchy, and heads of imperialist states have become occasions for mass protests by indignant workers and peoples in the meeting areas and in various countries. Countries assertive of national independence are exposing and lambasting the dictates and impositions of imperialism.

Armed revolutions for national liberation and democracy are continuing and gaining strength in the Philippines, Colombia, India, Peru and Turkey. The people of Iraq and Afghanistan are waging armed resistance against the occupation and colonization of their countries by the US. The armed forms of struggle are bound to grow in strength and advance as a result of the intensification of the crisis of monopoly capitalism.

Since the fall of the Berlin Wall, the workers and peoples of Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union and the world have undergone ever worsening economic and social conditions. They see monopoly capitalism as an evil and bankrupt system that is destroying the world's productive forces and is inflicting immense suffering on the people.

Monopoly capitalism is igniting the people's desire for socialism. So long as imperialist oppression and exploitation persist, the people fight for national and social liberation. It is farthest from the truth that monopoly capitalism is the end of history. The utter bankruptcy of monopoly capitalism and its descent to ever more barbarous forms of plunder and aggression drive the people to fight for their rights and for a bright socialist future.

The workers and peoples of the world are called upon to persevere in the struggle for genuine socialism, against monopoly capitalism that is now in the throes of its worst crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s. The crisis of the world capitalist system makes socialism necessary for humankind.

Contrary to the claims of the imperialists and their propagandists that socialism fell in 1989, the fall of the Berlin Wall has actually meant the collapse of the modern revisionist regimes in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and the completion of the restoration of capitalism. It is the end result of the revisionist betrayal of socialism started by Khrushchov in 1956 and completed by Gorbachov in the years of 1989-91.

The history of socialist countries from the Bolshevik victory of 1917 up to 1956, and from the founding of the People's Republic of China up to 1976 shows great leaps in the advancement of the social, economic, political, cultural and defense situations of the workers and peoples of those countries. The poverty, hunger, joblessness, and the cruelties of exploitation and oppression before the victory of the socialist revolution were overcome. The great victories in socialist construction and revolution were achieved despite imperialist wars of aggression and economic and military blockades and subversion.

The rise of modern revisionism in socialist countries and elsewhere reversed all the great achievements of socialism. Advances in the situation of the workers and peoples were slowly but surely eroded, and pre-revolutionary forms of exploitation, oppression and violence were restored. Together with criminal syndicates in the so-called free market, the modern revisionist big bourgeoisie grew fat on bureaucratic corruption and enjoyed the lifestyles of the rich and famous, while the workers and peoples suffered from the decrease in food, jobs, savings and social services.

As workers and peoples grew restive and began clamoring for reforms, the ruling revisionist regimes imposed severe political repression. In Eastern Europe, and in East Germany especially, this condition fueled the mass protests that brought about the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. The revisionist regimes in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union peacefully gave up power and gave way to the legalization of their bureaucratic loot, the barefaced restoration of capitalism and the blatant privatization of state assets.

Since Nikita Khrushchov's reign in the Soviet Union, genuine proletarian revolutionaries the world over have called the ruling regimes in the Soviet Union and its satellite states in Eastern Europe as modern revisionists, who

mouth socialism but practice capitalism. They have predicted that it will not take long before capitalism reveals itself bare-faced in these countries.

The fall of the Wall has shown how accurate their predictions are. The modern revisionists in these countries have since exposed themselves as pseudo-communists and anti-communists. It is modern revisionism, not socialism, which fell with the Berlin Wall and delivered the workers and peoples of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe into the even more predatory and violent rule of barefaced capitalism. The revisionists had earlier undermined, eroded and destroyed socialism.

Since 1989 up to the present, imperialism and its well-paid propagandists in the mass media and academe have tirelessly repeated their line on the fall of the Berlin Wall. They have misrepresented the revisionist regimes as socialist and boasted that their fall meant the futility of socialism and the end of history with capitalism and liberal democracy.

They have touted the jump from the frying pan of revisionist-ruled state monopoly capitalism to the flames of barefaced capitalism as the beginning of development and democracy. But the imperialist powers are incomparable in discrediting monopoly capitalism through their unbridled plunder and wars of aggression and the recurrent and increasingly severe crisis.

The workers and peoples of the world are subjected to ever-increasing exploitation, oppression and violence and are impelled to wage resistance, seek national and social liberation and aim for the attainment of socialism. The present crisis, which has been generated by the US-directed policy of neoliberal "globalization" in the last three decades, incites the people to struggle for socialism.

The world capitalist system continues to sink deeper into crisis. It is devastating jobs and livelihood of the workers and peoples of the world. The profuse use of public funds to bail out the big banks and corporations in the military industrial complex is building bigger bubbles than ever before. These are bound to burst and cause a steeper fall in the crisis.

The US and its imperialist allies have generated the global financial and economic crisis, have plunged the world into a state of economic depression and have aggravated and deepened the conditions for state terrorism and aggressive wars. The combination of state monopoly capitalism and monopoly capitalism in imperialist countries is responsible for the unprecedentedly greatest devastation of productive forces through the most rapacious forms of private profit-taking and private accumulation, including the wanton creation of fictitious capital.

We are in the era of modern imperialism and proletarian revolution. Further economic crisis, social disorder, state terrorism and imperialist wars of aggression are in prospect. These are the objective conditions for the rise of revolutionary movements for national and social liberation led by the working class.

Message of Solidarity to Contend on its 42nd

Anniversary Celebration

August 23, 2010

I wish to convey warmest greetings of solidarity to all my academic colleagues in the Congress of Teachers/Educators for Nationalism and Democracy (CONTEND) on the occasion of its celebration of the 16th anniversary of its founding on July 22, 1994. I am proud to give you a message of unity as I did in 1998 during your anti-imperialist conference in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Philippine-American War.

I salute CONTEND as a combination of the associations of militant teachers and educators from public and private schools, colleges, and universities from all over the Philippines, who are fully aware of the semicolonial and semifeudal character of Philippine society and accept the role as agents of social change and who are ever committed to raising the social and political consciousness of teachers, the defense of their democratic rights, and sharpening of their skills for the purpose of promoting a progressive, nationalist, scientific and mass-oriented education and culture.

I congratulate you for all your efforts and achievements in arousing, organizing and mobilizing the teachers to serve not only their distinctive sectoral interest but also the entire Filipino people in the struggle for national liberation and democracy against US imperialism and the local exploiting classes. You have excelled at upholding, defending and promoting the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal line against the semi-colonial and semi-feudal conditions.

You have attained outstanding and resounding success at the political work of clarifying the national democratic line and applying it on important issues affecting the academic community and the people on a national and international scale. You have persevered in struggle not only against barefaced adversaries who perpetuate pro-imperialist and anti-people lines of thought, especially in the curriculum, but also against pseudo-progressives who stir up supposedly fashionable anti-Marxist trends like postmodernism, neoliberal economics and bourgeois feminism masquerading as socialist.

You have manifested your position in so many conferences and forums. You have issued so many enlightening books, pamphlets and statements. Academics and non-academics are gratified to read the books that you have published: *Serve the People*, *ang Radikal na Kasaysayan ng UP*, *Mula Tore*, *Tungong Palengke* against neoliberal education, three books of poetry and three anthologies of poetry on various themes, including the Hacienda Luisita massacre in 2004 and other grievous human rights violations and the people's demand to oust Arroyo from power.

To foster transformative education, you have undertaken film screening of local and international films and documentaries. You have engaged in mass actions on every campus of tertiary education where your association exists and, as part of the wider frame of the Alliance of Concerned Teachers, you have participated in its activities. You have joined and even spearheaded broad formations in the University of the Philippines on issues with regard to good governance, electoral fraud, human rights and the ouster of Arroyo. You have played an important role in mass campaigns to oust Estrada and Arroyo, against the Hacienda Luisita massacre and other human rights violations and against US military intervention in the Philippines and US wars of aggression abroad, especially in Iraq, Afghanistan and Palestine.

I appreciate the extent of recruitment that has been done by CONTEND. I measure my appreciation in relation to your perseverance in struggle over the years and also in relation to the total number of teachers on the campus where your association exists. I believe that the national democratic line is so appealing to the broad masses of teacher that a substantial number of them can be recruited from year to year to become members of CONTEND. As regards those who do not join CONTEND, the policy of the united front can be applied in order to cooperate with them. The possibility of alliance on issues is always possible with teachers who are either active or not active in the traditional faculty association or union and of course with the association of non-academic employees.

I have read the Constitution of CONTEND promulgated in 1994. It envisions some kind of a federation of associations in various schools, colleges and universities. And it is quite elaborate in seeking to combine such

associations and providing them with the organs of leadership at various levels. But it does not make clear the basic rule of recruitment, the basic tasks and basic rights and duties of individual members per association. It is advisable that in this regard the Constitution is amended or a provision of the By-Laws or a set of guidelines is made.

As it is, your Constitution is good in terms of its preambular description of CONTEND, its enumeration of principles and objectives and its conceptualization of so many associations to combine and to be governed by leading organs at various levels. But it is necessary to have clear provisions about the recruitment, basic rights and duties of individual members. Thus, the task of recruiting more members is made simple and easy through compliance with the provisions of the Constitution.

I urge you to intensify your efforts at solid mass organizing and thereby increase your political strength. You need to pay close attention to the recruitment of the individual members of every existing association of CONTEND as well as the recruitment of the initial members of an association that is in the process of being established or reestablished. I do not know how much has been the adverse effect of not having clear provisions on the recruitment of individual members. But I am certain that it does no harm to have such provisions.

Aside from the need to make clear the basic requirements for recruitment and membership of individuals, there is also a need to examine what are possibly the subjective tendencies that can prevent or slow down the growth of an association. These tendencies or factors may include the petty bourgeois small group mentality, contempt for mass organizing, unwitting conceit towards non-members and towards new members, plain neglect of the task of recruitment and failure to keep and develop those already recruited as members.

There should be no problem about recruiting an ever increasing number of individual members and building the member-associations of CONTEND. The national democratic line responds to the demands of the workers, peasants, urban petty bourgeoisie and even the middle bourgeoisie and upholds their rights and interests. We must trust and rely on the mass of teachers as being capable of understanding the principles and objectives of CONTEND and the national democratic movement, willing to be recruited and to recruit others and ever ready to participate in various campaigns launched by CONTEND.

I am pleased to know that by way of celebrating the founding anniversary of CONTEND you are holding a forum with the theme, BACK TO CLASS: O Kung Bakit Hindi Kadiri ang Makauring Pagsusuri and with an array of distinguished speakers to discuss topics related to the concept and reality of social classes. I presume that the discussion of the subject is meant to deepen and heighten your understanding of who are the friends and who are the enemies of the national democratic revolution in class terms. I cannot help but contribute my share in the discussion.

We may define classes as divisions of society defined by ownership of the means of production and the relations of production, role in the process of production, share in the distribution of the social product and the mode of thinking on the social issues. To know best the character of a society, it is necessary to make a class analysis and know the class composition. The class analysis starts with looking at the material base or mode of production and proceeds to the political and cultural superstructure. But to avoid the pitfalls of economic determinism or reductionism, we must grasp the dialectical interaction of the economic, political and cultural aspects of society.

In an exploitative society, there are basic exploiting and exploited classes and there are intermediate classes often called the middle class, usually the petty and middle bourgeoisie. In an industrial capitalist society, the capitalist class and working class are the basic opposite classes. In a semicolonial and semifeudal society, there are the comprador bourgeoisie and landlord class on one hand and the working class and peasantry on the other hand.

The ruling exploitative class controls the economic base by owning the means of production and determining the relations of production and division of labor and the distribution of the social product. It uses the political and cultural superstructure to maintain its class rule. The legal system upholds the property rights of the ruling class and the coercive apparatuses of the state are used to enforce the laws favoring the ruling class. Cultural institutions and practices are used to make the ruling class look good and acceptable, indoctrinate the people and to entertain and divert them from resisting the exploitative and oppressive ruling system.

To fight the ruling class and overthrow the ruling system, the exploited and oppressed classes have to wage a class struggle in the socioeconomic, political and cultural fields. The class struggle of the working class arises in

the socioeconomic field and develops from the spontaneous actions of the class in itself to the more conscious better-organized trade union and political actions of the class for itself. The socioeconomic struggles give rise to political struggles which require the leadership of the party of the working class as a revolutionary class. Cultural class struggles also arise and develop. The all-round class struggle enables the revolutionary class to strengthen itself together with the rest of the people and to develop further until they can overthrow the old social system and establish an entirely new one.

There is no other category more significant and effective than social class in the process of maintaining, reforming or radically transforming a social system. But we must also be mindful of categories smaller than the class and subsumable by the class. There may be elite groups of the ruling class which are distinguished by some outstanding competency or representation of a new dominant section of the class or rising type of economic activity. There may be groups or sections in any class that are identifiable by certain industries, occupations, clans and regions and by racial, ethnic, religious and other cultural characteristics.

Other than class, there are important social categories that seem to transcend class category such as individuals, families, clans, tribes, associations, nations, nation-states and associations of states. Such categories are even used to obscure and deny the existence of classes and class struggle. But there is no category more important than classes in the consideration and realization of revolutionary change in any country even when the sense of national unity is also of decisive importance in the people's struggle for national liberation against imperialism.

A reactionary ruling class is always definitely conscious of and acts according to its own class interests and it always seeks to limit, undermine and divert the class consciousness of the exploited and oppressed people and prevent them from acting concertedly in their interest. It is afraid of the toiling masses of workers and peasants becoming conscious of their classes and becoming militated against the handful of exploiters and the conditions of exploitation

Whatever is the level of class consciousness and militancy of the exploited classes, the exploiting classes always engage in class struggle against them. They do so in various ways in order to preempt and prevent the rise of the class consciousness among the exploited as well as to counter and combat an already conscious and militant class struggle of the exploited against the exploiters.

Like the Philippine reactionary state, the University of the Philippines carries as official ideology a pro-imperialist kind of liberalism. It considers individual rights in the abstract as the most important aspect of democracy, glosses over the existence of classes and class struggle and pays lip service to national and public interest. It is a hotbed of self-serving individualism and subjectivism, variegated and yet all are in the mold of petty bourgeois thinking that is servile to the foreign monopoly capitalists and local exploiting classes. Its main purpose is to teach and train the professionals and bureaucrats for the semi-colonial and semifeudal ruling system.

A major method of the bourgeoisie for obfuscating or laying aside the theory and practice of class struggle is to play up individualism, narrow family interest, ethnocentrism, religious sectarianism, chauvinism and a pro-imperialist sense of globalization against the national and class rights and interests of the working people. Let us do the opposite. Let us uphold the class struggle of the working people as the key link and harmonize their class rights with our legitimate rights and interests as individuals, as family, as group, as an ethnic community, as a nation and as internationalists against imperialism and all reaction.

The theory of classes and class struggle was originated by bourgeois thinkers, who were then revolutionary democrats against the feudal order, and was an important element in the advance of social science in France in the 18th century. Marx himself said that he did not originate such theory but he pointed out as his unique achievement the extension and development of such theory to the theory of the proletarian revolution and class dictatorship of the proletariat against the class dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

It is of crucial importance that we deepen, widen and heighten our knowledge of the reality of social classes and the theory and practice of class struggle up to proletarian revolution and class dictatorship of the proletariat. Why so strong a term as class dictatorship? It refers in the first place to the bourgeois state as organized violence against the proletariat and consequently the proletariat must smash the bureaucratic and military machinery of the bourgeois state in order to liberate the proletariat and the rest of the exploited people. You may use the scientifically frank term of class dictatorship but also say in a more gentle way, people's democratic or socialist state or democratic rule of the working people, depending on the actual conditions.

It is of urgent necessity to study and apply the theory of classes and class struggle up to proletarian revolution

and proletarian class dictatorship in view of fact that the financial oligarchy and monopoly bourgeoisie have systematically and effectively propagandized that the working people of the world must forget about class struggle. And yet they have waged the most rapacious and violent class struggle against the working people in the last three decades under the policy regime of “neoliberal globalization” and unceasing state terrorism, foreign military intervention and wars of aggression unleashed by the US unilaterally or multilaterally in collaboration with other imperialist powers.

Take note that “neoliberalism” or “free market” is a petty bourgeois expression meant to appeal to the middle class and camouflage the big bourgeois interest in the policy. Under such a policy, the imperialist powers and their agents all over the world have blamed any rise of the wage level of workers and government social spending for the recurrent and worsening economic crises and have adopted and implemented a wide variety of cruel measures against the working class and the entire people.

They have brought down the levels of income of the toiling masses and most of the middle class, attacked their hard-won social rights and cut back government social spending. They have accelerated the accumulation of capital in the hands of the monopoly bourgeoisie through tax cuts, privatization of public resources, liberalization of trade and investments, deregulation against public interest, the working people, women, children and the environment and the denationalization of the economies of the client-states like the Philippines.

It is high time that academics of the UP and all other schools strive to take the standpoint of the anti-imperialist progressive and optimally that of the proletarian revolutionary and contribute to raising the level of class consciousness and class struggle of the working people against the biggest financial and industrial bourgeoisie in the imperialist countries and the big comprador bourgeoisie and landlord class in the Philippines. We must aim for victory in the people’s democratic revolution and advance to socialism.

The crisis of the world capitalist system and the domestic ruling system is worsening rapidly. It is now characterized by prolonged global depression and wars aggression. The epochal struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat is once more conspicuous in the imperialist countries and the rest of the world. In the Philippines, the people’s democratic revolution is intensifying. The struggle for national liberation against foreign monopoly capitalism is necessarily linked to and interactive with the class struggle for social liberation against the comprador big bourgeoisie and the landlord class.

I hope that the current generation of academics carry on the work to which we in my generation have committed ourselves. Take the stand, viewpoint and method of materialist dialectics and use class analysis in order to rip apart and debunk any attempt of the big bourgeoisie and its political and intellectual agents (mostly recruited from the ranks of the university-educated and unremolded petty bourgeois) to misrepresent capitalism and liberalism as the end of history, ridicule proletarian class struggle and revolution as obsolete and irrelevant and misrepresent the latest petty bourgeois intellectual spin as new and therefore correct.

I have always told the petty bourgeois faddists among the intellectuals on and off campus and the NGO entrepreneurs who brag about their new ideas and new language that all the newly-minted terms of petty bourgeois subjectivism the imperialist-directed think tanks, universities, institutions, business corporations and mass media can never make Adam Smith younger than Karl Marx.

It is capitalism, especially monopoly capitalism and finance monopoly capitalism, that is obsolete and moribund. We are in the midst of an unprecedentedly severe crisis of global capitalism and we are now on the eve of an unprecedentedly great rebound of the anti-imperialist and socialist movement to a new and higher level of revolutionary struggle from the deep trough caused by revisionist betrayal of socialism, capitalist restoration and neocolonialism.

Interview by Ang Bayan

November 20, 2010

It has been 40 years since the Central Publishing House of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) first published *Philippine Society and Revolution* (PSR). In the past 40 years, PSR has served as the CPP's principal reference and guide in laying down the basic principles of the two-stage revolution in the Philippines based on the analysis of concrete conditions of the semicolonial and semifeudal system. To commemorate the anniversary of PSR and reaffirm the principles it laid down, Ang Bayan decided to interview Comrade Jose Ma. Sison who, as CPP founding chair Amado Guerrero was the principal author of the PSR.

1. *Can you relate to our readers certain historical facts about PSR? When did you start writing it? Who were involved in the research and writing? When was it first published and in what form? To your knowledge, how many times has the book been printed?*

JMS: I wrote it soon after the launching of the people's war and on the eve of the First Quarter Storm of 1970. I started writing and finished it in the third quarter of 1969. Some comrades in the EC/CC like Charlie del Rosario and Monico Atienza brought me the reference materials that I needed. When I finished the rough draft around August 1969, I gave it to Julie de Lima and other individuals and the members of the Central Committee to gather their suggestions and comments.

The first edition of *PSR* was published in mimeographed form in October 1969, a copy of which was submitted for publication in the *Philippine Collegian* under the title *Philippine Crisis and Revolution* (this can be considered the second edition). *Pulang Tala Publications* published the third edition and *Ta Kung Pao* of Hongkong, the fourth edition in 1970. The fifth and sixth editions in English and Pilipino were mimeographed by the CPP Central Publishing House in 1971. In 1977, the *Katipunan ng Demokratikong Pilipino* published the seventh edition in the US. This can be considered the fourth edition if the mimeographed editions are excluded.

Other editions were released after my capture in 1977. There were even German and Turkish translations and a comics edition.

2. *PSR is one of the most important Marxist-Leninist theoretical works of the revolutionary movement in the Philippines. What theoretical challenges faced its writing? What do you think are the key contributions of PSR to the theory of revolution in the Philippines? Has it made any contribution to theory that is relevant beyond the practice of the Philippine revolution?*

JMS: The biggest theoretical challenge was the application of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism to Philippine history and circumstances. It necessitated the concrete analysis of concrete conditions. The key contributions of *PSR* are its characterization of Philippine society as semicolonial and semifeudal and the corresponding line of national and democratic revolution under the leadership of the working class.

In this regard, *PSR* specified the allied classes (workers, peasants, the petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie) and the class enemies (big compradors and landlords) in the new democratic revolution. It also laid down the principal task: national liberation and democratic revolution. It defined as well the stages of the Philippine revolution: people's new democracy and socialism.

3. *Before PSR, there were Struggle for National Democracy (SND) and the document "Rectify Errors, Rebuild the Party" (RERP) which were among the first major theoretical works of the national democratic movement in the Philippines. Can you recount the history of the development of the theory of Philippine revolution up to the publication of PSR in 1970?*

JMS: The publication of *SND* and the *RERP* document was necessary and essential. *SND* paved the way for the exposition of the people's basic problems and the possible revolutionary solution in legal and persuasive language. It was in line with the tradition of the old democratic revolution of 1896 and the new democratic revolution under the leadership of the working class. It was based on the prevailing conditions and needs of the Filipino people, especially the toiling masses.

RERP was seminal in the analysis of the experience of the old merger party of the Communist and Socialist

Parties. It exposed the errors and weaknesses which led to the failure of the revolution. It had therefore laid down what must be done in order to realize the ideological, political and organizational requirements to rebuild the revolutionary party of the proletariat, the people's army and the united front and to rekindle and advance the revolution towards victory.

4. What was the biggest contribution of PSR to the course of the Philippine revolution in the past 40 years? What role did it play in the different stages of development of the Philippine revolution?

JMS: PSR greatly strengthened the general line earlier laid down by the Party Constitution and the Program for a People's Democratic Revolution. Since the first year of the people's war up to the present, PSR has played a key role in shedding light about the history, the basic problems and the revolutionary solution of the Filipino people.

PSR has played such an important role in every stage of the revolution. PSR further enlightens with the help of recent writings based on the advances of the revolution and the worsening of the crisis of the rotten system. PSR has been an effective tool of the Party in raising the consciousness and fighting will of Party members and mass activists.

5. The fourth edition of PSR included "Specific Characteristics of Our People's War" and "Our Urgent Tasks" which emphasized the theoretical importance of this document. What other theoretical works of the CPP do you think have equal weight and significance in terms of the development of the theory of revolution in the Philippines?

JMS: The fourth edition (if the three mimeographed editions are not counted) indeed emphasized the theoretical importance of the two supplementary documents, which in turn further enhanced PSR. The documents of similar importance and significance in the development of the theory of revolution in the Philippines are "On the Mode of Production in the Philippines" (1983), "Philippine Crisis and Revolution" (1986), "Stand for Socialism Against Modern Revisionism" (1992) and "Reaffirm Our Basic Principles and Rectify the Errors" (1992), the basic documents of the Second Great Rectification Movement, and basic documents against the policy of neoliberal globalization and other offensives of imperialism.

6. It has been over 40 years since the PSR was first published. How would you compare Philippine society today to the conditions then? Do you think PSR remains an effective guide for the Philippine revolution? Do you see a need for a new edition, revision or supplement to PSR?

JMS: The continuing semicolonial and semifeudal conditions are further worsening and deepening. Thus, PSR remains an effective guide for the Philippine national and democratic revolution. The Party continues to issue new editions of PSR and supplement it with new related documents. However, I am tempted to write a new edition with expanded text dealing with the past four decades.

7. How can PSR further benefit the current stage of the revolution, especially in line with the CPP's call to achieve the strategic stalemate in five years? What do you think are the crucial issues that have to be studied by Philippine revolutionaries in order to further invigorate the different fields of struggle?

JMS: Always review PSR and apply it to current circumstances and events. Under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought (or Maoism), PSR explains why the people's war is necessary and how to advance it in stages: from the strategic defensive to the strategic stalemate and from the strategic stalemate to the strategic offensive. PSR also laid down the need to fulfill the political requirements in order to advance the people's war from one stage to the next.

The Party must be strengthened ideologically, politically and organizationally. The people's army must be strengthened through armed struggle, agrarian revolution and the building of the mass base and organs of political power. There must be a united front policy involving certain types of alliances: the basic worker-peasant alliance, the progressive alliance of the toiling masses and the urban petty bourgeoisie, the patriotic alliance of the progressive classes and the national bourgeoisie and the temporary and unstable alliance with reactionaries fighting the enemy.

Philippine Revolution and Just Peace,

Prospects in the Global Context

Letter from Prof. Jose Maria Sison

(Contribution to a Festschrift in honor of National Artist Bienvenido L. Lumbera - scholar, writer, pedagogue, and Filipino - on his 80th birthday on 11 April 2012)

Dr. Bienvenido Lumbera

National Artist

Professor Emeritus, University of the Philippines

Dear Bien,

I am honored and delighted to participate in the festschrift in your honor on the occasion of your 80th birthday. In this regard, I am contributing this open letter. I understand that I can deal with any subject that is of interest to you. I have chosen to write on the question of revolution and just peace. But first let me reminisce.

It was sometime in November 1986 when we last met in Osaka where you were teaching Philippine studies at the Foreign Languages University. You expressed regrets that you were abroad when the Marcos fascist dictatorship fell. And I retorted that you had contributed a lot towards the downfall of Marcos since a long time ago and that even if I had been in the Philippines I was under maximum security detention and had no chance to be with the masses at Edsa in February 1986.

At any rate, I have always thought that we belong to the same revolutionary tradition of the Filipino people and to the same continuum of struggle for national liberation and democracy. There are so many ways for us to contribute to the Philippine revolution and even if this were not completely realized in our lifetime we are confident that it would go on and carry forward our contributions until the people win complete victory.

Since I became aware of your revolutionary work in the cultural field in the late 1960s and early 1970s, I have always kept you in the highest comradely regard. I have also been grateful to you for giving serious attention to my critical work on social consciousness in Philippine poetry and to my creative output of poems. You have generously expressed appreciation for *Prison and Beyond* and you have even more generously written the *dalit* for the musicale, *Ang Makata'y Mandirigma, Ang Mandirigma'y Makata*.

We have a common cause in seeking the fulfilment of the people's aspirations for greater freedom, democracy, social justice, development and international solidarity. And I presume that you might be interested in an assessment of realities and possibilities in the last lap of our existence.

Philippine revolution and just peace

The semi-colonial and semi-feudal character of Philippine society persists. The US and its imperialist allies continue to dominate our country economically, financially, politically and culturally despite the grant of nominal independence in 1946. The local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords are extremely servile to their foreign masters. So are their political representatives and agents who lord over the people.

The reactionary state uses all kinds of deception and violence to obfuscate the three evil forces: foreign monopoly capitalism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. These forces mercilessly exploit the people and cause their poverty and underdevelopment of our country. But the rulers of our country spread the obvious lie that the revolutionary resistance of the people is to blame for the widespread poverty and gross underdevelopment. They insult the victims by misrepresenting them as culprits.

They are hostile to the patriotic and progressive demands of the people, such as the following: the assertion and exercise of national independence to do away with unequal treaties, agreements and arrangements; the democratic empowerment of the people against the oligarchy of big compradors and landlords; land reform and national industrialization; promotion of a national, scientific and mass culture; and an independent foreign policy for development and world peace.

The Aquino regime is no different from the Arroyo regime. It is an instrument of big comprador-landlord rule. It does not propose anything to change the semi-colonial and semi-feudal character of society. It is so obsessed with seeking to destroy the revolutionary movement. Yet the ruling system is now so weak because of its own

chronic crisis as well as the grave crisis of the world capitalist system. It has increasing difficulties in getting new foreign loans to cover the growing trade and budgetary deficits and the mounting foreign debt.

It is so desperate like the previous regime that it has wantonly opened the entire country to mining by foreign and big comprador firms, merely for the export of mineral ores at dirt cheap prices. The remittances of overseas contract workers are now being reduced by the crisis. The regime is corrupt no matter how much it tries to look clean. The people see how officials continue to enrich themselves by collaborating with foreign banks and firms in the perpetuation of consumption-oriented imports and in the plunder of our natural resources. The regime condones the gross human rights violations by the previous regime and is perpetrating them at an alarming rate.

Oplan Bayanihan is a plan of military suppression designed under the US Counterinsurgency Guide. It is no different from Oplan Bantay Laya in terms of pursuing the triad of military psywar, intelligence gathering and combat operations. But the Aquino regime tries in vain to make it look different by using Orwellian language, misrepresenting outright military operations as peace and development operations. It is appropriating billions of pesos as handouts under a sham anti-poverty program for the purpose of undermining the mass base of the revolutionary movement and funding base-denial operations of the AFP.

The people's clamor for a just peace is resounding. But the Aquino administration and the particular office of the reactionary government (GPH) in charge of peace negotiations with the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) are hell-bent on paralyzing and scuttling said negotiations, unless the latter submits to a scheme of capitulation and pacification. They have made it indubitably clear that they have no intention of addressing the roots of the armed conflict and forging agreements on basic social, economic and political reforms.

They have openly derided The Hague Joint Declaration as a document of "perpetual division," the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees as devoid of any obligation on the part of the reactionary government and the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Laws as of no value with regard to the gross violations of human rights and the more than 350 political prisoners detained on trumped up charges of common crimes.

Like the Arroyo regime, the Aquino regime keeps on demanding ceasefire as a way of blocking and putting away the urgent need to address the roots of the armed conflict and agree on basic reforms. In response, the NDFP has proposed truce and alliance on the basis of a general statement of common intent to realize certain basic demands of the people, including the assertion of national independence, democratic empowerment of the working people, land reform and national industrialization and prioritizing education, health and other social services over the military and foreign debt service. But the Aquino regime has refused to seriously consider the NDFP proposal like all previous anti-national and anti-democratic regimes.

The Filipino people are keenly aware of the scheme of the US and the Aquino regime to destroy the revolutionary forces. They have therefore become more than ever resolved to pursue the general line of struggle for national liberation and democracy through protracted people's war; and to realize in five years' time the advance from the stage of strategic defensive to that of strategic stalemate.

Being the chief political consultant of the NDFP in peace negotiations with the Manila government, I am a daily visitor of www.philippinerevolution.net. Basing myself on the publications of the Communist Party of the Philippines, I am aware of the determination of the revolutionary forces to carry out the political prerequisites and the politico-military strategy and tactics for achieving the advance from strategic defensive to strategic stalemate.

The first political prerequisite is further strengthening the CPP as the advanced detachment of the working class and leading force of the Philippine revolution. The announced objective is to recruit at least 200,000 CPP members, educate them in Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and on the program of people's democratic revolution, develop cadres and members through mass struggles and in various fields of activity and to build Party branches and groups in the people's army and the localities.

The CPP is responsible for expanding and deepening the mass movement along the new democratic line through the people's army, the mass organizations and the national united front. More than ever the broad masses of the people are to be aroused, organized and mobilized, The mass organizations of workers, peasants, fishermen, urban poor, youth, women, professionals, cultural activists and children are to be strengthened. The cultural revolution, in which you are so deeply interested, plays a decisive role in enlightening and militating the masses

The organs of democratic political power (starting with appointive barrio organizing committees and elected

barrio revolutionary committees) are to be increased at various possible levels, from the village upwards. They function as the people's government replacing the reactionary government of the big compradors and landlords in the guerrilla fronts. They are based on the mass organizations and the unorganized masses and they are assisted by such working committees as those public education, health, land reform, production, finance, defense, arbitration and cultural activities.

The CPP ensures that revolutionary politics is in command and exercises absolute leadership over the New People's Army. Together they are responsible for providing politico-military training to the NPA commanders and fighters as well as to the people's militia and self-defense units. The objective is to have an ever increasing number of Red commanders and fighters with firm revolutionary stand, proficient in combat and capable of mass work, base building and production.

The NPA is expected to increase its rifle strength to 25,000 and build 180 guerrilla fronts in order to reach the stage of the strategic stalemate. The people's militia shall be strong in tens of thousands and the self-defense units of the mass organizations shall be in hundreds of thousands. They are to be strengthened as reserve and augmentation force for the people's army. They serve as the local internal security force to allow the full-time NPA units to engage in more tactical offensives on a wider scale, with short rest periods.

The strategic line of the people's war is to encircle the cities from the countryside and accumulate armed strength until it becomes possible to seize power in the cities and on a nationwide scale. The enemy strength is divided by the expanse of the countryside and by the archipelagic character of the country. Whenever possible, rural-based commandos of the people's army and armed city partisans can deliver head blows to the enemy.

The people's army is conceived of going through three probable strategic stages of development: defensive, stalemate and offensive. At the current stage of the strategic defensive for the NPA, the enemy forces may be ten times strategically superior in terms of trained personnel and equipment. But at the tactical level, the NPA can be ten times superior by taking the initiative to choose the time and place to attack a weak part of the enemy and mustering the superior force to annihilate it.

The NPA launches quick tactical offensives that it is sure of winning and avoids protracted battles at which the outcome is uncertain. It is engaged in a war of fluid movement. It does not have fixed points or fixed structures to defend. It trades space for time to be able to gain a favorable position for launching tactical offensives. As required by circumstances, it can use flexibly such tactics of guerrilla warfare as dispersal, shifting and concentration.

Dispersal is a tactic for depriving the enemy of a visible target or for doing mass work under favorable conditions in certain areas. Shifting is a tactic for getting out of the way of a superior enemy force or getting out of an encirclement and going to a more advantageous position. Concentration is a tactic for gathering enough force for offensives or enforcing the policy or law of the revolutionary government.

The main and essential strength of the NPA is that it upholds, defends and fights for the national and democratic rights and interests of the people. For being puppets and mercenaries of the US and the exploiting classes, the reactionary army, police and the paramilitary forces are hated by the people and are kept blind and deaf by them. They also show off their strength and expose their weaknesses. They attack the people and incur their ire. Thus, the NPA has ample opportunities to discover the weak points of the enemy and to create the opportunities for tactical offensives. So many small army detachments, police stations, paramilitary units and private armed guards are so vulnerable to NPA offensives. In fact, the NPA is targeting them at an increasing frequency.

In the course of the people's war, the main objective of the people's army is to launch tactical offensives and annihilate enemy units in order to seize weapons from the enemy, accumulate armed strength and form more fighting units. Thus, the NPA weakens the enemy over time, steadily changes the balance of forces and realizes eventually the advance from one strategic stage to another. Many tactics are available for carrying out tactical offensives in the form of ambushes and raids with the element of surprise and quick decision.

Ambushes are carried out against enemy units traveling on vehicles or marching; and raids are launched against fixed positions of the enemy through subterfuge, surprise and superior force. The NPA gives priority to the seizure of weapons from the hands of enemy personnel or from their armories. An enemy position or unit may be wiped out or harassed and the reinforcement may be the main target for annihilation. When NPA offensives draw enemy reaction to concentrate on a certain area, the NPA can launch offensives in other areas where enemy forces are weak. A series of tactical offensives may be carried out according to a definite plan or according to general guidelines on the scale of a guerrilla front, a district, a province, region or the entire country.

Attrition is a secondary objective of the people's war but is very important in weakening and demoralizing the enemy. Teams are formed and deployed for sniping, laying mines, harassing enemy detachments and sabotaging or destroying enemy equipment and facilities, such as military transport and fuel depots. Such actions have the effect of throwing off balance and deterring even to the extent of completely frustrating enemy offensive operations. Strategically, the cumulation of losses from attritive actions by the NPA, the people's militia, the commando teams and armed city partisans contribute to weakening the enemy armed forces.

More and more enemy personnel can be forced to assume guard duties and become dispersed and vulnerable as the NPA carries out arrest orders against tyrants, human rights violators and other criminal bigwigs and dismantles or disables plantations, logging companies, mines and other business enterprises that disobey the laws and regulations of the people's government, engage in extreme exploitation, violently oppose land reform and ruin the environment. I suppose that the NPA is pleased whenever the rulers react by assigning armed units for guard duty or passive defense at disparate points, especially in the hinterlands.

As proven in the last more than forty years, the exploited and oppressed masses of the people are not helpless and hopeless. They have a clear general line of struggle for national liberation and democracy and have a clear perspective of socialism. The revolutionary forces and the people have overcome the terrible campaigns of suppression against them, including a 14-year long fascist dictatorship, the deceptive pseudo-democratic regimes after Marcos and the ten-year murderous and corrupt Arroyo regime.

They have also prevailed over major "Left" and Right opportunist errors and over the wrecking operations by the incorrigible opportunists who eventually went over to the enemy side. They have carried out successfully the Second Great Rectification Movement and have become far stronger than ever before. The strength of the NPA in 1986 would have been far more than 6,100 rifles (falsely claimed by the AFP as 25,000) if not for the major opportunist errors in the 1980s and the earlier failure to set a policy of multiplying platoons on a nationwide scale as the strike force since 1979.

As a result of the rectification movement, the revolutionary forces have revitalized themselves and are now in the process of striving to advance from the strategic defensive to the strategic stalemate. The plan to advance to the strategic stalemate is well-grounded on the current revolutionary strength and capabilities. It can be anticipated that upon reaching the threshold of the strategic stalemate the revolutionary movement would advance at a faster rate than ever before. The US can be expected to become more aggressive against the Philippine revolution even as it is now bogged down in several wars of aggression and preoccupied with a severe domestic crisis.

Prospects in the global context

At this point, I wish to consider the prospects for the Philippine revolution in the global context. The world capitalist system is now in a grave economic and financial crisis. A protracted kind of depression, comparable to, and in some ways even worse than that of the Great Depression in the 1930s, afflicts the people of the world. It is generating fascism and related ultra-reactionary currents and causing further wars of aggression. The broad masses of the people are suffering severely from the relentless escalation of exploitation and oppression. But they are being driven to rise up and resist on a global scale.

When the neoliberal policy of "free market" globalization was launched more than thirty years ago, it was considered by the US and its imperialist partners as the surefire way of solving the problem of stagflation by pressing down wages and cutting back on government social spending and by liberalizing trade and investments, privatizing state assets and doing away with regulations. The one-sided premise is that the monopoly bourgeoisie is the creator of wealth and provider of jobs and must be provided with an abundance of capital and profit-making opportunities in order to ensure economic growth.

As the monopoly bourgeoisie, together with its ideologists and publicists, have preached against class struggle by the workers, it has waged the most ruthless class warfare against the workers by accusing them falsely of causing inflation through wage hikes, by bringing down real wage levels and social benefits and suppressing trade union and basic democratic rights. Indeed, under the neoliberal policy, capital accumulation in the hands of the monopoly bourgeoisie has accelerated from the intensified exploitation of the working people in both developed and underdeveloped countries.

As Marx pointed out a long time ago, the fundamental problem of capitalism is that the crisis of overproduction or the contraction of the market results from the capitalist minimizing the fund for wages and maximizing profits and further accumulating capital. The problem is aggravated when in the course of competition, the

capitalists further press down wages to raise profits. It is still further aggravated when finance capital is generated above the real economy in order to counter the contraction of the market and the tendency of the rate of profit to fall by resorting increasingly to debt financing at the level of the state, corporations and households in order to expand consumption.

The neoliberal dogma is that there is no limit to the so-called free market and free flow of bank money in solving every crisis. But certainly there are limits to consumption and production that are dependent on excessive cumulative borrowing while wages continue to be pressed down and the money is created by banks and investment firms in the form of derivatives and at computer speed. Financial bubbles are exciting for a while until they burst.

The neoliberal policy has resulted in more than 100 financial crises in the global centers of capitalism and in particular global regions. Colossal amounts of bank credit have been poured on them every time. Thus, the public can remember only the biggest financial crises. But in over three decades the global debt has accumulated and mounted to the point that no less than the US and other industrial capitalist countries are confronted with the worst economic and financial crisis since the Great Depression.

In the first decade of the neoliberal policy, the major crises included the debt crisis of the third world countries (Latin America, Africa and Asia) and the revisionist-ruled countries (the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe), the US becoming a debtor country after high-speed spending for high-tech military production and outsourcing the production of basic consumer goods, the economic and political turbulence in China, the long-running economic stagnation resulting in political crisis that would soon topple the revisionist regimes in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union and the beginning of the prolonged stagnation of Japan that extends to the present.

In the second decade of the neoliberal policy, contrary to expectations of a peace dividend from the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, the US and NATO unleashed wars of aggression aimed at grabbing oil resources and controlling pipelines (Iraq and Balkans). The crisis of Mexico burst out, exposing the fragility of third world economies depending on stocks and bonds bought by foreign investors in the privatization of telecommunications and other enterprises. The structural adjustment programs and austerity measures imposed by the IMF resulted in desperate economic and political situations and in extremely bloody civil wars (Rwanda and the Congo).

The so-called Asian financial crisis of 1997 broke out and jolted the global economy. It showed the disastrous outcome of excessive borrowing for real estate speculation and consumerism in Southeast Asia and in other regions and even for the expansion of production in durable and nondurable consumer goods as in South Korea, Japan and China. The Asian financial crisis adversely affected the US and Europe, even as they still boasted of economies boosted by high technology production and low inflation rates realized as a result of wage freeze and cheap consumer goods from China.

At the very start of the third decade of the neoliberal policy, the high-tech bubble burst in the US and other developed countries. The US took the lead in countering economic and financial crisis and trying to invigorate the economy by generating what would become the housing bubble and by stepping up military production and unleashing wars of aggression under the pretext of a global war on terror in retaliation for 9/11 (Afghanistan and Iraq) and later on under the pretext of humanitarian intervention (Libya).

We are now in the midst of a grave economic and financial crisis resulting from the unsustainability of consumption based on excessive debt, the bursting of the financial bubbles, the collapse of financial markets and the drastic fall of production and employment. The crisis is not being solved because the imperialist rulers stubbornly cling to the neoliberal policy and prohibit the state from directly undertaking any program to raise production and employment.

Huge amounts of public funds are used to bail out the big banks and corporations. And when certain amounts are appropriated to stimulate production and employment, these are delivered first to the favored giant corporations which subject the funds to saving on labor costs and widening the profit margin before any production is undertaken. Thus, unemployment remains high and incomes of the working people are kept low. The crisis has consequently worsened, deepened and protracted.

Since the open and rapid restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe and China, the adversaries of socialism and communism have proclaimed that communist parties and the socialist cause are hopeless and that history cannot go any farther than capitalism and liberal democracy. They have misrepresented the

Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and the revolutionary mass movement as ideologically and materially dependent on the revisionist regimes and that therefore they can no longer preserve themselves and advance.

In the course of its Second Great Rectification Movement, the CPP renewed its stand for socialism against modern revisionism. It asserted that the people's democratic revolution can definitely go forward amidst the semi-colonial and semi-feudal conditions and strive for victory against US imperialism and the local exploiting classes. As regards the future of socialist revolution, that is prepared for by the strengthening and victorious advance of the revolutionary forces and people in the course of the new democratic revolution.

Since the fall of the revisionist regimes and full restoration of capitalism in Eastern Europe, the former republics of the Soviet Union and China, the CPP and the revolutionary mass movement have succeeded in preserving their strength and advancing the Philippine revolution, rectifying the major ultra-Left and Rightist opportunist errors and opposing steadfastly the US-instigated policies of neoliberal globalization and war on terror. They have also exposed the pro-imperialist and reactionary character of the various anti-communist petty bourgeois groups that assisted the US and the local exploiting classes in trying to taunt the CPP and the Philippine revolution to death.

What are the prospects of the Philippine revolution in the next five to ten years? That is more than enough time for the revolutionary forces and the people to advance from the strategic defensive to the strategic stalemate and consequently aim for the strategic offensive. Definitely, the strategic offensive shall already be in sight or in progress, depending on the accumulation of strength by the revolutionary forces, the state of disintegration of the ruling system, the gravity of the world capitalist system and the overextension of US imperialism on a global scale.

All major contradictions within the world capitalist system are well on the way to intensifying right within the global centers of capitalism. The crisis is causing the class struggle between labor and capital to surface. The struggle for a redivision of the world is intensifying among the imperialist powers. Governments that assert national independence and invoke socialism are in increasing contradiction with the imperialist powers. The oppressed peoples and nations in the underdeveloped and impoverished countries are the most victimized by imperialism and reaction and are being goaded by the crisis to wage armed and other forms of struggle.

The adoption of higher technology has further sharpened the contradiction between the social character of production and the private monopoly character of appropriation. The monopoly bourgeoisie accelerates the extraction of profits not only from the process of production but also at a faster rate from the abuse of finance capital. The US and other global centers of capitalism have rapidly accumulated and centralized capital through ownership and control of high technology and through generation of money printing and financial derivatives practically without restraint.

The proletarian revolutionaries, social activists and the broad masses of the people refer to the rising social character of production and the escalation of exploitation and use information technology to advocate socialism. They are outraged that precisely when working class productivity is so high workers are subjected to mass layoffs and reduction of income while the parasitic finance oligarchs and their minions suck up private profits and public funds. Together with the rest of the people, the working class in the industrial capitalist countries is resisting the high rates of unemployment, the rising cost of living and the austerity measures and all other attempts of the monopoly bourgeoisie and the financial oligarchy to shift the burden of crisis to the people.

Such ultra-reactionary currents as fascism, chauvinism, racism, religious bigotry and war hysteria are being used by the monopoly bourgeoisie and their big media minions to obfuscate the capitalist roots of the crisis in the effort to mislead people. An increasing number of workers and youth are taking up the study of Marxism-Leninism and are proposing socialism as the alternative to capitalism. In the course of practical struggles the advanced sections of working class parties and the trade union movements are increasingly critical of revisionism, reformism and bureaucratism. The rise of anti-imperialist and progressive forces and movements in the developed countries is certainly of great support to the revolutionary struggle in the Philippines.

The integration into the world capitalist system of former socialist countries with a significant industrial base, like Russia and China; the rapid rise of the social character of production through high technology; the intensified forms of accumulating profits from the real economy and the financial markets; and the relentless need for expanded markets, sources of fuel and other raw materials, and fields of investment have combined to make the world capitalist system tighter and more implosive. The economic competition and political rivalries among the imperialist powers intensify and drive them inexorably to struggle for a redivision of the world.

At any rate, the imperialist powers in the G8 and G20 still manage to maintain their unity in exploiting the working class and the people on a global scale and launching wars of aggression against certain third world countries. There is yet no conspicuous alignment and counter-alignment of imperialist powers poised to wage war against each other. The imperialist powers are still at that stage of holding different positions vis a vis the national policies and natural resources of particular countries, maintaining good economic and diplomatic relations and supplying arms to their clients and allies in the third world. Even now, if the new democratic revolution in the Philippines were victorious, it would be in a position to take advantage of the contradictions among the imperialist powers.

The US and its major imperialist allies in the NATO has applied high technology in the development and manufacture of weapons for the purpose of dominating the world, aggressing against states deemed as enemies, making profits on huge weapon sales to other states, especially the oil producing ones, and satisfying the dictates of corporations in the military-industrial complex. They have also applied high technology for the purpose of surveilling and threatening entire countries and peoples, for equipping and assisting reactionary puppets in campaigns of state terrorism and for unleashing propaganda against peoples and government opposed to imperialism and reaction.

The aggressive character of US imperialism and its NATO allies is evident in launching wars of aggression against third world countries. The United States takes the lead in conducting either covert or overt military operations in at least ten countries: Iraq, Afghanistan, Yemen, Somalia, Iran, Libya, Pakistan, the Philippines, Colombia and now Uganda. It has 820 military installations in at least 135 countries. In recent memory, the people in imperialist countries rose up in millions to oppose the wars of aggression against Iraq in 2003. We estimate that the overextension of the US and its domestic problems will increasingly limit its capability for intervention and aggression. We hope that in long run they would be able to stop the imperialist wars of aggression.

The US and China have been the main partners in implementing the neoliberal policy of globalization. The US has used its economic, trade and financial relations to concentrate on the production of big items and more profitable industrial goods of civil and military or dual character, to financialize the US economy and have a more effective handle on the global economy, to outsource to China the production of consumer goods on cheap Chinese labor and to have it use its export surplus earnings to buy US treasury bills and other securities.

The relationship seemed to work well until the US financial bubbles burst one after the other and the US started to worry over the shrinkage of its manufacturing sector in relation to high unemployment and the huge US public debt in relation to China's export surpluses. The contradictions between the US and China over economic, financial, political and military issues can be a source of tensions in East Asia but can also provide to the Philippine revolution some room for maneuver.

Certain countries in the third world are governed by parties and leaders that assert national independence and invoke socialism in order to oppose imperialism and its most reactionary agents, seek to improve their country's economic and social condition and win the political support of their own people and gain the sympathy and support of patriotic and progressive forces in other third world countries. Such countries like China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Cuba, Venezuela and Bolivia can be helpful to the Philippines, especially after victory in the national democratic revolution.

Certain countries have been victimized by imperialist wars of aggression such as Iraq, the Balkans, Afghanistan and Libya. The peoples in most of these countries are waging wars of national liberation against invasion and occupation. Right now, as they fight imperialism, they inspire the Filipino people to advance Philippine revolution. They are helpful because they bog down much of the war personnel and resources of the US and its imperialist allies and lessen their capability for military intervention and aggression elsewhere. The Filipino revolutionaries view the growing tendency of the imperialist powers to wage aggression as unwittingly promotive of anti-imperialist armed resistance not only in the countries directly victimized but also further afield.

The overwhelming majority of the underdeveloped and impoverished countries are governed by such exploiting classes as the big compradors, landlords and corrupt bureaucrats acting as puppets of the US and other imperialist powers. Even before the imposition of the neoliberal economic policy, they have been afflicted by chronic economic and political crisis resulting in armed conflicts of various types. Under the aforesaid policy, they have been subjected to worse exploitation and oppression and kept in neocolonial bondage.

The dire conditions in such countries are favorable for the rise of new democratic revolutions through

people's war. The armed revolutionary movements in Colombia, India, Nepal, Peru, Turkey and elsewhere contribute to weakening imperialism and reaction worldwide and serve to inspire other peoples to wage armed struggles for freedom and democracy.

As the crisis of the world capitalist system worsens and protracts, the imperialist powers find it easiest to shift the burden of crisis to the oppressed peoples and nations and plunder their natural resources. But the broad masses of the people are further driven to wage resistance. The neoliberal economic policy has devastated the general run of third world countries so much so that opportunities have opened for the rise of armed revolutionary resistance in so many countries and in entire global regions. The spread of the conflagration will certainly facilitate the advance and victory of the people's democratic revolution in the Philippines.

I am confident that in our retirement years and thereafter the Philippine revolution will win far greater victories than we have seen since the start of the people's war in 1969. In writing you this long letter, I wish to share with you the optimism and confidence that our contributions to the Filipino people's struggle for national and social liberation are not in vain and that they are part of a growing and advancing revolutionary movement that will ultimately win complete victory and lead to socialism.

Fraternally,

Joma

On Philippine Sovereignty, the US and China

Reply to Questions from Renato Reyes,

BAYAN Secretary General

April 20, 2012

Renato Reyes (RR): I hope that you can answer briefly the following questions re China, Philippines and the assertion of national sovereignty. We have an all-leaders meeting this Saturday and we are trying to get views on how to deal with the issue of China's incursions on Philippine territory, the Aquino regime's response and US intervention.

Jose Maria Sison (JMS): First of all, as a matter of principle, the Filipino people must assert their national sovereignty and Philippine territorial integrity over the issue of Spratlys (Kalayaan) and other islands, reefs and shoals which are well within the 200-nautical mile exclusive economic zone (EEZ) defined by the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). According to the Philippine reactionary government, it submitted on time to the UN the necessary scientific and technical grounds to define the Philippine 200-mile EEZ under UNCLOS.

The UNCLOS is the strongest legal basis for the definition of the territorial sea and EEZ of the Philippine archipelago. Also, archaeological evidence shows that the islands, reefs and shoals at issue have been used by inhabitants of what is now the Philippines since prehistoric times. But the Philippine reactionary government muddles the issue and undermines its own position by making historical claims that date back only to a few decades ago when pseudo-admiral Cloma made formal claims to the Kalayaan group of islands.

Chinese historical claims since ancient times amount to an absurdity as this would be like Italy claiming as its sovereign possession all areas previously occupied by the Roman empire. The name China Sea was invented by European cartographers and should not lead anyone to think that the entire sea belongs to China. In the same vein, neither does the entire Indian Ocean belong to India.

RR 1: How do we view the incursions and aggressive behavior of China in territories claimed by the Philippines? Is this aggressiveness proof that China has imperialist ambitions and should be criticized as an imperialist power? What is the relationship between China's revisionist regime and its apparent desire to flex its muscles in the region?

JMS: The Filipino people and progressive forces must oppose what may be deemed as incursions and what may appear as aggressive behavior of China with regard to the territories belonging to the Philippines. But so far China's actions and actuations manifest assertiveness rather than outright military aggression. The Philippine reactionary government should desist from self-fulfilling its claim of China's aggression by engaging in an anti-China scare campaign.

The Filipino people and progressive forces must consciously differentiate their position from that of the Aquino regime, its military subalterns and its Akbayan special agents who pretend to be super patriots against China but are in fact servile to the interests of US imperialism and are using the anti-China scare campaign to justify the escalation of US military intervention in the Philippines and US hegemony in the Asia-Pacific region.

At any rate, China must not violate Philippine national sovereignty and territorial integrity, the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and the Declaration on Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea it agreed to with the ASEAN. The apparently aggressive or assertive acts and words of China are in consonance with its own premise of national sovereignty and territorial integrity as well as with the bourgeois character of the Chinese state that may indicate an imperialist tendency or ambitions.

The Chinese state is blatantly a capitalist state. Only occasionally does it claim to be socialist so as to cover up its capitalist character as the revisionists in power systematically did in the past. Whatever is its character, the Chinese state must not infringe or threaten to infringe Philippine sovereignty and territorial integrity. When it does, it opens itself to criticism and opposition by political and diplomatic action.

RR 2: On the other hand, would criticism of China serve the US ploy of increasing its military presence in the region by supporting the claim that China is indeed a major threat to Philippine sovereignty? Would such criticism serve to support the claim that China is indeed a major threat while obfuscating the US continuous undermining and violation of Philippine sovereignty? How important is it that the Left join in the assertion of Philippine sovereignty against incursions by China?

JMS: Criticism and opposition to any actual incursion by China is consistent with the assertion of national

sovereignty and does not serve the US ploy so long as we expose at the same time why and how the Aquino regime's posture against alleged incursions by China are meant to serve US goals in the region.

We must be alert to and oppose the malicious efforts of the US and the Aquino regime to hype China as an imperialist aggressor in order to allow the No. 1 imperialist power to further entrench itself militarily in the Philippines and realize its strategy of encircling China and enhancing its hegemony over East Asia and entire Asia-Pacific region. You should take critical notice of the fact that the agents of US imperialism like Aquino, his military sidekicks and his Akbayan hangers-on are presenting themselves as superpatriots against China while they allow the US to increase the presence of military forces and activities under the Visiting Forces Agreement, the Balikatan exercises and various other pretexts.

It is a matter of principle to invoke national sovereignty and territorial integrity against China's claims on certain islands, reefs and shoals that belong to the Philippines. But we should expose and oppose the US and the Aquino regime for actively undertaking what are obviously anti-China provocations and propaganda aimed at justifying the escalation of US military intervention and further entrenchment of US forces in the Philippines, as part of the strategic scheme of the US to preserve and strengthen its hegemony over the Asia-Pacific region, particularly East Asia.

Further, the US imperialists are increasing their pressure on China to privatize its state-owned enterprises, to restrain its bourgeois nationalist impulses, to yield further to US economic and security dictates and to further promote the pro-US or pro-West bourgeois forces within China. In comparison to the Philippines, China is a far larger country for imperialist exploitation and oppression. Having more economic and political interests in China than in the Philippines, the US is using the Philippines as a staging base for actions aimed at pressuring and influencing China rather than protecting the Philippines from China.

The US-RP Mutual Defense Treaty does not contain an automatic retaliation provision. The US has used this treaty as the basis for the Visiting Forces Agreement and for the escalation of US military intervention in the Philippines. But in case of attack from any foreign power, the Philippines has no basis for expecting or demanding automatic retaliation from the US. The treaty allows the US to act strictly in its national interest and use its constitutional processes to bar the Philippines from demanding automatic retaliation against a third party that attacks the Philippines.

The US and China can always agree to cooperate in exploiting the Philippines. In fact, they have long been cooperating in exploiting the Philippines. The Chinese comprador big bourgeoisie in both the Philippines (Henry Sy, Lucio Tan and the like) and China (within the bureaucracy and outside) are trading and financial agents of the US and other imperialist powers.

RR 3: The Aquino government has availed of diplomatic venues to resolve the dispute. Meanwhile, the Chinese incursions continue. The Philippines is a weak country militarily and has no capability for securing its territory. What would be the requirements for the

Philippines to be able to effectively assert its sovereignty (not limited of course to questions of territory)? Briefly, how can the Philippines develop a credible external defense?

JMS: Rather than entertain hopes that the Aquino regime would defend Philippine sovereignty and territorial integrity, the Filipino people and progressive forces must resolutely and militantly expose and oppose the puppetry, shameless mendicancy and the hypocrisy of the regime in pretending to be for national sovereignty and territorial integrity against China while inviting and welcoming increased US military intervention in the Philippines and using the country as a base for strengthening US hegemony in the Asia Pacific region.

Only the Filipino people and revolutionary forces can gain the capability to secure, control and defend their territory by fighting for and achieving national and social liberation in the first place from US imperialist domination and from such reactionary regimes of the big compradors and landlords like the Aquino regime. Otherwise the US and their puppets will always be the *bantay salakay* at the expense of the people.

When the Filipino people and revolutionary forces come to power, they will certainly engage strongly among others in metal manufacturing, ship building and fishing in close connection with securing the Philippine territorial sea and exclusive economic zone.

They shall have internal political-military strength and socioeconomic satisfaction. And they shall develop international solidarity and use diplomatic action against any foreign power that violates Philippine sovereignty and territorial integrity.

At the moment, the US and Aquino regime are engaged in a calibrated anti-China propaganda campaign in order to justify and allow the US to control the Philippines and East Asia militarily. We are being subjected to an anti-China scare aimed at further strengthening the dominance of US imperialism and the domestic rule of its reactionary puppets like Aquino. Right now, we must give the highest priority to fighting these monsters.

The Filipino people and the progressive forces must complain to the entire world against any incursive act of China and at the same time against the maneuvers of the US and its Filipino puppets to use the anti-China campaign to further oppress and exploit the Filipino nation and people. By the way, the Aquino regime blows hot and cold against China. In fact, it is vulnerable to China's manipulation of Philippine exports to China like some semi-manufactures and agricultural and mineral products.

When the Filipino people and revolutionary forces win, they shall be able to bring up through official representatives the issues concerning the UNCLOS to the UN General Assembly and the Hamburg-based International Tribunal on the Law of the Sea. They can encourage the cooperation of certain countries like Russia and Norway to avoid unwelcome impositions from US, UK and Netherlands in the exploration and development of oil and gas in the areas of the Philippines.

Even at this time, approaches can be made to China to avoid confrontations and tensions over the territories that belong to the Philippines and to engage in all-round cooperation for mutual benefit, especially for the advance of national independence, the industrial development of the Philippines and the termination of the extremely oppressive and exploitative US hegemony over East Asia, which victimizes both the Philippines and China.

RR 4: What approaches would you like the Philippines to make towards China? Were such approaches taken into account in the 2011 NDFP proposal to the Aquino regime for an alliance and truce? In this regard, what can the Left do in view of the rabid servility of the Aquino regime to the US.

JMS: China has been known for its policy of dealing diplomatically solely with the state (rather than with the revolutionary forces) in any country and for its flexibility in considering the needs and demands of that state or country. It is not as imposing and as aggressive as the US in diplomatic and economic relations with other countries. It tries to comply with what it professes, such as the principles of independence, non-interference, equality and cooperation for mutual benefit.

Thus, the National Democratic Front of the Philippines has proposed to the Aquino regime strategic alliance and truce in the context of peace negotiations. It has challenged the Aquino regime to make a general declaration of common intent with the NDFP to assert national independence and end unequal treaties and agreements; expand democracy through empowerment of the workers and peasants; carry out national industrialization and land reform; foster a patriotic, scientific and pro-people culture; and adopt an independent foreign policy for world peace and development.

A key part of the NDFP proposal is for the Philippines to approach China and other countries for cooperation in the establishment of key industrial projects for the national industrialization of the country. Certainly, it would be greatly beneficial for the Filipino people that the Philippines is industrialized and ceases to be merely an exporter of raw materials, semi-manufactures and migrant workers, mostly women.

But the US agents in the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process and in Akbayan and Aquino himself supplied information on the NDFP proposal to the US embassy and Washington. They proceeded to cook up the anti-China scare campaign in order to undercut the proposal and serve US imperialist interests. It would be absurd for BAYAN, Bayan Muna and MAKABAYAN to join the rabidly pro-Aquino Akbayan or even compete with it in the anti-China scare campaign that draws away attention from US imperialism as well as justifies US military intervention and aggression in the Philippines and the whole of East Asia and the Asia-Pacific.

The people should know that the agents of US imperialism in the Aquino regime have used various malicious and cruel tactics to block the road to a just peace. The tactics include the abduction, torture and extrajudicial killing of NDFP consultants in violation of JASIG and the continued imprisonment of hundreds of political prisoners in violation of CARHRIHL.

RR 5: How would you describe the contradictions between the US and China? On one hand, the US is wary of the rise of China as a military power and has sought to encircle China, yet on the other hand, the US economy is closely linked to China's. and China is said to be the biggest creditor of the US.

JMS: There is unity and struggle between two capitalist powers in the relationship between the US and China.

The US is not yet really worried about China having the military strength that can be projected outside its borders. It is more worried about China's military strength being able to defend China, fend off US imperialist dictates and threats and combat separatist forces in Taiwan, Tibet and Xinjiang.

The US strategy of encirclement is calculated to keep China as a friendly partner in the exploitation of the Chinese and other peoples. The US and China have already more than three decades of being close partners in promoting and benefiting from the neoliberal policy of globalization. The super-exploitation of the Chinese working people, China's trade surpluses and huge indebtedness of the US to China are matters well within the negotiable relations of two capitalist powers, which would rather go on taking advantage of the working people rather than go to war against each other.

The efforts of China to find its own sources of energy and raw materials and markets and fields of investment can be at times irritating or even infuriating to the US (when the conflicts of interest occur as in Iran, Sudan, Libya and Syria). But the capitalist powers can settle their relations with each other at the expense of the working people and underdeveloped countries, until the crisis of the world capitalist system further worsens to the point that a number of capitalist powers accelerate their aggressiveness and even become fascist in their home grounds.

***On the China Claims and Intrusions
and the GRP-NDFP Peace Negotiations***

Brief Remarks

30 April 2012

Dear Compatriots,

Warmest greetings!

I am thankful to my dear friend, General Joone de Leon, for giving a lecture on my sociopolitical philosophy and to him and to all of you in the Regular Class 47 of the Masters program in National Security Administration for allowing me the privilege and honor of expressing my position and recommendations on certain current issues of great importance to our nation and people.

Regarding the claims and intrusions of China involving the Kalayaan group of islands and the Panatag shoal, I consider it a matter of principle and patriotic duty to uphold the national sovereignty of the Filipino people and the territorial integrity of the Philippines. The aforesaid pieces of territory are well within the 200-nautical miles of exclusive economic zone of the Philippines under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) which the Philippines and China have signed and which bind the two countries.

The UNCLOS provides us the strongest basis for the assertion of our sovereign right over the islands, shoals and reefs at issue under international law. Archaeological evidence shows that inhabitants of the Philippines have used these since prehistoric times in their fishing, coral harvesting and sailing activities. Spanish colonial mapping and other historical records show that these pieces of territory belong to the Philippine archipelago. The Murillo Map used by the US and Spain in forging the 1898 Treaty of Philippines includes Bajo de Masinloc, Scarborough Shoal or Panatag Shoal.

Despite its assertiveness, China has so far avoided any outright military act of aggression. It is probably mindful of its claims to a peaceful rise and its binding commitments to the UNCLOS and the Declaration on Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea. In my debates with foreign revolutionaries who claim that China is already an imperialist power, I have maintained that indeed China has become capitalist and does export a significant amount of surplus capital but it has not yet deployed combat troops to promote and protect its foreign investments. Even in the UN peacekeeping operations which it has joined, it has avoided committing Chinese combat troops.

We should also consider it a matter of principle and duty to seek a peaceful resolution of the territorial issues with China under the terms of the UNCLOS and the Declaration of Conduct of Parties in the South China sea. As much as possible, we may negotiate with China bilaterally as well as through the ASEAN. We are aware of the limits of these approaches and how the issue can protract without end. Thus, we must at all times demand that the issue be decided conclusively as soon as possible by presenting a case under the UNCLOS to the International Tribunal on the Law of the Sea in Hamburg.

It is in our sovereign interest not to involve the country and people in any self-damaging act, like an unnecessary war or even unnecessary shows of military force or provocations. China has shown a preference for economic and diplomatic action rather than military action in international affairs. We should not be carried away by the illusion that the US is out to protect us. We must keep in mind that the US has far larger interests in China than in the Philippines and that the US-RP Mutual Defense Treaty, which carries no automatic retaliation clause, allows the US to avoid siding with the Philippines against China. What the US is bent on doing is to manage and manipulate the Philippine-China contradictions in order to further entrench itself militarily in the Philippines, continue to violate our national sovereignty and territorial integrity, serve as the bantay salakay, and intensify its efforts to strengthen US hegemony over the Asia-Pacific region.

Regarding the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations, these are now paralyzed by the stubborn position of the Aquino government or in particular its Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (PAPP) to get the immediate capitulation and pacification of the revolutionary forces represented by the NDFP; to undermine The Hague Joint Declaration of 1992 by labeling it as a document of so-called perpetual division rather than as a viable framework of peace

negotiations; to cover up, condone and perpetuate the extrajudicial killings, torture and detention of NDFP consultants and staffers in violation of the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity and Guarantees (JASIG) and to continue the detention of more than 350 political prisoners detained on trumped up charges of common crimes in violation of the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL) and the Hernandez political offense doctrine in particular.

Notwithstanding all the aforementioned issues, the NDFP holds the position that the peace negotiations are still going on in principle because no side has terminated JASIG and that in fact twelve formal agreements between the two sides remain valid and binding, the Joint Secretariat of the Joint Monitoring Committee under the CARHRIHL continues to operate in Quezon City, the panelists of both sides are allowed by the Ground Rules to meet at any time for consultations and the Norwegian third party facilitator shuttles back and forth between the two panels. Formal peace talks between the two negotiating panels have been lacking since February 2011. The NDFP is very desirous of the resumption of such formal talks and is willing to have teams of the negotiating panelists meet and engage in consultations in order to pave the way for the formal talks.

The NDFP continues to hope that the GPH comply with the JASIG and CARHRIHL as a matter of obligation and that the formal peace talks between the two panels are resumed so that the three remaining subjects in the substantive agenda can be negotiated and agreed one after the other. These are the a) social and economic reforms, b) political and constitutional reforms and c) the end of hostilities and disposition of forces. The NDFP continues to offer the special track of immediate truce and alliance between the GPH and NDFP as soon as they sign a general declaration of common intent even as the regular track of peace negotiations continues to deal with the three remaining subjects.

The general declaration of common intent proposed by the NDFP is something that cannot be opposed by any Filipino who is patriotic and desirous of democracy. It encompasses such objectives as upholding national sovereignty and independence and doing away with unequal treaties, agreements and arrangements; expanding democracy through certain mechanisms to empower the toiling masses and the middle class; carrying out a program of national industrialization and land reform; promoting a patriotic, scientific and pro-people education and culture; and pursuing an independent and active foreign policy for development and world peace.

If the Aquino administration is really interested in accelerating the regular track of peace conditions under conditions of truce, there is no reason for delaying the realization of the NDFP proposal on the special track for alliance and truce on the basis of a general declaration of common intent, all for the benefit of the Filipino people.

I urge no less than the president of the GPH to muster the political will to do his crucial part in making the regular and special tracks succeed. The NDFP is always willing to meet his special representatives on the special track so that the conditions of peace negotiations are greatly improved and efforts are accelerated to address the roots of the armed conflict and lay the ground for a just and lasting peace. Let us define the common political ground and work together immediately for the benefit of the people.

Intensify the Struggle Against Imperialism, Advance and Call for Radical Social Change

May 1, 2012

We, the International League of Peoples' Struggle, join the workers of the world in celebrating the day in their honor, express our militant solidarity with them and support their struggle against imperialism, the biggest cause of the suffering of the toiling masses. The current severe crisis of the world capitalist system is worsening the exploitation and oppression of the people.

We raise our fists in salute to the workers and peoples of the world. We applaud them for waging militant collective struggle against the ill effects of the crisis, for raising their consciousness about the root causes of the crisis and for sharpen their will to fight in order to overthrow the imperialist system.

We pay tribute to the countless martyrs of the international working-class movement. Their struggles, sacrifices and successes continue to inspire us in fighting for the rights and welfare of the workers' and the people and for radical social change. They continue to motivate us to think bigger, dream higher, and work harder for genuine fundamental social change.

The severe economic and financial crisis that has become manifest since 2008 in the global centers of capitalism has resulted in a global depression. The imperialist powers have not found a way out of the crisis because they cling to the neoliberal economic policy of monopolistic greed, which has the first place caused the crisis. As a result, the workers and peoples of the world, especially in underdeveloped countries, are suffering rising levels of unemployment, sinking incomes, soaring prices and widespread poverty.

In imperialist countries, the bailouts given to the big financial institutions and favored corporations, the tax cuts, subsidies and overpriced contracts for monopoly firms and the wanton spending on the military and bureaucracy have resulted in huge deficits and debts for the governments. In order to pass the burden of the crisis on to the backs of the workers and the people, brutal austerity measures have been adopted and implemented.

In underdeveloped countries, extreme hunger and poverty among workers and the people continue to mount. Exports of raw materials and semimanufactures are decreasing. The reduced demand from the developed countries has aggravated the long-standing overproduction of such goods. International credit, foreign investments, and the demand for migrant workers are all decreasing.

The imperialists are stepping up war production and unleashing wars of aggression in an attempt to spur production through the military-industrial complex and expand economic territory abroad. As a result, all kinds of contradictions are sharpening and the whole world is in a state of turbulence. State fascism is being unleashed against workers' and people's protests in both developed and underdeveloped countries, while wars of aggression are being unleashed by the imperialist powers against countries assertive of their independence.

Even as it faces severe fiscal constraints and even as it remains mired in its wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya, the US is trying to expand its military presence in the Asia-Pacific region avowedly to encircle and contain China as a potential imperialist rival with growing and economic and military power. It is using one-sided treaties with its puppet governments in order to increase military forces in the region. It follows the same pattern of engaging in military intervention in other regions.

The bleak economic and political landscape is being lit up by the flames of revolutionary resistance and by the red flags of the protest actions of the workers and peoples of the world, who are now incited by the governments' austerity measures to rise in opposition. The forces of anti-imperialism, people's democracy and socialism are rising to the occasion by raising consciousness on the basis of the burning issues of the day, expanding their ranks, and promoting revolutionary alternatives.

We are calling on the workers and peoples of the world to intensify our struggles against imperialism. Let us take the governments of our respective countries to task for implementing neoliberal policies. Let us deepen our understanding of the root causes of the present crisis, the alternatives to this rotten kind of society, and the various forms of struggle needed for revolutionary social change.

We are calling on all progressive, anti-imperialist and socialist-oriented workers' and people's organizations to

take advantage of the rare opportunity being provided to us by the current global depression. Let us aggressively arouse, organize, and mobilize workers and the rest of the people for genuine radical social change.

Let us continuously expand and consolidate our ranks in order to effectively fight and eventually defeat imperialism and its reactionary stooges. Let us make sure that this crisis, which is leading to greater barbarism on the part of imperialism and its allies, will give birth to a fundamentally new society where freedom, democracy, social justice, all-development and peace reign.

On Balikatan Exercises and Oplan Bayanihan

Interview by John Toledo

Philippine Collegian

3 May 2012

Good evening Prof. Sison. I am John Toledo from Philippine Collegian, the writer who interviewed you before about role of US in the Philippines in relation to VFA and MDT. Here's a link to that article <http://www.philippinecollegian.org/strategic-offensive-confronting-the-threat-of-us-interests-in-the-philippines/>

I am here writing again to you, asking for your answers on certain questions which bother me regarding the current Balikatan exercises here in the Philippines which started last April 16. I shall be writing again a new article based on this news peg which will be published on May 1 for the Labor Day celebrations. Here are the questions:

1. Please comment on the continuation of Balikatan exercises and Oplan Bayanihan by US here in the Philippines.

JMS: The Balikatan exercises are a demonstration and sharpening of US military intervention. They are supposed to put into practice the interoperability of the US and its Filipino puppet forces. They are a show of force aimed at intimidating the Filipino people and the peoples in the Asia-Pacific region.

Oplan Bayanihan is a national campaign plan of military suppression designed under the *US Counterinsurgency Guide*. It is a continuation of Arroyo's murderous Oplan Bantay Laya and it aims to surpass it in perpetrating abductions, torture and extrajudicial killings and other human right violations. Cynically and shamelessly, the Aquino regime misrepresents military operations against the people as peace and development operations.

2. What are the implications of these on our sovereignty?

JMS: The Balikatan exercises flagrantly violate the national sovereignty of the Filipino and the territorial integrity of the Philippines. The US and Aquino regime collaborate in invoking the US-RP Mutual Defense Treaty and the Visiting Forces Agreements and in allowing US military forces conduct military operations and commit crimes with impunity. US military personnel are practically beyond the criminal jurisdiction of Philippine courts.

Oplan Bayanihan is supposed to be carried out by Filipino puppet troops to suppress the revolutionary movement of the Filipino people in order to preserve the ruling system under US domination. In violation of national sovereignty, US military forces stationed in the Philippines collaborate with the puppet troops in intelligence, psy-war and combat operations, especially with the use of the latest US-provided weapons and gadgets.

3. What are the implications economically?

The US-directed military exercises and military operations against the revolutionary movement in the Philippines are aimed at preserving the unjust ruling system of big compradors and landlords servile to US imperialism. The preservation of the system means the continuance of the exploitation of the people by the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords and by US and other foreign monopolies.

Thus, the Philippines remains economically backward, agrarian and semi-feudal, It is prevented from undertaking national industrialization and genuine land reform. The people continue to suffer a high rate of unemployment, low incomes, soaring prices and expensive yet deteriorating social services, especially now that the world capitalist system and the local ruling system are stricken by a severe and protracted crisis.

4. Please comment on America's move to expand its military power here in the Philippines, aside from the fact that China looms as an emerging imperialist country.

JMS: US military intervention in the Philippines is being escalated for the purpose of further oppressing and exploiting the Filipino people as well as for the purpose of serving as part of the deployment of US military forces to strengthen US hegemony over the Asia-Pacific region and encircle China and the People's Democratic Republic of Korea.

China is now being vilified as an imperialist power that is about to pounce on or aggress against the Philippines. The anti-China scare campaign is used to justify the deployment of more US military forces in the Philippines and in East Asia. In fact, the US is by far the biggest imperialist power that has long violated the national sovereignty of the Filipino people and subjected them to perpetuated aggression and extreme plunder.

China has a large GDP second only to the US but it has a huge population and is still poor. The per capita GDP places China in the lower part of the list of countries. China has weapons that merely suffice to defend itself

within its national borders and to deter foreign aggression. It has not engaged in any sustained war of aggression like the US has done so many times since it became an imperialist power towards the end of the 19th century.

5. Please comment on the possible future instances of harassment, violations on women, children and indigenous people's communities, and events of extra-judicial killings?

JMS: We can be certain that human rights violations will increase by leaps and bounds upon the deployment of a bigger number of US troops in the Philippines as well as upon the escalation of military operations under the supervision of US military officers and with the collaboration of US troops. Among the most vulnerable people are the women, children and the indigenous peoples.

We can be certain that the rape of women, prostitution, drug use and spread of sexually transmitted diseases will become rampant. The condition of children will be greatly degraded. More of them will be abandoned and orphaned. Many will take to the streets and forced to become slave labor, child prostitutes, drug runners or beggars. Great numbers of peasants and indigenous people will be subjected to bombings, mass dislocation, illegal detention, torture and extrajudicial killings in the course of campaigns of military suppression.

Need for a Socialist Future for Genuine Sustainability

18 June 2012

The Charter of the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS) and every General Declaration issued by the ILPS International Assembly define the anti-imperialist and democratic struggle of the ILPS and stress the objective of national and social liberation of peoples. The ILPS goes by the general terms and seeks the common ground for effecting the broadest international united front of all anti-imperialist and democratic forces. But the ultimate goal is system change, replacing capitalism with socialism.

The peoples of both the developed and underdeveloped countries are disgusted with capitalism and welcome socialism as the alternative to capitalism. They want a way out of the rapidly worsening crisis of imperialism, the undeniable depression of the global economy, the escalation of exploitation and oppression, the frequency of imperialist wars of aggression and consequences of capitalism that threaten the very existence of humankind and the entire planet, such as the proliferation of nuclear, chemical, biological and other weapons of mass destruction; the extreme degradation of the environment; and global warming.

The material conditions for socialism already exist in the industrial capitalist countries. But the proletariat and people urgently need to wage the anti-imperialist and class struggle in order to develop their strength for countering the growing danger of fascism and overthrowing the big bourgeoisie through a socialist revolution. In the more numerous semi-colonial and semi-feudal countries, it is more than ever valid to struggle for the completion of the new democratic revolution and proceed consequently to the stage of the socialist revolution.

Imperialist use of the term 'sustainable development'

In the aftermath of World War II, socialist countries and people's democracies encompassed one-third of humankind and put forward socialism as the alternative to capitalism. National liberation movements continued to surge forward in Asia, Africa and Latin America. The United Nations (UN) recognized the great wave of decolonization. The imperialist powers themselves admitted that they could no longer control the colonies in the old way and sought to avail of the methods of neocolonialism.

The socialist countries and the newly-independent countries that formed the Non-Aligned Movement called for industrial development and for a new international economic order that would no longer be controlled and manipulated by the imperialist powers at the expense of the underdeveloped countries. The UN proclaimed the decades of the 1960s and 1970s as "development decades". The core demand for industrial development was unmistakable. Even the US made a big show of promoting certain newly-industrializing economies (such as South Korea, Taiwan and Brazil) under the aegis of monopoly capitalism to counter the example of industrialization being set by socialist countries and the demand of the anti-imperialist and socialist movement for industrialization.

But while pretending to support the development of underdeveloped countries, the US was forwarding concepts to undermine and defeat the popular clamor for industrial development as the leading factor in well-balanced economic development. Through the Club of Rome in 1972, the US harped on the "limits to growth" in the face of the fuel and food crisis during the 1970s, stirred up the fear of sudden and uncontrolled collapse of economies and dished out the concept of "sustainable development."

The concept of "sustainable development" emphasized the limited natural resources of certain countries and the danger of degrading the environment. It obscured the extent and richness of the natural resource base of many underdeveloped countries, as well as the possibilities for the wise utilization of these resources and the development of economies in harmony with both the environment and the people's welfare. It further obfuscated the fact that the US and other imperialist powers had plundered and degraded the environment for the purpose of profit-taking to the detriment of the people.

When imperialist powers headed by the US adopted the neoliberal policy of "free market" globalization at the beginning of the 1980s in reaction to the phenomena of stagflation and state-supported development in socialist countries and in certain developing countries, they retained the notion of "sustainable development" for

propagation, mainly through imperialist-funded NGOs, academics and the mass media in order to undercut and discourage the people's demand for industrial development in underdeveloped countries. The coupling of neoliberalism and the fear of unsustainable development coincided with the rapid degeneration of socialist societies towards capitalism and the successful financial and economic manipulation of newly-independent countries through neocolonialism.

The imperialists and their political, business and intellectual camp followers attacked national industrialization for supposedly being dependent on the state and being destructive to the environment. Why aim for national industrialization and a well-balanced economy when multinational companies can provide manufactured goods from their home base and overseas enclaves while being able to exploit the natural resources of underdeveloped countries? The point of the imperialists is to globalize the economy by denationalizing underdeveloped economies and allow trade and finance liberalization, privatization of state assets and deregulation at the expense of the entire nation, labor, women, children, society and the environment.

When the first Earth Summit (UN Conference on Environment and Development Conference) was held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, the imperialist campaign against industrial development for underdeveloped countries had reached an advanced stage under the auspices of the Washington Consensus. It was practically unopposed because of the dominance of neocolonialism and neoliberalism over underdeveloped countries and the full restoration of capitalism in the revisionist-ruled countries from the years of 1989 to 1991, after decades of the revisionist subversion and betrayal of socialism.

The Earth Summit of 1992 used the definition of "sustainable development" in the Brundtland Report, as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs," that "gives overriding priority to the essential needs of the world's poor" and "takes into account the limitations imposed by the state of technology and social environment on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs".

The summit proceeded to issue the Declaration on the Environment and Development filled with glittering generalities and pious preachings on the need for the harmony of humanity and the environment, the sovereignty of the state in underdeveloped countries to use the environment and natural resources for its purposes and the precautionary principle of being prudent in the application of science and technology. But the slogan of sustainable development was drummed up merely to drown out the clamor for industrial development. Imperialist powers and multinational firms were depicted as knowing best how to develop the global economy and protect the environment.

Since the Earth Summit of 1992, the underdevelopment of the overwhelming majority of countries has become far deeper and far worse than ever before. At the same time, the imperialist powers and their multinational firms have accelerated the emission of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases towards the tipping point in global warming; the spread of nuclear, chemical and other kinds of pollutants; the plunder and depletion of the world's mineral, forest, soil, marine and fresh water resources; the genetic manipulation of flora and fauna; the patenting of genetic processes; the massive loss of biodiversity and the degradation of the environment in general. In the process, they have done away with constitutional and legal limitations on foreign ownership and exploitation of natural resources in underdeveloped and impoverished countries.

Even as the neoliberal economic policy of accelerated superprofit-taking and capital accumulation has brought about the ongoing economic and financial supercrisis, the US and other imperialist powers are more hell-bent than ever in carrying out their accursed policy of unbridled greed. They wave the green flag to herald the further accumulation of super-profits by escalating the plunder of natural resources in underdeveloped countries. They pretend to protect the environment in order to further exploit and control the world's natural wealth, converting what remains into their "natural capital".

In the UN Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio this year, they are launching an offensive, using the ruse of the "Green Economy", in order to expand the sources of profit by further exploiting the environment in the underdeveloped countries. Their goal is to further plunder natural resources and commodify even essential organic processes in nature, putting a price tag on biomass, biodiversity and the functions of ecosystems—such as storing carbon, pollinating crops, filtering water and the like—in order to transform the "services" of nature into tradeable units in the financial market.

The document being prepared for issuance by the Rio+20 conference is titled, "The Future We Want." Once

more, the imperialist powers and the multinational firms are using the slogans of sustainable development and poverty eradication in order to expand their corporate interests and profit-making opportunities, to guarantee themselves against risks and to put up the legal framework for the financialization of nature. They claim that all previous failures to advance socioeconomic development and environmental protection have been due to market failures and misallocation of capital and not due to the unequal relations between the imperialist states and the client-states and between the exploiting and exploited classes in the social structure of the underdeveloped countries.

Bankruptcy of capitalism and need for a socialist future

The imperialist powers and their camp followers still arrogantly assert that the history of humankind has attained final perfection in capitalism and liberal democracy and that there is no alternative to these. They find comfort in the notion that the current grave crisis of global capitalism is merely a period of consolidation in which the strong gobble up the weak; that it is a process of creative destruction, leading to the next peak of capitalist development. They are oblivious of the fact that we are still in the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution and that imperialism is moribund capitalism.

The adoption of higher technology has raised the productivity of labor and has enhanced the social character of production. But under capitalism, especially with its neoliberal policy, the maximization of profit, the pressing down of wage levels and accumulation of private capital have accelerated at an extreme speed, bringing about the recurrence of the crisis of overproduction at a far worse rate than before. The attempt to stem or override the crisis of overproduction and the tendency of the profit rate to fall through all kinds of financial manipulation (expanding the money supply, increasing the debt of governments, corporations and households, inventing all sorts of financial derivatives and engineering one financial bubble after another) has led to the ongoing economic and financial disaster.

The monopoly bourgeoisie, especially the financial oligarchy, get bailouts and continue to enjoy tax cuts, over-priced contracts from the state, subsidies, guarantees and other kinds of privileges. Within the imperialist countries, the burden of crisis is passed on to the people through austerity measures, including higher taxes on consumers, lower wages, erosion of pension benefits, reduction of public sector employees and higher fees for lessened social services. These austerity measures further impoverish the people and make life even more miserable amidst widespread unemployment and soaring prices of basic commodities.

From the imperialist countries to the underdeveloped countries, the burden of crisis is passed on to the people, thus causing high rates of unemployment and further cheapening labor for the production of raw materials and semi-manufactures. The imperialist powers can take more exports at cheaper prices from the underdeveloped countries. They are also rushing in to plunder natural resources in an inter-imperialist contest to stock up on strategic materials. They wave the so-called green flag to promote their assault on the environment and the world's land, forest, mineral, energy, marine, water and genetic resources.

It is remarkable that they are frenziedly opening up mines in a period of economic depression. It is obvious that they are stocking up on mineral ores. They are thus taking advantage of cheap labor and the eagerness of political puppets for some doses of foreign exchange. In connection with the ravaging of the environment, multinational companies have engaged in a simultaneous process of acquiring national treatment for themselves and denationalizing the economy of client-states.

The inter-imperialist struggle for a redivision of the world is intensifying. It is a contest for sources of oil and other strategic raw materials, markets, fields of investment and spheres of influence. So far, it has taken the appearance of amicable negotiations among the imperialist powers who, at worst, show disagreements on how to enforce their decisions on resource-rich countries that assert their national independence. The direction of the wars of aggression carried out by the US and NATO is against such countries as Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya.

But the crisis of the world capitalist system is worsening. In the past, grave crises like the current one have led to inter-imperialist wars and provided great opportunities for the proletariat and the people to carry out new democratic and socialist revolutions. At the moment, the crisis is comparable to the Great Depression in scale and severity and is already inciting the broad masses of the people to wage various forms of struggle along the anti-imperialist and democratic line towards a socialist future.

The utter bankruptcy of the world capitalist system is made conspicuous by the severe economic and financial crisis in all the imperialist countries and consequently the far more severe crisis in the underdeveloped countries.

The whole world is afflicted by economic stagnation, high rates of unemployment, growing poverty, environmental degradation and underdevelopment of the overwhelming majority of countries.

These problems have run out of control because of the unbridled greed of the imperialist powers and the monopoly bourgeoisie. It is a great irony and tragedy that the people are exploited and impoverished more than ever before, when their relatively higher level of education and training and the higher level of technology mean higher productivity and ought to result in better social conditions. But this higher productivity leads to an economic and financial crisis that destroys productive forces through mass layoffs and closure of workplaces.

Worse than the economic and financial crisis is the rise of state terrorism aimed at suppressing the people's exercise of their democratic rights to protest the injustices done to them and to demand changes for the better. The imperialist powers are systematically whipping up chauvinism, racism, religious bigotry, fascism, war hysteria and other ultra-reactionary currents in order to mislead the people and obscure the roots of the crisis in the exploitative and oppressive nature of the capitalist system.

Worst of all, the imperialist powers are increasing their military budgets, stepping up war production and are ready to plunge into more wars of aggression. The US and the NATO have deployed their military forces far beyond their national borders. They openly boast of their objectives to expand their economic territory. They threaten to use, or actually use, brute force to impose their imperialist interests on other countries. Rival military blocs such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Collective Security Treaty Organization have risen to counter the hegemonism and expansionism of the US and its Western allies.

The International League of Peoples' Struggles and the broad masses of the people must intensify their anti-imperialist and democratic struggles, with the perspective of advancing in the direction of socialist revolution. The imperialist powers are hell-bent on escalating the exploitation and oppression of the people and bringing out the worst of monopoly capitalism. The reformists who wish to improve and preserve the capitalist and imperialist system cannot stop or redirect the plundering and aggressive course of imperialism. Neither can they mislead the people who are suffering from the crisis and who are responsive to calls for revolutionary struggle.

The adoption of higher technology has accelerated and aggravated the recurrence of the crisis of overproduction. It has facilitated financial transactions and the creation of fictitious capital. It has speeded up the propaganda of the imperialist powers and their puppets. But the handy gadgets of communication also speed up the spread of revolutionary propaganda and facilitates the mobilization of the people against the system. The revolutionary forces and people are confident that someday they can use high technology to serve social needs and not private profit-taking.

The higher level of science and technology is fully useful and beneficial to the people only under a socialist system. It can expand and improve the quality of production without resulting in a crisis of overproduction. It can protect and ensure the wise and planned utilization of natural resources, instead of the reckless plunder by capitalism. It offers ceaseless possibilities for centrally-planned, decentralized and creative economic, social, political, cultural, educational and scientific activities. It can enhance the harmonious relationship of humankind with the environment, with entire nations and local communities benefiting from it and protecting it. It can promote and realize social and environmental justice. Thus, it can facilitate and accelerate the spread of ideas and activities that bring about greater freedom, democracy, social justice, all-round development, a healthy environment and the revolutionary solidarity of all peoples.

November 27, 2013

I am delighted and honored to be invited to give the introduction to the collection of written contributions under the title of Boni @ 150: Bonifacio's Legacies to the National Democratic Struggle. This book is the central feature of the CONTEND Conference on Andres Bonifacio @ 150 to honor the legacy of the Great Plebeian who in 1896 led the first national democratic revolution in the Philippines and Asia against a Western colonial power and the feudal system. Bonifacio grasped the ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity by reading books about the French revolution and sifting the essence of liberal democracy from the Propaganda Movement and Freemasonry. He and other leaders of the Philippine revolution of 1896 were guided by bourgeois liberalism in leading the broad masses of the people against the colonial and feudal ruling system. The ideology was effective enough to shed light on the oppression and exploitation of the people and generate a revolutionary mass movement that ultimately put an end to the Spanish colonial rule in 1898. The revolution that Bonifacio started won final victory against the old type of colonialism upon the nationwide defeat and collapse of the Spanish colonial regime. But it was overtaken by the intervention and aggression of the modern imperialist power, US monopoly capitalism. The subjugation of the Filipino people and their revolutionary forces involved the killing of 1.5 million Filipinos from the start of the Filipino-American war on February 4, 1899 to 1914. The new colonial master had the capability to coopt the liberal bourgeoisie and control public opinion through the expanded educational system and mass media and make lopsided investments for the quickest extraction of superprofits.

Relevance of Bonifacio: continuing problems and need for revolution

The US has developed a semifeudal social economy dominated by US and other foreign capital and run mainly by the city-based comprador big bourgeoisie and the landlord class in the countryside. The urban petty bourgeoisie and the middle bourgeoisie have expanded since Spanish colonial times to some 8-9 percent of the population.

The working class has expanded to some 15-16 percent and the peasantry has decreased to about 75 percent. But the economy remains agrarian, dependent on the export of raw materials and some semimanufactures and the import of manufactures and is always weighed down by deficits and a mounting debt burden. The underdevelopment of the economy has been deepened and aggravated by the lack of national industrialization and land reform and by the sequence of import-substitution manufacturing in the 1950s and 1960s, export-oriented pseudo-industrialization since the 1970s and the neoliberal economic policy of trade and finance liberalization, privatization of public assets, anti-social and anti-environment deregulation and outright denationalization of the economy in the last three decades. The US colonial system has moved to a semicolonial one since 1946 when nominal independence was granted by the US. The pro-US political agents of the big compradors and landlords have been responsible for national administration. They are either the offspring of the exploiting classes or are recruits from the middle social strata. They have become a distinctly huge problem of the Filipino people in addition to imperialism and feudalism. They constitute bureaucrat capitalism by which public office is made a profitmaking private enterprise for the office holders and their families. Before and after granting nominal independence to the Philippines, the US has made sure that it retains control over the Philippine economy, politics, military and culture through unequal treaties, agreements and arrangements. It has continuing ownership and control over key businesses and it binds the entire economy and specific enterprises with loan, supply, technical, market and other agreements. It promotes and finances the politicians it favors and dictates policy to the puppet regime. It indoctrinates, advises, trains and supplies the military and police, uses their facilities and subordinates them to US military policy. It controls the educational system and mass media through training of personnel, investments, advertisement and setting of ideological and entertainment trends. The basic problems of foreign and feudal oppression and exploitation which the Filipino people confronted and fought against in the old democratic revolution of 1896 remains unsolved because the independence they won against Spain was defeated by US imperialism. Since then, the problems have become aggravated and deepened. The Philippine revolution is unfinished and must be continued under new conditions in the era of modern imperialism and proletarian revolution. The working class has arisen as the new leading class of the Philippine revolution. In fact, the Communist Party of the Philippines is

the advanced detachment of the working class. The new democratic revolution under the class leadership of the proletariat is already in progress. The objectives are still the full realization of national independence and democracy. The anti-imperialist liberal bourgeoisie is still a revolutionary class and can combine with the working class and peasantry to continue the Philippine revolution. But the working class is now the most progressive productive and political force and has the comprehensive and profound system of ideas and accumulation of experience that can challenge and defeat modern imperialism and lead both the new democratic and socialist stages of the Philippine revolution.

Bonifacio as father of the Filipino nation and the Philippine revolution

To this day and in generations to come, when we speak of continuing the Philippine revolution, the icon that comes instantly to our minds is that of Andres Bonifacio, the Great Plebeian, who started the Philippine revolution in 1896. When we think further of him, we are gratified that the frustrated old democratic revolution has been overtaken by the new democratic revolution and that the legacy of the worker Bonifacio has been adopted, cherished and held ever valid and relevant by the entire working class that has assumed the leadership over the Philippine revolution. Even as Bonifacio was a liberal democratic revolutionary, he had qualities, accomplishments and aspirations that the proletarian revolutionaries, the working class, all the revolutionary forces and the people of today can highly appreciate and conscientiously emulate. Bonifacio achieved greatness as a Filipino patriot because, despite being a wage-earning plebeian, he could not be awed or cowed into submission or compromise by the colossal colonial and feudal structure which had been built for more than 300 years old. He detested the rule of greed and terror and the combination of sword and cross to legitimize and sanctify the system. And most importantly he trusted the people and was determined to arouse, organize and mobilize them against the enemy. Thus, he took the risk and the pains of organizing the Katipunan in order to generate the collective will and daring of the people to fight the powerful oppressors and exploiters Bonifacio had nobility and purity of character and purpose. He was resolved to serve the people in the struggle for national independence and social justice against Spanish colonialism and the religious orders that carried out the most despicable forms of landgrabbing and feudal exploitation that were connected with the expansion of foreign trade in the nineteenth century. He dedicated his life and all his capabilities to the people's struggle and was ready to die for the people and for their bright future. Bonifacio was brilliant. He studied the history and current circumstances of his people, especially the toiling masses. He understood their suffering, striving and aspirations. And he drew the conclusion that they desired to liberate themselves from their foreign and local exploiters. He was far more knowledgeable about his people than those who went to the university but who did not care about them and those who neither read nor understood the social advancement of other peoples who had fought for liberty, equality and fraternity. Bonifacio was courageous. He was not deterred by the enemy's acts of intimidation and terror. He became more determined to fight for his people when he and his comrades founded the Katipunan subsequent to the arrest of Rizal and the scuttling of the La Liga Filipina in 1892. He was steadfast in declaring independence, in regarding the Supreme Council and lower councils of the Katipunan as organs of revolutionary government and in launching the armed revolution in August 1896. On August 28, 1896, he issued the proclamation for the start of the armed revolution on August 29. He actually led the series of battles that irrevocably started the war of independence. Thus, he became the Father of the Filipino nation and the Philippine revolution. Bonifacio had the humility to offer the leadership of the revolution to Rizal before and after the outbreak of the revolution. But the latter did not have that revolutionary kind of wisdom, closeness to the masses and daring to make that crucial judgment of accepting the offer of leadership. Aguinaldo had the cunning to seize the leadership from Bonifacio and order his murder as well as the murder of his siblings. But he capitulated to one foreign master after another (Spain in 1897, the US from 1901 onward and Japan during World War II). Bonifacio has remained forever glorious with his heroism and martyrdom for the cause of national and social liberation.

In the general assembly of Katipunan leaders in Pasig on May 3, 1896, Aguinaldo expressed doubts about starting the armed revolution. After the Katipunan made the decision to start the armed revolution on August 29, 1896, Aguinaldo did not send to Manila a contingent instructed to participate in the uprising. At any rate, the armed actions of the Katipunan in Manila and its environs pushed the Spaniards to draw troops from Cavite and allowed the Katipunan in Cavite to have the favorable conditions for attacking and defeating the small Spanish garrisons. It also helped that the Katipunan leaders who came from the principalia, exemplified by Capitan Miong (Aguinaldo), had influence to disintegrate the local civil guards. By the time General Polavieja tried, with a strong column, to

cross the Zapote bridge on February 17, 1897, Aguinaldo was ready with more than enough troops to defeat him. He gained prestige as leader and commander. Desirous of solving the dispute between the Magdalo and Magdiwang factions of the Katipunan, Bonifacio walked into the trap prepared by the Aguinaldo-led Magdalo faction. The Tejeros Convention of March 22, 1897 was rigged to carry out a coup against the Supreme Council of the Katipunan and its Supreme President Bonifacio, causing not only his political overthrow but his eventual murder on May 10, 1897 after a mock trial. After the death of Bonifacio, the forces of Aguinaldo in Cavite could not withstand the Spanish counteroffensive and had to retreat and march to Biaknabato. Before the year of 1897 was over, Aguinaldo sold out the Filipino people in the Pact of Biak-na-Bato of December 14-15, 1897, upon the advance payment of 400, 000 dollars from the Spanish colonial government. Subsequently, US imperialism revived the political fortunes of Aguinaldo and brought back him to the Philippines in 1898. Thus, when he authorized the so-called Kawit declaration of independence on June 12, 1898, he actually proclaimed the Philippines as a protectorate of the US. The revolutionary mass movement of the Filipino people was so strong that Spanish colonial power collapsed on a nationwide scale, except in the walled city of Manila (Intramuros). Under the advice of Apolinario Mabini and the overwhelming majority of generals headed by Antonio Luna, Aguinaldo had to carry on his role as president of the revolutionary government. But he supported the capitulationist tendency in his cabinet when he ordered the murder of Luna in Cabanatuan by the presidential troops from Kawit. Thereafter he further retreated northward from one place to another until he reached Palanan, Isabela where he was captured by the US troops. Soon after his capture, he volunteered to take an oath of allegiance to the US on April 19, 1901 to save his life. He accepted US sovereignty over the Philippines and thereafter issued a manifesto calling on the Filipino people and their revolutionary forces to surrender. He continued his surrender and servility to US imperialism until the Japanese occupied the Philippines in World War II. He took an oath of allegiance to the Japanese occupation and vigorously supported and campaigned for it. He was arrested upon the reconquest of the Philippines by the US and once more he renewed his allegiance to the US and also submitted himself to the semicolonial regime in order to benefit from a prospective amnesty proclamation. The treachery and treason of Aguinaldo has to be told at length here in connection with honoring Andres Bonifacio because to this day the rulers of the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system continue to foist on the Filipino people the notion that Aguinaldo was most responsible for Philippine independence before 1946. Every year the entire people are made to celebrate the false declaration of independence of June 12, 1898 under the protection of the US. This is being used psychologically and politically to reinforce the false independence granted by the US to its puppets in 1946 upon the formal start of the semicolonial political system. A comparison between Bonifacio and Aguinaldo is one between a great patriot and a repeatedly proven traitor. The revolutionary descendants of Bonifacio are reminded to carry forward the patriotic mission to realize and proclaim genuine national independence as a consequence of ending the current ruling system of the big compradors, landlords and high bureaucrats who are servile to US imperialism.

Lasting significance of Bonifacio in the Philippines and Asia

The Philippine revolution of 1896 led by Andres Bonifacio opened the road of armed revolution for national liberation and democracy in Asia. It came ahead of the Chinese revolution of 1911, the Indonesian uprising of 1926 and the independence of Indonesia, Vietnam and Korea in 1945 and the further establishment of people's democracies under the leadership of working class parties after World War II. It also came ahead of the grant of nominal independence by colonial powers to a series of Asian countries within the scheme of semicolonialism and neocolonialism. In the ongoing new democratic revolution in the Philippines, the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army, the National Democratic Front of the Philippines, the People's Democratic Government, the revolutionary mass organizations and the entire people honor Andres Bonifacio as the foremost among all the heroes of the old democratic revolution. They regard him as an exemplary revolutionary fighter and an inspiration for continuing the Philippine revolution at a new and higher stage of history at which the working class can lead the Filipino people from the new democratic revolution to the socialist revolution.

November 28, 2013

I am elated that the book, Boni@150, in honor of the great Andres Bonifacio, is now being launched. I take this occasion to express once more my appreciation to CONTEND for publishing this book. It is a great honor for me to have contributed the introduction to the book and a poem in honor of the father of the Philippine revolution and of the Filipino nation. It is a sacred duty for all of us to do everything necessary and possible to cherish his legacy and most important of all to continue the Philippine revolution that he started in 1896. Bonifacio is the most outstanding revolutionary fighter and national hero of the Filipino people in the old democratic revolution. He opened the road of democratic revolution not only in the Philippines but also in the entire Asia and third world. His superlative qualities as a patriot and a revolutionary and his fundamental goal of liberating the Filipino people from foreign and feudal domination remains valid in the new democratic revolution against modern imperialism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. We can carry out the new democratic and socialist stages of the Philippine revolution only by seeking inspiration from his ideas and deeds and emulating his example. May I read my poem in his honor.

Tribute to Comrade Andres Bonifacio

How great was Comrade Andres Bonifacio? He did not believe as sacred and eternal The colonial and feudal bastion of greed and terror. He detested the collusion of sword and cross, He trusted the entire people could prevail If they dared to unite and fight the oppressor. How pure was Comrade Andres Bonifacio? He decided to serve the people To fight for national independence, Achieve justice and progress. He offered his life and was ready to die For the people and for their bright future. How brilliant was Comrade Andres Bonifacio? He drew knowledge from history And the condition of the working people Who suffered, strove and hoped to free themselves From exploitation and oppression By the greedy and cruel foreign and local masters. How learned was Comrade Andres Bonifacio? More than those who reached the university Who did not know or care to know the anguish Of the toiling masses and what they can do. More than those who neither read nor understood The spirit of liberty, equality and fraternity. How valiant was Comrade Andres Bonifacio? He built the Katipunan in the face of intimidation With the arrest of Rizal and dismantling of the Liga. He was resolved to break the chains of colonial rule, He declared independence and led the revolution. Thus, he became the Father of the Filipino nation. How worthy was Comrade Andres Bonifacio? Rizal lacked trust in the revolution and the masses And spurned the earnest offer for him to lead. Miong seized the leadership and slew the Supremo. The honor of the martyr hero shines forever Against treason and repeated surrender to the foe. How further worthy was Comrade Andres Bonifacio? The revolution he led opened the road Of democratic revolution in the whole of Asia. Thus, the honor of Bonifacio rose so high Towards the leadership of his proletarian class In the era of the new-democratic revolution. Comrade Andres Bonifacio remains our inspiration, His example is always our guide Our urgent task to emulate him and advance What he began until we achieve complete victory. Fight to defeat imperialism and reaction, Achieve freedom and move towards socialism.

Thank you.

Building the People's Army and Waging the People's War

March 30, 2014

Comrades and Friends:

I wish to express my greetings of solidarity to all of you in this informative and cultural gathering organized by the International Office of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) to celebrate the 45th anniversary of the founding of the New People's Army (NPA) by the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP).

I am deeply pleased and highly honored to be invited to speak on the building of the New People's Army and waging the people's war in the Philippines. I wish to share with you basic information and ideas on the following: first, the circumstances and reasons for founding the NPA, second, the growth and victories in the people's war and third, the prospects of the people's war.

With boundless joy, I recall how I presided over the founding of this revolutionary army of the Filipino people on March 29, 1969 in my capacity as Chairman of the CPP Central Committee and its Military Commission. This is a time to give the highest honors to the martyrs and heroes and to congratulate all the Red commanders and fighters for all the victories won through hard work, sacrifices and relentless struggle.

Let us give a special Red salute to Comrades Benito Tiamzon and Wilma Austria for their long service to the Filipino people and new democratic revolution. They have contributed greatly to the growth and advance of the revolutionary forces of the people. They are senior field consultants of the NDFP in the peace negotiations between the Manila government and the NDFP. We demand their immediate release in accordance with the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees mutually approved since 1995 by the aforesaid negotiating parties.

1. Circumstances and reasons for founding the NPA

Since the Philippine revolution of 1896, the Filipino people have fought for national and social liberation against foreign and feudal domination. But since the US defeated the Philippine republic in the Filipino-American War that started in 1899, the Filipino people have been subjected once more to foreign and feudal domination and have repeatedly sought to complete the struggle for national independence and democracy.

The formation of the Hukbo ng Bayan Laban sa Hapon in 1942 resulted in the most serious struggles of the people to liberate themselves from the Japanese fascist occupation during World War II and from the US-dominated puppet government up to the early 1950s. But serious opportunist errors of the leadership of the old merger party of the Communist and Socialist parties led to defeat. The rectification of these errors from 1966 onward paved the way for the reestablishment of the Communist Party of the Philippines in 1968 and founding of the New People's in 1969.

Since 1946, when the US granted nominal independence, the ruling system in the Philippines has become semi-colonial politically; *i.e.* ruled indirectly by the US through its Filipino political agents. It has retained its semi-feudal character economically; *i.e.* maintained directly by the comprador big bourgeoisie and landlord class and their political agents in collaboration with the US and other foreign monopoly capitalists.

The Filipino people aspire to free themselves from oppression and exploitation. Thus, the CPP has put forward the general line of people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war. This program seeks to realize national independence and democracy, social justice, land reform and national industrialization, a national, scientific and mass culture, international solidarity and peace.

The working class is the leading class in the democratic and socialist stages of the revolution. The peasantry is the main force of the revolution and demands the agrarian revolution. It serves as the largest source of personnel and inexhaustible resource base for the people's army and people's war. It provides the widest physical and social terrain for the people's army to maneuver against the enemy in the expanse of the countryside.

The armed struggle is the main form of revolutionary struggle. It answers the central question of revolution, which is the seizure of political power. But the united front is also an important weapon of the revolution. The basic worker-peasant alliance is the foundation of such united front, which includes the urban petty bourgeoisie as one more basic revolutionary ally and further takes on board the national bourgeoisie as a positive though

vacillating ally. Under given circumstances, the united front may be further broadened as to take advantage of splits among the reactionaries and thereby aggravate and hasten the isolation and destruction of the enemy.

The NPA carries out the strategic line of protracted people's war, which means encircling the cities from the countryside and accumulating strength until conditions are ripe for the seizure of the cities on a nationwide scale. This strategic line is of decisive importance. It allows the NPA and other revolutionary forces of the people to grow from small to big and from weak to strong. It avoids a war of quick decision which favors the militarily far superior enemy forces.

In a protracted people's war, the NPA has the chance to develop in stages. At first, it takes the strategic defensive against the enemy's strategic offensive but launches guerrilla warfare, waging tactical offensives that it can win until it has accumulated enough strength to put the enemy in a strategic stalemate. Through a combination of regular mobile warfare and guerrilla warfare during the strategic stalemate, it can destroy the enemy forces faster and change the balance of forces until it puts the enemy on the strategic defensive and reaches the strategic offensive.

In carrying out the people's war, the NPA integrates armed struggle with agrarian revolution and mass base building. It gains the inexhaustible support of the peasantry only by carrying out the agrarian revolution. The fulfillment of the peasant demand for land is the main content of the democratic revolution. The mass base of the revolution must also be built by forming the mass organizations, the local organs of political power and the local CPP branches. Thus, wave upon wave, the people's democratic government replaces the power of the reactionary state.

The agrarian revolution is done in two stages. The first is the minimum land reform program, which involves rent reduction, elimination of usury, fair wages to the farm workers, fair prices for products at the farm gate and raising production in agriculture and sideline occupation through rudimentary cooperation. The second is the maximum land reform program, which involves the confiscation of land from the landlords and the free and equitable distribution of the land to the landless tillers. The anti-feudal united front relies mainly on the poor peasants and farm workers, wins over the middle peasants and takes advantage of the splits among the landlords in order to isolate and destroy the power of the despotic landlords.

The local organs of political power constitute the people's democratic government and are established at the barrio, municipal and higher possible levels. The barrio revolutionary committees are assisted by working committees concerned with mass organizing, public education, land reform, production, health care, defense, arbitration, cultural activities and so on. They are supported by the mass organizations of workers, peasants, women, youth, children, cultural activists and so on in the implementation of social programs, campaigns and activities. The local CPP branch that arises from the local mass base takes the lead in mass work and governance.

II. Growth and victories of the NPA

Under the leadership of the CPP, the NPA and other revolutionary forces of the people have preserved themselves, grown in strength and won great victories since the founding of the NPA in 1969 because they have a just revolutionary cause, which is the national and social liberation of the people from the terrible scourges of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. They have a clear program of people's democratic revolution, the correct strategy and tactics and a definite socialist perspective.

We started the NPA from scratch in the second district of Tarlac in 1969. We had only 9 automatic rifles and 26 other inferior firearms to rotate among 60 Red fighters to whom we had given politico-military training. But we were confident. We had a party that had avidly studied Marxism-Leninism, the revolutionary experience of the Filipino people, the teachings of Comrade Mao Zedong and the writings of Vietnamese comrades on building the people's army and waging the people's war. We benefited from the guerrilla experience and mass base of 80,000 people in Tarlac as well as from the urban-based mass movement which we had resumed and revitalized.

We anticipated that Tarlac would become the focus of enemy attacks as soon as we launched tactical offensives in the people's war. Thus, we recognized immediately the urgent need for expansion cadres to start the revolution in as many other regions and provinces as soon as possible. We gave politico-military training to a few expansion cadres for certain provinces in the Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, Southern Tagalog, Bikol and Western Visayas. In the period of 1969-72 (before the martial law period), the most successful of the expansion efforts was in the Cagayan Valley, especially Isabela.

In 1969-71, in less than two years, we were able to increase the number of NPA rifles to 200 through tactical offensives in Tarlac and we almost captured another 200 rifles from the armory of Camp O'Donnel of the US

Navy. We were very successful at the minimum land reform program and improving the housing of many people. As early as 1969, Marcos organized Task Force Lawin, with a total strength of 5000 military troops and policemen.

By 1971 the CPP Central Committee had shifted its headquarters to Isabela to direct the rapid growth of the mass base (already about 200,000 people), the land reform campaign, the accelerated politico-military training of expansion cadres for the Northern Luzon and other regions of the country and the intensification of armed struggle with a significant increase of rifles from the successful raid on the armory of the Philippine Military Academy in December 1970. The Marcos regime formed the Task Force Saranay of so many battalions in Isabela after the enemy noticed the use of the Browning automatic rifles captured from the PMA raid.

Aside from developing the revolution in a region of strategic importance, the greatest value yielded by building the guerrilla bases and zones in Isabela was the politico-military training and the experience of guerrilla war and mass work given to the trade unionists and youth activists that came from cities all over the country, thanks especially to Kabataang Makabayan and the First Quarter of 1970. By early 1972, a significant number of expansion cadres had flowed out to new areas of expansion nationwide, including the rest of Northeast Luzon, Northwest Luzon, Central Luzon, Southern Tagalog, Bicol, Visayas and Mindanao.

As early as 1970, the CPP was already forming regional Party committees to start the people's war in their respective regions, with the assistance of mass organizations. Such regional Party committees tried to do their best and became ever more successful as they accumulated experience and summed up lessons, including bitter ones, and as they were reinforced by cadres and fighters who had previous politico-military training and guerrilla experience from Tarlac and Isabela. Consequent to the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus in 1971 and the declaration of martial law in 1972, significant numbers of trade unionists and youth activists joined the people's army.

When Marcos declared martial law, he claimed that the NPA had 10,000 fighters but in fact it had only about 350 rifles in the hands of the NPA fighters, excluding the people's militia and self-defense units of the mass organizations. A relatively big number of national cadres were released from underground administrative functions in 1974 to be integrated into the people's army and to conduct rural mass work.

By December 1975 the country was well covered by relatively stable regional committees of the CPP and regional NPA commands.

The two NPA companies that had been isolated in the Isabela forest region since 1972, because of a wrong decision by the regional Party committee, marched out towards Cagayan province in 1975. The NPA in Eastern Visayas started to carry out platoon-size guerrilla offensives and these grew more frequent from 1976 onward. The NPA grew steadily in Northwest Luzon, Southern Tagalog, Bicol and Western Visayas. It expanded rapidly in Mindanao. It was the first to use the term guerrilla front to define the combination of guerrilla bases and zones in a contiguous area. The CPP Central Committee adopted the use of the term and instructed the Mindanao Party Committee to divide the big region into several regions in 1976.

After the 1975 Plenum and the subsequent carrying out of guerrilla offensives nationwide, it became clear that both the CPP and the NPA were truly nationwide forces with deep roots among the masses in the regions and provinces. The point had been reached that the NPA forces could withstand concentrated enemy attacks on one guerrilla front or a whole region and could fight back not only in that guerrilla front or region but also in several regions and guerrilla fronts where the enemy forces were weaker. On a national scale, the CPP and NPA had overcome tremendous odds, become tempered in struggle and gained the strength for continuous growth.

When I was captured in November 1977, the NPA was already at the level of 1500 automatic rifles, excluding the far bigger number of men and women in the people's militia and self defense units. I was confident that the CPP and NPA would grow in strength further and become a major factor in the overthrow of the Marcos fascist dictatorship. The NPA reached the level of 3000 rifles in 1983 and 5600 automatic rifles in 1986. Fearing the growth of the people's war, the US, the Catholic church and the big comprador-landlord oligarchs in the country decided within the period of 1984 to 1986 that Marcos had become more of a liability than an asset and had to be removed from power the way Duvalier had been deposed.

The people's army grew in strength and the people's war spread because of the Maoist leadership in both the CPP and NPA. The cadres and fighters were well-versed on the specific characteristics of the people's war in the Philippines, the revolutionary guide to land reforms and the urgent tasks in building the mass base.

Despite overall growth in the 1980s, a few members of the Central Committee spread the subjectivist notion that the Philippine was no longer semi-feudal and that by implication Marcos had greatly developed the economy

with his big comprador-landlord policy dependent on foreign loans. Based on said notion, Right and “Left” opportunism arose and lowered what should have been a faster rate of growth. The opportunists deviated from the analysis of the Philippine economy as semifeudal, the general political line of people's democratic revolution and the strategic line of protracted people's war.

The worst of the Right opportunists wanted to do away with the working class leadership and make the bourgeois-led united front the main weapon and legal struggle the main form of struggle. The worst of the Left “opportunists” wanted to enlarge and regularize NPA combat units, without minding agrarian revolution and building the mass base. Upon failure of their line, the military adventurists raised a hysteria about deep penetration agents and engaged in witch hunts, thus eroding the strength of the revolutionary movement and the mass base in certain areas at various times from 1985 onward.

Happily, the CPP launched the Second Great Rectification Movement in 1992. Comrades Benito Tiamzon and Wilma Tiamzon played important roles in this educational movement. Since then, the CPP and NPA have won resounding victories in reaffirming basic revolutionary principles and the strategic line of protracted people's war, regaining the mass base (60 percent of which had been lost by 1991 due to the “Left” opportunist line), revitalizing the mass movement and carrying forward the people's war. The line of the people's war has been sharpened as the waging of extensive and intensive guerrilla warfare on the basis of an ever widening and deepening mass base. It has been resoundingly successful.

At present, the CPP is reported to have about 150,000 members, the NPA has about 10,000 fighters, the people's militia tens of thousands of personnel, and the self-defense units hundreds of thousands. The guerrilla fronts number more than 110 covering significant portions of 71 provinces. The mass organizations have members in millions; and the people's democratic government has millions of people in its territory. Despite the recent arrest of Comrades Tiamzon and Austria, the revolutionary movement of the people will continue to grow in strength and advance. There is a far bigger mass movement now than when Julie and I were captured in 1977.

The CPP, NPA and the revolutionary forces of the people have withstood and prevailed over the attempts of the 14-year fascist dictatorship and the subsequent pseudo democratic regimes to destroy them with US-instigated national plans of military suppression and deception, like the current Oplan Bayanihan. It has been proven again and again that the guidance of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and the general line of people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war are correct and invincible against the rotten ruling system which is in a chronic crisis that is always worsening.

Prospects of the NPA and people's war

Like the CPP, the NDFP has declared that the general line for people's democratic revolution for the protracted people's war is the same line for the peace negotiations with the reactionary government and that the people's war is justified for so long as the demand of the people for national and social liberation is not satisfied. The revolutionary forces and the people consider the peace negotiations as a way of carrying forward and helping realize their demand for national independence and democracy.

They always resist the reactionary government's obsession of perpetuating the semicolonial and semifeudal system and seeking the capitulation and pacification of the revolutionary movement. They have made clear that they are ever ready for the eventuality that their enemy terminate the peace negotiations. The reactionary government has been brazenly disrespecting and violating existing agreements, like The Hague Joint Declaration, The Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees and the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law.

The CPP and NPA are determined to realize the plan to advance from the strategic defensive to the strategic stalemate in the near term and to overthrow the ruling system and establish the people's democratic system in the long run. They intend to bring up the number of CPP members to 250,000, NPA to 25,000, the guerrilla fronts to 200 and the scope of the agrarian revolution and the mass base to many more millions of people.

They aim to advance until they reach the strategic offensive in order to overthrow the ruling system and establish the people's democratic state system. They are confident of advancing from stage to stage in the people's war because they fight for the just revolutionary cause of the Filipino for national and social liberation, because they have the correct general line and strategy, because they accumulate strength through hard work and struggle and because conditions favorable to the revolution are provided by the unprecedentedly grave and ever worsening crisis of global capitalism and the domestic ruling system.

The broad masses of the people suffer terribly from the escalation of exploitation under the neoliberal economic policy, from state terrorism and from the imperialist wars of aggression. But they are driven to fight ever more fiercely for their national and social liberation and for a fundamentally new and better world of greater freedom, social justice, development, cultural upliftment and peace.

**Contribution to 22nd International Communist Seminar
in Brussels, Belgium on May 31, 2013**

I. Attacks on democratic rights and freedoms

It is in the nature of the monopoly bourgeoisie to carry out attacks on the democratic rights and freedoms of the working class and the rest of the people in order to preserve the system of exploitation. Oppression is a necessary concomitant of class exploitation.

The monopoly bourgeoisie cannot go on extracting surplus value from the working class without the power to hire and fire the workers in every work place and without the state power to dominate the working class and preempt or contain the trade union movement and even more so the revolutionary party of the proletariat. The monopoly bourgeoisie has magnified the role of the bourgeois state for repressing the proletariat and people and for waging wars of aggression for the purpose of seizing economic territory and engaging in plunder.

In the underdeveloped countries, the imperialist bourgeoisie is allied with the comprador big bourgeoisie and landlord class and is in a position to use these for the most brazen forms of exploitation and the most brutal forms of oppression. Superprofits are extracted with less amounts of investments, with the use of cheap labor amidst the worst conditions of unemployment and poverty. Repression is a normal part of the daily life of the exploited masses. The local exploiting classes use state terrorism against manifestations of people's resistance.

The imperialist powers headed by the US have used the neoliberal economic policy to deny the working class as the creator of new material values in production, to misrepresent the monopoly bourgeoisie as the ultimate producer of wealth and jobs and to justify the use of the state to accelerate profit-taking and the accumulation and concentration of capital.

The wages of the workers are pressed down. Social spending by government is reduced, while the big bourgeoisie and its high income executives are privileged with tax cuts. State assets are privatised. Investment, trade and finance are liberalized. Regulations to protect labor, women, children, society at large and the environment are cast away. In the name of globalization, the economies of the underdeveloped countries are denationalized to allow the imperialist bourgeoisie to exploit cheap labor and plunder the natural resources.

The neoliberal economic policy has resulted in a series of ever worsening financial and economic crisis. For so long since 1980, it had looked like every crisis could be solved by simply expanding the money supply and credit, stimulating consumerism and thus bloating the gross domestic product. But since 2007-2008, it has become clear the abuse of finance capital has its limits not only at the level of households and corporations but also at the level of national economies and states.

Enormous amounts of public funds have been used to bail out the failing banks and firms. Public funds that are touted as stimulus to economic recovery are passed to the corporations, which promptly subject them to labor cost-saving and profit making. The states continue to give tax cuts to the big bourgeoisie and provide more funds for the apparatuses of repression and war, while the economy stagnates and recedes. The US has used at least USD 4 trillion for wars of aggression, without taking into account the costs of replacing war equipment and medical costs of veterans.

All imperialist countries are now beset by public deficits and debt and by the falling value of currencies, especially the US dollar and the euro. Like the Third World countries, they are chronically at the brink of default and bankruptcy but get temporary relief by taking new loans that sink them deeper into the debt trap. The imposition of austerity measures at the expense of the people has resulted in further economic stagnation and in massive protests and social disorder in several imperialist states.

Upon the rise of public deficits and the public debt, states adopt and implement policies that pass the burden of crisis to the proletariat and the rest of the people. They raise taxes and adopt austerity measures. These cause further lay-offs, wage decreases, rising prices of basic necessities, reduced pensions, lessened social benefits and tax hikes on goods and services used by the working people.

The workers and the rest of the people are driven by their worsening dire conditions to resist. They are steadily fighting back. They are not deterred by the monopoly bourgeoisie which escalates repression and mass deception by unleashing all kinds of reactionary currents, including chauvinism, racial discrimination, religious bigotry, fascism and war-mongering in a vain attempt to obfuscate the roots of the crisis and distract the people.

Long before 9-11, the US and its imperialist partners laid the legal, ideological and political justification for state terrorism and wars of aggression. Thus, when 9-11 occurred, the PATRIOT ACT USA and the war plans could be instantly promulgated and put into effect. Since then, more laws and executive orders have been promulgated to facilitate repression and the unleashing of wars under the pretext of combating terrorism and imaginary weapons of mass destruction in the hands of the targeted regime.

The monopoly bourgeoisie orchestrates the think tanks, academic departments, special committees of the executive and legislative branches, the political parties, nongovernmental organizations, the churches and most important of all the corporate mass media to drum up and spread the most specious arguments and schemes for state terrorism and wars of aggression.

The imperialist powers and its multilateral agencies like the IMF, World Bank and WTO are making more intolerable impositions on the client states. They impose ever more onerous terms of debt and use loans as leverage for taking over domestic public and private assets and plundering the natural resources of underdeveloped countries. The puppet governments yield to the monopoly firms their local capital assets, land and natural resources at dirt cheap prices.

Under the neoliberal economic policy regime and the persistent influence of the neoconservative military policy, the US and the NATO countries have unleashed wars of aggression at an increasingly rapid rate, including those in the Balkans, West Asia, Central Asia and Africa since the end of the Cold War in 1991. The main thrust of the wars is to seize markets and fields of investment, control sources and routes of oil and other natural resources and install puppet governments.

The proletariat and peoples of the underdeveloped countries suffer the most from the global depression. The demand for raw material and semi-manufactured exports has decreased or some of these are being exported in greater volume but at lower prices. At the same time, the prices of imported manufactures are rising. Trade deficits grow and foreign debt mounts.

The economic crisis has resulted in the escalation of exploitation. The working people and the middle social strata suffer from intolerably high unemployment rates, real wage reductions, lower income levels, soaring prices of basic goods and services and the deterioration and higher costs of social services, such as education, health, low-income housing and the like. The conditions of mass poverty have worsened.

In mere anticipation of the people's resistance and even more so in reaction to its occurrence, the US and other imperialist powers have emboldened puppet states to adopt more draconian laws and more brutal means of repression. They design systems of social and police control and campaigns of military suppression. They earn profits from supplying weapons and thereby gain leverage and influence among the reactionary politicians and military officers.

II. Current trends of people's resistance

The global crisis and the intensification of oppression and exploitation that the reactionary classes impose on the people have led to widespread social unrest. The people's resistance has taken various forms. Those in power representing the exploiting classes are quick to use violence to intimidate the people and suppress their resistance. They find it convenient to adopt the language and force of the US designed war on terror so-called.

In North America, Western Europe and elsewhere, strikes and protest marches have broken out against attacks on the rights of working people, austerity measures, deteriorating working conditions, erosion of social benefits in contrast to tax cuts and high incomes of the upper crust, the wars of aggression, racial and minority discrimination, the criminalization of migrant workers, discrimination against the youth in employment and the higher costs of education.

The Occupy movement has arisen in Wall Street and spread out to many cities in and beyond the US and the Indignados have arisen on a wide scale in Spain. The aforementioned non-Party formations make it a point to declare that they are not led by Parties but are creations of the spontaneous. But in Greece and other countries, communist and workers' parties have been in the forefront of the mass struggles.

The working class is becoming increasingly conscious of the need to engage in class struggle against the

monopoly bourgeoisie that has long carried out its own class struggle to suppress democratic rights and press down wage conditions. The class struggle of the proletariat is steadily coming to the fore as the workers stand up and act to defend their rights and interests. All efforts are being exerted to mobilize the unionized and un-unionized workers.

The conditions have become favorable for the resurgence of the working class movement against capitalism and for socialism, even as the monopoly bourgeoisie and their political agents are still very much ahead in undertaking measures to counter the current of people's resistance through deception and violence. The monopoly bourgeoisie uses a wide range of nonproletarian parties to quieten and mislead the people. At the same time, they adopted draconian laws against the people in the name of anti-terrorism.

The prolongation of the crisis gives the genuine communist and workers' parties to strengthen their ranks, overcome adverse factors and sharpen the class struggle against the monopoly bourgeoisie. Certain factors check the continuous vigorous development of anti-imperialist mass movements and revolutionary parties. The monopoly bourgeoisie erodes the rights and social benefits of the workers and people but in a gradual or surreptitious way so as not to provoke revolt.

The major bourgeois parties, mass media, trade union bureaucracy and schools cloak big bourgeois interests with petty bourgeois rhetoric. There are yet no Marxist-Leninist parties and revolutionary mass movements that are large and strong enough to challenge the monopoly bourgeoisie and its agents.

The various Communist formations striving to play the role of the revolutionary party of the proletariat still suffer from the limitations and weaknesses that developed during the decades of the Cold War, the spread of revisionist ideas, the neoliberal economic policy and other kinds of imperialist offensives.

The imperialist states in Europe are still shielded from the Communist challenge by a panoply of parties, including the Christian democrats, the liberals, the social democrats, and the greens, and by the see-saw of public sentiment between the relative Left and the absolute Right in electoral contests. However, the polarization of political forces will continue as the socioeconomic conditions deteriorate.

Due to the grossly uneven development of global capitalism, imperialist hegemony has many weak points, especially in the underdeveloped countries whose people suffer the most from imperialism and local reaction. The current global crisis and the overextension of the US in wars of aggression and in military interventions are favorable conditions for advancing the revolutionary struggle of the oppressed peoples and nations. In all the underdeveloped regions of the world, the entire Africa, West Asia, Central Asia, South Asia, East Asia and Latin America, mass protests and armed struggles are spreading and intensifying.

Blatantly pro-imperialist governments are being condemned and repudiated by the people in an increasing number of countries. Governments like those of Cuba, Venezuela and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea have their people's support because they assert national independence and oppose imperialism; they work hard to look after the welfare of the people; and they express adherence to socialism.

Where the US and NATO allies have unleashed wars of aggression to bring down governments that reject US dictation, such as in the Balkans, Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya and Syria, the most intense forms of armed conflict occur; and even after the overthrow of the anti-US and anti-NATO government, movements for national liberation persevere and serve as long-term challenges to imperialist power.

The conditions of economic depression and worsening exploitation and oppression have intensely aggrieved the people. Mass uprisings and political turmoil are surging to shake and topple the rulers and autocrats of the client states of the US and other imperialist powers. Conditions are ripe for revolutionary armed struggles in many countries and entire global regions. Even where there are yet no strong revolutionary parties of the proletariat, the conditions are present for them to develop strength in the long run.

The so-called Arab Spring has swept the Middle East and North Africa, with the masses demanding democratic changes, toppling despotic regimes and shaking others. However In the absence of a strong communist party, the Islamic movement tends to grow strong and gain power, as in Tunisia, Egypt and elsewhere. The imperialist powers headed by the US also install new puppets in the name of liberal democracy. Elsewhere they perpetuate puppet monarchies.

Long-running armed struggles for national liberation, such as those in India and the Philippines are persevering and proving to the whole world that armed revolution can be waged and can grow in strength under current conditions. The Palestinian people have persisted in waging their decades-long struggle for national liberation and

for their return to their homeland with broad international support against the brutal Zionist aggression and occupation backed by US imperialism. All these continue to prove that the US and NATO do not have a seamless control over the entire world.

The Marxist-Leninist and Maoist parties that are waging the new democratic revolution through protracted people's war play a signal role in bringing about the world proletarian revolution. They hold high the torch of armed revolution. They illumine the road of revolution for the peoples in the underdeveloped countries, in the retrogressive countries of former socialist countries and in the imperialist countries.

III. Strategies and actions in response

What the people can and must do about the global financial and economic crisis ranges from seeking relief, recovery and reforms within the imperialist-dominated world capitalist system to making the most fundamental criticism of this system and raising the demand and undertaking the actions for revolutionary change towards socialism. It is the strategic task of communists to serve the immediate demands of the proletarian and people and to seek the overthrow of the bourgeois state.

Reforms can be undertaken to serve the immediate needs of the working people for employment, decent income, better working and living conditions and the availability of basic social services. But the communist must not be confined to merely seeking reforms within the existing ruling system of the big bourgeoisie. The long term goal of the working class and the people is to replace the system of monopoly capitalism with the socialist system.

To take an important phrase from the Communist Manifesto, the battle for democracy must be won whether the popular movement for socialism be in the imperialist countries or in the far less developed countries dominated by imperialism. The consciousness, organization and mobilization of the broad masses of the people must be raised to a level high enough to effect basic reforms immediately and social revolution in the long run.

In the industrial capitalist countries, the economic basis for socialism exists. But the monopoly bourgeoisie never gives up its political and economic power voluntarily. It uses its state power to impose fascist rule if the deceptive role of the bourgeois political parties fails to mislead the people and stabilize the system. Thus, the battle for democracy must be won against the potential or actual rise of fascism and the use of imperialist war by the monopoly bourgeoisie to regiment the people. In this regard, we recall the Great Depression, the rise of fascism and World War II.

In the far less developed countries, where there are still large vestiges of feudalism, winning the battle for democracy involves not only upholding, defending and promoting in general the collective and individual democratic rights of the people, especially civil and political liberties, but most importantly addressing substantively the peasant demand for land reform and engaging the peasant masses in the new democratic revolution led by the working class as the long term agent for socialist revolution and construction.

There is the need for a working class party to lead the people in seeking basic reforms within the bourgeois political system and aiming for the socialist revolution. Basic social reforms as well as social revolution are not possible without the working class party that is capable of leading the organized and unorganized masses. Without such a working class party, the big bourgeoisie continues to rule society unchallenged and unhampered through the political parties which it uses for preserving the system, for intra-class and intra-systemic competition for political power among the bourgeois factions and for warding off any political party that seeks to overthrow bourgeois rule.

There must be a trustworthy working class party committed to the propagation and realization of the revolutionary program of social change and capable of leading the broad masses of the people, especially the working people. Such a party is best relied upon for confronting the global financial and economic crisis and solving the problems for the benefit of the people and with their active participation. Without a working class party, the bourgeois parties would prevail over the working people who are unorganized and spontaneous or who are limited to mass organizations.

In carrying out organizational campaigns in the face of the current grave financial and economic crisis, efforts must be resolutely undertaken to build a genuine working class party that surpasses the bourgeois laborite, reformist social democratic or revisionist communist parties. Building such a working class party is quite challenging because of the long running attempts of the monopoly bourgeoisie to stigmatize as "terrorist" revolutionary forces that call for national liberation, democracy and socialism. But the current crisis conditions are

favorable for building such a party.

The trade unions and other mass organizations must be built in order to uphold, defend and promote the rights and interests of the exploited classes and sectors of society. In the industrial capitalist countries, the most important of these are the mass organizations of workers, migrant workers, immigrants, the various nationalities, youth, women, the professionals and cultural workers. In the semicolonial and semifeudal countries, the most important mass organizations are those of workers, peasants, youth, women, the intelligentsia and the minorities. These classes or sectors are adversely affected by the crisis in particular ways.

The class and sectoral mass organizations must further form multi-class and multisectoral alliances in order to underscore common interests and build political unity cumulatively and progressively. The genuine working class party offers to them as guide its general line and program of action, encourages their political and organizational initiatives and thereby wins their abiding support. Mass organizations with different ideological, political and religious affinities can form formal and informal alliances to pursue common courses of action on the basis of consensus and coordination.

The broad masses of the people in their millions must be mobilized to denounce the exploitative and oppressive character of the system of monopoly capitalism, now sharper and more destructive than ever before, and to demand social, economic and political changes, ranging from basic reforms to the fundamental revolutionary transformation of society.

The battle for democracy must be carried out according to the objective and subjective conditions obtaining. The legal forms of struggle must be carried out where these are possible and to whatever extent these are possible. The full spectrum of human rights, civil, political, social, economic and cultural, must be upheld, defended and advanced for the benefit of the exploited and oppressed people. The people must be able to act accordingly as the socioeconomic crisis results in political crisis and the forces and agents of monopoly capitalism malign and try to discredit democratic protest as unlawful rebellion or even as terrorism and thus justify increased political repression.

In countries where the ruling classes engage in state terrorism and/or imperialism engages in wars of aggression and military intervention, the people have the sovereign right to mobilize themselves for all forms of resistance, including revolutionary armed struggle. At the moment, legal mass movements and revolutionary armed struggles are going on and advancing in several countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, where the people are the most oppressed and exploited.

To become most effective in making protests and demands, the mass movement for social change must be based at the level of the local communities, the factories, farms, schools and churches. It is indestructible when there are dedicated cadres of the working class party and the mass organizations who are deeply rooted among the toiling masses and who arouse, organize and mobilize them at the basic level.

This fact is well demonstrated in cases where the most vicious campaigns of deception of the counterrevolutionary state cannot sway the people against the progressive mass movement as well as in cases where such state carries out a campaign of military and police suppression but fails to defeat or weaken the revolutionary mass movement of the people.

The revolutionary parties of the proletariat are needed to lead the battle for democracy and the revolutionary struggle for socialism. But they cannot succeed without the revolutionary mass movement. They must bring about a mass movement of the working class and the rest of the people that is strong enough to end the state power of the bourgeoisie and install the power of the proletariat.

Prospects

The imperialist powers and their monopoly bourgeoisie and finance oligarchy persist in clinging to the neoliberal economic policy because this feeds their greed. There is therefore no solution in sight for the grave economic and social crisis that is wreaking havoc on the lives of the broad masses of the people throughout the world. What is in sight is a new round of deterioration in the global crisis of capitalism.

All major contradictions are expected to intensify: between labor and capital in the imperialist countries, between the imperialist powers on one hand and the oppressed peoples and nations on the other hand, between the imperialist powers and the countries assertive of national independence, and among the imperialist powers themselves.

The struggle between labor and capital will sharpen in the years to come, as the structural crisis of capitalism

and imperialism worsens. In the United States itself, the debt crisis at the level of local states and city governments will become far worse than now and will drive the federal debt crisis to become far more unmanageable than now. The federal debt bubble in the US is being brought to bursting point with the frenzied quantitative easing (printing money) and easy credit to finance budgetary and trade deficits.

The public debt crisis that has dramatically destabilized the economies and politics of the southern countries of Europe (Greece, Spain, Portugal and Italy) will aggravate and can easily spread northward at an accelerated rate. Germany and all other capitalist countries are beset with high rates of public debt and these cannot be softened up by overseas trade and investments. Japan has been ahead of all industrial capitalist countries in that kind of predicament, which now affects all, especially because of new capitalist powers further cramping the space for inter-imperialist competition.

The attempts of the imperialist powers to shift the burden of crisis to the proletariat and people through higher taxes and austerity measures at their expense will cause the intensified mass resistance, which will overshadow the workers' strikes and protest rallies that we have seen so far in the capitalist countries. The workers and the rest of the people cannot accept the painful paradox of rising productivity resulting in mass lay-offs, less income and impoverishment.

The global depression will worsen and further reduce the demand from the developed countries for the raw material and semi-manufacture exports of the underdeveloped countries. This will further destroy productive forces and aggravate poverty. Social discontent will further spread and deepen. It will generate mass protest actions, unprecedented mass uprisings, and the growth of armed revolutionary movements for national and social liberation led by revolutionary parties of the working class in the context of the revolutionary united front.

Social unrest and people's resistance are growing not only in the most underdeveloped and impoverished countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, which have been least favored by neoliberal financing for high rise buildings, semi-manufacturing and import-dependent consumption. Even the big countries like China, India, Russia and Brazil previously praised by the imperialists as partners in the exploitation of cheap labor and cheap raw materials under the neoliberal policy of globalization are now afflicted by severe economic and social crisis.

The US and other imperialist powers (especially those in the NATO) will continue to perversely see in the crisis of global capitalism the need to stimulate their economies by increasing military production, use this to wage aggression to topple regimes assertive of national independence and expand economic territory. Imperialist military intervention and wars of aggression will continue and be directed against countries with rich natural resources, especially oil and gas. In this regard, Iran and Venezuela are among the targets of imperialism.

The imperialist powers will try to maintain their unity within the UN Security Council, the IMF, World Bank, WTO and various regional trade and military alliances. But the worsening crisis of global capitalism will tend to put them at loggerheads and to form alliances and counteralliances in economic and military terms. The struggle for a re-division of the world among the imperialist powers will become more conspicuous as they compete for sources of fuel and raw materials, markets, fields of investment, and spheres of influence.

The escalation of military expenditures for war production and wars of aggression, and the rise of such ultra-reactionary currents as chauvinism, anti-migrants, racism, religious bigotry, and fascism challenge the people in imperialist countries and in the whole world to be vigilant and militant in upholding, defending and promoting their democratic rights and their struggle for a fundamentally new and better world of greater freedom, democracy, social justice, all-round development, international solidarity and peace.

National Democratic Struggle

and People's Trial Of US Imperialism and its Puppets

Lecture to the New World Academy
in Utrecht, The Netherlands
15 November 2013

Fellow artists and Friends,

Good afternoon! Thank you Maria Hlavajova of the Basis voor Actuele Kunst for the warm welcome and Jonas Staal of the New World Academy for the introduction to the program.

My task today is to talk about the national democratic struggle and the people's trial of US imperialism and its puppets in the Philippines. This is in connection with the title of this session, Towards a People's Culture, which centers on the critical role of arts and artists in the struggle for national liberation and democracy in the Philippines. I am pleased that Luis Jalandoni of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines will focus on the conflict between cultural imperialism and people's culture.

I shall describe the political, socioeconomic and cultural aspects of the national democratic struggle. Thus, I provide a broad context for the conflict of cultural imperialism and people's culture and the more direct discussion by the other speakers on art and specific forms of art, like the musical, graphics, the effigy and the "people's trial" as a theatrical model, in relation to the national democratic movement of the Philippines.

I shall also give my views on how art and literature are necessary and essential in "putting on trial" US imperialism and its puppets by exposing their crimes and bringing about the condemnation and judgment of the malefactors and their crimes. Thus, art and literature contribute decisively to arousing, organizing and mobilizing the masses and to advancing from the symbolic trial to the real trial of the criminals in the drama of the revolutionary process.

In keeping with the theme of people's trial, I wish to present the coldblooded and systematic crimes of US imperialism and its puppets in oppressing and exploiting the people, the programmatic demands of the people for national and social liberation and the process of rendering justice. By taking up the Philippine case in a broad context, I hope to contribute to the development of a transnational "people's trial" as a major function of art against oppression and exploitation.

1. The national democratic struggle in the Philippines

The Filipino people have the distinction of being the first nation in the whole of Asia to carry out and win a revolutionary war of national independence against a Western colonial power. The Philippine revolution started in 1896 and triumphed over Spain in 1898. But after pretending to be friendly and helpful to the revolution, the US ignited the Filipino-American War in 1896 and carried out a war of aggression in order to destroy the Philippine republic and impose its own colonial rule over the Philippines.

The Philippine revolution of 1896 was anticolonial and antifeudal and had therefore a national democratic character. The bourgeois liberal intelligentsia (ilustrados) successfully provided the leadership to end Spanish colonial rule. But it failed to prevail over the newly risen modern imperialist power of the US, based on industrial monopoly capitalism, with superior military weapons and with the capacity to use the bourgeois liberal ideology to coopt the Filipino intelligentsia and deploy investments to extract superprofits..

The US carried out a barbaric war in order to defeat the Philippine republic. It killed a total of 1.5 million Filipinos out of a population of 7 million in the course of the officially designated Filipino-American War of 1899 to 1902 and further pacification campaigns up to 1914. It used a brutal strategy and tactics it had applied against the First Nation and Mexicans. It unleashed food blockades, forced relocations of entire communities and the extensive use of torture and extrajudicial killings.

The US forced the Filipino people to finance their own military conquest and subjugation. It floated war bonds in Wall Street and subsequently made the people pay for these through taxation. To extract superprofits, it made investments in the expansion of plantations, opening of mines, establishment of a few monopoly enterprises and acceleration of domestic and foreign trade. It generated a semifeudal type of social economy dependent on

imported manufactures and raw material exports from a persistent feudal base.

It established an educational and cultural system that perpetuated colonial mentality but this time servile to the US instead of Spain. It superimposed bourgeois ideas and values on those feudal and religious ones previously propagated by the dominant Catholic church. It systematically used education and culture to breed a new and bigger corps of puppet politicians and to produce the professionals and clerks to serve the expanded bureaucracy and businesses.

The social structure that has arisen from the semifeudal economy includes the basic ruling classes of the comprador big bourgeois and landlords, who are fractions of one percent of the population. The intermediate social strata are the middle bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie which are around 1 percent and 8 percent, respectively. The basic exploited classes are the workers and peasants, which are around 15 and 75 percent respectively.

Since the early years of the 20th century, the trade union movement has developed among the workers. Since 1930 upon the establishment of the Communist Party of the Philippine Islands (CPPI), the revolutionary idea of the working class leading the people in the national democratic revolution and consequently the socialist revolution has acquired reality and taken roots in the Philippines.

As soon as it was established in 1930, the CPPI was suppressed by the US colonial regime. It was allowed to operate legally under the auspices of the anti-fascist Popular Front in 1937. It organized the People's Army Against Japan in 1942 after the Japanese invasion of the Philippines. The opportunities and prospects for advancing the Philippine revolution were undermined by strategic errors of the CPPI leadership, swinging from Right opportunism (from 1942 to 1946) to "Left" opportunism (1948 to 1952) and again to Right opportunism (1954 to 1962).

In 1946 the US granted nominal independence to the Philippines. Since then, the political system has become semicolonial, no longer ruled directly by the US but indirectly through puppet politicians who are essentially bureaucrat capitalists and who serve the US as well as the interests of the big compradors and landlords in the semifeudal economy. The US has retained its dominance and control over the economic, political, cultural and security system of the Philippines.

The Philippines was touted by the US as the show window of democracy (in fact a cesspool of neocolonialism and semifeudalism) because the duopoly of the Liberal Party and Nacionalista Party alternated in taking presidential power through periodic elections. But after getting himself reelected through fraud and terrorism in 1969, Marcos carried forward his scheme to impose a fascist dictatorship and carried it out through the proclamation of martial law in 1972.

While the socioeconomic and political crisis of Philippine society was rapidly worsening in the latter half of the 1960s, the proletarian revolutionaries who were guided by Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought separated from the old Communist Party in 1966. They criticized and repudiated the wrong line and strategic errors of the Lavaite leaders of that party since 1942.

They clarified the character of Philippine society as semicolonial and semifeudal and the corresponding character of the Philippine revolution as national and democratic under the leadership of the working class. The motive forces of the revolution are the workers, peasants and the urban petty bourgeoisie. The enemies are US imperialism, the big compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists. The current stage of national democratic revolution through protracted people's war is directed towards reaching the stage of socialist revolution.

Accordingly, the Communist Party of the Philippines was established under the theoretical guidance of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought on December 26, 1968. It founded the New People's Army on March 29, 1969. It initiated the formation of the National Democratic Front on April 24, 1973. In the progression of these events, the revolutionary cadres and the people fought the frenzied and violent preparations and imposition of the fascist dictatorship on the people.

The revolutionary advance of the CPP, NPA and NDFP was the decisive factor in the overthrow of the Marcos fascist dictatorship in 1986. But since then, one regime after another has masqueraded as democratic and has oppressed and exploited the people for the benefit of US imperialism and the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords.

The new democratic revolution through protracted people's war has therefore continued in order to fight for national liberation, democracy, social justice, development through land reform and national industrialization, a national, scientific and mass culture and international solidarity for peace and development. The revolutionary forces and people have gained strength through the people's war in the countryside and the legal mass movement

in the urban areas.

II. Crimes of US imperialism and its puppets

For the purpose of the people in putting on trial US imperialism and its puppets, we must be aware of the comprehensive range of crimes that they are culpable for.

US imperialism must be held accountable. When we speak of US imperialism, we refer to the US federal state and its various agencies, the corporations and banks which are impelled by monopoly capitalism to engage in aggression and plunder.

1. The genocidal killing of 1.5 million Filipinos amounting to 20 percent of the Philippine population of 7 million is a horrendous crime. It was the brutal way by which US imperialism violated the national sovereignty of the Filipino people and destroyed the Philippine republic.

2. The direct colonial occupation of the Philippines from 1902 to 1946, except for the interregnum of Japanese occupation from 1942 to 1945, meant the oppression and exploitation of the Filipino people. The people were taxed by the colonial state to pay for the costs of US aggression and colonial occupation.

3. The US monopoly capitalists extracted superprofits from the Philippine colony by plundering its natural resources, subjecting the workers to inhumanly low wages in public works and in US enterprises, promoting the unequal exchange of raw-material exports and manufactured imports and subjecting the country to debt peonage to US banks.

4. The US used the Philippines as launching base for aggression against China and for getting a piece of the Chinese melon in the colonial game. This started the criminal use of US military bases in the Philippines for aggression against the neighboring countries of the Philippines, especially after World War II, against China, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and Indonesia.

5. The US engaged in cultural imperialism and perpetuated colonial mentality. It imposed on the people not only the English language but also pro-imperialist ideas and values that obscured the blood debts of the US and misrepresented the exploitation of the people as beneficial. It bent the feudal and medieval belief system of the dominant Catholic church to serve the interests of US monopoly capitalism.

6. The US trained the bureaucrats, politicians and professionals to be servile to US imperialist power and to use the language of pro-imperialist liberal democracy to deceive the people. It was most responsible for promoting bureaucrat capitalism. It taught the children of the exploiting classes and the urban petty bourgeois to seek and hold power and amass private wealth through bureaucratic corruption

7. The US has fostered the comprador big bourgeoisie as its principal trading and financial agents in the country. This class is responsible for ensuring raw material production for export and for importing foreign manufactures and distributing them in the country. The US has also retained the landlord class for the purpose of controlling food production and agricultural production for export.

8. When the US pretended to grant independence in the Philippines in 1946, it was sure of being able to rely on its puppets: the big compradors and landlords and bureaucrat capitalists. Since then it has retained control over the economy, the politics, the culture, security and diplomatic relations of the Philippines.

9. The US is culpable for the semicolonial system of exploitation, underdevelopment and rampant poverty. The daily violence of exploitation has caused the untimely death of many more Filipinos than those 1.5 million killed from 1899 to 1913.

10. To this day, the US provides arms, indoctrination, training and strategic planning to the military and police forces of the reactionary state and is culpable for military campaigns of suppression and the gross and systematic human rights violations. It has forces of military intervention in the Philippines and uses these to dominate the Philippines and threaten neighboring countries under the US pretext of a permanent war on terrorism and the US strategic policy of pivot to East Asia.

US imperialism maintains hegemony over the Philippines because it is assisted by the big compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists. These reactionary puppets are complicit with the US in grave crimes against the Filipino people and they take their own initiatives to oppress and exploit the people.

1. Puppetry to US imperialism is a grave crime against the people. It is treason. It is the betrayal and violation of the people's sovereignty and national independence in an all-round way. Traitors are subject to trial by the people.

2. Bureaucratic corruption is a grave crime committed by the bureaucrat capitalists. They auction off the

economic sovereignty, the national patrimony and business privileges to foreign monopoly corporations and big compradors. They impose a heavy tax and debt burden on the people and rob the national treasury through the pork barrel system.

3. The big compradors based in the cities collaborate with and assist the foreign monopoly capitalists in undertaking super-exploitation and extracting superprofits through investments, trade and finance. In combination with US imperialism, they get the most out of the sweat and blood of the people.

4. The landlords hold sway over the countryside and impose feudal and semifeudal forms of exploitation on the masses of peasants and farm workers. The despotic landlords wield political power and use the armed personnel of the state and private guards to suppress any form of resistance from the exploited.

5. The rights of the workers are curtailed. The law of the reactionaries is slanted against the workers' right to form trade unions and exercise their democratic rights. Violence is easily employed by the proprietors and the state against the workers' trade unions and their strikes. Thus, the wage and living conditions of workers are always deteriorating.

6. The puppet reactionary state engages in bogus land reform program to deceive the peasant masses and preserve landlordism in the Philippines. The landlords sell land to the state for the purpose of "land reform" only upon their volition and compensation at the current market price. Landlordism is rampant and so is landgrabbing for the purpose of unbridled mining, logging, plantation and real estate speculation.

7. Every regime of the reactionary puppet state has a campaign plan for the suppression of peasants who demand land reform and the workers who fight for their trade union rights. The puppets receive arms and advice from their imperialist master for the purpose. The US and every puppet regime wantonly engage in human rights violations.

8. The share of public education, health, housing and other social services is ever subject to diminution while the funds flow mainly to military expenditures, bureaucratic corruption and debt service.

9. The right to self-determination of the national minorities and indigenous people is grievously violated. They are deprived of their right to ancestral domain and their land and other natural resources are grabbed from them by the local exploiting classes and by the mining, logging, plantation and real estate companies.

10. The reactionary puppet state constantly invites the US military forces to further entrench themselves in the Philippines and provides facilities to them in violation of the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Philippines. It also supports US imperialism in realizing its hegemony and strategic plans over the Asia-Pacific region.

III. The Process of trying the malefactors

Upholding, defending and promoting the people's culture is a crucial and necessary part of the comprehensive program for the people's democratic revolution in the Philippines. People's culture has a national, scientific and mass character.

By having a national character, it upholds national independence and serves the needs and aspirations of the nation. It cherishes and harmonizes all the regional and local cultures in the country. It learns from other countries but is not subservient to them or dependent on them. It contributes what it can to the advance of human civilization and international solidarity.

By being scientific in character, it is free from the shackles of medieval belief and superstition and at the same it respects the freedom of thought and belief. It adopts revolutionary ideas from the high road of human civilization. It seeks to modernize and develop society by benefiting from scientific and technological advances.

By having a mass character, it serves the rights and interests of the toiling masses of the people and not of the few who belong to the exploiting classes. The culture of the people is opposed to the culture of the exploiting few.

The arts are a great part of culture. They include architecture, sculpture, painting, creative writing, music, dance, theatre, photography and comics. All these art forms and their creations are not simply passive objects of appreciation or static reflectors of reality, they should be an active force for exposing and opposing the crimes of malevolent forces in society, for arousing, organizing and mobilizing the masses and for making fundamental social change.

It is fine that we have with us in this session Walkie Miraña who can explain to us the role of the cultural worker as an organizer of resistance and how the various art forms are concentrated in the theatre as a distinct form of art and done so with minimal costs but with maximum effect in activating the people against injustices and

crimes. It is also fine that we have Lisa Ito who can explain to us the art of protest puppetry and how effigies of the malefactors are made and burned in an act of judgment and condemnation. We appreciate the New World Academy for inviting them and also for arranging the exhibition of the works of art that have been created to reflect and advance the national democratic struggle in the Philippines.

It will still take some time before the people's democratic revolution can overthrow the existing ruling system on a nationwide scale in the Philippines in order to put on trial the worst of criminals, mete out punishments to them and put to an end the root causes of oppression and exploitation. But while the juridical processes of the people's democratic state system are not yet available, except in the countryside where revolutionary organs of political power and people's courts have come into existence, the cultural process of putting on trial the criminals through the various art forms can run ahead and have influence and effects on a wide scale.

In reflecting social reality and exposing and opposing the crimes of oppression and exploitation, the various art forms metaphorically, symbolically or allegorically perform the various stages and functions of the criminal trial, such as preliminary investigation, indictment and the trial proper in which facts are established on the basis of evidence and testimonies and the application of law in the judgment. It is the moral court of public opinion rather than a court of law that is addressed in the people's trial of the malefactors. The people's trial can be further invigorated and reinforced by integrating or coordinating it with artistic works and performances.

The existing courts of the oppressors are theatrical in trying and deciding cases within the parameters of the unjust ruling system. The revolutionary people and forces in the Philippines have all the right to stage people's trials of US imperialism and local reactionaries in order to expose and oppose the real criminals and fight for justice. The people's trial has been demonstrated by Philippine organizations since a long time ago. During the First Quarter Storm of 1970, the mass meetings at public squares were referred to as people's tribunals. There have also been internationally well-known indoor trials like those of the Russell Tribunal since 1967 and the Permanent People's Tribunal since 1979.

The people's trial acquires moral authority and political weight 1. because the people themselves and their organizations establish it; 2. because it takes up serious issues which affect the life of an entire nation or the entire humankind but which are ignored or suppressed by the oppressive authorities and by their courts, 3. because it has for judges those respected for moral integrity, knowledge and a high sense of justice; 4. because it adopts the process of hearing out the conflicting sides, especially the long repressed aggrieved side; 5. because it applies the principles and standards provided by international law, especially the International Bill of Rights and International Humanitarian Law; and 6. because the people further legitimize the decisions by propagating and carrying them out.

The people's trial of US imperialism and puppets by the various art forms is meant to arouse, organize and mobilize the masses for the revolutionary movement to get rid of the oppressive and exploitative ruling system and establish a new system in accordance with the people's demands for national Independence, people's democracy and social justice, economic development through land reform and national industrialization, national, scientific and mass culture and international solidarity of peoples for peace and development.

The highest and most serious purpose of the cultural people's trial is to arouse, organize and mobilize the masses and consequently to replace the unjust ruling system. Thereafter, it is the people in a just system that exercise revolutionary power to end national and class oppression and exploitation and authorize and oversee the real juridical people's trial of the criminals.

Message of Gratitude to the ILPS HK and Macau Chapter on the Launch of Foundation for Resuming the Philippine Revolution

15 December 2013

As author, I wish to thank ILPS HK & Macau for launching the book, *Foundation for Resuming the Philippine Revolution*. I also thank all the guests and ILPS members for attending this event.

This is the first of the series of five books which presents my writings from 1968 to 1990. The titles of the four other volumes are: *Defeating Revisionism, Reformism and Opportunism*, *Building Strength through Struggle*, *Detention and Defiance Against Dictatorship* and *Continuing the Struggle for National and Social Liberation*.

Foundation for Resuming the Philippine Revolution contains the founding documents of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), such as its Constitution and the Program for a People's Democratic Revolution; and of the New People's Army, such its Declaration and its Rules. It also contains the articles that I wrote in the period of 1968 to 1972. These reflect the circumstances and initial efforts of the Filipino people and the Party to continue the Philippine revolution.

From the book, you can learn that the CPP was reestablished under the theoretical guidance of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought and that the general political line is to complete the Filipino people's revolutionary struggle for national liberation struggle through protracted people's war and thereby put to an end to the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system and pave the way to the socialist revolution. The CPP and other revolutionary forces strengthen themselves by arousing, organizing and mobilizing the people in their millions.

The leading force of the revolution is the CPP as the advanced detachment of the working class. Its main force is the peasantry, especially the landless peasants and farm workers. The revolutionary combination of the workers and peasants is augmented by the urban petty bourgeois and further augmented by a patriotic alliance with the middle bourgeoisie. All together they confront and seek to defeat US imperialism and the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords. They also take advantage of contradictions among these reactionaries under certain conditions.

The program of the CPP is to complete the struggle for national independence and empower the workers and peasants in a people's democratic state system, carry out land reform and national industrialization, achieve social justice and lay the ground for socialism, promote a national, scientific and mass culture, uphold proletarian internationalism and develop relations of international solidarity among the peoples and their institutions.

Reading the book can give you insights into why and how the revolutionary movement has been able to win the support of millions of Filipinos, to withstand the brutal campaigns of suppression unleashed by the Marcos fascist dictatorship and the post-Marcos pseudo-democratic regimes and to grow in strength and advance from one stage to another. The CPP and the Filipino people have demonstrated that they can make revolutionary advances despite the dismal turn of events on the world stage in the years of 1989 to 1991 when the socialist cause was put on a strategic retreat as a result of the full blast restoration of capitalism in what were then revisionist-ruled countries.

Now we see the ever worsening crisis of the world capitalist system. Gone are the days when the ideologues and propagandists of imperialism were boasting that capitalism and liberal democracy are the end of history and socialism is dead. Nowadays, even Pope Francis is strongly critical of capitalism, takes a friendly look at the theology of liberation and suggests that communist who do good can also go to heaven.

The neoliberal economic policy has brought about the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression by accelerating the accumulation and concentration of capital in the hands of a few through the most vicious pressing down of wages, the wanton liberalization of investments, trade and finance, the most corrupt privatization of state assets, the reckless deregulation of social and environmental restrictions and the overbearing denationalization of the economies of underdeveloped countries.

In a vain attempt at concealing the capitalist roots of the crisis, the imperialist powers are whipping up ultra-reactionary currents, such as chauvinism, racism, religious bigotry, anti-migrant bias, fascism and war mongering. The imperialist powers are also saying that war production is a stimulus to economic recovery and military is the way of gaining sources of cheap natural resources and cheap labor, expanding the market and field of investments

and seizing spheres of influence. Thus, they are more prone than ever before to engage in military intervention and unleash wars of aggression against third world countries.

We see how the workers, the migrant workers, the women and youth and the rest of the people are adversely affected by the crisis of overproduction and the bursting of one kind of financial bubble after another in the capitalist countries. The states are afflicted by the public debt crisis and impose austerity measures on the people in order to further pass the burden of crisis to them. Mass unemployment is rising, wage incomes are further declining even as the costs of living are rising, social services are deteriorating and yet becoming more expensive.

As a result of the financial meltdown and economic fall since 2008, a global economic depression has gripped the entire world, especially in the underdeveloped countries. In the Philippines, the export income from semi-manufactures and raw materials has fallen while the costs of imports have risen. Mining is being done all over the country and the mineral ores extracted are underdeclared and undervalued. The widening trade and budgetary deficits are further increasing the debt burden. The tax burden is increasing, with most of the state revenues go to counterproductive programs and projects, bureaucratic corruption through pork barrel system, military over-spending and debt service.

The US-Aquino regime boasts of economic growth in the Philippines. But this is generated by hot money (portfolio investments) from abroad which go mainly into the stock market and the money market and at best encourages the private construction bubble and consumerism of a small part of the population. The lack of genuine land reform and national industrialization keeps the Philippines underdeveloped and impoverished. Unemployment has risen abruptly, incomes have plunged and the costs of basic goods and services are soaring.

A great number of Filipinos continue to seek employment abroad in the absence of jobs at home. But the worsening crisis abroad, the turmoils in certain countries and the ultra-reactionary political campaigns against migrant workers prejudice and put the migrant workers at great risk. According to a report, overseas employment of Filipino has actually decreased but the increase of money remittances from them are accounted for mainly by the nurses and caregivers in North America.

Under conditions of worsening economic and social crisis, the people are made to suffer rising levels of exploitation and oppression. They are driven to fight for their rights and legitimate interests. We therefore see the spread of mass protest rallies and general strikes in both developed and underdeveloped countries. In the underdeveloped countries, armed revolutionary movements are gaining ground. In the Philippines, the revolutionary forces and people are determined to advance from the strategic defensive and strategic stalemate in the people's war.

The broad masses of the Filipino people cherish their revolutionary tradition. Thus, the 150th anniversary of Andres Bonifacio has been joyously celebrated in the Philippines. The people understand their own desire to be freed from foreign and feudal domination. Thus, they participate in the ongoing democratic revolution for national liberation and democracy. Thank you.

Speech at Forum and Launch of the 5-Book Series, Continuing the Philippine Revolution

December 15, 2013

As author, I wish to thank ILPS HK & Macau for launching the book, *Foundation for Resuming the Philippine Revolution*. I also thank all the guests and ILPS members for attending this event.

This is the first of the series of five books which presents my writings from 1968 to 1990. The titles of the four other volumes are: *Defeating Revisionism, Reformism and Opportunism*, *Building Strength through Struggle*, *Detention and Defiance Against Dictatorship* and *Continuing the Struggle for National and Social Liberation*.

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Remarks at Netherlands Launch of Building Strength Through Struggle

At the Mirror Centre, Amsterdam,

February 9, 2014

Dear comrades, friends and compatriot,

First of all, I thank the organizers and all of you for coming. I am overwhelmed and humbled by this celebration. I came to this event, thinking that I would sit back and enjoy myself most of the time. But Julie has made a proposal to further activate me in connection with the revitalization and expansion of the work of the Center for Social Studies. I am thus reminded that there is no sitting back and no retirement for revolutionaries.

I am happy that *Building Strength through Struggle*, the third book in the series of five books titled *Continuing the Philippine Revolution*, is now being launched in The Netherlands in conjunction with the celebration of my 55 years of service to the revolutionary cause of the Filipino people as well as my 75 years of existence outside of the womb.

This book extends, reinforces and further develops the principles, policies and major lines of action for carrying out the people's democratic revolution, as put forward by the earlier two books in the series, *Foundation for Resuming the Philippine Revolution* and *Defeating Revisionism, Reformism and Opportunism*. It includes the major documents of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) which I drafted and the major articles that I wrote under the nom de guerre Amado Guerrero, from the formal declaration of martial law on September 21, 1972 to my capture on November 10, 1977.

The book is indispensable to understanding why and how under the leadership of the CPP the Filipino people and their revolutionary forces successfully fought and defeated the US-instigated fascist dictatorship of Marcos. The dictatorship was designed to destroy the revolutionary movement but instead served to incite the people to rise up further against the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system. Let me cite the major contents of the books to show how the CPP guided the revolution.

When Marcos imposed fascist dictatorship on the people and outlawed all types of legal opposition, the CPP was already ideologically, politically and organizationally prepared to lead the people in the revolutionary struggle for national liberation and democracy. Soon after the declaration of martial law, the Party issued the comprehensive statement, "Overthrow the US-Marcos Dictatorship to Achieve National Freedom and Democracy." It condemned the dictatorship as an ultra-reactionary instrument of US imperialism and the local exploiting classes and called for its overthrow through the people's war. It described the fundamental and fatal weaknesses of the fascist state and the conditions for its eventual downfall notwithstanding its appearance of overwhelming power and invincibility.

Basing itself on the nationwide spread of the Party, the New People's Army, the underground mass organizations and the local organs of political power, the Party issued the "Guide for Establishing the People's Democratic Government" to lay down the principles, policies and methods for building the revolutionary government in the countryside in order to replace the counterrevolutionary state of the big compradors and landlords based in the urban areas. It was in the period of 1972 to 1977 that the revolutionary forces struck deep roots among the people, especially among the toiling masses, on a national scale.

The Party issued "Specific Characteristics of Our People's War in the Philippines" on the basis of the rich experience already accumulated by the New People's Army from 1969 to 1975. This historic document creatively applies Chairman Mao Zedong's principles, strategy and tactics of people's war to concrete Philippine conditions by taking into account the relatively wide countryside and the archipelagic and mountainous character of the country as well as the domestic and international situation. The comprehensive and profound formulation of the strategy and tactics has guided the New People's Army and the revolutionary movement in growing in number and all-round strength and frustrating the enemy campaigns to destroy the armed revolution.

The Party issued "Our Urgent Tasks" to sharpen the general political line as one of combating fascism, feudalism and imperialism and called on the revolutionary forces to carry out the urgent tasks and the proper methods and steps in building the local organs of political power and the mass organizations of various types and waging the mass campaigns for land reform and other social purposes. Since then, the mass base of the armed

revolution has been growing wave upon wave. The requisite of mass work has ensured the mass base for carrying out a protracted people's war.

The "10-Point Program of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP)" was first outlined in 1973. It was eventually elaborated upon in 1977, spelling out in major detail the method for overthrowing the Marcos autocracy. It shows how the national and democratic rights and interests of the toiling masses of workers and peasants and the urban petty bourgeoisie can be realized and harmonized and how the united front of the basic revolutionary forces must be built. The NDFP has been consolidated thereby as a united front of the basic revolutionary forces serving as a reliable base for engaging in broader alliances in order to isolate and destroy the enemy at every given time.

The decisions taken by the CPP Central Committee were resolutely and militantly implemented by the Party rank and file, the New People's Army and the masses. The ground for fighting and defeating the Marcos fascist dictatorship was well laid on a national scale from 1972 to 1977. Thus, even after I was captured by the enemy on November 10, 1977, I continued to be confident that the Filipino people and their revolutionary cause would prevail over the enemy.

It is necessary to read and study all the contents of *Building Strength through Struggle* in order to understand why and how the people's democratic revolution had led to the overthrow of the Marcos fascist dictatorship, how it has continued to fight and win victories against the pseudo-democratic regimes, how it has frustrated subjectivist and opportunist trends and how it has excelled as a torch bearer of armed revolution led by the proletariat amidst the dominance of neocolonialism in the underdeveloped countries, the full restoration of capitalism in former revisionist-ruled countries and the neoliberal plunder and aggression of the imperialist powers worldwide.

The CPP, NPA, NDFP and the people's democratic revolution in the Philippines enjoy the respect, appreciation and support of the world anti-imperialist movement and the international communist movement. This book *Building Strength through Struggle* illumines the path to understanding the fact.

Thank you.

Comment on the Philippine Case

Before ITLOS and Arbitral Tribunal

April 4, 2014

In a previous interview, I said that the strongest piece of international law in favor of the Philippines is the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), particularly with regard to the 200 mile exclusive economic zone. I even challenged the Manila government to file a case in the International Tribunal on the Law of the Sea (ITLOS).

By manifestations through writing and mass actions, the patriotic and progressive forces have stood for Philippine sovereignty and territorial integrity over the islands or islets in question in the sea west of the Philippines on the basis of UNCLOS and other international instruments. This is not the first time that their position has concurred with that of the Philippine reactionary government on a territorial issue, as in the case of Sabah.

It is better than not for the Philippines to file the case before ITLOS and in particular the Arbitral Tribunal as the chosen mechanism for arbitration regarding the islands or islets west of the Philippines. When the revolutionary government gains the personality to make representations for the Philippines in the community of states, it will certainly take responsibility for asserting territorial integrity.

The Chinese government of today invokes the position of previous Chinese governments as far back as the feudal dynasties in the same manner as the irredentist Mussolini of Italy invoked the scope of the ancient Roman empire to claim territories. The Chinese government also argues that certain territories are owned by a country no matter how far those are and closer to other countries. But it should also mention that such territories are usually habituated by nationals of the owning country (e.g. British territories closer to Germany and France than to UK) or occupied through colonization (e.g. Malvinas island and all previous British colonies).

The Philippines cannot accept the view that China is ever willing to negotiate with the Philippines and yet it asserts from beginning to end that its claim of sovereignty over the islands in question is nonnegotiable. What China actually means is that it has the sovereignty and territorial integrity over the islands and the Philippines can only negotiate or beg for some accommodations like permission for Filipino fishermen to fish in the area, to have more time to tow away the stranded boat on Ayungin shoal or continue the joint oil exploration stupidly agreed to by the Arroyo regime.

I do not agree with the view that the Philippines should not have filed the case against China before ITLOS and the Arbitral Tribunal, supposedly because the Philippines should fear retaliation from China and/or because the Philippines stands to gain something from “negotiating” with China. Even after filing of the case, it is still possible to negotiate the issue out of court. After all, there are more matters than this issue that require both China and the Philippines to negotiate and transact business. In the first place, filing the case before ITLOS and the Arbitral Tribunal is not a violent act at all, no matter how China presents it as a hostile act. Had the Philippines desisted from filing the case, China would have certainly used the desistance as proof of a Philippine lack of conviction and interest in the case.

The national democratic movement must stand firm for national sovereignty and territorial integrity and should not give a chance to the Aquino regime, its military minions and propagandists to misrepresent it as pro-China on the issue at hand in order to favor their vicious use of the issue to justify their collaboration with the US in the violation of Philippine national sovereignty and territorial integrity. The US is a long-standing violator and a far bigger transgressor of Philippine territory than other foreign forces. It has arrogated unto itself the power and privilege of occupying the Philippines at will under the guise of protector and under other guises.

A former diplomatic official of the Philippine reactionary government has said that it is futile for the Philippines to file a case before ITLOS and the Arbitral Tribunal. He says that China can refuse to go before the international tribunal and that, as a matter of real politik, China can even defy a ruling favorable to the Philippines because the tribunal does not have any enforcement agency and China has veto power in the UN Security Council. Furthermore, the US will in fact remain neutral over the issue between China and Philippines or can even join China in the exploitation of oil and gas resources in the disputed area. But it is decisively necessary and better for the Philippines to make a well-grounded and sustained case before the international tribunal and before world

public opinion, especially for long-term purposes, than do nothing at all.

The national democratic movement should assert that the islands in question belong to the Filipino people or the Philippines as a country in accordance with the UNCLOS and oppose the following:

1. The claim and related actions of China in contravention of the UNCLOS.
2. The US for taking advantage of the territorial dispute in order to entrench itself further in the Philippines and does worse than China in encroaching upon the entire Philippines and violating Philippine sovereignty and territorial integrity.
3. The Philippine reactionary government for puppetry to the US, for believing that the US is its best protector against China and for belatedly making the case before ITLOS and the Arbitral Tribunal.

The national democratic movement should take a long term view. The future revolutionary government shall be in a fundamentally better position to assert national sovereignty and territorial integrity because it shall engage in national industrialization and become capable of producing the ships, planes and other instruments to defend the country and people. It shall be in a position to deal properly with the Chinese comprador big bourgeoisie now exploiting the Philippines and the Chinese mining operations now plundering the natural resources of the Philippines and all other forms of unwelcome Chinese intrusions.

It shall not be limited to being a passive object of interest of the US and China and shall avail of broad diplomatic and trade relations in order to preempt subservience to any foreign power. Now and in the future, the more than one hundred million Filipino people and the other hundreds of millions of people in Southeast Asia should not allow themselves to be bullied by any foreign power.

US Imperialism and People's Resistance

in the Philippines

**Paper for the Forum on Imperialism and Resistance,
organized by the ILPS-Netherlands in Amsterdam
on June 6, 2014**

I wish to discuss with you how US imperialism has imposed itself on the Filipino people and violated their national sovereignty and thwarted their aspirations for democracy, social justice and development since 1898 by military, political, economic and cultural means.

In this connection, I wish to discuss first how monopoly capitalism or modern imperialism arose as the final stage in the development of capitalism and how the era of imperialism began. Monopoly capitalism is parasitic, decaying and moribund, opening more widely than before the possibility of socialism. In being imperialist, it is emphatically violent and aggressive in repressing revolution and in acquiring economic and political territory abroad.

As early as the middle of the 19th century, from 1848 to 1868, England showed at least two major characteristics of imperialism: its possession of vast colonies and its industrial monopoly by which it could draw monopoly profits or superprofits. It was the first among the capitalist countries in which free competition capitalism developed into monopoly capitalism as the dominant force in the economy.

However, it would be in the last three decades of the 19th century that several countries, including the US, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and Russia, would see the development of free competition capitalism to monopoly capitalism. Altogether with England, they manifested the five features of imperialism. The fifth feature, which is the completed division of the world by the capitalist powers, directly set the stage for imperialist wars: 1) the dominance of capitalist monopolies in the economy; 2) the merger of industrial and bank capital and the emergence of the finance oligarchy; 3) the greater importance of the export of surplus capital than the export of surplus commodities as the means to obtain superprofits; 4) the alliances and counteralliances of cartels, syndicates and trusts on an international scale; 5) the completion of the division of the world by the great capitalist powers, covering underdeveloped or less developed countries or areas as economic territory (sources of cheap raw materials and cheap labor, captive markets and fields of investment) and as political territory (colonies, semicolonies, protectorates, dependent countries and spheres of influence).

For a monopoly capitalist power, a certain country or area abroad becomes a more reliable economic territory when it is also a political territory acquired through military intervention or aggression. The newcomers in the colonial game like the US had to engage in acts of aggression in their emergence as imperialists. In comparison to the Western imperialist powers, Russia and Japan had developed monopoly capitalism to a lesser extent but aggressive use of military power enabled them to acquire territories from which to extract monopoly profits.

Then as now, the capitalist powers try to amicably divide the world market among themselves, until their economic competition and political rivalry break out into wars. The completion of the division of the world among the capitalist powers towards the end of the 19th century laid the ground for the violent struggle among them for the redivision of the world. Latecomers in the colonial game upset the balance of forces and pushed the outbreak of wars.

Thus, the era of modern imperialism was inaugurated by wars and took final shape in the period of 1898 to 1914. The Spanish-American War (1898), the Anglo-Boer War (1899–1902), the Russo-Japanese War (1904–05) and the economic crisis in Europe in 1900 were the chief historical landmarks in the new era. Lenin categorically stated that the era of imperialism did not begin earlier than 1898 to 1900 and that neither Marx nor Engels lived long enough to see it.

1. Perpetuated US aggression

The US fully assumed the character of an imperialist power, on the basis of monopoly capitalism, when it deliberately provoked the Spanish-American War of 1898 in order to seize the colonies of Spain: Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines. In connection with said war, the US pretended to make friends with the Aguinaldo junta in

Hongkong and actually brought Aguinaldo back to the Philippines on an American cutter to proclaim Philippine independence (under the “protection” of the US) and to resume the national war of independence against Spain.

The Filipino people succeeded in liberating themselves nationwide and were about to seize Intramuros, the walled citadel of the Spanish colonizers. But the US interfered with the deployment of Filipino troops for the purpose and maneuvered to prepare for the landing of more US troops. Behind the back of their supposed Filipino allies, the US intervenors arranged with the Spanish side a mock battle on August 13, 1898 to justify the surrender of the latter to the former. It was done on the day after Spain and the US signed an armistice agreement ending the Spanish-American War.

The US and Spain forged the Treaty of Paris of December 10, 1898 in which Spain sold the Philippines to the US for the amount of USD 20 million. On December 21, 1898 US President McKinley issued the Proclamation of Benevolent Assimilation to manifest the US plan to colonize the Philippines. The US started to unleash a war of aggression against the Filipino people on February 4, 1899. This has come to be known as the Filipino-American War. The US used superior military force and extreme barbarity of more than 126,000 troops to conquer the nation of 7,000,000 people. It ruthlessly carried out massacres, the torture of captives, the reconcentration of population, scorched earth tactics and food blockades. It killed more than 700,000 or 10 per cent of the Filipino people from 1899 to 1902, directly through its brutal operations and indirectly through consequent famines and epidemics. Likewise, it proceeded to kill 800,000 Filipinos up to 1916.

To keep the Philippines as a colony, the US established military bases at various strategic points. It organized the so-called Philippine Scouts as puppet troops and subsequently converted them into the Philippine Constabulary. As a result of relentless demands of the Filipino people for national independence, the US decided as early as 1935 to make the Philippines a semicolony in 1946 after a ten-year transition period under the so-called Commonwealth government.

The National Defense Act of 1936 was this government’s first legislative act making the puppet constabulary the First Regular Army under the direct supervision of US Army’s Philippine Department. Commonwealth president Quezon made General Douglas MacArthur the field marshal of the puppet army. The US formed, indoctrinated, equipped and trained the puppet army. On the eve of World War II, it placed this puppet army within the frame of the US Army Forces in the Far East (USAFPE).

When World War II broke out in 1941, the Japanese fascists defeated the US army in Bataan and occupied the Philippines up to 1945. To recover the Philippines as a colony, the US coordinated with the USAFFE guerrillas. Before the grant of nominal independence to the Philippines in 1946, the US imposed on the puppet Filipino leaders the Treaty of General Relations which ensured the continuance of US military bases and the property rights of US citizens and corporations. This treaty even required in advance that the diplomatic relations of the Philippines would be subject to US approval.

After the Philippines became a semicolony, the US perpetuated its successful aggression and continued to control the Philippine state militarily. It obtained a military assistance agreement to make the Philippine armed services dependent on US planning, training, intelligence and equipment; and a military bases agreement for US military forces to stay in the Philippines for another 99 years. It also bound the Philippines to a mutual defense pact and a US controlled regional security pact, the South East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO).

Because of its military power over the Philippines, the US has been able to dominate the Philippine economy and politics and intervene at will in Philippine affairs since 1946. It manipulated the outcome of presidential elections in favor of the candidate most compliant with and servile to US interests in the Philippines and in the region.

It instigated the Marcos fascist dictatorship in 1972 in a futile attempt to suppress the revolutionary mass movement that had emerged and developed since 1961 because of the wanton extraction of superprofits by US corporation, bureaucrat corruption and exhaustion of the land frontier.

The Filipino people were outraged by the prolonged persistence of the fascist regime from 1972 to 1986, because of US military and economic assistance to it. They were also incensed by the direct and indirect consequences of US planes, ships and troops operating in and around the US bases. Thus, after the downfall of Marcos, the framers of the 1987 constitution enjoyed overwhelming popular support and took courage in adopting provisions that banned foreign military bases, troops, facilities and nuclear weapons from the Philippines. This ban was indeed the fruit of the people's revolutionary struggle against the fallen US-instigated dictatorship.

The military bases agreement with the US was terminated in 1991 by the Philippine Senate, with the open and

strong support of the national democratic movement. But since then, the US has resorted to all sorts of maneuvers to circumvent the constitutional ban on foreign military bases. By invoking the US-RP mutual defense pact. It has used the Balikatan joint US-Philippine military exercises and interoperability training as pretext for the forward stations and rotational presence of US troops in the Philippines.

It has been able to obtain the Visiting Forces Agreement and the Mutual Logistical Support Agreement to allow the entry and stationing of US military forces anywhere in the Philippines for any duration of time. It has used 9-11 and the so-called US global war on terror to justify US military presence and intervention in the Philippines. It has also expanded the pretexts for such Intervention. These include humanitarian aid, medical mission, civic action, disaster-related aid for rescue, relief and rehabilitation; and so on.

The latest pretext of the US for further entrenching itself militarily in the Philippines is to make a strategic pivot to Asia-Pacific region and to protect the country from a putative Chinese aggression in view of the overreaching claims of China over 90 per cent of the South China Sea, encroaching on 90 per cent of the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and 100 per cent of the extended continental shelf (ECS) of the Philippines. Thus, with the servile collaboration of the Aquino regime, the US has been able to obtain the so-called Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA).

This agreement allows the US to establish military bases in an indefinite number of so-called Agreed Areas, fortified at Philippine expense, paying no rent, enjoying perimeter security from puppet troops free of charge, barring Philippine authorities from knowing things and activities inside the US military enclaves or bases and allowing US air planes and ships to come and go, with the Philippine authorities barred by the US military from knowing whether such vessels carry nuclear, chemical, bacteriological and other weapons of mass destruction. Moreover, the agreement requires the AFP to provide or facilitate access by US forces to any place whatsoever in Philippine territory that the US decides.

Despite the treason and obsequiousness of the Aquino regime in acceding to EDCA, US President Obama in his recent visit to Manila clearly declared that the US is neutral over the Philippine-China maritime dispute in the West Philippine Sea and that US policy is not to counter or contain China. In fact, the US has a dual policy of cooperation and contention with China and makes its decisions according to US national interest. At any rate, the US has far more interest in relations with China than in those with the Philippines. The people should be alert to the possibility that the US and China could agree to jointly explore and exploit the oil, gas and other natural resources in the EEZ and ECS of the Philippines.

In the face of the perpetuated aggression of US imperialism in the Philippines, the Filipino people and their revolutionary forces have adopted the line of people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war. They are waging a civil war against the semicolonial political system. At the same time, they condemn the escalating military intervention of the US in favor of the puppet regime. They are therefore prepared to wage a war of national liberation should the US unleash a full-scale war of aggression. They are not afraid of such possibility but prepare against it.. They consider it an opportunity to realize justice for the heroes martyred by US imperialism and for the suffering of the millions of people as a consequence of the direct and indirect rule of US imperialism.

II. Continuing economic plunder

The US had a strategic motive and objective for seizing and making the Philippine its colony. This was connected with the expressed desire of the US to expand the international market for its manufactures, to turn the Pacific Ocean into an “American lake” for the purpose and to have a base for launching efforts to get a share of China in the frenzy of the capitalist powers to establish spheres of influence.

The US floated bonds in Wall Street to finance its war of aggression in the Philippines. Ultimately, it made the Filipino people pay for their own military conquest through taxation. But the biggest gain for US imperialism came from the extraction of superprofits from the colonial exchange of US manufactures and Philippine raw materials as well as from the direct and indirect US investments in the Philippines. In the process, the US imperialists turned the Philippine economy from feudal to semifeudal.

US imperialism did not have to eliminate feudalism. It merely superimposed the imperialist mode of exploitation to change the total complexion of the social economy to semifeudal. In an attempt to appease the people's hatred of the landed estates owned by the foreign religious orders, the US colonial government expropriated some of them for redistribution to the peasants. But the peasants could not afford to complete payments for the redistribution price. The land eventually fell into the hands of the landlord class.

The US colonial government lifted the feudal restrictions on the physical movement of peasants. This enabled peasants to open land in frontier areas or to seek jobs in urban areas, public works and mines. Bureaucrats and landlords enticed peasants to make their homesteads in frontier areas but ultimately they claimed and registered the land as their own. Merchant usurers also followed the peasants into frontier areas and eventually became landlords.

The US colonial rule differed significantly from that of the Spanish by taking superprofits from a far greater flow of manufactured imports and raw material exports, from the chronic need to take loans to cover trade deficits and new schemes of overconsumption and from the far greater inflow of direct foreign investments. The US opened the mines, expanded the plantations for raw-material export production and established a few factories manufacturing consumer products from locally available raw materials. The roads, bridges, ports and other means of transport and communications were improved for the growing domestic and foreign trade. The system of public and private schools was developed to produce the professionals and technicians for the expanded bureaucracy and business enterprises.

In the semifeudal economy and society, the joint class rule of the big compradors and landlords (one per cent of the population) arose and replaced the singular dominance of the landlord class in the feudal period of previous centuries. The intermediate social strata of middle bourgeois and urban petty bourgeoisie expanded and would ultimately come to 1 and 8 per cent, respectively. From a few percentage points, the working class grew to 15 per cent. The peasants descended from a feudal high of about 90 per cent to its current semifeudal level of about 75 per cent.

The US economic domination of the Philippines was interrupted by the Japanese invasion and occupation during World War II. Japan's imperialist character and war of aggression prevented it from making credible its slogan of “Greater East Asia co-prosperity”. The Japanese aggressors wrought havoc and destruction on the lives, communities and properties of Filipinos. In the course of recapturing the Philippines, especially in its haste to oust the Japanese through massive bombardment, the US added to and aggravated the destruction of lives and properties. US war damage payments were made mainly to the US corporations for reestablishing US economic domination of the Philippines.

The US did not only retain the property rights of US corporations and citizens through the Treaty of General Relations before the grant of nominal independence to the Philippines in 1946 but also imposed on the supposedly independent Philippine state the so-called Parity Amendment in the Philippine Constitution. This amendment allowed US corporations and citizens to have the same rights as Filipinos in owning public utilities and exploiting natural resources. Furthermore, through the Laurel-Langley Agreement, the US extracted from the Philippines the privilege of owning and operating all kinds of businesses without restriction.

A civil war broke out in the Philippines between the reactionary forces of foreign and feudal domination and the revolutionary forces of national liberation and democracy in 1948. The demand for national industrialization and land reform became so strong that the reactionary authorities had to fake land reform in the form of land resettlement programs and token expropriation of landed estates as well as to feign national industrialization in

the form of import-substitution manufacturing which was in fact reassembly and repackaging operations dependent on licensing, financing, technical and marketing agreements with US corporations.

The Philippine economy went from bad to worse when the Marcos regime went on a spending and borrowing spree to build infrastructure and conspicuous tourist facilities and opted for the so-called export-oriented manufacturing in export-processing zones and for the export of labor in the absence of real industrial development for generating local employment. Export-oriented manufacturing is a far worse kind of pseudo-industrialization than the import-substitution manufacturing. It overprices the imported components and underprices the exported semi-manufactures. Workers are mostly categorized as casuals, apprentices or learners. They are paid substandard wages and are deprived of job security. Their trade union and other democratic rights are curtailed.

To this day, export-oriented manufacturing is misrepresented as industrial development. It has been greatly set back by the Asian financial crisis of 1997 and the global financial meltdown of 2007-08. The reassembly and export of semi-conductors and other products have plunged. What has become glossier than export-oriented manufacturing is the bubble in office and residential towers and upscale tourist enclaves, which is now about to pop because of the growing flight of portfolio investments. All regimes since the time of the puppet president Ramos have gone into a mad frenzy of opening the entire country to foreign mining companies that ruin agriculture and the environment, preempt future industrialization and take mineral ores out of the country without paying the commensurate taxes.

Philippine economic policy has always been dictated by US imperialism. In the time of Marcos, the World Bank was active in pushing a Keynesian policy of undertaking public works to promote raw-material production and the colonial exchange of raw material exports and manufactured imports and thereby diverting resources and foreign loans from what should be a line of national industrialization. The first Aquino regime drew the Philippines further away from national industrialization by following the US-dictated policy of neoliberalism and carrying out trade liberalization at the expense of both local industry and even agriculture. The Ramos regime followed up the anti-industrialization policy by channeling huge resources and foreign loans to upscale private construction and tourist facilities.

Altogether the post-Marcos regimes have been bound to exporting raw materials and labor and have been trapped within the frame of the imperialist policy of neoliberal globalization under the so-called Washington Consensus of the IMF, the World Bank (especially its private investment arm (IFC) and the WTO (including its GATT predecessor). The US has used these multilateral agencies to push the liberalization of trade and investments, privatization of public assets, deregulation of social and environmental protection and the denationalization of such underdeveloped economies as the Philippines. Like their imperialist masters, the puppet regimes in the Philippines have clung to the neoliberal policy because it suits their greed, they believe that they can always shift the burden of crisis to the people and they still have to see a more powerful revolutionary mass movement to challenge them.

Under the general auspices of the WTO and the proliferation of bilateral and multilateral free trade agreements with the US and other imperialist powers, the Philippines is prevented from upholding economic sovereignty, conserving its national patrimony for the benefit of the Filipino people and undertaking national industrialization and land reform. The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, the Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement and ASEAN Economic Community are frameworks for binding the Philippines to the imperialist system of plunder and particularly to its neoliberal policy of unbridled monopoly capitalist greed.

In the face of the continuing plunder of the Philippines by US imperialism, enjoying the collaboration of the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords, the Filipino people and their revolutionary forces are committed to fighting for national liberation and democracy, realizing social justice, conserving the national patrimony and carrying out a program of development through national industrialization and land reform. They can end the underdevelopment of the Philippines only by destroying the exploitative system of big compradors and landlords subservient to US imperialism and thereby releasing the patriotic and progressive forces to undertake genuine development and achieve social justice.

III. Unrelenting puppetry of officials

Even while it carried out its war of aggression against the Filipino people, the US sought to entice leaders of the Philippine revolutionary government to surrender. This caused a split within the Aguinaldo Cabinet, between the revolutionary members like Apolinario Mabini and Antonio Luna and the capitulationists like Pardo de Tavera,

Paterno and Buencamino. But the revolutionary mass movement was too strong to be derailed by the capitulationists, who were ridiculed as *asimilistas* and *Sajonistas*.

The US aggressors carried out a brutal war of conquest to serve the interests of US monopoly capitalism. But hypocritically they declared that they came to the Philippines to “civilize” and “Christianize” the people, after more than three centuries of Spanish colonial rule and Roman Catholic proselytization. They also claimed to have no interest in possessing the Philippines but in teaching democracy and self-government to the Filipinos, despite the success of the Filipinos in exercising democracy by building a revolutionary government and army and defeating Spanish colonialism.

They touted Jeffersonian democracy to embellish modern imperialism. With this, they were confident of being able to coopt the bourgeois liberals leading the Philippine revolution. The Filipino bourgeois liberals derived their political enlightenment from the study of bourgeois liberalism in Europe. They did not arise as the offshoot of a manufacturing bourgeoisie as in Europe. In fact, they were children of landlords, colonial bureaucrats and merchants.

The US calculated that it could rely on a growing number of political collaborators by developing the semifeudal economy of the big compradors and landlords, using the educational system and the *pensionado* system of sending native scholars to US universities to promote a pro-US colonial mentality and expanding the bureaucracy and businesses to accommodate those produced by the schools.

After his capture in 1901, President Aguinaldo was threatened with death and coaxed by his US captors to issue a Peace Manifesto calling on the revolutionary forces to surrender. The leaders who turned against the revolution were given positions at various levels of the US colonial government and were encouraged to form in 1901 the Partido Federal to serve the colonial regime and to help it to discourage and suppress the revolutionary resistance of the people.

Those who continued to wage revolutionary resistance were subjected to a series of draconian laws and were made to suffer torture and death by hanging and other means. Even after several years from the formal end of the Filipino-American War, the US issued in 1907 the Flag Law prohibiting the Filipino people from displaying the Philippine flag. They continued to be subjected to massacres, arbitrary detention and torture, food blockades and reconcentration.

When the US calculated that it had sufficiently broken the armed revolutionary movement and trained a large corps of puppet politicians and professionals, it allowed the Nacionalista Party to exist and call for immediate, absolute and complete national independence. The Nacionalista Party was a reformist party, committed to demanding national independence only by legal and peaceful means and sending missions to Washington to plead for an eventual grant of independence.

Consequent to the inspiration of the victorious Great October Revolution in 1917 and the dire colonial and social conditions, the modern trade union movement which started in 1902 became relatively stronger and became the basis for the establishment of the Communist Party of the Philippine Islands in 1930. The US immediately tried to suppress this party by trumping up charges of sedition against the leaders. When the Great Depression worsened social conditions in the Philippines in the 1930s and the danger of fascism was running high, the rise of the broad anti-fascist Popular Front paved the way for the release of communist leaders from prisons and internal exile.

By 1935 the US was ready to establish the Commonwealth government as a transition to a semicolonial status for the Philippines. It approved the Philippine Constitution as framed by Filipino politicians and promised the grant of national independence by 1946. The Japanese imperialists and fascists invaded and occupied the Philippines from 1941 to 1945 and pretended to be even more generous than US imperialism by swiftly granting nominal independence to a puppet Philippine republic. In the course of the inter-imperialist war, the Communist Party was able to build a people's army against Japan (Hukbalahap), local organs of political power and a powerful mass movement that confiscated land from the landlords.

During World War II, the US kept a Commonwealth government in exile in Washington and directed from Australia the Filipino guerrilla forces, which swore loyalty to the US Army Forces in the Far East. It was able to recover the Philippines in 1945 and grant national independence in 1946 to a group of Filipino puppets headed by Manuel Roxas who had broken away from the Nacionalista Party and formed the Liberal Party. Thus, the Philippines became a semicolony run by puppets who served US imperialism and the local exploiting classes of big compradors

and landlords.

The US and the local exploiting classes provoked the revolutionary resistance of the people by making impositions on them in violation of national independence and the national patrimony, by nullifying land reform and other social gains made by the anti-Japan revolutionary movement and by carrying out brutal campaigns of military suppression. The backbone of the armed revolutionary movement was broken in the early 1950s. But it succeeded in calling attention to the dire semicolonial and semifeudal conditions and the need for a democratic revolution led by the working class.

It seemed as if the phoney democracy of the big comprador-landlord oligarchs could go on forever as a game of musical chairs between the Nacionalista and Liberal parties, with each party trying to replace the other in periodic elections that they monopolized. The two parties were a duopoly patterned after that of the Republican and Democratic parties in US. But the chronic crisis of Philippine society kept on worsening, exposing the inability of every regime to solve the crisis, pointing to the need for a revolution but also tempting a president like Marcos to carry out a counterrevolution.

The Communist Party of the Philippines was reestablished in 1968 as the advanced detachment of the working class under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought (or Maoism). It rectified the errors and shortcomings of the previous revolutionary movement. It put forward the general line of people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war. It considered the peasantry as the main force of the revolution in combination with the proletariat. The basic worker-peasant alliance linked itself with the urban petty bourgeoisie as a revolutionary force and further with the middle bourgeoisie against the joint class dictatorship of the big compradors and landlords.

Upon the instigation of the US, Marcos launched a fascist dictatorship under the pretext of "saving the republic and building a new society" in 1972. He sought to destroy the armed revolutionary movements of the Filipino and Moro people. He succeeded only to inflame the resistance of the broad masses of the people. Eventually, the people totally discredited, isolated and overthrew the fascist regime. Even his US imperialist master turned against him when it became indubitably clear that he was more of a liability than an asset. Fearing that the revolutionary forces could grow strong enough to overthrow the entire ruling system, the US and the local exploiting classes decided to junk Marcos and go back to the old track of pseudo-democratic regimes.

The pseudo-democratic regimes, from that of Cory Aquino to her son Benigno III, have proven to be utterly servile to US imperialism, exploitative and oppressive, corrupt and brutal. They have imposed on the Filipino people the policies of neocolonialism and neoliberalism and have inflicted extremely terrible suffering on the people. A multiplicity of reactionary parties has not proven any better than the duopoly of the Nacionalista and Liberal parties or the one-party rule of Marcos. Bureaucrat capitalism has grown worse since the Marcos dictatorship. Thus, the Filipino people and their revolutionary forces have become ever more determined to overthrow the entire ruling system and consequently end US domination in order to fully realize national and social liberation.

IV. Persistence of colonial mentality

From the very start of its colonial rule in the Philippines, US imperialism was determined to dominate and control the Filipino people culturally aside from militarily, economically and politically. It sought to capture the hearts and minds of the people by misrepresenting itself as beneficent and altruistic and making the people forget about the extreme brutality of the US war of aggression through political propaganda and through the educational and cultural system. Thus, it dramatized the arrival of hundreds of American teachers on the ship *Thomas* and the conversion of some US troops to school teachers in pacified areas.

The US imperialists misrepresented themselves as far more gentle and kind than Spanish colonialists whom they demonized. And yet they cleverly forged a compromise between their own cultural imperialism and the feudalism of the dominant Roman Catholic Church. The US controlled the expanding public school system and allowed the church and its religious orders to control in the main the private educational system. It propagated a conservative and pro-imperialist kind of liberalism, while the religio-sectarian schools continued religious instruction and accepted the new colonial dispensation. It suppressed the expression of patriotism and anti-imperialism by political and mass leaders, by journalists, creative writers, artists and teachers.

A pro-US kind of colonial mentality supplanted the previous pro-Spanish kind among those educated in the schools under the US colonial regime. The US colonial authorities established the *pensionado* system, providing scholarships to bright students for higher studies in various fields in the US. When the *pensionados* returned,

they propagated their adulation of the US and were assured of promotions in the educational system, bureaucracy, business and professions. The supplantation of Spanish by English as the principal medium in the schools and in government guaranteed the predominance of a pro-US colonial mentality.

But such colonial mentality could never obliterate the patriotism and revolutionary aspirations of the Filipino people. In so many ways, the people demanded national independence and democracy and condemned the US colonial regime. Formations of the working people and the intelligentsia persevered in upholding and propagating patriotic and progressive ideas and sentiments. They were reinforced and revitalized by the establishment of the Communist Party of the Philippine Islands which was avowedly guided by Marxism-Leninism and which demanded a national, scientific and mass culture.

The influences of the Great October Revolution and the revolutionary movements in China, Spain, Germany, US and elsewhere reached the Philippines, especially when the Great Depression worsened and fascist and anti-fascist movements arose in various parts of the world. The US colonial authorities tried to combine anti-communism with colonial mentality to discourage the patriotic and progressive forces. But they failed because the economic and social crisis was worsening and the threat of fascism moved the people towards the struggle for national independence, democratic rights and social justice.

During their occupation of the Philippines from 1942 to 1945, the Japanese imperialists tried to ape the US imperialists in using the schools, mass media, puppet organizations such as the *KALIBAPI*, the Japanese language, and other cultural vehicles to impose on the people the most colonial aspect of their culture, including their fascist ideas and practices that carried markedly feudal vestiges, even their body language (e.g. deep bowing to show respect or submission). They aroused patriotic anger among the Filipino people. Many Filipinos did not send their children to the Japanese-controlled public schools to keep them away from Japanese indoctrination.

After their reconquest of the Philippines in 1946, the US imperialists misrepresented themselves as liberators of the Filipino people even as they were clearly reestablishing their military, economic, political and cultural dominance. They showed signs of wishing to postpone the grant of nominal independence, unless their unjust impositions were accepted. They were confronted by the old merger party of the Communist and Socialist parties that had led the People's Army Against Japan and by a broad Democratic Alliance of patriotic and progressive forces that demanded national independence and resisted the imperialist impositions.

From the US grant of nominal independence in 1946, when the Philippine ruling system became semicolonial, the US tried to perpetuate a pro-US colonial mentality among the Filipinos and combined it with anti-communism. It used the dominant political parties, the schools, the mass media, the churches, the movies, pop music and stage entertainment to tout the US as the defender of democracy or distract the people from the cause of national and social liberation in the Philippines and from the advancing forces of national liberation and socialism abroad.

The political ideas and sentiments generated by the duopoly of the Liberal and Nacionalista parties were pro-imperialist and reactionary. The higher political and educational authorities directed the school administrators and teachers to adopt the curricula and syllabi that they had approved. The US granted scholarships under the Fulbright and Smith-Mundt programs to maintain its influence in key universities and the entire educational system. It also used conferences, seminars and travel grants to promote pro-imperialist and anti-communist ideas and sentiments among academics, journalists, creative writers, artists, trade unionists and other people.

The Central Intelligence Agency became most notorious, through its front foundations (Asia Foundation, PEN and Congress for Cultural Freedom), in funding and manipulating cultural organizations and activities along the pro-imperialist and anti-communist line as a major part of the US-instigated Cold War. The reactionary authorities in state and religious schools were also notorious in trying to prevent the study of the works of the intellectual and political leaders of the old democratic revolution and oppose the speeches and writings of contemporary anti-imperialists like Claro Mayo Recto.

When the mass organizations that espoused the new democratic revolution grew in strength in the 1960s and early 1970s, the US foreign aid and educational agencies and private US foundations like those of Ford and Rockefeller intensified their interference in the educational and cultural field in the Philippines. After declaring martial law in 1972, Marcos established draconian control over mass media and cultural channels, and deepened the propaganda of his fascist dictatorship through the educational system with its censored curricula and syllabi. The fascist regime and the US also started to use the World Bank to fund so-called reforms to align education to

US policies.

The post-Marcos regimes have propagated anti-national and anti-democratic ideas and sentiments along the neocolonial and neoliberal line. US cultural imperialism has become even more pronounced. While one regime after another has increasingly channeled public funds to foreign debt servicing, bureaucratic corruption and military campaigns of suppression, all have reduced appropriations for state colleges and universities in order to press them to raise tuition fees and seek assistance from the private sector and US and foreign entities.

The US and other imperialist governmental agencies and private foundations fund and direct nongovernmental or so-called civil society organizations to subvert educational and cultural institutions and attack the cultural, educational and other works of the people's national democratic movement. US agencies like the Agency of International Development, the National Endowment of Democracy, the US Institute of Peace and the like are well known for funding groups for subverting and attacking the endeavors and aspirations of the Filipino people for national and social liberation.

More than ever the Filipino people and their revolutionary forces demand and struggle for a national, scientific and mass culture and education. The cadres and mass activists are propagating this patriotic and progressive type of culture and education and contributing creatively to its advance even in the schools and other cultural institutions of the ruling system. But certainly they are most effective in the mass movement, in the people's army and in the areas governed by the people's democratic government.

V. Perspective of the Filipino people in the new democratic revolution

The Filipino people and their revolutionary forces persevere in the struggle for national liberation and democracy under the leadership of the working class and its advanced detachment, the Communist Party of the Philippines. It is precisely through the revolutionary struggle that they build their strength to overthrow the ruling system and to establish a people's democratic state system. They are prepared to fight US imperialism as it escalates its military intervention and proceeds to a full scale war of aggression.

Both US imperialism and the ruling system of big compradors and landlords cannot persist forever in the Philippines. By their own unbridled greed and terrorism under the auspices of neocolonialism and neoliberalism, they increasingly expose their unjust character and bankruptcy and drive the people to intensify their struggle for national and social liberation. After winning the new democratic revolution, the Filipino people can proceed to the socialist stage of the Philippine revolution.

The betrayal of socialism by the modern revisionists since the late 1950s, culminating in their full restoration of capitalism in their respective countries from 1989 to 1991, led to the full sway of neocolonialism in the underdeveloped countries and neoliberalism in the entire world capitalist system. Since 2007-2008 when the US and other imperialist powers were hit hard by an economic and financial crisis comparable to that of the Great Depression, the conditions of exploitation and oppression have worsened as if without end; but have at the same time driven the broad masses of the people to wage resistance.

US imperialism has undermined its position as the sole superpower by becoming overdrawn to high tech military production and wars of aggression, by making China a major partner in neoliberal globalization, by relying on cheap Chinese labor to produce consumer goods, by undercutting manufacturing and employment in the US, by accelerating the financialization of the US economy and becoming a debtor to China, Japan and a host of other countries. The full entry of China and Russia into the ranks of big capitalist powers has not strengthened the world capitalist system but has made it more cramped and more prone to the intensification of inter-imperialist contradictions.

Up to the first decade of the 21st century, China and Russia have been acquiescent to the US engaging in wars of aggression, as in Iraq and Afghanistan. But subsequently, they have become wary of US expansionism and have formed the Shanghai Cooperation Organization to countervail the growing aggressiveness of the US and NATO. They have also promoted the BRICS as an economic bloc to serve as counterfoil to US arrogance in economic, trade and financial matters. The inter-imperialist contradictions are still apparently far from breaking out into direct or indirect war between any of the big capitalist powers, notwithstanding their involvement in civil strifes, such as those in Syria and Ukraine.

In East Asia, China has moved on from being known as the sponsor of the Chinese comprador big bourgeoisie collaborating with US and other multinational firms in sweatshop operations and private construction to being a rising industrial capitalist power, involving the nationalist collaboration of both state and private monopoly capitalism. But China is still avoiding being called a full imperialist power that uses aggression to grab both economic and political territory. Even in UN peacekeeping missions, it prefers to contribute police advisors rather than military troops.

In maritime disputes over the South China Sea, China is conspicuously overreaching and potentially violent. But so far it has not engaged in any act of aggression for the purpose of subjugating any country. The submission by the Philippines of its maritime dispute with China to the International Tribunal on the Law of the Sea is a peaceful act and could be a peaceful way of resolving the said maritime dispute and similar disputes. A situation in which China can always insist on indisputable sovereignty over 90 per cent of the South China Sea is more fraught with violence.

The reactionary Aquino regime has boasted that the US will protect the Philippines from China and has allowed the US to have military bases, troops, facilities, war materiel (tanks, warships and attack planes) and even nuclear weapons on Philippine territory under the new Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement, in flagrant violation of the 1987 constitution. In fact, the US has declared neutrality between the Philippines and China over their maritime dispute. It is deliberately maintaining a dual policy of cooperation and contention towards China. It is mindful that it has far more economic, trade, financial and security interests in China than in the Philippines. Even the Aquino ruling clique has lucrative relations with Chinese mining, construction, export-processing and marketing firms.

In the meantime, the long running provocative thrust of the neoconservative policy to make the US dominant in the entire 21st century and use a broad spectrum approach to put down any imperialist rival and the more recent provocations of the US pivot to Asia against China and the US-EU-NATO expansion into the Ukraine against Russia have pushed China and Russia to sign on May 21 a 30-year \$400 billion natural gas agreement. This agreement solidifies the alliance of China and Russia against the hegemonic schemes of the US and is at the center of the most pertinent economic, financial and trade agreements and is concomitant to a greatly increased security alliance and cooperation between the two giant neighbors. The struggle for a redivision of the world among the great capitalist powers is steadily developing before the huge earthquakes break out to serve as prelude to the unprecedented rise of the anti-imperialist and socialist movements.

The Filipino people and the revolutionary forces have to grasp the complexity of the world capitalist system today and study how to avail of opportunities presented by inter-imperialist contradictions as did the Bolsheviks when there was no preceding socialist country to aid them. They must resolutely raise the level of their revolutionary consciousness and fighting capabilities. They must be determined to win the people's democratic revolution and proceed to the socialist revolution. They must be prepared to confront and counter the No. 1 imperialist enemy at every stage.

They can be confident that the turmoil of the world capitalist system, wracked by protracted, intensifying and widening crisis, is the eve of renewed anti-imperialist and proletarian revolutions on a global scale. They must rely primarily on themselves in waging revolution as they have done successfully for so long, intensify the efforts to win the solidarity and support of other peoples and revolutionary movements and take advantage of the worsening global crisis, inter-imperialist contradictions and the rise and spread of anti-imperialist and proletarian revolutions on a global scale.

Global Trends and the Philippine Political System

Presentation at the Forum on Global Trends

and the Philippine Political System

University of the Philippines – Baguio

November 28, 2015

Dear Friends,

Good afternoon! I thank the Alliance of Concerned Students, ANAKBAYAN, and League of Filipino Students for inviting me to this forum as the speaker. I am happy to join you in celebrating the 150th birth anniversary of the great Andres Bonifacio and the 49th founding anniversary of Kabataang Makabayan.

I am tasked to present the global trends and the Philippine political system before I receive and answer the questions in this forum.

A. *Global trends*

1. The crisis of global capitalism and global depression continue, especially because the imperialist powers stick to the neoliberal economic policy. This has accelerated the accumulation and concentration of capital in the hands of the few through the intensified exploitation of labor, the liberalization of investment, trade and finance, privatization of public assets, anti-social and anti-environment deregulation and denationalization of the underdeveloped economies.

2. Rising mass unemployment and prolonged economic stagnation are the result of the crisis of overproduction and bursting of financial bubbles. The economic and financial crisis is further aggravated by the so-called quantitative easing or wanton printing of money by the US to cover its public deficits. Industrial capitalist countries generally have adopted austerity measures in a vain attempt to reduce their public deficits and solve their debt problem. Thus, they pass the burden of crisis to the people and aggravate the crisis of the entire economy.

3. The imperialist powers step up war production and launch wars of aggression. They consider these as stimulus to economic growth, while they consider spending for social services as counterproductive. Maintaining military superiority through more advanced weaponry, the deployment of military forces and wars of aggression is aimed at protecting and promoting foreign investments.

4. The imperialist countries whip up reactionary currents like chauvinism, racism, religious bigotry, fascism and warmongering in their home grounds to deflect the people's attention from the capitalist roots of the crisis. The monopoly bourgeoisie and its financial oligarchy conceal their responsibility for the crisis through their control of the mass media and the dominant political parties.

5. To override contradictions among themselves, the imperialist powers unite against the third world countries and peoples and shift the burden of crisis to them through intensified superexploitation, lopsided trade, currency imposition, international usury, intensified plunder and ruin of the environment.

6. The third world peoples are resisting. Mass protests are occurring daily all over the world. Those who are waging armed struggles against foreign domination and the local exploiting classes have the best chances of achieving national and social liberation. Some third world states assert national independence: DPRK, Cuba, Venezuela, Syria and Iran. They are resisting threats, provocations and blockades.

7. Despite their efforts to unite at the expense of the third world, the imperialist powers are hard pressed by the crisis. There is less space for mutual accommodation among the imperialist powers due to the addition of China and Russia. Thus, inter-imperialist contradictions are growing over economic, trade, financial, political, security, spying and environment issues.

8. The combination of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) has arisen as an economic bloc. It contributes to the multipolarity of the global economy against the vain attempts of the US to maintain hegemony over all. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization has also arisen as a countervailing force to the US and NATO, especially in Asia.

9. The US has created politico-military quagmires for itself in West Asia, North Africa, Central Asia and South Asia and has potential trouble spots elsewhere but is pivoting to East Asia in an apparent move to contain China. The US is showing of its military power to push the Chinese authorities to further privatize state-owned

enterprises and to encourage the Chinese bureaucracy to drop their residual pretenses at socialism.

10. In connection with its pivot to East Asia, the US is further entrenching itself in the Philippines militarily and otherwise. In effect, the US has gotten back military bases under the guise of rotating ever larger military forces and accelerating the comings and goings of aircraft carriers and other vessels of war.

B. The Philippine political system

1. The crisis of global capitalism certainly afflicts the Philippine economy. Exports (especially semiconductors) have been drastically reduced. Low-value added semimanufacturing and assembly plants have shut. Agricultural production has decreased. Over-dependence on call centers or business processing outsourcing (BPO) and labor exports & remittances of OCW can only aggravate the underdevelopment of the country. Unemployment is increasing rapidly. Prices of basic commodities and services are rising. Social services are decreasing and deteriorating.

The extraction of mineral ores is accelerated but these are being smuggled out. At the same time, luxury imports are being smuggled in. OCW remittances and BPO incomes are at risk. Budgetary and trade deficits are widening. The foreign and local debt burden is becoming heavier. OCW remittances from most countries are decreasing but appear to grow only because of nurse and caregiver remittances from North America.

2. The Aquino regime boasts of having the fastest growing economy in the whole world. But what is really the content of the GDP of 250 billion USD. It is a lie to claim a miracle economy when there is no industrialization going on. The GDP is a bubble created mainly by hot money (portfolio investments) in the carry trade and wanton government borrowing and spending for nonproductive purposes. The hot money from abroad flows mainly into the stock market and at best finances a growing overcapacity and bubble in private construction.

A real estate bubble is now being replicated in the Philippines. Even families of OCWs with short term contracts have been teased into buying condos on mortgage. The bubble can burst any time soon due to the rise of interest rates in the imperialist countries, a bust in the China bubble or a sharp fall of OCWs due to wars or social disorder abroad.

3. The underdeveloped, agrarian and semi-feudal character of the economy, dominated by the imperialists, big compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists, has been aggravated and deepened in the absence of genuine land reform and national industrialization.

4. As a consequence, the Philippine political system remains ever more the instrument of the US and the local exploiting classes of big comprador and landlords through the bureaucrat capitalists who themselves are members of the exploiting classes or come from the urban petty bourgeoisie and know no better than to improve their economic and social standing. The ruling system has been weakened by the privatization of its earning assets, the ever worsening crisis and by unbridled bureaucratic corruption.

5. The bureaucrat capitalists amass private wealth in the form of capital and land by using their government offices for the purpose. They are divided into factions that take the form of political parties and coalitions and compete for power and the spoils of power. There was the duopoly of the Nacionalista and Liberal parties before the Marcos monopoly through the KBL. Now, there is a multiplicity of parties dedicated to bureaucrat capitalism. In any case, the parties use the elections for peaceful rotation in the occupation of offices and for creating the illusion that the people have the freedom of choice. The latest feature of the reactionary elections is the adoption of the automated electoral system and its manipulation by a cabal of foreigners and big compradors.

6. The elections are used to formalize the exclusion of the genuine representatives of the toiling masses of workers and peasants (more than 90 per cent of the people) who are earlier excluded by surveillance and vilification by the security services and bourgeois mass media and by the high financial costs of running an electoral campaign. As a result of a Supreme Court decision, the big comprador-landlord dynasties and parties will block any progressive urban petty bourgeois to win a congressional seat through the party list system.

7. The bureaucrat capitalists amass wealth by favoring their campaign financiers, relatives and cronies with economic privileges, by adopting policies and rules for the purpose and by cutting into business contracts and government appropriations (especially with the use of the pork barrel system). Currently, the Filipino people are outraged by the corruption involved in the manipulation of pork barrel funds like those under PDAP and DAP and in the disappearance of calamity funds, so badly needed now by millions of disaster-stricken people in the Visayas.

8. The Philippine political system has been so designed that government officials are rewarded through the

corrupt practices of bureaucrat capitalism for preserving and promoting the dominance for foreign monopoly capitalism and the exploiting classes and for betraying national sovereignty, auctioning of the national patrimony and for making constitutional amendments and laws that favor the foreign monopoly investors and the local exploiters.

9. Aquino was previously touted as the icon of good governance and economic growth. This kind of BS is in connection with the US scheme of combining psywar, intelligence and brutal military operations under Oplan Bayanihan to destroy the revolutionary movement. Thus, he was unwilling to have serious peace negotiations with the NDFP on basic social, economic and political problems and, if only to insult the NDFP, practically demanded the scrapping of all previous agreements and the surrender and pacification of the revolutionary forces and people under the guise of an indefinite ceasefire.

10. The Aquino regime is depending on US military intervention for the perpetuation of the oppressive, exploitative and corrupt ruling system. Thus, it welcomes every move of the US to entrench its military forces and expand US economic, political and cultural dominance in the Philippines. It is betraying and violating the national sovereignty of the people, selling out the national patrimony and letting the US use the Philippines as a base of aggression in East Asia and as a base of rapid deployment on a wider scale.

The National Liberation Movement in the

Philippines and the “Terrorist Listing”

by Foreign Powers

Keynote Speech at the Second New World Summit

The Waag, Leiden, December 29, 2012

First of all, I wish to thank the organizers of the Second New World Summit for inviting me to serve as the keynote speaker. I am honored and delighted to avail of this “alternative parliament” to expose the socioeconomic, political, and ideological interests behind the “terrorist” labeling and listing of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), the New People’s Army (NPA), your speaker and in effect the entire struggle of the Filipino people for national liberation and democracy.

In this connection, may I present to you briefly the highlights of the revolutionary history and circumstances of the Filipino people, the CPP, the NPA and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) and in the process my historical and current role which has resulted in my inclusion in the so-called terrorist blacklist of the US and the EU among others. More importantly, I wish to present to you the just cause of the Filipino people and their revolutionary forces to fight for national liberation and democracy.

I shall comment on the adversities that I have faced in connection with the “terrorist” blacklist and other acts of persecution, on how these have affected me and on my position towards them and towards the states that employ them. I shall also point to the rise of the international democratic movement and relate them to the goals of the national liberation movement in the Philippines.

The interests behind “terrorist” listing

The interests behind the “terrorist” listing of the national liberation movement in the Philippines are chiefly those of the US among the imperialist powers. The “terrorist” listing seeks to demonize the movement and justify the use of violence and deception against the people and social activists in order to preserve and promote the socioeconomic interests of the US monopoly bourgeoisie. This globally hegemonic class wants to continue drawing superprofits from the working people and oppressed nations and peoples and seeks to crush their resistance.

The local reactionary classes of big compradors and landlords in the Philippines follow the dictates of the US. They serve the interests of the US and their own class and factional interests in the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system. There is the illusion of democracy in the Philippines but this is merely the competition of political factions of the same exploiting classes. These factions always compete for US support because this is the most decisive in determining which of them becomes the ruling faction.

Since 9-11, the US has used the pretext of combating Al Qaida in order to proclaim and carry out a perpetual borderless war of terror on countries assertive of national independence and on national liberation movements. For this purpose, it has launched wars of aggression against Iraq, Afghanistan and other countries, killing hundreds of thousands of people and destroying their social infrastructure in the process. It has caused the adoption of draconian laws like the USA PATRIOT Act in the imperialist and dominated countries and has emboldened governments to engage in state terrorism.

To justify the extraordinary and boundless use of violence and go beyond appropriate police measures against common crimes, the US has used the metaphor of war to commit grievous criminal violations of basic democratic rights, engage in foreign military intervention and wage wars of aggression. Of course, the US has a motive for the use of oppression, aggression and occupation. This is to maintain and expand its dominant share of the global and regional markets, the sources of cheap labor and raw materials, the fields of investment and the spheres of influence.

Under its global security policy, the US has designed the master plans for military campaigns of suppression against the revolutionary forces and people in the Philippines. These are Oplan Bantay Laya for the Arroyo regime and Oplan Bayanihan for the current Aquino regime. The NPA has never engaged in any cross-border action against the US or any other country. But the US and its Filipino puppets connive in trying to subject the CPP, NPA and the NDFP chief political consultant to the jurisdiction of the US and other imperialist powers.

There were those who said in the years of 1989 to 1991 that, after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the full restoration of capitalism in revisionist-ruled countries, there would be world peace and peace dividends. But in fact the US has been driven by its ideological and economic interest to wipe out every vestige or semblance of the socialist cause and even the cause of national liberation and democracy among the oppressed nations and peoples. It has launched multi-pronged offensives of counterrevolution in the ideological, socioeconomic, political and military spheres.

In the ideological field, it has propagated the notion that history cannot go any farther than capitalism and liberal democracy. In the socioeconomic field, it has used the neoliberal policy of “free market” globalization to accelerate the accumulation and concentration of capital and attack the rights of the working people. In the political field, it has trampled upon the national sovereignty of underdeveloped countries and has violated human rights on a wide scale. In the military field, it has asserted the imperial authority to engage wantonly in military intervention and aggression.

From the Old to the New Democratic Revolution

The Filipino people had the distinct honor of being the first Asian people to win a bourgeois democratic revolution by liberating themselves from Spanish colonialism in 1898. But unfortunately, the US intervened militarily by pretending to support the Philippine revolution. It landed military forces in Manila in order to prevent the Philippine revolutionary forces from capturing Intramuros, the walled final enclave of the Spanish colonizers.

The US provoked an incident on February 4, 1899 in order to ignite the Filipino-American War and to conquer and occupy the Philippines under the terms of the US-Spanish Treaty of Paris of December 10, 1898 whereby Spain had sold the Philippines to the US for USD 20 million. In carrying out its war of aggression, the US military forces killed at least 700,000 or ten per cent of the Filipino people from 1899 to 1902 and a total of 1.5 million Filipinos up to 1913. War of aggression is truly the worst kind of terrorism.

After defeating the old democratic revolution of the Filipino people, the US imposed its own colonial rule and started to shift the feudal economy to a semi-feudal one dominated by US monopoly capitalism with the collaboration of the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords. The US applied the so-called policy of benevolent assimilation to coopt the liberal bourgeoisie that led the revolution. Unlike the Spanish colonialists who had engaged in sheer plunder, the US colonialists made direct and indirect investments in order to extract more superprofits.

The Filipino working class steadily grew even as the peasantry remained the most numerous class in Philippine society in the persistently agrarian economy. The Communist Party of the Philippine Islands (CPPI) was established in 1930. Thus, the possibility of continuing the Philippine revolution emerged, this time led by the working class rather than by the liberal bourgeoisie. The revolutionary leadership of the working class based itself mainly on an alliance with the peasantry.

The US colonial regime outlawed the CPPI in 1931 by trumping up charges of sedition and imprisoning and exiling the leaders. But as a result of the global anti-fascist united front, the Commonwealth government of Quezon released the CPPI leaders in 1936. The CPPI immediately revived its mass strength, especially by merging with the Socialist Party. In 1942 the Communist-Socialist merger party (hereafter, merger party) organized the People's Army Against Japan (Hukbalahap) in order to fight the Japanese fascist invaders.

The merger party gained revolutionary strength during World War II by building the people's army, carrying out land reform and forming local organs of political power called the barrio united defense corps. But the revolutionary gains were limited by a Right opportunist line of passive defense, waiting for the return of the US, welcoming the US to fulfill its promise of granting independence and preparing for legal struggle supposedly under conditions of “peace and democracy”.

Despite the Right opportunist line of the leadership of the merger party, the US and its Filipino puppets used brute force to restore the power and wealth of the landlords in the countryside and to allow the US to continue its economic, political, cultural and military dominance over the Philippines after the grant of formal independence in 1946. Indeed, the US had its way through the semi-colonial agency of the political parties of the big compradors and landlords and through the neocolonial manipulation of the economy and finance of the semi-colony.

The exploited and oppressed masses demanded revolutionary armed struggle. Thus, a change of leadership in the merger party occurred in 1948. But a “Left” opportunist line was adopted. It was bound to fail as it aimed to win victory within two years by relying on popular hatred of the corrupt puppet regime of Quirino and without

paying attention to the need for land reform and painstaking mass work. It succeeded in carrying out one big military offensive in August 1949 but failed to prevail over the counter-offensives of the US-trained and US-supplied army battalions of the enemy.

After the total defeat of the “Left” opportunist line by the reactionary government in the early 1950s, the leadership of the merger party swung back to Right opportunism. In 1954 it sought to liquidate the people’s army by ordering its conversion into organizational brigades. In 1957 it also sought to liquidate the merger party by reducing its membership to single files and thus in effect dissolving party branches and other collectives. Thus by the time that I joined the merger party in December 1962, it did not have any existing party branch and the general secretary was merely hiding himself in Manila.

Even after the defeat of the armed revolutionary movement, the reactionary state enacted in 1957 the bill of attainder, Anti-Subversion Law, punishing anyone for adhering to Marxism-Leninism and for merely associating with groups that could be considered communist. The Cold War policy of the US prevailed over the entire semi-colonial and semi-feudal ruling system.

Resurgence of the national democratic mass movement

We who were in the University of the Philippines in the late 1950s and who considered ourselves patriotic and progressive were not at all intimidated by the Anti-Subversion Law. Instead, we were challenged to fight back as a result of recurrent efforts of the reactionary state and the dominant church to use the said law in carrying out ideological and political witch hunts in violation of the fundamental rights of free speech and assembly and the liberal democratic principle of separation of church and state.

We formed the Student Cultural Association of the University of the Philippines in 1959 in order to defy the Anti-Subversion Law and to propagate openly the line of people’s struggle for national liberation and democracy against US imperialism and the local exploiting classes and to promote the clandestine study of Marxism-Leninism.

We countered the congressional investigations of so-called subversive articles written by professors and students, including your speaker who had written an internationalist piece, “Requiem for Lumumba”, under a pseudonym. We called for mass action in defense of academic freedom and we succeeded in mobilizing 5000 students for a demonstration against such investigations. This event opened the series of mass actions against the ruling system in the 1960s.

I was the chairman of the Student Cultural Association of the University of the Philippines. We linked up with student governments and organizations on a national scale and formed new national student organizations that were patriotic and progressive. We further linked up with the labor and peasant organizations from late 1962 onward. And some of us joined the remnants of the underground merger party of communists and socialists.

We were active in the aboveground Workers’ Party, particularly in the work of social research, publications and seminars in this party and in its affiliate trade union federations. On the basis of this work, I became the vice chairman for education. We were also active in providing refresher courses to the peasant cadres who were beginning to revive the peasant movement under the cover of the bogus land reform program of the reactionary state.

Our work with the organizations of workers and peasants helped us greatly in founding in 1964 the comprehensive youth organization, Kabataang Makabayan (Patriotic Youth), consisting of students, young workers, young peasants and young professionals. I was elected chairman of this youth organization. This became the most militant organization in arousing, organizing and mobilizing the masses on the domestic issues against imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism and on international issues, especially the US war of aggression in Vietnam and the whole of Indochina.

The Kabataang Makabayan became the principal proponent for the organization of a broad united front of patriotic and progressive forces in 1966. And I was elected the general secretary of this formation. My book, Struggle for National Democracy, became the basic reading material of the mass activists from 1966 onward. In the entire 1960s, I was publicly accused of being the key link of the anti-imperialist and democratic forces and as the aboveground representative of the underground revolutionary party.

Reestablishment of the CPP and its program

While the national democratic mass movement was growing rapidly, a debate arose within the underground merger party about the history, status and direction of the revolutionary movement and about issues in the ideological debate between the Marxist-Leninists and the modern revisionists in the international communist

movement. We who stood as proletarian revolutionaries called for the rectification of previous major opportunist errors, declared that the growing mass movement was a preparation for the new democratic revolution through people's war and aligned ourselves with the Marxist-Leninists in the international communist movement.

We separated from the merger party in 1967 and carried out a rectification movement in order to prepare the reestablishment of the Communist Party of the Philippines on the theoretical foundation of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought. We adopted this revolutionary theory of the proletariat because it sheds light on the new democratic and socialist stages of the Philippine revolution and on combating modern revisionism and continuing the revolution until the threshold of communism is reached.

We applied the theory on the history and circumstances of the Philippines. We recognized the semicolonial and semifeudal character of Philippine society and the need for waging the new democratic revolution through the strategic line of protracted people's war. This line involves encircling the cities from the countryside and accumulating armed strength here until the time comes to seize the cities. It means that the proletariat relies mainly on the peasantry and carries out land reform as the main content of the democratic revolution.

We were determined to build the Party as the advanced detachment of the working class; the New People's Army as the instrument for waging revolutionary struggle in combination with land reform and mass-base building; and the united front for mobilizing the toiling masses and the middle social strata and for taking advantage of the splits among the reactionaries in order to isolate and defeat the enemy, which may be the worst reactionary force at a given time or a foreign aggressor.

We reestablished the CPP on December 26, 1968 through a congress that ratified the Constitution and the Program for a People's Democratic Revolution and elected the Central Committee, which in turn elected me as the Chairman. We started with only about 80 full members and candidate members of the Party. But we were already leading thousands of members of trade unions and organizations of youth, urban poor and peasants. With a revolutionary theory and a democratic political program, we were confident of growing in strength through revolutionary struggle.

The aims and purposes of the national liberation movement in the Philippines are best expressed by the CPP's Program for a People's Democratic Revolution. This calls for the unity of the Filipino people to complete the struggle for national independence and democracy, overthrow the big comprador-landlord state, end the unequal treaties and agreements with the US and establish a people's democratic state based mainly on the worker-peasant alliance. It also called for economic and social development through genuine land reform and national industrialization; for a national, scientific and democratic system of culture and education; and for an independent foreign policy that promotes international solidarity, peace and development.

Repression and armed resistance

A few months after the reestablishment of the Party, we founded the New People's Army on March 29, 1969. We the proletarian revolutionaries from Manila linked up with the healthy remnants of the old people's army that had a mass base of 80,000 peasants in Tarlac province. We started with only nine automatic rifles and twenty-six inferior firearms, like single-shot rifles and handguns.

We were determined to wage revolutionary armed struggle because the Marcos regime had been escalating violence against the workers, urban poor, the peasants and the youth in numerous incidents since 1965. These included massacres and brutal disruption of worker strikes and protest rallies. In 1968, I was subjected to a knife attack by covert agents of the regime. From year to year, there were increasing signs that Marcos would perpetuate himself in power through military force and other extraordinary means. The US was supporting his regime with increasing military assistance and training the police for surveillance and crowd control.

In 1971 Marcos masterminded the Plaza Miranda bombing and scapegoated the CPP, the NPA and his arch political rival Benigno Aquino in order to suspend the writ of habeas corpus. This was a direct preparation for his proclamation of martial law and imposition of a fascist dictatorship on the people in 1972. He prated that the communists, the Muslim separatists and the intrasystemic opposition were out to overthrow the government by force and that it was his duty to save the republic and undertake reforms in order to build a new society.

The US further increased military and economic assistance and facilitated foreign loans to the Marcos fascist regime in exchange for the further entrenchment and expansion of US economic, political and military interests in the Philippines. It expected the fascist dictatorship to destroy both the legal democratic movement and the armed revolutionary movement. But the consequences were contrary to the expectations of the US.

As Chairman of the CPP Central Committee, I was among those who initiated the founding of the National Democratic Front (NDFP) on April 24, 1973. The NDFP was formed as the united front organization of the revolutionary forces of the toiling masses of workers and peasants and the middle social strata for promoting the revolutionary struggle and mobilizing the people in their millions. It included the CPP, NPA and various types of mass organizations, especially those driven underground by the Marcos fascist dictatorship.

From year to year, the CPP, NPA, the NDFP, the underground mass organizations and revolutionary organs of political power increased nationwide. By 1982 the US had become worried about the growing strength of these revolutionary forces and wanted to replace Marcos with Aquino. The subsequent killing of Aquino by the military minions of Marcos in 1983 resulted in sustained protest mass actions, culminating in the overthrow of Marcos in 1986.

In 14 years of struggle against fascist dictatorship, the CPP struck deep roots among the workers and peasants nationwide. The NPA was able to create scores of guerrilla fronts, covering thousands of villages, hundreds of municipalities and scores of provinces. In these guerrilla fronts, revolutionary organs of democratic power, mass organizations, militia and self-defense units were formed to support the people's army. The revolutionary mass base included millions of the people.

My capture in 1977 did not lessen the momentum of the revolutionary movement. Together with so many other gross human rights violations committed by the fascist dictatorship, the various forms of torture that I suffered in prison and my steadfast defiance helped to inspire the revolutionary forces and people to intensify their struggle. Upon the fall of Marcos in 1986, the charges of subversion and rebellion against me under the military commissions were nullified by the Aquino regime. I went back to the University of the Philippines to teach political science in the Asian Center of Graduate Studies.

Then I decided to go on a global university lecture tour in the latter half of 1986. While I was still in the Asia-Pacific region, the military establishment did not like what I was saying abroad in the exercise of my fundamental right to think and speak freely and pressed Cory Aquino to cancel my passport and force my return to the Philippines. She yielded to the pressure of the military, canceled my passport and went along with the filing of a false charge of subversion against me in 1988. Thus, I had to apply for political asylum in The Netherlands in order to avoid the sword of the military in Manila.

The reactionary regimes that have succeeded the Marcos fascist regime have pretended to be democratic but have continued to suppress basic democratic rights and use brute military force against the revolutionary movement without having to declare martial law. But the revolutionary forces have continued to fight and win victories in the fields of political struggle, tactical offensives, land reform and cultural work. The new democratic revolution has proven to be indestructible in the last more than 44 years because of the strategic line of encircling the cities from the countryside in the protracted people's war.

The general line of new democratic revolution and strategy of people's war have been strengthened as a result of a nationwide rectification movement to correct major errors committed by "Left" and Right opportunists in various regions at different times during the decade of the 1980s. The rectification movement was an educational campaign to criticize, repudiate and rectify major errors and set forth creative tasks for revitalizing and further strengthening the Party and entire revolutionary movement. It was enthusiastically carried out by the Party rank and file from 1992 to 1998. It was resoundingly successful and guided the further development of the revolutionary forces. It has come to be known as the Second Great Rectification Movement, which alludes to the First Great Rectification Movement of 1967 that led to the reestablishment of the CPP in 1968.

At the moment, the Party has a membership of 100,000 and is active in all the provinces of the Philippines. The NPA has thousands of Red fighters with high powered rifles and operates in 110 to 120 guerrilla fronts. These cover extensive areas of 70 provinces and more than half of the 1500 municipalities of the Philippines. The local Party branches, the units of the people's army, the political organs of democratic power, the mass organizations, the people's militia and self-defense units are thriving. The mass base in both urban and rural bases includes millions of people.

Under the leadership of the CPP, the local organs of political power have working committees in charge of mass organizing, public education, land reform, production, finance, health and sanitation, cultural work and arbitration. Mass campaigns for the benefit of the people are carried out with the support of the mass organizations of workers, peasants, women, youth, cultural activists and children. Contradictions among the people are settled

through education and arbitration. The people's democratic government, which embraces the local organs of democratic power, has functions of administration, policy-making and trying cases through a people's court system.

The people's war is now in the middle phase of the strategic defensive. And the CPP plans to advance from the strategic defensive to the strategic stalemate in the people's war. This involves raising the Party membership to the level of 250,000 and the number of guerrilla fronts to 180. Every guerrilla front optimally has a total force of one NPA company, which has a platoon as center of gravity and the rest of the company dispersed within a wider radius in order to cover more people and territory. The organs of democratic power, mass organizations, the people's militia and self-defense units are also planned to increase.

Peace negotiations and "terrorist" blacklist as obstacles

Soon after the fall of Marcos in 1986, the Cory Aquino regime proposed to negotiate with the CPP, NPA and NDFP a ceasefire agreement as the prelude to negotiating the substantive agenda for peace negotiations. A 60-day ceasefire agreement was signed in November 1986. But it was broken when the presidential guards opened fire on thousands of peasants and their urban supporters peacefully crying for land reform in front of the presidential palace on January 22, 1987. Aquino did not hold to account the military and police officers who perpetrated the massacre and she proclaimed instead the unsheathing of the sword of war against the revolutionary movement in February 1987.

She used the ceasefire negotiations in Manila and the ceasefire agreement as convenient devices for consolidating power and for placing the NDFP negotiators and their supporters under military surveillance. But the threats of military coup from the Enrile-RAM faction and the pro-Marcos faction within the reactionary armed forces persisted. Aquino made overtures to the NDFP for peace negotiations in 1989 when she sent to me emissaries, the most important of whom was our mutual friend, Rep. Jose V. Yap. But her defense secretary Ramos was obstructive.

When Ramos became president, he sent Yap back to The Netherlands in 1992. Thus, The Hague Joint Declaration was initially signed by the delegations of the Manila government and the NDFP. It defined the framework of prospective peace negotiations. It set forth the purpose of ending the armed conflict by negotiating and agreeing on basic social, economic and political reforms to address the roots of the armed conflict and lay the basis for a just and lasting peace; the principle of non-capitulation; the guidance of mutually acceptable principles, such as national sovereignty, democracy and social justice; the four substantive agenda; and the basic methods of negotiating each major item in the agenda.

The two delegations continued to forge major agreements, subject to the approval of their respective principals. These included the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG), the Ground Rules for the Negotiating Panels and the Joint Agreement on Reciprocal Working Committees. The formal peace negotiations opened in Brussels in 1995. The negotiating panels exchanged their credentials. In 1998 they succeeded in forging the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL).

Ramos and his Speaker de Venecia wanted so much that I would appear with them in a projected ceremony of signing the CARHRIHL at the Quirino grandstand in 1988. To assure me that I had no legal liabilities in the Philippines, the Secretary of Justice Silvestre Bello III issued a certification that there was no pending criminal charge against me in view of the nullification of the subversion charge upon the repeal of the Anti-Subversion Law in 1992 and the dismissal of a false charge of multiple murder in 1994. However, I did not travel to the Philippines in 1998 because the promise to release political prisoners priorly was not fulfilled.

On behalf of the Manila government, Estrada approved the CARHRIHL in 1998. But he terminated the JASIG and therefore the peace negotiations in 1999 in reaction to the capture of General Obillo by the NPA and to the NDFP condemnation of the Manila government's Visiting Forces Agreement with the US. This agreement has allowed the US to bring in US military troops and weapons of mass destruction to the Philippines at any time under the pretext of joint military exercises and other pretexts.

The peace negotiations were resumed soon after Estrada was ousted from his office by popular uprising and then Vice President Arroyo succeeded him. With the Norwegian government as the facilitator, the negotiating panels of the Manila government and the NDFP reaffirmed all previous agreements and agreed to establish in Manila the secretariat of the Joint Monitoring Committee under CARHRIHL. Even as the peace negotiations were going on, the reactionary armed forces, police and paramilitary forces engaged in gross and systematic human rights

violations. But when the infamous torturer Col. Rodolfo Aguinaldo was killed by the NPA because he resisted arrest, the Arroyo regime used this single incident as an excuse for refusing to negotiate further.

The regime was vociferous in seeking to stop me from exercising my democratic right to speak freely and in preconditioning the resumption of negotiations with the capitulation and pacification of the revolutionary forces and the people. Thus, for the purpose of blackmail and pressure, it requested the US government to designate the CPP, NPA and myself as the NDFP chief political consultant as “foreign terrorists” in November 2001. Accordingly, the US designated them in August 2002. The Dutch government likewise designated me as a “terrorist” and further curtailed my fundamental rights, froze my bank account and terminated all my social benefits (living allowance, housing, health insurance and pension). Subsequently, it was the prime movant in having the Council of European Union put me in the “terrorist blacklist” of the European Union in October 2002.

After the Arroyo regime approached the NDFP for resumption of talks in 2004, the two negotiating panels met twice in Oslo to forge Oslo Joint Statements I and II to tackle mainly the problem posed by the terrorist listing of the CPP, NPA and the NDFP chief political consultant by the US, European Union and other governments. The Manila government’s failure to comply with the terms of the aforesaid Oslo statements led the NDFP to propose postponement of the formal talks slated for August, 2005 in order to give more time for said government to make compliance.

The Arroyo regime reacted by “suspending” the JASIG and going on a rampage to abduct, torture and imprison or murder NDFP consultants and staffers. It escalated the violation of the human rights of persons associated with the NDFP in the peace negotiations as well as a wide range of social activists. Upon the request of the Manila government which supplied false allegations against me, the Dutch government raided the NDFP office in Utrecht and the residences of NDFP negotiators and consultants and arrested me and put me in solitary confinement from August 28 to September 13, 2007 on trumped up charges of murder.

These baseless charges had been previously invalidated in June 2007 by judgment of the Philippine Supreme Court on a trumped up case of rebellion against me and 50 others, including progressive members of the Philippine Congress and anti-Arroyo military officers. And yet the Manila government did not bother to inform the Dutch government about said judgment.

After Aquino became president in 2010, the formal talks between the negotiating panels occurred twice in Oslo within the first half of 2011. On both occasions the negotiating panel of the Manila government sought to undermine and nullify previous agreements. It denounced The Hague Joint Declaration as a “document of perpetual division.” It considered the JASIG as non-binding and without effect in protecting the NDFP consultants, security officers and staffers who had been arrested by the military.

The Aquino regime has taken advantage of the fact that the Dutch police seized and destroyed the encrypting and decrypting programs related to the documents of identification under JASIG. It has condoned the violations of the CARHRIHL committed by the Arroyo regime and has increased the victims of such violations. The victims have suffered abductions, torture, illegal detention or extrajudicial killing.

The number of political prisoners has risen. They are mentioned as connected with the NPA as fighters or as accomplices and yet they are accused of common crimes in violation of CARHRIHL and the Hernandez political offense doctrine. Like predecessor regimes, the Aquino regime has failed to comply with the provision of the CARHRIHL for the indemnification of the victims of human rights violations under the Marcos fascist regime.

The NDFP perspective on the peace negotiations

Despite the increasing obstacles put up by the Manila government and by the US, the NDFP is determined to pursue the peace negotiations and insist that comprehensive agreements on social, economic and political reforms must be negotiated and reached in order to lay the basis for a just and lasting peace.

Despite the painful attacks on my fundamental human rights, such as the denial of residence to me even as I am a recognized political refugee since 1992 and I have the right to family union, and despite the attempts to assassinate me in 1999 and 2000, the “terrorist” listing of my name, the curtailment of my basic rights and termination of my social benefits since 2002 and my arrest and detention on trumped up charges of murder in 2007, I continue to work earnestly for the peace negotiations in my capacity as chief political consultant of the NDFP Negotiating Panel.

I do not carry any rancor that prevents me from participating in the peace negotiations, especially because I have won my cases in court against the trumped up charges of murder and the terrorist blacklisting. But I

admonish my powerful detractors not to use blackmail and dirty tricks to pressure the NDFP or any one to yield to the scheme of capitulation and pacification in the form of an indefinite ceasefire agreement that puts away serious negotiations on basic social, economic and political reforms.

The Manila government should retract its previous request to the US and other governments to designate and list the CPP, NPA and the NDFP chief political consultant as “terrorists”. It should stop making servile, silly and shameless pronouncements that the foreign governments have the sovereign right to claim jurisdiction over Philippine entities and their activities within the Philippines.

It is best for the contending and negotiating parties to concentrate on serious negotiations and arrive at agreements that are beneficial to the entire Filipino people. The NDFP has proven that it is capable of forging with the Manila government the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law. It is truly desirous of forging with the other side the series of comprehensive agreements on social and economic reforms, on political and constitutional reforms and on the end of hostilities and disposition of forces.

The Manila government must cease to use the demand for an indefinite ceasefire by way of effecting the capitulation and pacification of the revolutionary forces and people represented by the NDFP in the peace negotiations. The end of hostilities is properly the subject of negotiation under the last item of the substantive agenda. This last item should not be used to put aside the prior negotiations of social, economic and political reforms.

However, the NDFP has proposed a truce and alliance on the basis of a declaration of common intent to adopt and implement policies to advance national independence, democracy, economic development through national industrialization and land reform, social justice, a patriotic, scientific and democratic culture and an independent foreign policy for world peace and development.

The agreement on truce and alliance based on a general declaration of common intent can be forged immediately on a special track, without prejudice to the regular track of negotiating comprehensive and more detailed agreements on social and economic reforms and on political and constitutional reforms. But so far, the Aquino regime has not demonstrated any political will beyond seeking the capitulation and pacification of the revolutionary forces and people mainly through the US-designed Oplan Bayanihan and secondarily through sham peace negotiations.

The NDFP estimates that the worsening crisis of the world capitalist system and the domestic ruling system, the further strengthening of the revolutionary forces and people and the ceaseless appeal of peace advocates for serious substantive negotiations can persuade the current Aquino regime or any of the succeeding regimes of the Manila government to negotiate seriously with the NDFP and forge the necessary agreements on social, economic and political reforms in order to pave the way for a just and lasting peace. In any case, the people decide the question of peace by their own will and struggle.

Concluding remarks

Let me stress that the Manila government, the US government and other foreign governments are violators of human rights and are reprehensible for labeling, libeling and listing the CPP, NPA and the NDFP chief political consultant as “terrorists” and for filing false criminal charges against me. By doing so, they have also damaged and delayed the peace negotiations between the NDFP and the Manila government. They have exposed the limits of their claims to democracy and, more candidly speaking, the fundamental rottenness of ruling systems that are controlled by exploiting classes, such as the monopoly bourgeoisie in imperialist countries and the big compradors and landlords in a client-state like the Philippines.

The US and other imperialist powers are condemnable for using as pretext the so-called war on terror to encroach on the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of other countries and designate political forces like the CPP and NPA and individuals like me as “terrorist” without any proof of any terrorist act that is within the jurisdiction of any of the imperialist countries. I was put on the terrorist blacklist of the Dutch government and then the European Union, denied basic rights and deprived of all social benefits and subjected to stigmatization and incitement to hatred, without my being informed of any act of terrorism imputed to me, without any proper investigation and without respecting my right to counsel and the right to go to court prior to the terrorist listing and the punitive actions taken against me.

With a deep sense of gratitude to my lawyers, the solidarity activists and the people in various countries, I am pleased about having won in 2007 before the Dutch courts my case against the false charges of murder and in 2009 before the European Court of Justice my case against my inclusion in the terrorist blacklist of the European

Union after seven long years of litigation. But I am always reminded by myself and by many others with a sense of justice and fairness that I should not have been persecuted in the first place and that those who have the most power and the most wealth in my country and their imperialist allies abroad can still get back to me at any time and brazenly persecute me again. Indeed, I remain vulnerable to those powerful interests that wish to silence me. They persist in trying to stop me from exercising my fundamental rights to think, write and speak freely in support of the exploited and oppressed people.

I am also always reminded of the fact that I have been unjustly and unfairly refused residence by the Dutch government for more than 24 years despite the fact that I have been a recognized political refugee since 1992, with a spouse who has legal residence in The Netherlands and with two children who are naturalized Dutch, and despite the fact I have the fundamental right to be presumed innocent in the absence of any criminal conviction by any court. Worst of all, the Dutch authorities have never taken the steps to prosecute those who tried to assassinate me in 1999 and 2000 despite the evidence presented from 2000 to 2007. The Dutch police themselves uncovered evidence on the assassination plot against me while they were investigating the false criminal charges against me in 2007.

Despite the dismal and unjust character of bourgeois democracy in imperialist countries, I am happy about the rise of the democratic mass movement of the people in Europe, against the worsening economic and social crisis, against the growing repressive conditions, against imperialist support for counterrevolutions and against wars of aggression. I welcome and support the spread of the Occupy movement, the Indignado mass protests in Spain, the popular uprisings in Greece and all other forms of resistance in various capitalist countries. I stand in solidarity with the rising international democratic mass movement of the 99 per cent against the 1 per cent. I am also aware that the CPP, NPA and the NDFP support this movement. The people of the world have common aspirations and need to support each other in waging anti-imperialist and democratic struggles.

As chairperson of the International League of Peoples' Struggle, which has hundreds of member-organizations in more than 40 countries in all continents, I am fortunate to have a vantage for helping to arouse, organize and mobilize the people of various oppressed and exploited classes and sectors to engage in anti-imperialist and democratic struggle. As the crisis of global capitalism worsens, exploitation and oppression escalate in both the imperialist countries and the client states. Reactionary trends and currents like those of fascism, xenophobia, racial discrimination and religious bigotry are becoming rampant. The imperialist powers are trigger-happy and are more prone than ever before to unleash wars of aggression and all reactionary states are becoming more repressive and brutal.

The broad masses of the people must resolutely and militantly wage struggles to defend their democratic rights and interests. They are the real source of democracy. They must win the struggle for democracy, whether the aim is to achieve national liberation or socialism. The proletariat and people in both the developed and underdeveloped countries have a common basis for solidarity and mutual support against imperialism and reaction. Their united struggle can lead to a fundamentally new and better world of greater freedom, democracy, social justice, all-round development and peace.

Thank you

On the Question of Philippine Sovereignty

over Sabah

Interview by D. L. Mondelo

Europe Correspondent, *Bulatlat*

March 6 2013

1. *The Sulu sultanate was supposed to have ceded Sabah to the Republic of the Philippines in 1962. In the first place, how did the sultanate come to rule and own Sabah?*

JMS: The Sulu sultanate had ruled and owned Sabah since 1704 when this was ceded by the Sultan of Brunei as reward to the Sultan of Sulu for helping him defeat his enemies. I presume the Sabah people of Mindanao ancestry, especially the Tausugs, Samals, Iranons and others, were the main political base of the Sulu sultanate in Sabah.

The best known documentation of the scope of the Sulu sultanate's rule and ownership of Sabah is the 1878 lease agreement with the British trading syndicate of Dent and Overbeck. Subsequently, the Chief Justice C. F. C. Macaskie of North Borneo recognized the proprietary rights of the Sulu sultanate in a ruling in 1939 in a related civil suit about the payment of rent (padyak) to the heirs of the sultan of Sulu.

2. *Are there people of Mindanao ancestry in Sabah? How many are they or what is their proportion in relation to the entire population?*

JMS: Since time immemorial, the Bajaus, Tausugs, Samals, Iranons and other people from Mindanao have migrated to Sabah. The biggest inflow of people from Mindanao to Sabah occurred during the hostilities between the Manila government and MNLF. This coincided with Tun Mustapha's (a Bajau) relying on people of Mindanao ancestry for political support and facilitating the acquisition of Malaysian citizenship by a significant number of Moro refugees and migrant workers.

In 1970 the population of Sabah was only 651, 304. It jumped to by 1.5 million to 2,468,246 in 2000 and further on to 3,117,405 in 2010. People of Mindanao ancestry comprise a big part of the Sabah population and are more than the widely acknowledged 800,000 Filipinos. If they are aggregated instead of divided into several ethno-linguistic groups, they can outnumber the Kadazan-Dusun, which is 17 per cent of the population. Also of significant size are the people of Chinese origin, comprising 9 per cent of the population. Three-fourths of the people live on the coasts of mainland Sabah and outlying islands.

3. *What is the nature of the 1878 agreement between the Sulu sultanate and the British? Did the sultanate sell or lease Sabah to the British?*

JMS: On 22 January 1878, an agreement was signed between the Sultanate of Sulu and the British trading company (Alfred Dent and Baron von Overback), which stipulated that the former was leasing (padyak) North Borneo (Sabah) to the latter in return for payment of 5000 Malayan Dollar per year. On 22 April 1903 Sultan Jamalul Kiram signed a document leasing additional islands in the vicinity of the mainland of North Borneo from Banggi island to Sibuku Bay to the British North Borneo Company.

The sum of 5,000 dollars a year payable every year from 1878 onward was increased to 5,300 dollars a year payable every year from 1903 onward. Every year, the Malaysian Embassy in the Philippines issues a check in the amount of 5,300 ringgit (US\$1710 or about 77,000 Philippine pesos) to the heirs of the Sultan of Sulu. The British wrongly translate the word padyak in the 1878 agreement as cession, instead of lease, in order to make the false claim that the Sulu sultanate had ceded sovereignty and ownership to them.

4. *Did Spain ever come to acquire and control the Sulu sultanate and its territories? If so, which territories?*

JMS: The Sultanate of Sulu came under the control of Spain in 1878. It was forced to sign a document giving to Spain all of the Sultanate's properties in Palawan and Sulu but not North Borneo. Nevertheless, the Spaniards brought Chavacano-speaking Filipinos to settle in Sempurna, Sabah .

In 1885, Great Britain, Germany and Spain signed the Madrid Protocol to assure Spain of its continued sway over the Philippine islands. In the same agreement, Spain gave up all claims of sovereignty over the territories of the Borneo which belonged to the Sultan of Sulu (Jolo). These included the neighboring islands of Balambangan,

Banguey, and Malawali, as well as all those within a zone of three maritime leagues from the coast. They were administered by the British North Borneo Company.

5. After the US conquered and colonized the Philippines, what was its policy on Sabah? What has been the policy of Filipino officials since the Philippine Constitution arose in 1935?

JMS: In 1906 and in 1920, the United States officially reminded Great Britain that North Borneo did not belong to the Crown and was still part of the Sultanate of Sulu. Even then, the British turned Sabah into a Crown Colony on July 10, 1946. The Philippine Constitution of 1935 states that the national territory of the Philippines included, among other things, “all other areas which belong to the Philippines on the basis of historical rights or legal claims”. Even before Sabah was incorporated into Malaysia in 1963, the Philippines had sent delegations to London reminding the British Crown that Sabah belonged to the Philippines.

6. Exactly when did the Sulu sultanate cede its sovereignty over Sabah to the Republic of the Philippines? In asserting Philippine sovereignty, what have been the most significant actions of the Philippine government?

JMS: On 12 September 1962, during President Diosdado Macapagal’s regime, the territory of North Borneo or Sabah and the full sovereignty, title and dominion over the territory were ceded by the then reigning Sultan of Sulu, HM Sultan Muhammad Esmail E. Kiram I, to the Republic of the Philippines. The cession effectively gave the Philippine government the full authority to pursue the Sulu sultanate’s claim in international courts. The Philippines broke diplomatic relations with Malaysia after the federation included Sabah in 1963.

Republic Act 5446, which took effect on 18 September 1968, regards Sabah as a territory “over which the Republic of the Philippines has acquired dominion and sovereignty.” On 16 July 2011, the Supreme Court ruled that the Philippine claim over Sabah is retained and may be pursued in the future.

7. How valid is the argument of Malaysia that the people of Sabah themselves overruled Philippine sovereignty over Sabah by voting for incorporation in Malaysia?

JMS: The formation of Malaysia in 1963 was rammed through by the British imperialists and the local reactionaries in Malaya under the pretext of combating communism and so-called Indonesian expansionism. The argument of the Kuala Lumpur government that all historical, political and legal issues have been overcome by the people of Sabah exercising the right of self-determination and voting for incorporation in Malaysia does not hold and cannot stand because the voting done in 1963 was under conditions of coercion and manipulation by British colonialism and their Malaysian puppets.

8. Have Philippine regimes been consistently diligent in trying to assert Philippine sovereignty over Sabah? In any case, why?

JMS: Despite the validity of Philippine sovereignty over Sabah, Philippine regimes have failed to assert it consistently, diligently and effectively because of their subservience to the US imperialism. Macapagal submitted to US dictat that the Philippine government must put Indonesia’s Sukarno in a corner through the tripartite Maphilindo scheme and the Manila Accord and give way to the formation of Malaysia without demanding the non-incorporation of Sabah in Malaysia.

Marcos organized and trained Moro volunteers to make an expedition to Sabah but these volunteers became the victims of the Jabitah massacre as a result of the exposed corruption of the project officers. Since then, the Philippine has put the Sabah issue on the back burner. President Cory Aquino became very obsequious to Malaysia by siding up to Malaysia and forgetting about the Sabah issue.

9. What do you think of the expedition of the hundreds of followers of the Sulu sultanate to Sabah? What do you think of the reaction of the Aquino regime and that of the Malaysia?

I think that those hundreds of followers of the Sulu sultanate who sailed to Sabah were basically making a political demonstration to assert Philippine sovereignty and the authority and proprietary rights of the Sulu sultanate. They were simply linking up with their fellow Filipinos in Sabah. They announced that they did not go there to engage in war.

The current Aquino regime is absolutely wrong in violating and in effect casting away Philippine sovereignty over Sabah, in opposing the basically political act of the hundreds of followers of the Sultan of Sulu in upholding the sovereign interests of the Philippines as well as the local authority and proprietary rights of the Sulu sultanate over Sabah and, worst of all, in actively urging the Malaysian authorities and armed forces to massacre those Filipino citizens who expect to be protected by the Philippine government, especially on territory belonging to the Philippines.

It is a criminal and treacherous act for the Aquino regime to condemn the Filipinos and cheer on the Malaysian land grabbers to massacre Filipinos. Malaysia compounds its landgrabbing crimes with butchery in bombing and massacring Filipinos who are poorly armed and are practically without arms.

10. In view of the attitude manifested by Aquino, encouraging the Malaysian authorities to take as much repressive measures as they wish against Filipinos, what are the adverse consequences that we can expect? Please mention the consequences to the ordinary working people, be they migrants from the Philippines or longstanding Sabah inhabitants of Mindanao ancestry.

JMS: For quite a number of years already, the Malaysian authorities have been systematically trying to cut down the inflow of Filipino workers into Sabah, whether these come from the Moro areas or from elsewhere in the Philippines. They prefer to get workers from South Asian countries and discourage Filipino workers from coming in by subjecting them to human right violations.

The Filipino workers are discriminated, against, bullied and harassed by the Malaysian police. They are easily deported and are beaten before they are deported. The most maltreated are workers from the Sulu archipelago. These workers easily sail to Sabah in order to look for job opportunities. But the Malaysian authorities try to discourage them through harsh measures. They are now emboldened by Aquino to engage in mass deportations of Filipinos from Sabah.

The Malaysian authorities are violently opposed not only to the proprietary rights of the Sulu sultanate but also to the rights of ancestral domain of the ordinary land-tilling Sabah people of Mindanao ancestry who have lived for so many generations in Sabah. It is difficult for them to acquire land to till and yet it is so easy for the Malaysian authorities to take away the land from them.

Fight for Workers' Rights and Strengthen the Trade Unions

Message to the Mindanao Workers' Summit

Davao City, April 25-26, 2013

First of all, I thank the officers of the Nonoy Librado Development Foundation, Inc. for inviting me as the Chairperson of the International League of People's Struggle (ILPS) to deliver a message of solidarity to the Mindanao Workers' Summit. We welcome your project, Workers' Rights are Human Rights: Strengthening Trade Unions to Advance Fundamental Freedoms in Mindanao.

We of the ILPS commend the foundation for having successfully engaged in education, research, networking and policy advocacy in order to uphold, protect and promote the rights and welfare of workers. With your achievements, you have done well in drawing inspiration from Nonoy Librado's legacy of courageous and relentless advocacy of workers' rights.

We express warmest greetings of solidarity to all the participants in the Mindanao Workers' Summit. We are aware that you come from various companies and workplaces in Mindanao. We wish you the utmost success in sharing your situations and experiences with regard to trade union work and human rights, in learning both positive and negative lessons and in drawing up recommendations and resolutions.

We highly appreciate the tasks that you are committed to perform in the summit. We know that the workers of Mindanao are undergoing terrible suffering from both the deterioration of wage and living conditions and the brutal use of armed force by the state and private companies in order to suppress trade unions and violate workers' rights. All these grave problems put the workers in Mindanao in an ever more vicious circle of exploitation and oppression.

The unraveling of the neoliberal economic policy globally and domestically has brought about a protracted and rapidly worsening crisis in Mindanao. This is wreaking havoc on the lives of the broad masses of the people, especially the workers and peasants. The high rate of unemployment, the reduced incomes, the rising costs of basic goods and services, the heavier tax burden, deterioration of social services and the breakdown of electric power facilities are aggravating the conditions of poverty and misery.

The US-Aquino regime is a fanatic of neoliberalism and does not care about national independence, human rights and the long-desired goal of national industrialization and genuine land reform. It gives free rein to the superprofit-taking by the US and other foreign corporations and the big comprador-landlords. It allows these malefactors to grab the land and all natural resources in connection with their plantations, mining, logging, bio-fuel production and sheer real estate speculation.

The export-oriented plantations and bio-fuel production have taken away huge areas of land from the production of food staples. Logging for export has destroyed the forest cover which used to protect Mindanao from typhoons, flooding and drought. Mining involves the export of mineral ores and runs counter to the national aspiration for industrial development. It also destroys the environment and agriculture, poisoning the rivers, accelerating siltation and causing landslides and floods.

The US-Aquino regime collaborates closely with the US and other foreign corporations and the local big compradors and landlords in exploiting the workers and peasants. Oplan Bayanihan gives them all out military, police and paramilitary protection in combination with the private security guards. The regime systematically employs violence and engages in human rights violations in attempts to intimidate workers and prevent them from having real trade unions and asserting their rights.

In representation of the people and revolutionary forces, the National Democratic Front of the Philippines has engaged the Philippine reactionary government in peace negotiations in accordance with The Hague Joint Declaration of 1992. It has gone so far as to offer an immediate truce and alliance on the basis of a general declaration of common intent to realize national independence and economic development through national industrialization and genuine land reform.

But the US-Aquino regime is obsessed with seeking the capitulation and pacification of the revolutionary

movement of the people and with avoiding serious negotiations on social, economic and political reforms. It refuses to address the roots of the armed conflict and lay the basis for a just and lasting peace on the basis of comprehensive agreements on the aforesaid reforms.

The regime is a shameless puppet of US imperialism. It has adopted Oplan Bayanihan in accordance with the US Counterinsurgency Guide. It has allowed the US military forces to establish forward stations in Mindanao and elsewhere in the Philippines and to increase interventionist operations under various pretexts. It is already preparing public opinion for the return of US military bases. It collaborates with the US in stirring up troubles in East Asia in order to justify the further entrenchment of US military forces in the Philippines and other countries in East Asia.

We hope that our observations can help the summit participants in understanding the socioeconomic, political and military context in which the workers of Mindanao are being subjected to the escalation of of exploitation and oppression. You can best discuss in detail the conditions that are adverse to the workers of Mindanao, make the necessary conclusions and define the tasks of fighting for their rights and welfare, strengthening the trade union movement, opposing human rights violations and demanding justice for the victims, be they individuals, organizations and entire communities.

Your summit opens the door to more work in arousing, organizing and mobilizing the workers and their supporters in Mindanao. We wish you ever greater victories in this regard. We are confident that your resolute and militant work among the workers will lead to better conditions for them and will contribute to the advance of the people's movement for realizing national independence, democracy, social justice and all-round development.

**Contribution to 22nd International Communist Seminar
in Brussels, Belgium on 31 May 2013**

I. Attacks on democratic rights and freedoms

It is in the nature of the monopoly bourgeoisie to carry out attacks on the democratic rights and freedoms of the working class and the rest of the people in order to preserve the system of exploitation. Oppression is a necessary concomitant of class exploitation.

The monopoly bourgeoisie cannot go on extracting surplus value from the working class without the power to hire and fire the workers in every work place and without the state power to dominate the working class and preempt or contain the trade union movement and even more so the revolutionary party of the proletariat. The monopoly bourgeoisie has magnified the role of the bourgeois state for repressing the proletariat and people and for waging wars of aggression for the purpose of seizing economic territory and engaging in plunder.

In the underdeveloped countries, the imperialist bourgeoisie is allied with the comprador big bourgeoisie and landlord class and is in a position to use these for the most brazen forms of exploitation and the most brutal forms of oppression. Superprofits are extracted with less amounts of investments, with the use of cheap labor amidst the worst conditions of unemployment and poverty. Repression is a normal part of the daily life of the exploited masses. The local exploiting classes use state terrorism against manifestations of people's resistance.

The imperialist powers headed by the US have used the neoliberal economic policy to deny the working class as the creator of new material values in production, to misrepresent the monopoly bourgeoisie as the ultimate producer of wealth and jobs and to justify the use of the state to accelerate profit-taking and the accumulation and concentration of capital.

The wages of the workers are pressed down. Social spending by government is reduced, while the big bourgeoisie and its high income executives are privileged with tax cuts. State assets are privatized. Investment, trade and finance are liberalized. Regulations to protect labor, women, children, society at large and the environment are cast away. In the name of globalization, the economies of the underdeveloped countries are denationalized to allow the imperialist bourgeoisie to exploit cheap labor and plunder the natural resources.

The neoliberal economic policy has resulted in a series of ever worsening financial and economic crisis. For so long since 1980, it had looked like every crisis could be solved by simply expanding the money supply and credit, stimulating consumerism and thus bloating the gross domestic product. But since 2007-2008, it has become clear the abuse of finance capital has its limits not only at the level of households and corporations but also at the level of national economies and states.

Enormous amounts of public funds have been used to bail out the failing banks and firms. Public funds that are touted as stimulus to economic recovery are passed to the corporations, which promptly subject them to labor cost-saving and profit making. The states continue to give tax cuts to the big bourgeoisie and provide more funds for the apparatuses of repression and war, while the economy stagnates and recedes. The US has used at least USD 4 trillion for wars of aggression, without taking into account the costs of replacing war equipment and medical costs of veterans.

All imperialist countries are now beset by public deficits and debt and by the falling value of currencies, especially the US dollar and the euro. Like the Third World countries, they are chronically at the brink of default and bankruptcy but get temporary relief by taking new loans that sink them deeper into the debt trap. The imposition of austerity measures at the expense of the people has resulted in further economic stagnation and in massive protests and social disorder in several imperialist states.

Upon the rise of public deficits and the public debt, states adopt and implement policies that pass the burden of crisis to the proletariat and the rest of the people. They raise taxes and adopt austerity measures. These cause further lay-offs, wage decreases, rising prices of basic necessities, reduced pensions, lessened social benefits and tax hikes on goods and services used by the working people.

The workers and the rest of the people are driven by their worsening dire conditions to resist. They are steadily fighting back. They are not deterred by the monopoly bourgeoisie which escalates repression and mass deception by unleashing all kinds of reactionary currents, including chauvinism, racial discrimination, religious bigotry, fascism and war-mongering in a vain attempt to obfuscate the roots of the crisis and distract the people.

Long before 9-11, the US and its imperialist partners laid the legal, ideological and political justification for state terrorism and wars of aggression. Thus, when 9-11 occurred, the PATRIOT ACT USA and the war plans could be instantly promulgated and put into effect. Since then, more laws and executive orders have been promulgated to facilitate repression and the unleashing of wars under the pretext of combating terrorism and imaginary weapons of mass destruction in the hands of the targeted regime.

The monopoly bourgeoisie orchestrates the think tanks, academic departments, special committees of the executive and legislative branches, the political parties, nongovernmental organizations, the churches and most important of all the corporate mass media to drum up and spread the most specious arguments and schemes for state terrorism and wars of aggression.

The imperialist powers and its multilateral agencies like the IMF, World Bank and WTO are making more intolerable impositions on the client states. They impose ever more onerous terms of debt and use loans as leverage for taking over domestic public and private assets and plundering the natural resources of underdeveloped countries. The puppet governments yield to the monopoly firms their local capital assets, land and natural resources at dirt cheap prices.

Under the neoliberal economic policy regime and the persistent influence of the neoconservative military policy, the US and the NATO countries have unleashed wars of aggression at an increasingly rapid rate, including those in the Balkans, West Asia, Central Asia and Africa since the end of the Cold War in 1991. The main thrust of the wars is to seize markets and fields of investment, control sources and routes of oil and other natural resources and install puppet governments.

The proletariat and peoples of the underdeveloped countries suffer the most from the global depression. The demand for raw material and semi-manufactured exports has decreased or some of these are being exported in greater volume but at lower prices. At the same time, the prices of imported manufactures are rising. Trade deficits grow and foreign debt mounts.

The economic crisis has resulted in the escalation of exploitation. The working people and the middle social strata suffer from intolerably high unemployment rates, real wage reductions, lower income levels, soaring prices of basic goods and services and the deterioration and higher costs of social services, such as education, health, low-income housing and the like. The conditions of mass poverty have worsened.

In mere anticipation of the people's resistance and even more so in reaction to its occurrence, the US and other imperialist powers have emboldened puppet states to adopt more draconian laws and more brutal means of repression. They design systems of social and police control and campaigns of military suppression. They earn profits from supplying weapons and thereby gain leverage and influence among the reactionary politicians and military officers.

II. Current trends of people's resistance

The global crisis and the intensification of oppression and exploitation that the reactionary classes impose on the people have led to widespread social unrest. The people's resistance has taken various forms. Those in power representing the exploiting classes are quick to use violence to intimidate the people and suppress their resistance. They find it convenient to adopt the language and force of the US designed war on terror so-called.

In North America, Western Europe and elsewhere, strikes and protest marches have broken out against attacks on the rights of working people, austerity measures, deteriorating working conditions, erosion of social benefits in contrast to tax cuts and high incomes of the upper crust, the wars of aggression, racial and minority discrimination, the criminalization of migrant workers, discrimination against the youth in employment and the higher costs of education.

The Occupy movement has arisen in Wall Street and spread out to many cities in and beyond the US and the Indignados have arisen on a wide scale in Spain. The aforementioned non-Party formations make it a point to declare that they not led by Parties but are creations of the spontaneous. But in Greece and other countries, communist and workers' parties have been in the forefront of the mass struggles.

The working class is becoming increasingly conscious of the need to engage in class struggle against the

monopoly bourgeoisie that has long carried out its own class struggle to suppress democratic rights and press down wage conditions. The class struggle of the proletariat is steadily coming to the fore as the workers stand up and act to defend their rights and interests. All efforts are being exerted to mobilize the unionized and un-unionized workers.

The conditions have become favorable for the resurgence of the working class movement against capitalism and for socialism, even as the monopoly bourgeoisie and their political agents are still very much ahead in undertaking measures to counter the current of people's resistance through deception and violence. The monopoly bourgeoisie uses a wide range of nonproletarian parties to quieten and mislead the people. At the same time, they adopted draconian laws against the people in the name of anti-terrorism.

The prolongation of the crisis gives the genuine communist and workers' parties to strengthen their ranks, overcome adverse factors and sharpen the class struggle against the monopoly bourgeoisie. Certain factors check the continuous vigorous development of anti-imperialist mass movements and revolutionary parties. The monopoly bourgeoisie erodes the rights and social benefits of the workers and people but in a gradual or surreptitious way so as not to provoke revolt.

The major bourgeois parties, mass media, trade union bureaucracy and schools cloak big bourgeois interests with petty bourgeois rhetoric. There are yet no Marxist-Leninist parties and revolutionary mass movements that are large and strong enough to challenge the monopoly bourgeoisie and its agents.

The various Communist formations striving to play the role of the revolutionary party of the proletariat still suffer from the limitations and weaknesses that developed during the decades of the Cold War, the spread of revisionist ideas, the neoliberal economic policy and other kinds of imperialist offensives.

The imperialist states in Europe are still shielded from the Communist challenge by a panoply of parties, including the Christian democrats, the liberals, the social democrats, and the greens, and by the see-saw of public sentiment between the relative Left and the absolute Right in electoral contests. However, the polarization of political forces will continue as the socioeconomic conditions deteriorate.

Due to the grossly uneven development of global capitalism, imperialist hegemony has many weak points, especially in the underdeveloped countries whose people suffer the most from imperialism and local reaction. The current global crisis and the overextension of the US in wars of aggression and in military interventions are favorable conditions for advancing the revolutionary struggle of the oppressed peoples and nations. In all the underdeveloped regions of the world, the entire Africa, West Asia, Central Asia, South Asia, East Asia and Latin America, mass protests and armed struggles are spreading and intensifying.

Blatantly pro-imperialist governments are being condemned and repudiated by the people in an increasing number of countries. Governments like those of Cuba, Venezuela and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea have their people's support because they assert national independence and oppose imperialism; they work hard to look after the welfare of the people; and they express adherence to socialism.

Where the US and NATO allies have unleashed wars of aggression to bring down governments that reject US dictation, such as in the Balkans, Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya and Syria, the most intense forms of armed conflict occur; and even after the overthrow of the anti-US and anti-NATO government, movements for national liberation persevere and serve as long-term challenges to imperialist power.

The conditions of economic depression and worsening exploitation and oppression have intensely aggrieved the people. Mass uprisings and political turmoil are surging to shake and topple the rulers and autocrats of the client states of the US and other imperialist powers. Conditions are ripe for revolutionary armed struggles in many countries and entire global regions. Even where there are yet no strong revolutionary parties of the proletariat, the conditions are present for them to develop strength in the long run.

The so-called Arab Spring has swept the Middle East and North Africa, with the masses demanding democratic changes, toppling despotic regimes and shaking others. However In the absence of a strong communist party, the Islamic movement tends to grow strong and gain power, as in Tunisia, Egypt and elsewhere. The imperialist powers headed by the US also install new puppets in the name of liberal democracy. Elsewhere they perpetuate puppet monarchies.

Long-running armed struggles for national liberation, such as those in India and the Philippines are persevering and proving to the whole world that armed revolution can be waged and can grow in strength under current conditions. The Palestinian people have persisted in waging their decades-long struggle for national liberation and

for their return to their homeland with broad international support against the brutal Zionist aggression and occupation backed by US imperialism. All these continue to prove that the US and NATO do not have a seamless control over the entire world.

The Marxist-Leninist and Maoist parties that are waging the new democratic revolution through protracted people's war play a signal role in bringing about the world proletarian revolution. They hold high the torch of armed revolution. They illumine the road of revolution for the peoples in the underdeveloped countries, in the retrogressive countries of former socialist countries and in the imperialist countries.

III. Strategies and actions in response

What the people can and must do about the global financial and economic crisis ranges from seeking relief, recovery and reforms within the imperialist-dominated world capitalist system to making the most fundamental criticism of this system and raising the demand and undertaking the actions for revolutionary change towards socialism. It is the strategic task of communists to serve the immediate demands of the proletarian and people and to seek the overthrow of the bourgeois state.

Reforms can be undertaken to serve the immediate needs of the working people for employment, decent income, better working and living conditions and the availability of basic social services. But the communist must not be confined to merely seeking reforms within the existing ruling system of the big bourgeoisie. The long term goal of the working class and the people is to replace the system of monopoly capitalism with the socialist system.

To take an important phrase from the Communist Manifesto, the battle for democracy must be won whether the popular movement for socialism be in the imperialist countries or in the far less developed countries dominated by imperialism. The consciousness, organization and mobilization of the broad masses of the people must be raised to a level high enough to effect basic reforms immediately and social revolution in the long run.

In the industrial capitalist countries, the economic basis for socialism exists. But the monopoly bourgeoisie never gives up its political and economic power voluntarily. It uses its state power to impose fascist rule if the deceptive role of the bourgeois political parties fails to mislead the people and stabilize the system. Thus, the battle for democracy must be won against the potential or actual rise of fascism and the use of imperialist war by the monopoly bourgeoisie to regiment the people. In this regard, we recall the Great Depression, the rise of fascism and World War II.

In the far less developed countries, where there are still large vestiges of feudalism, winning the battle for democracy involves not only upholding, defending and promoting in general the collective and individual democratic rights of the people, especially civil and political liberties, but most importantly addressing substantively the peasant demand for land reform and engaging the peasant masses in the new democratic revolution led by the working class as the long term agent for socialist revolution and construction.

There is the need for a working class party to lead the people in seeking basic reforms within the bourgeois political system and aiming for the socialist revolution. Basic social reforms as well as social revolution are not possible without the working class party that is capable of leading the organized and unorganized masses. Without such a working class party, the big bourgeoisie continues to rule society unchallenged and unhampered through the political parties which it uses for preserving the system, for intra-class and intra-systemic competition for political power among the bourgeois factions and for warding off any political party that seeks to overthrow bourgeois rule.

There must be a trustworthy working class party committed to the propagation and realization of the revolutionary program of social change and capable of leading the broad masses of the people, especially the working people. Such a party is best relied upon for confronting the global financial and economic crisis and solving the problems for the benefit of the people and with their active participation. Without a working class party, the bourgeois parties would prevail over the working people who are unorganized and spontaneous or who are limited to mass organizations.

In carrying out organizational campaigns in the face of the current grave financial and economic crisis, efforts must be resolutely undertaken to build a genuine working class party that surpasses the bourgeois laborite, reformist social democratic or revisionist communist parties. Building such a working class party is quite challenging because of the long running attempts of the monopoly bourgeoisie to stigmatize as "terrorist" revolutionary forces that call for national liberation, democracy and socialism. But the current crisis conditions are

favorable for building such a party.

The trade unions and other mass organizations must be built in order to uphold, defend and promote the rights and interests of the exploited classes and sectors of society. In the industrial capitalist countries, the most important of these are the mass organizations of workers, migrant workers, immigrants, the various nationalities, youth, women, the professionals and cultural workers. In the semicolonial and semifeudal countries, the most important mass organizations are those of workers, peasants, youth, women, the intelligentsia and the minorities. These classes or sectors are adversely affected by the crisis in particular ways.

The class and sectoral mass organizations must further form multi-class and multisectoral alliances in order to underscore common interests and build political unity cumulatively and progressively. The genuine working class party offers to them as guide its general line and program of action, encourages their political and organizational initiatives and thereby wins their abiding support. Mass organizations with different ideological, political and religious affinities can form formal and informal alliances to pursue common courses of action on the basis of consensus and coordination.

The broad masses of the people in their millions must be mobilized to denounce the exploitative and oppressive character of the system of monopoly capitalism, now sharper and more destructive than ever before, and to demand social, economic and political changes, ranging from basic reforms to the fundamental revolutionary transformation of society.

The battle for democracy must be carried out according to the objective and subjective conditions obtaining. The legal forms of struggle must be carried out where these are possible and to whatever extent these are possible. The full spectrum of human rights, civil, political, social, economic and cultural, must be upheld, defended and advanced for the benefit of the exploited and oppressed people. The people must be able to act accordingly as the socioeconomic crisis results in political crisis and the forces and agents of monopoly capitalism malign and try to discredit democratic protest as unlawful rebellion or even as terrorism and thus justify increased political repression.

In countries where the ruling classes engage in state terrorism and/or imperialism engages in wars of aggression and military intervention, the people have the sovereign right to mobilize themselves for all forms of resistance, including revolutionary armed struggle. At the moment, legal mass movements and revolutionary armed struggles are going on and advancing in several countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, where the people are the most oppressed and exploited.

To become most effective in making protests and demands, the mass movement for social change must be based at the level of the local communities, the factories, farms, schools and churches. It is indestructible when there are dedicated cadres of the working class party and the mass organizations who are deeply rooted among the toiling masses and who arouse, organize and mobilize them at the basic level.

This fact is well demonstrated in cases where the most vicious campaigns of deception of the counterrevolutionary state cannot sway the people against the progressive mass movement as well as in cases where such state carries out a campaign of military and police suppression but fails to defeat or weaken the revolutionary mass movement of the people.

The revolutionary parties of the proletariat are needed to lead the battle for democracy and the revolutionary struggle for socialism. But they cannot succeed without the revolutionary mass movement. They must bring about a mass movement of the working class and the rest of the people that is strong enough to end the state power of the bourgeoisie and install the power of the proletariat.

IV. Prospects

The imperialist powers and their monopoly bourgeoisie and finance oligarchy persist in clinging to the neoliberal economic policy because this feeds their greed. There is therefore no solution in sight for the grave economic and social crisis that is wreaking havoc on the lives of the broad masses of the people throughout the world. What is in sight is a new round of deterioration in the global crisis of capitalism.

All major contradictions are expected to intensify: between labor and capital in the imperialist countries, between the imperialist powers on one hand and the oppressed peoples and nations on the other hand, between the imperialist powers and the countries assertive of national independence, and among the imperialist powers themselves.

The struggle between labor and capital will sharpen in the years to come, as the structural crisis of capitalism

and imperialism worsens. In the United States itself, the debt crisis at the level of local states and city governments will become far worse than now and will drive the federal debt crisis to become far more unmanageable than now. The federal debt bubble in the US is being brought to bursting point with the frenzied quantitative easing (printing money) and easy credit to finance budgetary and trade deficits.

The public debt crisis that has dramatically destabilized the economies and politics of the southern countries of Europe (Greece, Spain, Portugal and Italy) will aggravate and can easily spread northward at an accelerated rate. Germany and all other capitalist countries are beset with high rates of public debt and these cannot be softened up by overseas trade and investments. Japan has been ahead of all industrial capitalist countries in that kind of predicament, which now affects all, especially because of new capitalist powers further cramping the space for inter-imperialist competition.

The attempts of the imperialist powers to shift the burden of crisis to the proletariat and people through higher taxes and austerity measures at their expense will cause the intensified mass resistance, which will overshadow the workers' strikes and protest rallies that we have seen so far in the capitalist countries. The workers and the rest of the people cannot accept the painful paradox of rising productivity resulting in mass lay-offs, less income and impoverishment.

The global depression will worsen and further reduce the demand from the developed countries for the raw material and semi-manufacture exports of the underdeveloped countries. This will further destroy productive forces and aggravate poverty. Social discontent will further spread and deepen. It will generate mass protest actions, unprecedented mass uprisings, and the growth of armed revolutionary movements for national and social liberation led by revolutionary parties of the working class in the context of the revolutionary united front.

Social unrest and people's resistance are growing not only in the most underdeveloped and impoverished countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, which have been least favored by neoliberal financing for high rise buildings, semi-manufacturing and import-dependent consumption. Even the big countries like China, India, Russia and Brazil previously praised by the imperialists as partners in the exploitation of cheap labor and cheap raw materials under the neoliberal policy of globalization are now afflicted by severe economic and social crisis.

The US and other imperialist powers (especially those in the NATO) will continue to perversely see in the crisis of global capitalism the need to stimulate their economies by increasing military production, use this to wage aggression to topple regimes assertive of national independence and expand economic territory. Imperialist military intervention and wars of aggression will continue and be directed against countries with rich natural resources, especially oil and gas. In this regard, Iran and Venezuela are among the targets of imperialism.

The imperialist powers will try to maintain their unity within the UN Security Council, the IMF, World Bank, WTO and various regional trade and military alliances. But the worsening crisis of global capitalism will tend to put them at loggerheads and to form alliances and counteralliances in economic and military terms. The struggle for a re-division of the world among the imperialist powers will become more conspicuous as they compete for sources of fuel and raw materials, markets, fields of investment, and spheres of influence.

The escalation of military expenditures for war production and wars of aggression, and the rise of such ultra-reactionary currents as chauvinism, anti-migrants, racism, religious bigotry, and fascism challenge the people in imperialist countries and in the whole world to be vigilant and militant in upholding, defending and promoting their democratic rights and their struggle for a fundamentally new and better world of greater freedom, democracy, social justice, all-round development, international solidarity and peace.

November 28, 2013

I am elated that the book, Boni@150, in honor of the great Andres Bonifacio, is now being launched. I take this occasion to express once more my appreciation to CONTEND for publishing this book.

It is a great honor for me to have contributed the introduction to the book and a poem in honor of the father of the Philippine revolution and of the Filipino nation. It is a sacred duty for all of us to do everything necessary and possible to cherish his legacy and most importantly to continue the Philippine revolution that he started in 1896.

Bonifacio is the most outstanding revolutionary fighter and national hero of the Filipino people in the old democratic revolution. He opened the road of democratic revolution not only in the Philippines but also in the whole of Asia and third world.

His superlative qualities as a patriot and a revolutionary and his fundamental goal of liberating the Filipino people from foreign and feudal domination remains valid in the new democratic revolution against modern imperialism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

We can seek inspiration from his ideas and deeds and emulate his example in carrying out the new democratic and socialist stages of the Philippine revolution. may I read my poem by way of honoring him.

Tribute to Comrade Andres Bonifacio

*How great was Comrade Andres Bonifacio?
He did not believe as sacred and eternal
The colonial and feudal bastion of greed and terror.
He detested the collusion of sword and cross,
He trusted the entire people could prevail
If they dared to unite and fight the oppressor.*

*How pure was Comrade Andres Bonifacio?
He decided to serve the people
To fight for national independence,
Achieve justice and progress.
He offered his life and was ready to die
For the people and for their bright future.*

*How brilliant was Comrade Andres Bonifacio?
He drew knowledge from history
And the condition of the working people
Who suffered, strove and hoped to free themselves
From exploitation and oppression
By the greedy and cruel foreign and local masters.*

*How learned was Comrade Andres Bonifacio?
More than those who reached the university
Who did not know or care to know the anguish
Of the toiling masses and what they can do.
More than those who neither read nor understood
The spirit of liberty, equality and fraternity.*

*How valiant was Comrade Andres Bonifacio?
He built the Katipunan in the face of intimidation
With the arrest of Rizal and dismantling of the Liga.
He was resolved to break the chains of colonial rule,
He declared independence and led the revolution.*

Thus, he became the Father of the Filipino nation.

How worthy was Comrade Andres Bonifacio?

Rizal lacked trust in the revolution and the masses

And spurned the earnest offer for him to lead.

Miong seized the leadership and slew the Supremo.

The honor of the martyr hero shines forever

Against treason and repeated surrender to the foe.

How further worthy was Comrade Andres Bonifacio?

The revolution he led opened the road

Of democratic revolution in the whole of Asia.

Thus, the honor of Bonifacio rose so high

Towards the leadership of his proletarian class

In the era of the new-democratic revolution.

Comrade Andres Bonifacio remains our inspiration,

His example is always our guide

Our urgent task to emulate him and advance

What he began until we achieve complete victory.

Fight to defeat imperialism and reaction,

Achieve freedom and move towards socialism.

Thank you.

December 7, 2013

Fellow artists and friends, Good afternoon! Thank you Maria Hlavajova of the Basis voor Actuele Kunst for the warm welcome and Jonas Staal of the New World Academy for the introduction to the program.

My task today is to talk about the national democratic struggle and the people's trial of US imperialism and its puppets in the Philippines. This is in connection with the title of this session, Towards a People's Culture, which centers on the critical role of arts and artists in the struggle for national liberation and democracy in the Philippines. I am pleased that Luis Jalandoni of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines will focus on the conflict between cultural imperialism and people's culture.

I shall describe the political, socioeconomic and cultural aspects of the national democratic struggle. Thus, I provide a broad context for the conflict of cultural imperialism and people's culture and the more direct discussion by the other speakers on art and specific forms of art, like the musical, graphics, the effigy and the "people's trial" as a theatrical model, in relation to the national democratic movement of the Philippines.

I shall also give my views on how art and literature are necessary and essential in "putting on trial" US imperialism and its puppets by exposing their crimes and bringing about the condemnation and judgment of the malefactors and their crimes. Thus, art and literature contribute decisively to arousing, organizing and mobilizing the masses and to advancing from the symbolic trial to the real trial of the criminals in the drama of the revolutionary process.

In keeping with the theme of people's trial, I wish to present the coldblooded and systematic crimes of US imperialism and its puppets in oppressing and exploiting the people, the programmatic demands of the people for national and social liberation and the process of rendering justice. By taking up the Philippine case in a broad context, I hope to contribute to the development of a transnational "people's trial" as a major function of art against oppression and exploitation.

1. The national democratic struggle in the Philippines

The Filipino people have the distinction of being the first nation in the whole of Asia to carry out and win a revolutionary war of national independence against a Western colonial power. The Philippine revolution started in 1896 and triumphed over Spain in 1898.

But after pretending to be friendly and helpful to the revolution, the US ignited the Filipino-American War in 1896 and carried out a war of aggression in order to destroy the Philippine republic and impose its own colonial rule over the Philippines.

The Philippine revolution of 1896 was anticolonial and antifeudal and had therefore a national democratic character. The bourgeois liberal intelligentsia (ilustrados) successfully provided the leadership to end Spanish colonial rule. But it failed to prevail over the newly risen modern imperialist power of the US, based on industrial monopoly capitalism, with superior military weapons and with the capacity to use the bourgeois liberal ideology to coopt the Filipino intelligentsia and deploy investments to extract superprofits..

The US carried out a barbaric war in order to defeat the Philippine republic. It killed a total of 1.5 million Filipinos out of a population of 7 million in the course of the officially designated Filipino-American War of 1899 to 1902 and further pacification campaigns up to 1914. It used a brutal strategy and tactics it had applied against the First Nation and Mexicans. It unleashed food blockades, forced relocations of entire communities and the extensive use of torture and extrajudicial killings.

The US forced the Filipino people to finance their own military conquest and subjugation. It floated war bonds in Wall Street and subsequently made the people pay for these through taxation. To extract superprofits, it made investments in the expansion of plantations, opening of mines, establishment of a few monopoly enterprises and acceleration of domestic and foreign trade. It generated a semifeudal type of social economy dependent on imported manufactures and raw material exports from a persistent feudal base.

It established an educational and cultural system that perpetuated colonial mentality but this time servile to

the US instead of Spain. It superimposed bourgeois ideas and values on those feudal and religious ones previously propagated by the dominant Catholic church. It systematically used education and culture to breed a new and bigger corps of puppet politicians and to produce the professionals and clerks to serve the expanded bureaucracy and businesses.

The social structure that has arisen from the semifeudal economy includes the basic ruling classes of the comprador big bourgeois and landlords, who are fractions of one percent of the population. The intermediate social strata are the middle bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie which are around 1 percent and 8 percent, respectively. The basic exploited classes are the workers and peasants, which are around 15 and 75 percent respectively.

Since the early years of the 20th century, the trade union movement has developed among the workers. Since 1930 upon the establishment of the Communist Party of the Philippine Islands (CPPI), the revolutionary idea of the working class leading the people in the national democratic revolution and consequently the socialist revolution has acquired reality and taken roots in the Philippines.

As soon as it was established in 1930, the CPPI was suppressed by the US colonial regime. It was allowed to operate legally under the auspices of the anti-fascist Popular Front in 1937. It organized the People's Army Against Japan in 1942 after the Japanese invasion of the Philippines. The opportunities and prospects for advancing the Philippine revolution were undermined by strategic errors of the CPPI leadership, swinging from Right opportunism (from 1942 to 1946) to "Left" opportunism (1948 to 1952) and again to Right opportunism (1954 to 1962).

In 1946 the US granted nominal independence to the Philippines. Since then, the political system has become semicolonial, no longer ruled directly by the US but indirectly through puppet politicians who are essentially bureaucrat capitalists and who serve the US as well as the interests of the big compradors and landlords in the semifeudal economy. The US has retained its dominance and control over the economic, political, cultural and security system of the Philippines.

The Philippines was touted by the US as the show window of democracy (in fact a cesspool of neocolonialism and semifeudalism) because the duopoly of the Liberal Party and Nacionalista Party alternated in taking presidential power through periodic elections. But after getting himself reelected through fraud and terrorism in 1969, Marcos carried forward his scheme to impose a fascist dictatorship and carried it out through the proclamation of martial law in 1972.

While the socioeconomic and political crisis of Philippine society was rapidly worsening in the latter half of the 1960s, the proletarian revolutionaries who were guided by Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought separated from the old Communist Party in 1966. They criticized and repudiated the wrong line and strategic errors of the Lavaite leaders of that party since 1942.

They clarified the character of Philippine society as semicolonial and semifeudal and the corresponding character of the Philippine revolution as national and democratic under the leadership of the working class. The motive forces of the revolution are the workers, peasants and the urban petty bourgeoisie. The enemies are US imperialism, the big compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists. The current stage of national democratic revolution through protracted people's war is directed towards reaching the stage of socialist revolution.

Accordingly, the Communist Party of the Philippines was established under the theoretical guidance of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought on December 26, 1968. It founded the New People's Army on March 29, 1969. It initiated the formation of the National Democratic Front on April 24, 1973. In the progression of these events, the revolutionary cadres and the people fought the frenzied and violent preparations and imposition of the fascist dictatorship on the people.

The revolutionary advance of the CPP, NPA and NDFP was the decisive factor in the overthrow of the Marcos fascist dictatorship in 1986. But since then, one regime after another has masqueraded as democratic and has oppressed and exploited the people for the benefit of US imperialism and the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords.

The new democratic revolution through protracted people's war has therefore continued in order to fight for national liberation, democracy, social justice, development through land reform and national industrialization, a national, scientific and mass culture and international solidarity for peace and development. The revolutionary forces and people have gained strength through the people's war in the countryside and the legal mass movement in the urban areas.

II. Crimes of US imperialism and its puppets

For the purpose of the people in putting on trial US imperialism and its puppets, we must be aware of the comprehensive range of crimes that they are culpable for.

US imperialism must be held accountable. When we speak of US imperialism, we refer to the US federal state and its various agencies, the corporations and banks which are impelled by monopoly capitalism to engage in aggression and plunder.

1. The genocidal killing of 1.5 million Filipinos amounting to 20 percent of the Philippine population of 7 million is a horrendous crime. It was the brutal way by which US imperialism violated the national sovereignty of the Filipino people and destroyed the Philippine republic.

2. The direct colonial occupation of the Philippines from 1902 to 1946, except for the interregnum of Japanese occupation from 1942 to 1945, meant the oppression and exploitation of the Filipino people. The people were taxed by the colonial state to pay for the costs of US aggression and colonial occupation.

3. The US monopoly capitalists extracted superprofits from the Philippine colony by plundering its natural resources, subjecting the workers to inhumanly low wages in public works and in US enterprises, promoting the unequal exchange of raw-material exports and manufactured imports and subjecting the country to debt peonage to US banks.

4. The US used the Philippines as launching base for aggression against China and for getting a piece of the Chinese melon in the colonial game. This started the criminal use of US military bases in the Philippines for aggression against the neighboring countries of the Philippines, especially after World War II, against China, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and Indonesia.

5. The US engaged in cultural imperialism and perpetuated colonial mentality. It imposed on the people not only the English language but also pro-imperialist ideas and values that obscured the blood debts of the US and misrepresented the exploitation of the people as beneficial. It bent the feudal and medieval belief system of the dominant Catholic church to serve the interests of US monopoly capitalism.

6. The US trained the bureaucrats, politicians and professionals to be servile to US imperialist power and to use the language of pro-imperialist liberal democracy to deceive the people. It was most responsible for promoting bureaucrat capitalism. It taught the children of the exploiting classes and the urban petty bourgeois to seek and hold power and amass private wealth through bureaucratic corruption

7. The US has fostered the comprador big bourgeoisie as its principal trading and financial agents in the country. This class is responsible for ensuring raw material production for export and for importing foreign manufactures and distributing them in the country. The US has also retained the landlord class for the purpose of controlling food production and agricultural production for export.

8. When the US pretended to grant independence in the Philippines in 1946, it was sure of being able to rely on its puppets: the big compradors and landlords and bureaucrat capitalists. Since then it has retained control over the economy, the politics, the culture, security and diplomatic relations of the Philippines.

9. The US is culpable for the semicolonial system of exploitation, underdevelopment and rampant poverty. The daily violence of exploitation has caused the untimely death of many more Filipinos than those 1.5 million killed from 1899 to 1913.

10. To this day, the US provides arms, indoctrination, training and strategic planning to the military and police forces of the reactionary state and is culpable for military campaigns of suppression and the gross and systematic human rights violations. It has forces of military intervention in the Philippines and uses these to dominate the Philippines and threaten neighboring countries under the US pretext of a permanent war on terrorism and the US strategic policy of pivot to East Asia.

US imperialism maintains hegemony over the Philippines because it is assisted by the big compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists. These reactionary puppets are complicit with the US in grave crimes against the Filipino people and they take their own initiatives to oppress and exploit the people.

1. Puppetry to US imperialism is a grave crime against the people. It is treason. It is the betrayal and violation of the people's sovereignty and national independence in an all-round way. Traitors are subject to trial by the people.

2. Bureaucratic corruption is a grave crime committed by the bureaucrat capitalists. They auction off the economic sovereignty, the national patrimony and business privileges to foreign monopoly corporations and big compradors. They impose a heavy tax and debt burden on the people and rob the national treasury through the

pork barrel system.

3. The big compradors based in the cities collaborate with and assist the foreign monopoly capitalists in undertaking super-exploitation and extracting superprofits through investments, trade and finance. In combination with US imperialism, they get the most out of the sweat and blood of the people.

4. The landlords hold sway over the countryside and impose feudal and semifeudal forms of exploitation on the masses of peasants and farm workers. The despotic landlords wield political power and use the armed personnel of the state and private guards to suppress any form of resistance from the exploited.

5. The rights of the workers are curtailed. The law of the reactionaries is slanted against the workers' right to form trade unions and exercise their democratic rights. Violence is easily employed by the proprietors and the state against the workers' trade unions and their strikes. Thus, the wage and living conditions of workers are always deteriorating.

6. The puppet reactionary state engages in bogus land reform program to deceive the peasant masses and preserve landlordism in the Philippines. The landlords sell land to the state for the purpose of "land reform" only upon their volition and compensation at the current market price. Landlordism is rampant and so is landgrabbing for the purpose of unbridled mining, logging, plantation and real estate speculation.

7. Every regime of the reactionary puppet state has a campaign plan for the suppression of peasants who demand land reform and the workers who fight for their trade union rights. The puppets receive arms and advice from their imperialist master for the purpose. The US and every puppet regime wantonly engage in human rights violations.

8. The share of public education, health, housing and other social services is ever subject to diminution while the funds flow mainly to military expenditures, bureaucratic corruption and debt service.

9. The right to self-determination of the national minorities and indigenous people is grievously violated. They are deprived of their right to ancestral domain and their land and other natural resources are grabbed from them by the local exploiting classes and by the mining, logging, plantation and real estate companies.

10. The reactionary puppet state constantly invites the US military forces to further entrench themselves in the Philippines and provides facilities to them in violation of the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Philippines. It also supports US imperialism in realizing its hegemony and strategic plans over the Asia-Pacific region.

III. The process of trying the malefactors

Upholding, defending and promoting the people's culture is a crucial and necessary part of the comprehensive program for the people's democratic revolution in the Philippines. People's culture has a national, scientific and mass character.

By having a national character, it upholds national independence and serves the needs and aspirations of the nation. It cherishes and harmonizes all the regional and local cultures in the country. It learns from other countries but is not subservient to them or dependent on them. It contributes what it can to the advance of human civilization and international solidarity.

By being scientific in character, it is free from the shackles of medieval belief and superstition and at the same it respects the freedom of thought and belief. It adopts revolutionary ideas from the high road of human civilization. It seeks to modernize and develop society by benefiting from scientific and technological advances.

By having a mass character, it serves the rights and interests of the toiling masses of the people and not of the few who belong to the exploiting classes. The culture of the people is opposed to the culture of the exploiting few.

The arts are a great part of culture. They include architecture, sculpture, painting, creative writing, music, dance, theatre, photography and comics. All these art forms and their creations are not simply passive objects of appreciation or static reflectors of reality, they should be an active force for exposing and opposing the crimes of malevolent forces in society, for arousing, organizing and mobilizing the masses and for making fundamental social change.

It is fine that we have with us in this session Walkie Miraña who can explain to us the role of the cultural worker as an organizer of resistance and how the various art forms are concentrated in the theatre as a distinct form of art and done so with minimal costs but with maximum effect in activating the people against injustices and crimes. It is also fine that we have Lisa Ito who can explain to us the art of protest puppetry and how effigies of the malefactors are made and burned in an act of judgment and condemnation. We appreciate the New World

Academy for inviting them and also for arranging the exhibition of the works of art that have been created to reflect and advance the national democratic struggle in the Philippines.

It will still take some time before the people's democratic revolution can overthrow the existing ruling system on a nationwide scale in the Philippines in order to put on trial the worst of criminals, mete out punishments to them and put to an end the root causes of oppression and exploitation. But while the juridical processes of the people's democratic state system are not yet available, except in the countryside where revolutionary organs of political power and people's courts have come into existence, the cultural process of putting on trial the criminals through the various art forms can run ahead and have influence and effects on a wide scale.

In reflecting social reality and exposing and opposing the crimes of oppression and exploitation, the various art forms metaphorically, symbolically or allegorically perform the various stages and functions of the criminal trial, such as preliminary investigation, indictment and the trial proper in which facts are established on the basis of evidence and testimonies and the application of law in the judgment. It is the moral court of public opinion rather than a court of law that is addressed in the people's trial of the malefactors.

The people's trial can be further invigorated and reinforced by integrating or coordinating it with artistic works and performances.

The existing courts of the oppressors are theatrical in trying and deciding cases within the parameters of the unjust ruling system. The revolutionary people and forces in the Philippines have all the right to stage people's trials of US imperialism and local reactionaries in order to expose and oppose the real criminals and fight for justice. The people's trial has been demonstrated by Philippine organizations since a long time ago. During the First Quarter Storm of 1970, the mass meetings at public squares were referred to as people's tribunals. There have also been internationally well-known indoor trials like those of the Russell Tribunal since 1967 and the Permanent People's Tribunal since 1979.

The people's trial acquires moral authority and political weight

- 1) because the people themselves and their organizations establish it;
- 2) because it takes up serious issues which affect the life of an entire nation or the entire humankind but which are ignored or suppressed by the oppressive authorities and by their courts;
- 3) because it has for judges those respected for moral integrity; knowledge and a high sense of justice;
- 4) because it adopts the process of hearing out the conflicting sides, especially the long repressed aggrieved side;
- 5) because it applies the principles and standards provided by international law, especially the International Bill of Rights and International Humanitarian Law; and
- 6) because the people further legitimize the decisions by propagating and carrying them out.

The people's trial of US imperialism and puppets by the various art forms is meant to arouse, organize and mobilize the masses for the revolutionary movement to get rid of the oppressive and exploitative ruling system and establish a new system in accordance with the people's demands for national Independence, people's democracy and social justice, economic development through land reform and national industrialization, national, scientific and mass culture and international solidarity of peoples for peace and development.

The highest and most serious purpose of the cultural people's trial is to arouse, organize and mobilize the masses and consequently to replace the unjust ruling system. Thereafter, it is the people in a just system that exercise revolutionary power to end national and class oppression and exploitation and authorize and oversee the real juridical people's trial of the criminals.

Remarks at Launch of Three Books

January 24, 2014

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

I am deeply pleased and honored by the publication of the three books: *Defeating Revisionism, Reformism and Opportunism, Building Strength through Struggle* and *Celebration*. I thank the publishers and the organizers, speakers and all other participants in the launch of these books today.

I am delighted that this book launch marks and lends meaning to the 55th year of my service to the revolutionary struggle of the Filipino people as well as the 75th year of my existence.

Defeating Revisionism, Reformism and Opportunism is the second book in the series of five books under the general title of Continuing the Philippine Revolution. It is a necessary companion of the first book *Foundation for Resuming the Philippine Revolution*.

Resuming the Philippine revolution in 1968 was not simply a matter of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) reestablishing itself by adopting the ideological line of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and the general political line of people's democratic line through protracted people's war against such obvious enemies as US imperialism and the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords.

It was also a matter of rectifying errors and opposing modern revisionism centered in the Soviet Union and peddled by local revisionists, against reformism most touted by the the Marcosian and jesuitical incubators of secular and clerico fascism and against opportunism in the history and circumstances of the old merger party of the Communist and Socialist Parties.

Building Strength through Struggle is the third book in the series and covers the period from the proclamation of martial law in 1972 to my capture on November 10, 1977. It extends and further develops the founding principles, policies and lines of action in the resumption of the Philippine revolution.

It elaborates on the why and how the Filipino proletariat and people struggled and employed the revolutionary party of the proletariat, the armed struggle and the united front against the US-instigated Marcos fascist dictatorship. It contains the documents and articles that guided the nationwide expansion and advance of the revolutionary forces. It shows how the strength of the people was built precisely through revolutionary struggle.

Despite my capture by the enemy in 1977, the theoretical and political groundwork was set for the people to win revolutionary victories, leading ultimately to the downfall of the Marcos dictatorship in 1986. It served to strengthen the fighting will, capabilities and methods (strategy and tactics) of the people and revolutionary forces even against the recrudescence of "Left" and Right opportunism among some elements in the CPP leadership in the 1980s.

I am glad that *Celebration* is reissued, after improvement and updating. Once more I thank all the contributors to the book for appreciating the service that I have tried to render to the Filipino proletariat and people in their struggle for national liberation and democracy in preparation for a socialist future.

The broad masses of the Filipino people are suffering more than ever before the worsening conditions of exploitation and oppression brought about by foreign monopoly capitalism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. They have no choice but to wage revolutionary struggle ever more resolutely and militantly for national freedom, democracy, social justice, genuine development and revolutionary solidarity with other peoples.

May the books launched today help to shed light on the road of revolution. I am optimistic that the Philippine revolution continue to advance from victory to victory. May the current and future generations win greater victories.

***The Current US and International Situation,
its Impact on the Philippine Revolution
and the Role of the Philippine Revolution
on the World Proletarian Revolution***

**Speech to a Forum of Activists in New York City,
January 24, 2014**

Dear Compatriots and Friends,

Thank you for inviting me. I extend to you warmest greetings of solidarity and best wishes for the new year in the anti-imperialist and democratic struggle of the people.

I am deeply pleased that you are celebrating the Filipino people's revolutionary struggle for national liberation and democracy in the last 45 years. The Communist Party of the Philippines guided by Marxism-Leninism-Maoism has led this struggle since 1968.

I am tasked to describe the current US and international situation, its impact on the Philippine revolution and the role of this revolution in the world proletarian revolution. The task is quite difficult to carry out in 15 minutes. May this presentation serve to ignite further discussion among you.

1. Major points in the US and international situation

Since the financial meltdown of 2008, the crisis of the US and world capitalist system has protracted and worsened. There is no end in sight because the imperialist powers and the monopoly bourgeoisie cling to the neoliberal economic policy. This gives free rein to the extraction of profit by capital from labor in the process of production as well as to the further accumulation of capital through the process of finance capitalism.

Under the neoliberal policy, the state is used to press down wages by all means. Thus, the crisis of overproduction recurs more often and more seriously than before. But the policy presumption is that economic stagnation can be countered by expanding the money supply and credit. The monopoly bourgeoisie has given itself the license to accumulate capital rapidly through tax cuts and supply contracts with the state, liberalization of investment, trade and finance, privatization of state assets, deregulation of any rule that protects labor, society and the environment and the denationalization of the underdeveloped and dependent economies.

The accelerated accumulation of productive and finance capital in the hands of the monopoly bourgeoisie and its finance oligarchy has resulted in a crisis of overaccumulation of capital and has aggravated and deepened the crisis of overproduction by abetting unemployment, poverty and wide disparity of income between 1 per cent and the rest of the population. Public funds have been used to bail out the giant banks and certain corporations in the military-industrial complex and to stimulate the financial markets but the entire real economy remains stagnant.

Within the imperialist countries, the monopoly bourgeoisie is waging a vicious class struggle against the proletariat and is doing everything violent and deceptive to prevent and distract the proletariat from the class struggle that it ought to wage justly against the monopoly bourgeoisie. Nevertheless, the worsening crisis conditions incite the proletariat (together with the youth, women, various communities and other people) to wage democratic and anti-imperialist struggles for its immediate benefit, to reject the capitalist system of exploitation and oppression and to fight for socialism.

The people wish to be freed from the scourge of unemployment, poverty homelessness, soaring prices of basic commodities and services and lack or dearth of social services. They are outraged that public funds are used to bail out the giant banks, fatten the military industrial complex and increase military expenditures but are withheld from the most direct forms of creating jobs and providing social services by public agencies. They are sick and tired of the dominant parties which compete in trying to mislead them and in preserving the ruling system.

The imperialist powers try to maintain their unity and pass the burden of crisis to the working people and to the underdeveloped countries. They are the source of the crisis and they themselves are gravely stricken by the crisis. They are all conspicuously beset by economic stagnation and public debt crisis. The crisis of the world capitalist system continues to induce wars. It is steadily pushing the imperialist powers to contradict each other over

economic, trade, financial, political and security issues. They are increasingly engaged in a struggle for a redivision of the world,

Upon the full restoration of capitalism in China and Russia, the imperialist powers headed by the US were beside themselves with glee as they proclaimed the triumph of capitalism and death of socialism. But now they consider China and Russia as cramping the space for global domination by the US, European Union and Japan. They, especially the US, consider as threats to their traditional hegemony the capitalist development of China and Russia, for the successes of these in military research and development and the formation of the BRICS as an economic bloc economic bloc and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization as a security bloc. The US is most brazen in trying to contain China by making a strategic pivot to East Asia and by launching the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement.

II. Impact on the Philippine revolution

The crisis of the world capitalist system is aggravating the chronic crisis of the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system in the Philippines. The value of raw material and semi-manufacture exports has drastically gone down. At the same time, the costs of importing manufactures, fuel and certain basic necessities have risen. The trade deficit is widening and is resulting in a bigger foreign debt.

The Philippine economy is trapped in the global depression. It is more stagnant than ever before. Unemployment is rising and incomes have fallen while the prices of basic commodities and services are rising. Poverty has become rampant. Social services are deteriorating and fees for these are rising.

The reactionary government is raising taxes at the expense of the toiling masses and the middle social strata. The foreign and big comprador firms enjoy both tax cuts and tax evasion. The budgetary deficit is widening and the public debt is rising.

There is no national industrialization and no genuine land reform. What is passed off as development consists of the accelerated landgrabbing and plunder by mining, plantation and logging companies, highly speculative private construction enterprises and business call centers. The incomes of these plus the foreign exchange remittances of the overseas Filipinos workers are not enough as basis for the claims of significant economic growth by the reactionary government. The illusion of growth has been conjured by the inflow of hot money (foreign portfolio investments) into the stock and other financial markets.

Due to the serious socioeconomic crisis, the political crisis of the ruling system is worsening. Despite the attempt of the US and the local exploiting classes to unify the reactionary political forces to escalate the counter-revolution, the wranglings among them have intensified, in the wake of the exposure of the pork barrel scams and other cases of bureaucratic corruption. The broad masses of the people are outraged that colossal amounts of public funds are stolen by government officials.

The mass protest movement is expected to intensify and spread as the Aquino regime is being denounced as a puppet of US imperialism, exploitative, corrupt and brutal. This regime follows the dictates of the US in carrying out the neoliberal economic policy to exploit the people and in unleashing Oplan Bayanihan to suppress the movement of the toiling masses and violate their human rights with impunity. The military and police campaigns of suppression have served to drive the people to take up arms against the ruling system.

The armed revolutionary movement led by the Communist Party of the Philippines is well on the way to advancing from the stage of the strategic defensive to the strategic stalemate. In concrete terms, the Party aims to increase its membership to 250,000, the Red fighters of the New People's Army to 25,000, the guerrilla fronts to 200 and the membership of mass organizations and the coverage of the local organs of political power to a greater number in millions.

III. Role of the Philippine revolution in the world proletarian revolution

The people's democratic revolution led by the CPP plays a major role in the revitalization and resurgence of the world proletarian revolution. It is a striking example of revolutionary movement led by a genuine communist party that has grown in strength through struggles against imperialism, revisionism and reaction. It has stood its ground and advanced despite the dominance of neocolonialism in most underdeveloped countries, the full restoration of capitalism in the former revisionist-ruled countries and the global sway of the US-instigated neoliberal economic offensive and wars of aggression in the last more than three decades.

Since 1968, the CPP has demonstrated that the ideological line of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is invincible. It has applied materialist dialectics in understanding the history and concrete conditions of the Philippines and in

deciding what to do in the concrete practice of the Philippine revolution. It consciously combats the errors of subjectivism, be it in the form of dogmatism and empiricism. It avails of the rich theoretical and practical legacy of proletarian revolution, from Marx to Mao. It uses this as guide to the self-reliant revolutionary struggle of the proletariat and people against US imperialism and the local exploiting classes.

The CPP has adopted the general line of people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war, for the purpose of overthrowing the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system and completing the struggle for national and democracy against US imperialism and the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords. The leading class in the revolution is the proletariat and the main force is the peasantry. Armed struggle is the main form of struggle and the united front is employed to mobilize the masses in their millions in order to isolate and destroy the enemy. The victory of the people's democratic revolution leads to the socialist revolution.

US imperialism has used all forms of violence and deception, short of a war of aggression in a futile attempt to destroy the people's democratic revolution. It instigated the Marcos fascist dictatorship but this served only to fan the flames of revolution and strengthen the forces of the people's war. It has shifted to the use of the pseudo-democratic regimes of the big comprador-landlord politicians since 1986. But these have also failed to destroy the armed revolution.

The US is now increasing its military intervention in the Philippines and is posing the danger of aggression. But it is being debilitated by crisis of global capitalism and by imperial overreach. The wars of aggression unleashed by the US have only served to further destabilize the world and allow its rivals to take advantage of its mistakes and weaknesses. The crisis of the world capitalist system has brought about global depression. It is inflicting terrible suffering on the people of the world and at the same time goading them to wage all forms of struggle.

The perseverance and victories of the Philippine revolution are highly appreciated by communist and workers' parties, national liberation movements, various progressive forces and the people of the world. The CPP has always pointed out that the revolutionary achievements of the Filipino proletariat and people are contributions to the revitalization and resurgence of the anti-imperialist movement, the international communist movement and the world proletarian revolution.

As you can observe from its internet publications, the CPP is ever willing to share ideas and experiences with other revolutionary forces through publications, bilateral meetings, exchange of study tours, seminars and conferences. It regards mutual understanding on issues as the path to revolutionary solidarity and practical cooperation.

Author's Remarks at the Launch of Three Books

University of the Philippines SOLAIR,

Diliman, Quezon City on February 8, 2014

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

I am deeply pleased and honored by the publication of the three books: *Defeating Revisionism, Reformism and Opportunism, Building Strength through Struggle and Celebration*. I thank the publishers and the organizers, speakers and all other participants in the launch of these books today.

I am delighted that this book launch marks and lends meaning to the 55th year of my service to the revolutionary struggle of the Filipino people as well as the 75th year of my existence outside the womb.

Defeating Revisionism, Reformism and Opportunism and Building Strength through Struggle are the second and third books in the series of five books under the general title of *Continuing the Philippine Revolution*. The first book is *Foundation for Resuming the Philippine Revolution* and was issued in July last year. The fourth and fifth books, *Detention and Defiance Against Dictatorship* and *Continuing the Struggle for National and Social Liberation*, will be issued in the next few months. The five books span the years 1968 to 1990.

Defeating Revisionism, Reformism and Opportunism is a necessary companion of the first book, *Foundation for Resuming the Philippine Revolution*. You must read the two books because they are complementary and interlap in time.

Resuming the Philippine revolution in 1968 was not simply a matter of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) reestablishing itself by adopting the ideological line of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and the general political line of people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war against such obvious enemies as US imperialism and the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords.

It was also imperatively a matter of rectifying errors and opposing modern revisionism centered in the Soviet Union and peddled by local revisionists, against reformism most touted at the time by the bourgeois nationalists and labor aristocrats and by both the incubators of Marcosian authoritarianism and clerico-fascism under the shared guise of constitutional reform and against opportunism in the history and circumstances of the old merger party of the Communist and Socialist Parties.

The CPP studied seriously Mao's victorious leadership of the new democratic and socialist stages of the Chinese revolution, all the way to his critique of modern revisionism and his theory and practice of continuing revolution under the proletarian state through cultural revolution in order to combat revisionism, prevent capitalist restoration and consolidate socialism.

Even as the cultural revolution was defeated in China itself after some years of victory in the period of 1966 to 1976, the anti-revisionist struggle of Mao has a strong influence on the CPP in terms of firming up the revolutionary will and inspiring the militancy of cadres and members. It explains why and how socialist societies degenerate from within and disintegrate without suffering any defeat from an imperialist war of aggression. It poses the problem of revisionism and capitalist restoration and offers the solution to be realized and developed in the long transition of socialism to communism.

Building Strength through Struggle is the third book in the series and covers the period from the proclamation of martial law in 1972 to my capture on November 10, 1977. It extends and further develops the founding principles, policies and lines of action in the resumption of the Philippine revolution.

It elaborates the why and how the Filipino proletariat and people struggled and employed the revolutionary party of the proletariat, the armed struggle and the united front against the US-instigated Marcos fascist dictatorship. It contains the documents and articles that guided the nationwide expansion and advance of the revolutionary forces. It shows how the strength of the people was built precisely through revolutionary struggle. It was in the period of 1972 to 1977 that the revolutionary forces struck deep roots among the people, especially among the toiling masses, on a national scale.

Among the most important documents in this period are the following:

1. "Overthrow the US-Marcos Dictatorship to Achieve National Freedom and Democracy", which was issued shortly after the proclamation of martial law in September 1972, condemned the dictatorship as an ultra-reactionary instrument of US imperialism and the local exploiting classes and called for its overthrow through people's war.

2. “Guide for Establishing the People’s Democratic Government”, which was promulgated in 1972, laid down the principles, policies and methods for building the revolutionary government in the countryside to replace the counterrevolutionary state of the big compradors and landlords based in the urban areas.

3. “Specific Characteristics of Our People’s War in the Philippines”, which was published in 1975, creatively applied Chairman Mao Zedong’s principles of people’s war to concrete Philippine conditions based on the experience gained by the NPA and taking into account the relatively wide countryside and the archipelagic and mountainous character of the country as well as the domestic and international situation.

4. “Our Urgent Tasks”, which was issued in 1975, sharpened the general political line as one of combating fascism, feudalism and imperialism and called on the revolutionary forces to carry out the the urgent tasks and the proper methods and steps in building various types of mass organizations and the local organs of political power and waging mass campaigns. Since then, the armed revolutionary mass base has grown, providing the ever widening and ever deepening basis for carrying out protracted people’s war.

5. “The 10-Point Program of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP), which was first outlined in 1973 and elaborated upon in 1977, spelled out the strategy and tactics for overthrowing the Marcos autocracy. The NDFP has been consolidated thereby as a united front of the basic revolutionary forces and has served as a base for engaging in broader alliances in order isolate and destroy the enemy at every given time.

The decisions taken by the CPP Central Committee were resolutely and militantly implemented by the Party rank and file, the New People’s Army and the masses. The ground for fighting and defeating the Marcos fascist dictatorship was well laid on a national scale from 1972 to 1977. Thus, even after I was captured by the enemy on November 10, 1977, I continued to be confident that the Filipino people and their revolutionary cause would prevail over the enemy.

Prior to my capture, the theoretical and political groundwork had already been set for the people to achieve revolutionary victories, leading ultimately to the downfall of the Marcos dictatorship in 1986. It served to strengthen the fighting will, capabilities and methods (strategy and tactics) of the people and revolutionary forces even against the recrudescence of “Left” and Right opportunism among some elements in the CPP leadership in the 1980s.

It is necessary to read and study all the contents of Building Strength through Struggle in order to understand why and how the people’s democratic revolution had caused the overthrow of the Marcos fascist dictatorship, how it has continued to fight and win victories against the pseudo-democratic regimes, how it has frustrated subjectivist and opportunist trends and how it has excelled as a torch bearer of armed revolution led by the proletariat amidst the dominance of neocolonialism in the underdeveloped countries, the full restoration of capitalism in former revisionist-ruled countries and the neoliberal plunder and aggression of the imperialist powers worldwide.

I am glad that Celebration is reissued, after improvement and updating. Once more I thank all the contributors to the book for appreciating the service that I have tried to render to the Filipino proletariat and people in their struggle for national liberation and democracy in preparation for a socialist future.

The broad masses of the Filipino people are suffering more than ever before amid the worsening conditions of exploitation and oppression brought about by foreign monopoly capitalism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. They have no choice but to wage revolutionary struggle more resolutely and more militantly for national freedom, democracy, social justice, genuine development and revolutionary solidarity with other peoples.

May the books launched today help to shed light on the road of revolution. I am confident that the current and future generations of Filipino revolutionaries will continue to advance the national democratic revolution to victory, and onward to socialism. Thank you.

March 30, 2014

Comrades and Friends:

I wish to express my greetings of solidarity to all of you in this informative and cultural gathering organized by the International Office of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) to celebrate the 45th anniversary of the founding of the New People's Army (NPA) by the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP).

I am deeply pleased and highly honored to be invited to speak on the building of the New People's Army and waging the people's war in the Philippines. I wish to share with you basic information and ideas on the following: first, the circumstances and reasons for founding the NPA, second, the growth and victories in the people's war and third, the prospects of the people's war.

With boundless joy, I recall how I presided over the founding of this revolutionary army of the Filipino people on March 29, 1969 in my capacity as Chairman of the CPP Central Committee and its Military Commission. This is a time to give the highest honors to the martyrs and heroes and to congratulate all the Red commanders and fighters for all the victories won through hard work, sacrifices and relentless struggle.

Let us give a special Red salute to Comrades Benito Tiamzon and Wilma Austria for their long service to the Filipino people and new democratic revolution. They have contributed greatly to the growth and advance of the revolutionary forces of the people. They are senior field consultants of the NDFP in the peace negotiations between the Manila government and the NDFP. We demand their immediate release in accordance with the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees mutually approved since 1995 by the aforesaid negotiating parties.

1. Circumstances and reasons for founding the NPA

Since the Philippine revolution of 1896, the Filipino people have fought for national and social liberation against foreign and feudal domination. But since the US defeated the Philippine republic in the Filipino-American War that started in 1899, the Filipino people have been subjected once more to foreign and feudal domination and have repeatedly sought to complete the struggle for national independence and democracy.

The formation of the Hukbo ng Bayan Laban sa Hapon in 1942 resulted in the most serious struggles of the people to liberate themselves from the Japanese fascist occupation during World War II and from the US-dominated puppet government up to the early 1950s. But serious opportunist errors of the leadership of the old merger party of the Communist and Socialist parties led to defeat. The rectification of these errors from 1966 onward paved the way for the reestablishment of the Communist Party of the Philippines in 1968 and founding of the New People's in 1969.

Since 1946, when the US granted nominal independence, the ruling system in the Philippines has become semi-colonial politically; *i.e.* ruled indirectly by the US through its Filipino political agents. It has retained its semi-feudal character economically; *i.e.* maintained directly by the comprador big bourgeoisie and landlord class and their political agents in collaboration with the US and other foreign monopoly capitalists.

The Filipino people aspire to free themselves from oppression and exploitation. Thus, the CPP has put forward the general line of people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war. This program seeks to realize national independence and democracy, social justice, land reform and national industrialization, a national, scientific and mass culture, international solidarity and peace.

The working class is the leading class in the democratic and socialist stages of the revolution. The peasantry is the main force of the revolution and demands the agrarian revolution. It serves as the largest source of personnel and inexhaustible resource base for the people's army and people's war. It provides the widest physical and social terrain for the people's army to maneuver against the enemy in the expanse of the countryside.

The armed struggle is the main form of revolutionary struggle. It answers the central question of revolution, which is the seizure of political power. But the united front is also an important weapon of the revolution. The basic worker-peasant alliance is the foundation of such united front, which includes the urban petty bourgeoisie as one more basic revolutionary ally and further takes on board the national bourgeoisie as a positive though vacillating ally. Under given circumstances, the united front may be further broadened as to take advantage of splits among the reactionaries and thereby aggravate and hasten the isolation and destruction of the enemy.

The NPA carries out the strategic line of protracted people's war, which means encircling the cities from the countryside and accumulating strength until conditions are ripe for the seizure of the cities on a nationwide scale. This strategic line is of decisive importance. It allows the NPA and other revolutionary forces of the people to grow from small to big and from weak to strong. It avoids a war of quick decision which favors the militarily far superior enemy forces.

In a protracted people's war, the NPA has the chance to develop in stages. At first, it takes the strategic defensive against the enemy's strategic offensive but launches guerrilla warfare, waging tactical offensives that it can win until it has accumulated enough strength to put the enemy in a strategic stalemate. Through a combination of regular mobile warfare and guerrilla warfare during the strategic stalemate, it can destroy the enemy forces faster and change the balance of forces until it puts the enemy on the strategic defensive and reaches the strategic offensive.

In carrying out the people's war, the NPA integrates armed struggle with agrarian revolution and mass base building. It gains the inexhaustible support of the peasantry only by carrying out the agrarian revolution. The fulfillment of the peasant demand for land is the main content of the democratic revolution. The mass base of the revolution must also be built by forming the mass organizations, the local organs of political power and the local CPP branches. Thus, wave upon wave, the people's democratic government replaces the power of the reactionary state.

The agrarian revolution is done in two stages. The first is the minimum land reform program, which involves rent reduction, elimination of usury, fair wages to the farm workers, fair prices for products at the farm gate and raising production in agriculture and sideline occupation through rudimentary cooperation. The second is the maximum land reform program, which involves the confiscation of land from the landlords and the free and equitable distribution of the land to the landless tillers. The anti-feudal united front relies mainly on the poor peasants and farm workers, wins over the middle peasants and takes advantage of the splits among the landlords in order to isolate and destroy the power of the despotic landlords.

The local organs of political power constitute the people's democratic government and are established at the barrio, municipal and higher possible levels. The barrio revolutionary committees are assisted by working committees concerned with mass organizing, public education, land reform, production, health care, defense, arbitration, cultural activities and so on. They are supported by the mass organizations of workers, peasants, women, youth, children, cultural activists and so on in the implementation of social programs, campaigns and activities. The local CPP branch that arises from the local mass base takes the lead in mass work and governance.

II. Growth and victories of the NPA

Under the leadership of the CPP, the NPA and other revolutionary forces of the people have preserved themselves, grown in strength and won great victories since the founding of the NPA in 1969 because they have a just revolutionary cause, which is the national and social liberation of the people from the terrible scourges of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. They have a clear program of people's democratic revolution, the correct strategy and tactics and a definite socialist perspective.

We started the NPA from scratch in the second district of Tarlac in 1969. We had only 9 automatic rifles and 26 other inferior firearms to rotate among 60 Red fighters to whom we had given politico-military training. But we were confident. We had a party that had avidly studied Marxism-Leninism, the revolutionary experience of the Filipino people, the teachings of Comrade Mao Zedong and the writings of Vietnamese comrades on building the people's army and waging people's war. We benefited from the guerrilla experience and mass base of 80,000 people in Tarlac as well as from the urban-based mass movement which we had resumed and revitalized.

We anticipated that Tarlac would become the focus of enemy attacks as soon as we launched tactical offensives in the people's war. Thus, we recognized immediately the urgent need for expansion cadres to start the revolution in as many other regions and provinces as soon as possible. We gave politico-military training to a few expansion cadres for certain provinces in the Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, Southern Tagalog, Bikol and Western Visayas. In the period of 1969-72 (before the martial law period), the most successful of the expansion efforts was in the Cagayan Valley, especially Isabela.

In 1969-71, in less than two years, we were able to increase the number of NPA rifles to 200 through tactical offensives in Tarlac and we almost captured another 200 rifles from the armory of Camp O'Donnel of the US Navy. We were very successful at the minimum land reform program and improving the housing of many people. As early as 1969, Marcos organized Task Force Lawin, with a total strength of 5000 military troops and policemen.

By 1971 the CPP Central Committee had shifted its headquarters to Isabela to direct the rapid growth of the mass base (already about 200,000 people), the land reform campaign, the accelerated politico-military training of expansion cadres for the Northern Luzon and other regions of the country and the intensification of armed struggle with a significant increase of rifles from the successful raid on the armory Philippine Military Academy in December 1970. The Marcos regime formed the Task Force Saranay of so many battalions in Isabela after the enemy noticed the use of the Browning automatic rifles captured from the PMA raid.

Aside from developing the revolution in a region of strategic importance, the greatest value yielded by building the guerrilla bases and zones in Isabela was the politico-military training and the experience of guerrilla war and mass work given to the trade unionists and youth activists that came from cities all over the country, thanks especially to Kabataang Makabayan and the First Quarter of 1970. By early 1972, a significant number of expansion cadres had flowed out to new areas of expansion nationwide, including the rest of Northeast Luzon, Northwest Luzon, Central Luzon, Southern Tagalog, Bicol, Visayas and Mindanao.

As early as 1970, the CPP was already forming regional Party committees to start the people's war in their respective regions, with the assistance of mass organizations. Such regional Party committees tried to do their best and became ever more successful as they accumulated experience and summed up lessons, including bitter ones, and as they were reinforced by cadres and fighters who had previous politico-military training and guerrilla experience from Tarlac and Isabela. Consequent to the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus in 1971 and the declaration of martial law in 1972, significant numbers of trade unionists and youth activists joined the people's army.

When Marcos declared martial law, he claimed that the NPA had 10,000 fighters but in fact it had only about 350 rifles in the hands of the NPA fighters, excluding the people's militia and self-defense units of the mass organizations. A relatively big number of national cadres were released from underground administrative functions in 1974 to be integrated into the people's army and to conduct rural mass work.

By December 1975 the country was well covered by relatively stable regional committees of the CPP and regional NPA commands.

The two NPA companies that had been isolated in the Isabela forest region since 1972, because of a wrong decision by the regional Party committee, marched out towards Cagayan province in 1975. The NPA in Eastern Visayas started to carry out platoon-size guerrilla offensives and these grew more frequent from 1976 onward. The NPA grew steadily in Northwest Luzon, Southern Tagalog, Bicol and Western Visayas. It expanded rapidly in Mindanao. It was the first to use the term guerrilla front to define the combination of guerrilla bases and zones in a contiguous area. The CPP Central Committee adopted the use of the term and instructed the Mindanao Party Committee to divide the big region into several regions in 1976.

After the 1975 Plenum and the subsequent carrying out of guerrilla offensives nationwide, it became clear that both the CPP and the NPA were truly nationwide forces with deep roots among the masses in the regions and provinces. The point had been reached that the NPA forces could withstand concentrated enemy attacks on one guerrilla front or a whole region and could fight back not only in that guerrilla front or region but also in several regions and guerrilla fronts where the enemy forces were weaker. On a national scale, the CPP and NPA had overcome tremendous odds, become tempered in struggle and gained the strength for continuous growth.

When I was captured in November 1977, the NPA was already at the level of 1500 automatic rifles, excluding the far bigger number of men and women in the people's militia and self defense units. I was confident that the CPP and NPA would grow in strength further and become a major factor in the overthrow of the Marcos fascist dictatorship. The NPA reached the level of 3000 rifles in 1983 and 5600 automatic rifles in 1986. Fearing the growth of the people's war, the US, the Catholic church and the big comprador-landlord oligarchs in the country decided within the period of 1984 to 1986 that Marcos had become more of a liability than an asset and had to be removed from power the way Duvalier had been deposed.

The people's army grew in strength and the people's war spread because of the Maoist leadership in both the CPP and NPA. The cadres and fighters were well-versed on the specific characteristics of the people's war in the Philippines, the revolutionary guide to land reforms and the urgent tasks in building the mass base.

Despite overall growth in the 1980s, a few members of the Central Committee spread the subjectivist notion that the Philippine was no longer semi-feudal and that by implication Marcos had greatly developed the economy with his big comprador-landlord policy dependent on foreign loans. Based on said notion, Right and "Left" opportunism arose and slowed what should have been a faster rate of growth. The opportunists deviated from the

analysis of the Philippine economy as semifeudal, the general political line of people's democratic revolution and the strategic line of protracted people's war.

The worst of the Right opportunists wanted to do away with the working class leadership and make the bourgeois-led united front the main weapon and legal struggle the main form of struggle. The worst of the Left "opportunists" wanted to enlarge and regularize NPA combat units, without minding agrarian revolution and building the mass base. Upon failure of their line, the military adventurists raised a hysteria about deep penetration agents and engaged in witch hunts, thus eroding the strength of the revolutionary movement and the mass base in certain areas at various times from 1985 onward.

Happily, the CPP launched the Second Great Rectification Movement in 1992. Comrades Benito Tiamzon and Wilma Tiamzon played important roles in this educational movement. Since then, the CPP and NPA have won resounding victories in reaffirming basic revolutionary principles and the strategic line of protracted people's war, regaining the mass base (60 percent of which had been lost by 1991 due to the "Left" opportunist line), revitalizing the mass movement and carrying forward the people's war. The line of the people's war has been sharpened as the waging of extensive and intensive guerrilla warfare on the basis of an ever widening and deepening mass base. It has been resoundingly successful.

At present, the CPP is reported to have about 150,000 members, the NPA has about 10,000 fighters, the people's militia tens of thousands of personnel, and the self-defense units hundreds of thousands. The guerrilla fronts number more than 110 covering significant portions of 71 provinces. The mass organizations have members in millions; and the people's democratic government has millions of people in its territory. Despite the recent arrest of Comrades Tiamzon and Austria, the revolutionary movement of the people will continue to grow in strength and advance. There is a far bigger mass movement now than when Julie and I were captured in 1977.

The CPP, NPA and the revolutionary forces of the people have withstood and prevailed over the attempts of the 14-year fascist dictatorship and the subsequent pseudo democratic regimes to destroy them with US-instigated national plans of military suppression and deception, like the current Oplan Bayanihan. It has been proven again and again that the guidance of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and the general line of people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war are correct and invincible against the rotten ruling system which is in a chronic crisis that is always worsening.

III. Prospects of the NPA and people's war

Like the CPP, the NDFP has declared that the general line for people's democratic revolution for the protracted people's war is the same line for the peace negotiations with the reactionary government and that the people's war is justified for so long as the demand of the people for national and social liberation is not satisfied. The revolutionary forces and the people consider the peace negotiations as a way of carrying forward and helping realize their demand for national independence and democracy.

They always resist the reactionary government's obsession of perpetuating the semicolonial and semifeudal system and seeking the capitulation and pacification of the revolutionary movement. They have made clear that they are ever ready for the eventuality that their enemy terminate the peace negotiations. The reactionary government has been brazenly disrespecting and violating existing agreements, like The Hague Joint Declaration, The Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees and the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law.

The CPP and NPA are determined to realize the plan to advance from the strategic defensive to the strategic stalemate in the near term and to overthrow the ruling system and establish the people's democratic revolution in the long run. They intend to bring up the number of CPP members to 250,000, NPA to 25,000, the guerrilla fronts to 200 and the scope of the agrarian revolution and the mass base to many more millions of people.

They aim to advance until they reach the strategic offensive in order to overthrow the ruling system and establish the people's democratic state system. They are confident of advancing from stage to stage in the people's war because they fight for the just revolutionary cause of the Filipino for national and social liberation, because they have the correct general line and strategy, because they accumulate strength through hard work and struggle and because conditions favorable to the revolution are provided by the unprecedentedly grave and ever worsening crisis of global capitalism and the domestic ruling system.

The broad masses of the people suffer terribly from the escalation of exploitation under the neoliberal economic policy, from state terrorism and from the imperialist wars of aggression. But they are driven to fight ever

more fiercely for their national and social liberation and for a fundamentally new and better world of greater freedom, social justice, development, cultural upliftment and peace.

Concerning the Maritime Dispute of the Philippines and China

Interview by Roselle Valerio

Liberation International, April 23, 2014

China's 9-dash line claim of indisputable sovereignty over 90 percent of the South China Sea violates the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and robs the Philippines of 80 percent of its Exclusive Economic Zone and 100 percent of its Extended Continental Shelf.

1. Why do you support the Philippine reactionary state in invoking the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and pursuing an arbitration case against China before the International Tribunal on the Law of the Sea (ITLOS), particularly in the Arbitral Tribunal based in The Hague?

JMS: What I support is not so much the Philippine reactionary state as the invocation of the UNCLOS and upholding the sovereign rights of the Philippines and the Filipino people over the 200-nautical mile exclusive economic zone (EEZ) as well as the extended continental shelf (ECS) in another 150 nautical miles from the outer limits of the EEZ. Thus, I have urged the Philippine government to act promptly on the matter.

It so happens that the Philippine state has the legal personality to pursue the case before the ITLOS. It is fine that it has filed a case against China under UNCLOS in January 2013 and the ITLOS has referred the case for hearing by one of its four mechanisms, the Arbitral Tribunal based in The Hague. On March 30, 2014 the Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs submitted its Memorial to the Arbitral Tribunal that is hearing the case.

China claims "indisputable sovereignty" over 90 per cent of the South China under the so-called 9-dash line map in violation of the UNCLOS. It has hypocritically called for peaceful negotiations and consultations over what it asserts as non-negotiable issue and has also called for shelving disputes and going into joint development projects in the EEZ and ECS of the Philippines. For quite sometime, the consistent point of China has been to maneuver and paralyze the Philippines into a position of acquiescence to the false claim of China and prevent a legal case from being brought before the ITLOS under the UNCLOS.

If China is allowed to violate the UNCLOS and claim 90 percent of the South China Sea under the so-called 9-dash line map, the Philippines would suffer the loss of 80 per cent of its EEZ in the West Philippine Sea, including the Reed Bank and even Malampaya. It would also lose all its ECS. We have practically lost Mischief Reef and the Scarborough Shoal to what is veritably Chinese aggression.

Irrespective of the political and social character of the present government occupying the seat of the Philippines in the community of states, the Filipino people and all patriotic and progressive forces must uphold the national sovereignty and safeguard the territorial integrity of the Philippines, including sovereignty over the territorial sea and the internal waters and sovereign rights over the EEZ and ECS. These are fundamental points of principle in the Program of the People's Democratic Revolution.

2. The arbitration case is supposed to involve a maritime dispute rather than a territorial dispute. Why a maritime dispute? What are the implications and consequences?

JMS: It is a given fact that the Philippines and China have their sovereign rights over their respective EEZs under the UNCLOS beyond their respective 12-mile territorial seas from their respective baselines. The EEZs, including the ECSs, of both countries do not overlap and are far apart from each other by hundreds of nautical miles. And the UNCLOS has extinguished the so-called historical rights of China over the islets, reefs and shoals outside of its EEZ and ECS. Moreover, these so-called historical rights beyond Hainan island are false and baseless even in the time before the UNCLOS.

The Philippine case brought before the ITLOS involves a maritime dispute. It is not about a territorial dispute or a case of maritime delineation, which is not governed by the UNCLOS and is not within the jurisdiction of the ITLOS. What the Philippines is simply after in the legal case is a court ruling that there are no overlapping EEZs and ECSs between the Philippines and China and that China has no reason whatsoever to prevent or interfere with the Philippines enjoying its sovereign exclusive rights over its own EEZ and ECS.

There is no territorial dispute whatsoever between the Philippines and China, involving issues of sovereignty

or ownership over land territory, such as islands or other elevations above water at high tide. Rocks or reefs that are below water at high tide cannot be considered land that is subject to territorial dispute. They are properly subject to maritime dispute that is governed by the UNCLOS.

Under the UNCLOS, maritime disputes among the signatory states like the Philippines and China are subject to compulsory arbitration. In contrast, territorial disputes can be the subject of arbitration only with the consent of each disputant state.

According to the Supreme Court Justice Antonio Carpio who has done scholarly legal work on the matter, the arbitration case of the Philippines against China is solely a maritime dispute. It does not involve any territorial dispute. The Philippines asks the tribunal whether China's 9-dash lines can negate the EEZ that is guaranteed to the Philippines under UNCLOS. The aggrieved state also asks the tribunal whether rocks above water at high tide, like Scarborough Shoal, generate a 200-nautical mile EEZ or only a 12-nautical mile territorial sea. The Philippines further asks the tribunal whether China can appropriate low-tide elevations (LTEs), like Mischief Reef and Subi Reef, within the Philippines' EEZ.

3. The whole world knows how China arrogantly claims almost the entire South China Sea as being under its "indisputable sovereignty", how in this regard it has expressed contempt towards any judicial process and how it has engaged in bullying and in aggressive occupation of islets and rocks within the EEZ of the Philippines. But in legal terms, how does China react to the arbitration case filed by the Philippines? And how does the Philippines answer?

JMS: China is determined to avoid participation in the proceedings of the Arbitral Tribunal. It argues that the Arbitral Tribunal has no jurisdiction over the case submitted by the Philippines, supposedly for two reasons: first, China can opt out of compulsory arbitration because the dispute involves maritime boundary delimitation arising from overlapping EEZs of the Philippines and China, requiring the consent of both to litigate; and second, China's 9-dash line claim is a historical right that predates UNCLOS and cannot be invalidated by UNCLOS.

The answer of the Philippines is that the waters within China's 9-dash lines do not constitute an EEZ because said lines are not drawn from baselines along the coast of China or any of its islands. China's 9-dash lines do not comply with the UNCLOS for drawing EEZs. There is in fact no EEZ of China that overlaps with the Philippines' EEZ. Relative to the Scarborough area, China's baselines are either along the coast of Hainan Island, which is 580 NM from Luzon, or along the coast of mainland China, which is 485 NM miles from the Zambales coastline in Luzon facing Scarborough Shoal. Even the Chinese-held Paracels are 480 miles from Luzon.

Low-tide elevations (LTEs) in the Spratlys within the 200-nautical mile EEZ of the Philippines, like Mischief Reef and Subi Reef, are subject to the sovereign rights of the Philippines. Under the UNCLOS, only the Philippines can construct structures here. China has no right whatsoever to occupy and construct structures on any of the LTEs in the EEZ of the Philippines.

4. How does the Philippine debunk China's invocation of historical rights to claim almost the entirety of the China Sea and even certain habitable islands (as in the Paracels) previously conceded to Vietnam at the 1951 San Francisco Peace Conference and nonhabitable islets, shoals and reefs that are within the EEZ of the Philippines and other countries?

The prevalent view, if not almost unanimous, among non-Chinese scholars on the law of the sea is that China's "historical right" to the waters within the 9-dash lines in the South China Sea is completely without basis under international law. First of all, the UNCLOS extinguished all historical rights of other states within the EEZ of a coastal state. Thus, the term "exclusive" is used to denote the sovereign rights of a coastal state over its exclusive economic zone. Fishing rights that people from Hainan, Taiwan and Japan previously enjoyed in what would become the Philippine EEZ were automatically terminated upon the effectivity of UNCLOS. The UNCLOS does not allow any state to invoke historical rights in order to claim the EEZs or ECSs of other coastal states.

The historical records show that never did any state claim, beyond the 12-nautical mile territorial sea, that the South China Sea is its internal waters or territorial sea, until 1947 when China domestically released its 9-dash line map and 2009 when China officially notified the world of its 9-dash line claim and submitted the 9-dash line map to the United Nations Secretary General. No country other than China recognizes the validity and effectivity of China's 9-dash line claim. China has never effectively enforced its claim between 1947 and 1994 when UNCLOS took effect, and even thereafter. Outside of the valid territorial sea of China, ships have freely crossed the South China Sea and planes have flown over it, without having to get permission from China.

The waters enclosed within China's 9-dash lines cannot form part of China's EEZ or ECS because they are

beyond the limits of China's EEZ and ECS as drawn from China's baselines in accordance with UNCLOS. Such waters do not fall under any of the maritime zones internal waters, territorial sea, EEZ and ECS – which are recognized by international law or UNCLOS. So far, China has not explained to the world what kind of maritime regime the 9-dash line waters fall under. It simply keeps on harping ad nauseam that it has “indisputable sovereignty” over such waters by “historical right.”

5. *You have made fun of China's “historical right” to having “indisputable sovereignty” over the entire South China Sea by comparing it with the irredentist ambitions of Mussolini to reclaim the territories that previously belonged to the ancient Roman empire. Don't you think that it is useful to examine and test the factual basis of the “historical right” invoked and asserted by China in order to debunk its arrogant claim to “indisputable sovereignty” over the South China Sea?*

JMS: Indeed, it is useful to examine and test the factual basis of China's claim of sovereignty over the South China Sea as a matter of “historical right”. And in the process, you can have a few laughs. For instance, China claims that Scarborough Shoal, or Huangyan Island to the Chinese, is the Nanhai island that the 13th century Chinese astronomer-engineer-mathematician Guo Shoujing allegedly visited in 1279, upon the order of Kublai Khan, the first emperor of the Yuan Dynasty, to conduct a survey of the Four Seas to update the Sung Dynasty calendar system.

But in the document entitled “China's Sovereignty Over Xisha and Zhongsa Islands Is Indisputable” dated January 30, 1980, China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs officially declared that the Nanhai island that Guo Shoujing visited in 1279 was in Xisha or what is internationally called the Paracels, a group of islands more than 380 nautical miles from Scarborough Shoal. China has thus debunked itself and is estopped from claiming the shoal. The Chinese claim to the shoal becomes hilarious when the purported historical account depicts Guo Shoujing going ashore on the small rock and building on it a massive observatory with a height of 12.6 meters.

The Murillo map is the oldest map in the world showing Scarborough Shoal as part of the Philippine archipelago. It was first issued in 1734 during the Spanish colonial period. It is entitled Mapa de las Islas Filipinas. It was drawn up by the Spanish priest Fr. Pedro Murillo. It clearly shows Scarborough Shoal, then called Panacot, in the vicinity of Zambales. Filipino fishermen called the shoal Panacot and often went to it for fishing.

One more absurd and funny claim of China is that the southernmost territory in the South China Sea is James Shoal, 50 nautical miles from the coast of Bintulu, Sarawak, East Malaysia. This shoal is a fully submerged reef, 22 meters under water. It is entirely within Malaysia's EEZ and is more than 950 nautical miles from China. It is obvious that Chinese leaders and cartographers claimed James Shoal as China's southernmost territory without anyone of them seeing it. But once more the Chinese narrative goes hilarious as it speaks of Chinese going ashore to “visit” James Shoal. James Shoal is unique for being the only national border in the world that is fully under the sea and too far beyond the territorial sea of the claimant state.

Many errors crept into the map of South China Sea made by the “Inspection Committee for Land and Water Maps” created by the Republic of China in 1933. The committee merely copied the existing British maps and changed the names of the islands by either translating them or transliterating them to make them sound Chinese. For example, Antelope Reef was translated as Lingyang and Spratly Island was transliterated as Sipulateli. The Chinese map even copied 20 errors in the British map (which misrepresented non-islands as islands) which the British map makers would later correct.

All Chinese official maps during the Yuan, Ming and Ching Dynasties acknowledged Hainan island as the southernmost border of China. These Chinese dynasty maps never mentioned the Paracels, the Spratlys, Scarborough Shoal, the 9-dash lines or the U-shaped lines. The Chinese Government officially declared to the world in 1932 that the “southernmost part of Chinese territory” or border was Hainan Island. In the 1951 San Francisco Peace Conference, the Soviet Union demanded on behalf of China that the Paracels and Spratlys be turned over to China but the demand was rejected by a vote of 48 states to 3 states.

The Chinese should not mislead themselves into thinking that they own the entire South China Sea just because the European mariners and cartographers gave it such name. The Chinese do not own it as much as the Indians do not own the entire Indian Ocean. Long before the Chinese imperial admiral Zeng He undertook his famous sea voyages from 1405 to 1433 A.D., the prehistoric inhabitants of the Philippines had fished in the waters, now within the Philippine EEZ, and the Filipino traders had become masters of the South China Sea in the course of trading with China, Indochina and their brother Malays in what are now Indonesia, Kalimantan and Malaysia.

6. *A Chinese professor from the University of Beijing wrote recently that China has the right to own islands, islets, reefs and shoals even within the EEZ of the Philippines, as in the case of British isles being dependencies of Britain even as they are geographically far closer to France?*

JMS: Such scholars conveniently do not mention the fact that the British isles referred to have long been inhabited by the British and have been recognized as British dependencies by nearby states and to my knowledge all other countries. They might as well mention the colonial possessions of Britain in far flung areas in the history of British colonialism and imperialism. In an effort to hold on to the Malvinas or what they call the Falklands, the British have combined the aggressive use of imperialist force and the deployment of British settlers.

7. *Is it possible and mutually beneficial for the Philippines and China to engage in joint development projects within the exclusive economic zone of the Philippines? What are now the obstacles? Why is it that China has manifested aggressive behavior?*

JMS: It is possible and mutually beneficial if first of all both China and the Philippines simultaneously recognize their sovereign rights over their respective EEZs and ECSs and then immediately agree on joint development projects. It is preposterous if such joint development is subject to the precondition of recognizing China's "indisputable sovereignty" under its 9-dash line claim over almost the entire South China Sea.

Surrendering to such precondition would mean the Philippines giving away and losing automatically at least 80 per cent of the EEZ and 100 per cent ECS and probably even losing the right to free and safe navigation in the South China Sea. Not one of the claimant states to the Spratlys has accepted China's joint development offer because of the precondition of recognizing China's imperial claims of "indisputable sovereignty" over the South China Sea.

The Philippines and the Filipino people cannot take lightly or ignore the aggressive actions already taken by China in connection with its greedy claim of owning almost the entire South China Sea. Through aggressive actions, China has grabbed the Mischief Reef in 1995 and Scarborough Shoal in 2012. Earlier it grabbed from Vietnam the Paracels in 1974 and Fiery Reef Cross in 1988. By all indications, China is poised to force out the handful of Philippine marines aboard the shipwrecked Philippine navy boat on Ayungin Reef, a low tide elevation in the EEZ of the Philippines in the Spratlys. Armed aggression violates the UN Charter.

The Filipino people should understand that China since the death of Mao has become a capitalist country. As the neoliberal partner of US imperialism, it has prominently promoted big comprador operations such as the proliferation of export-oriented sweatshops, privatization of the rural industries built under Mao and the wanton use of finance capital to generate a private construction boom and consumerism among less than 10 per cent of the population.

It converted proletarian state power into a bourgeois nationalist power and indeed developed further its industrial base, including its production of advanced weapons. Although it still has a relatively low per capita GDP, China is already a big capitalist power with the economic features of a modern imperialist power and is on the verge of a definitive kind of military aggression.

8. *In legal terms, what are the prospects of the arbitration case filed by the Philippines against China? What are the prospects in political and economic terms? How do you take into account the further entrenchment of US imperialism in the Philippines and the collusion and contention between the US and China?*

JMS: The Philippines has a good chance of winning the case. The approach in the case is excellent. It is a maritime dispute and not a territorial dispute. It attacks the outrageous claim of "indisputable sovereignty" over the South China Sea. To be benefited is not only the Philippines but also the other state claimants to EEZs and ECSs under the UNCLOS and all the people of the world who are interested in free and safe navigation over the South China Sea by ship and by airplane.

I estimate that the judges will make a ruling that yields the benefits that I have just mentioned and that keeps the South China Sea from becoming a hotbed of aggression based on the overreaching claims of China or the US. China insists that it can defy compulsory arbitration by arguing out of court that the case filed by the Philippines with the ITLOS is not a maritime dispute but territorial dispute or dispute over maritime delineation which are not governed by the UNCLOS and are outside the jurisdiction of the UNCLOS.

It cannot escape from compulsory arbitration because the tribunal can consider and rule on the pleading of the Philippines and weigh the arguments given by China for not participating in the process. If the ruling of the Arbitral Tribunal is not favorable to it, China will probably behave better in the face of the international community

or will proceed on a path of imperialist aggression.

A decision favorable to the Philippines can be a good basis for pro-actively offering cooperation to China and for telling the US to stop pretending as the protector of the Philippines against China and to cease its unbridled plundering and further military entrenchment in the Philippines. Unlike the US, China is a country that has never carried out a fullscale aggression to conquer the Philippines. It has the capacity and probable willingness to help the Philippines achieve national industrialization through equitable and friendly economic and trade relations.

However, the Philippines and the Filipino people must be always vigilant to the relationship of collusion and contention between the US and China in a world still suffering from imperialism, neocolonialism and the revisionist betrayal of socialism and the revolutionary forces of the people are just beginning to reinvigorate themselves and resurge.

9. What ought to be the long term view of the Filipino people and the patriotic and progressive forces in upholding national sovereignty, territorial integrity and sovereign rights over the exclusive economic zone and the extended continental shelf?

JMS: The Philippines should be independent of the US, China and other capitalist powers. To have their own strength and gain the respect, solidarity and cooperation of other peoples, the Filipino people should win the new democratic revolution and proceed to the socialist revolution. They must attain national sovereignty and democracy for the toiling masses of workers and peasants, realize social justice, carry out land reform and national industrialization, promote a patriotic and progressive culture and develop cooperative relations with all countries for the sake of peace and development.

10. What would you suggest as study material for understanding the dispute of the Philippines and China in connection with the latter's claim of indisputable sovereignty over the entire South China Sea and even the West Philippine Sea, where the Philippines has its exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and extended continental shelf (ECS)?

JMS: The most studious should read and study the 4000-page memorial of the Philippines in its arbitration case against China, submitted to The Hague-based Arbitral Tribunal.

There are plenty of scholarly legal works on the issue by Filipino and foreign experts on international law and the law of the sea. But for general readers, I suggest as the most concise and yet comprehensive and profound material is the speech of Supreme Court Senior Justice Antonio Carpio, "What's at Stake in Our Case Vs. China," delivered before the Philippines Women's Judges Association on March 14, 2014.

The New Democratic Revolution through Protracted People's War

**Lecture at the Forum for Liberation Theology
Centre for Liberation Theologies,
Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies,
Katholieke Universiteit Leuven,
Belgium May 15, 2014**

I thank the Centre for Liberation Theologies for inviting me to this Forum for Liberation Theology to speak on the new democratic revolution through protracted people's war. It is an honor and pleasure for me to interface and dialogue with theologians and others who are seriously interested in knowing the nature and development of the Philippine revolution, and the relationship of Christians with the Filipino people's struggle for national and social liberation.

I wish to present my subject by using the following outline: 1. the old democratic revolution against Spanish colonialism and feudalism; 2. the new democratic revolution against the semi-colonial and semi-feudal ruling system; 3. the Christians for National Liberation; 4. the continuance of the new democratic revolution to the present.

1. Old democratic revolution

Spain was motivated by mercantilism and the desire to spread the Catholic Christian faith in imposing colonialism by force of arms on the people of the Philippine archipelago, effectively starting in 1565 after the expedition of Magellan in 1521. It used the sword and the cross to pacify the people. The conquistadores brutally suppressed those who resisted. The missionaries worked persuasively to bring the people under the bells of the Catholic church.

The Spanish colonialists could apply the divide and rule policy on a people that generally had pre-feudal autonomous small communities. The Islamic sultanates covered a small part of the archipelago, particularly in southwest Mindanao. The Muslims traded in other parts and began to spread their faith. But the success of Spanish colonialism cut them off from most of the archipelago.

The Spanish king rewarded the conquistadores by granting to them the encomiendas, large areas of land which they were supposed to administer to make sure that the natives got their Christian catechism and paid tribute. The encomienda system, which involved slavery and all its brutal features previously denounced by Bartolome de las Casas in the Americas, would last for almost a century, and morphed into the system of feudal ownership of land by the friars and the native principales.

Spanish colonialism succeeded in maintaining a colonial system of government centralized in the walled city of Manila. It was enough to control entire municipalities with the use of Spanish friars in charge of the parishes and the Spanish military officer in charge of the civil guards. However, the people were never a totally conquered and pacified. The Moros in the south, Igorots in the north, and many hill tribes resisted subjugation until the end of Spanish colonialism. More than 200 revolts of varying scopes and intensity occurred in supposedly pacified provinces in more than 300 years preceding the Philippine revolution of 1896.

In the Manila-Acapulco galleon trade which lasted until 1815, the Spanish religious orders had a share of the boletas, cargo spaces in the ship, which the friars rented out to merchants. The income was supposedly for obras pias (pious works) but was large enough to capitalize the establishment of a bank, the Monte de Piedad. The galleon trade was basically trade between Chinese porcelain and silk, and Mexican silver, with the Chinese buying Philippine rice and cotton.

When the Suez Canal was opened in 1869, the direct trade between the Philippines and Europe accelerated and expanded. The Spanish religious orders expanded their landholdings arbitrarily, especially in the Tagalog areas of Luzon, in order to produce export crops, including sugar, copra, cocoa, tobacco, and hemp. Landholdings of native landlords for the production of staple food crops also expanded. The dispossessed peasants nationwide became restless.

Since the middle of the 19th century, a big number of native secular priests had been produced by the

seminaries. They eventually demanded that they take over the parishes from the foreign missionaries, and that the latter stay in the convents of their religious orders. What arose as a secularization movement among secular priests was condemned by the Spanish regular orders and the colonial government. A theocracy practically existed in the Philippines, with the church often more powerful than the governor generals who came and went in rapid succession.

When the Cavite Mutiny of 1872 occurred in a Spanish naval stockyard, the colonial and religious officials framed up and tried as instigators of the mutiny the known leaders of the secularization movement, secular priests Mariano Gomez, Jose Burgos, and Jacinto Zamora. They were sentenced to death by garrote and were executed in 1872. Their martyrdom galvanized for the first time the national sentiment of the Filipino people against the Spanish colonial authorities and the Spanish religious orders.

Before the 1880s, Filipino students in various professional courses (medical, legal, engineering, etc.) increased. Some of them who resented the authoritarian system in the Catholic schools left for Spain. They imbibed the influences of the French revolution and the Spanish enlightenment. They formed in Madrid the Propaganda Movement in the 1880s advocating such reforms as making the Philippines a regular province of Spain and letting the people enjoy democratic rights.

La Liga Filipina was established in Manila in 1892 to pursue the reforms advocated by the Propaganda Movement. The Spanish authorities arrested and exiled the leader Dr. Jose Rizal. The crackdown on La Liga Filipina inspired the formation of the Katipunan which vowed to rise up in arms for national independence from Spain. The Katipunan, led by Andres Bonifacio, launched a series of armed uprisings in Manila and its environs in 1896. Thus the Philippine democratic revolution started.

The guiding ideology was bourgeois liberal democratic. It called for national independence from Spanish colonialism and the end of feudalism, especially the dissolution of the friar estates. It was espoused by patriots and progressives among the workers, peasants, and the university-educated youth. They were strongly anti-clerical and were most averse to the friars of the religious orders and to the colonial officials. But they generally considered themselves Christians and called for a Filipino church. It may be said therefore that the Christians were on the opposing sides of revolution and counterrevolution.

The old democratic revolution of 1896 achieved national independence from Spanish colonialism in 1898. The Malolos Constitution of 1899 followed the template of the liberal democratic constitution. It provided for the separation of Church and State. But national independence was short-lived as US imperialism intervened and launched a war of aggression on 4 February 1899. The Constitutional provision on Church-State separation was then suspended for the duration of the war by the cabinet of the revolutionary government on the argument that the Filipino priests of the Catholic church were the most effective collectors of financial and other material resources for the revolution.

The revolutionary government had its own vicar general Rev. Gregorio Aglipay. He had been sent by the Spanish Bishop Nozaleda to offer a peace settlement to the revolutionary government. But instead he declared loyalty to the Philippine revolution and was appointed the vicar general. He considered the Philippine revolution a just war against colonial oppression and social injustice. He led a guerrilla force in his home province of Ilocos Norte to assault the US military garrison in Laoag. All Filipino secular priests in areas governed by the revolutionary forces declared their independence from the Spanish religious authorities, and of course from the colonial government.

As soon as they conquered the Philippines, the US colonial authorities moved to persuade the Catholic Church and the religious orders to replace the Spanish friars with Filipino secular priests in parishes, and to phase out gradually the Spanish friars in religious orders and schools with American or Irish priests. The Catholic church has remained dominant, with 85 per cent of the population baptized by it.

The priests who followed the leadership of Aglipay established the Philippine Independent Church in 1902. This covers some four percent of the population. To this day, it is the largest Christian church outside of the Roman Catholic church. The US colonial period opened the way to the entry of various Protestant denominations that share among them some five percent of the population.

II. New democratic revolution

The US imperialists defeated the old democratic revolution mainly with the use of superior arms and extreme brutality. They massacred 10 percent or 700,000 of the Philippine population during the Filipino-American War

which formally ended in 1902. They continued to inflict on the Filipino people another 800,000 death casualties up to 1915.

US imperialism had also a high capacity for deception. In the course of its war of aggression, it proclaimed a policy of benevolent assimilation to the revolutionary leaders and the people. It declared that it had no other aim but to further civilize and Christianize the people, and to teach them democracy for the purpose of self-rule. It used the language of bourgeois liberalism to coopt the leadership of the revolution.

The US established a colonial rule different from the old style colonialism of Spain involving sheer plunder. It represented a new kind of colonialism involving the extraction of superprofits through investments. It had the resources and the needs of monopoly capitalism. It expanded the plantations for export crops, opened the mines, and engaged in a limited amount of manufacturing. It established the public school system and improved the infrastructure for expanding domestic and foreign trade.

It has developed a semi-feudal economic system among the natives since the first decade of the 20th century. The urban-based big compradors and the rural-based landlords have served as the ruling classes. They comprise fractions of one percent of the population. The size of the middle bourgeoisie has stagnated as a fraction of one percent and the urban petty bourgeoisie has grown to eight percent. The industrial proletariat has risen from a small percentage to some 16-17 percent. The peasantry has gone down from a high of 90 percent to 75 percent.

The growth of the proletariat and the trade union movement paved the way for the establishment of the Communist Party of the Philippine Islands under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism in 1930. The US colonial regime tried to suppress this party as soon as it was established by imprisoning and exiling the leaders. But the Great Depression and the ever worsening social conditions goaded the workers and peasants to undertake strikes and mass protests.

After World War II broke out, the merger party of the Communist and Socialist parties and the mass movement built a people's army and local organs of political power, carried out land reform, and fought the Japanese invaders. After the war, the US and the local exploiting classes unleashed violent actions against the communists, the people's army, and the people, compelling them to fight back and declare an armed revolution.

In 1946, the US gave up direct colonial rule, granted nominal independence to the Philippines, and passed on functions of national administration to the politicians of competing factions of the local ruling classes of big compradors and landlords. Thus, the Philippines became a semi-colony, with the US retaining its military bases, the property rights of its citizens and corporations, and its strategic dominance over the Philippine state, its economy, politics, culture, defense, and international relations.

The semi-feudal economy persisted characterized by the exploitation of the toiling masses of workers and peasants, production of raw materials for export and import of manufactures mainly for consumption. Politics remained a revolving game for factions of the local exploiting classes. The dominant culture was a mixture and compromise of cultural imperialism and Christianity of the reactionary kind. The Philippine military continued its dependence on US indoctrination, planning, intelligence, and supply of war materiel. The Philippine government robotically followed US policy.

In the 1960s, the crisis of the Philippine ruling system worsened, with the exhaustion of the land frontier for peasant resettlement and the lack of industrial development causing mass unemployment and widespread poverty. The broad masses of the people called for fundamental social change to lift them from poverty and misery. The anti-imperialist and anti-feudal mass movement grew. The Marcos regime became more violent in suppressing the mass movement and saw the conditions opportune for a fascist dictatorship.

The proletarian revolutionaries recognized the worsening social conditions and the need for an armed revolution. They separated from the old merger party of the Communist and Socialist parties in April 1966. They criticized, repudiated, and rectified the errors of this party. They reestablished the Communist Party of the Philippines on 26 December 1968 under the theoretical guidance of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought. They proclaimed the Program for a People's Democratic Revolution. They organized the New People's Army on 29 March 1969 with the aim of overthrowing the big comprador-landlord government, and replacing it with a people's democratic government.

The Communist Party of the Philippines constituted itself as the advanced detachment of the proletariat – the leading class in the new democratic revolution and the consequent socialist revolution. It recruited its cadres and members from the ranks of workers and progressive youth activists who wished to remold themselves as

proletarian revolutionaries. It deployed the proletarian revolutionaries to the countryside to arouse, organize and mobilize the peasantry as the main force of the revolution and as the inexhaustible support for the people's war. It regarded the urban petty bourgeoisie a basic revolutionary force but no longer as the leading force as in the old democratic revolution. It also sought to win over the middle bourgeoisie on grounds of patriotism, despite the latter's distrust for the toiling masses.

The program of the new democratic revolution holds US imperialism and the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords as responsible for the semi-colonial and semi-feudal character of Philippine society. In the political field, it demands national independence and democratic rights, including respect for civil liberties, the solution of the land problem, and the empowerment of the workers and peasants. In the economic field, it demands social justice and economic development through land reform and national industrialization. In the cultural field, it demands a patriotic, scientific, and pro-people system of education and culture. In foreign relations, it seeks solidarity and cooperation with all peoples and countries for peace and development.

All the demands in the program of the new democratic revolution uphold, defend and promote the national and democratic rights and interests of the entire Filipino people, especially the toiling masses of workers and peasants, irrespective of their religious beliefs, their ethno-linguistic affinity, ancestry, color of skin, and gender. For emphasis, let me state that Christians and other religious believers, have the fundamental right to freedom of thought and belief. This right is clearly enshrined in the revolutionary constitution, the Guide to Establishing the People's Democratic Government.

The strategic line of protracted people's war, which involves encircling the cities by the revolutionary forces in the countryside, and accumulating strength here until conditions are ripe for seizing the cities, has been adopted by the CPP and the NPA for two reasons. First, it gives full play to the role of the peasants as main force of the democratic revolution. Second, it is the way to enable the people's army to grow from small to big and from weak to strong, and avoid being decisively destroyed in one uprising or one battle by a far superior enemy military force.

All forces of the new democratic revolution, including the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army, the National Democratic Front, the revolutionary mass organizations, and the organs of democratic power, recognize that more than 90 percent of the population are Christians, and that the new democratic revolution cannot be won without the participation and support of the Christians. Thus, the Christians for National Liberation has been initiated to engage the Christians as such, and give full play to their participation and support in the Philippine revolution.

The CNL has played a highly significant role in promoting ecumenism by uniting within the revolutionary movement the faithfuls of the Roman Catholic Church, the Philippine Independent Church, and various Protestant denominations; by developing mutual understanding between Christians and Muslims; by opposing Christian chauvinism so-called and other un-Christian phenomena engendered by colonial history and continuing bigotry; and by realizing the dialogue and cooperation between religious believers and nonbelievers.

While guided by dialectical and historical materialism in their revolutionary practice, the communists in the Philippines have a high level of discipline, and code of social behavior. They respect freedom of conscience and do not impose their ideology on others. When others differ from them in opinion, they prefer to listen and learn first, and then patiently explain their side for the purpose of mutual understanding and cooperation.

They avoid deflection of the issues of national and social liberation towards a heated debate of religious issues above the social needs and demands of the people. But they happily welcome and agree with any attempt to develop the dialogue and cooperation between them and the Christians in their obedience to the second great commandment to love and serve the people in consonance with their love of God above all.

III. Christians for national liberation

The Christians for National Liberation (CNL) was founded at the worship room of the Sampaloc University Center in Manila on 17 February, 1972 on the anniversary of the martyrdom of Fathers Gomez, Burgos and Zamora. Seventy-two revolutionary disciples of Christ gathered to bear the "cross of sacrifice" and raise the "red banner of revolution". They described themselves as a revolutionary organization of church people who had been challenged by social realities and their Christian faith to take part in the new democratic revolution under the leadership of the Communist Party of the Philippines and in accordance with the Program for a People's Democratic Revolution. They adopted the battle cry, "Love your neighbor. Serve the people."

The founding process extended to the general assembly that was held at the Assumption Convent in Herran,

Manila on 19-20 August 1972, a full month before the Marcos regime declared martial law and imposed a fascist dictatorship on the Filipino people. The nearly 250 delegates included priests, nuns, pastors, seminarians, novices, and church militants involved in social action projects in urban and rural communities. They elected the National Executive Board of the CNL.

The CNL officers and members arose from and developed in the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal or national democratic movement from the late 1960s to 1972. They were motivated by a high sense of patriotism sharpened by renewed studies of the Philippine revolution of 1896, the current dismal conditions, and the urgent need for continuing the Philippine revolution. They wanted to end the semi-colonial and semi-feudal conditions. They wanted national and social liberation from the evils of foreign domination, domestic feudalism, and bureaucrat capitalism. Like the rest of Filipino patriots and progressives, they were also inspired by the revolutionary resistance of the Vietnamese and other Indochinese people against the US war of aggression.

They were appalled and challenged by the ever worsening social crisis, the increasing violence of the Marcos regime towards mass protests, and apparent scheme of the regime to impose a fascist dictatorship on the people. They deemed it necessary to fight for democracy not only in the sense of upholding civil and political liberties but also in realizing the substance of democracy through land reform for the benefit of the peasant majority of the people. They desired the end of the conditions of underdevelopment and the start of genuine development through land reform and national industrialization.

The Catholics, the members of the Philippine Independent Church, and the Protestants all used the Bible as the source of inspiration. They had their respective theological authorities to support their commitment to the cause of national and social liberation. Certainly, the Catholics found wider new ground in the documents of the Second Vatican Council. The book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* by Paolo Freire became available in English translation in 1970, and influenced those who became members of the CNL. It was well ahead of the book *A Theology of Liberation* by Gustavo Gutierrez which was published in English by Orbis only in 1973. The book *Rules for Radicals* of Saul Alinsky also influenced those Christians who engaged in community work. The Filipino Redemptorist, Fr. Luis Hechanova advocated the Theology of Struggle and wrote a pamphlet on this.

The CNL departed from the conservative tradition and position of the institutional church and hierarchy. It called for the church of the people, especially for the poor, deprived, and oppressed. It propagated conscientization and preferential option for the poor. The lower clergy joined the CNL and consciously distanced themselves from the mindset and actions of an institutional church that owns substantial land and stocks in major corporations, and that provides services mainly to the exploiting classes. In the shift from the Spanish to the US colonial period, the Catholic Church retained their property rights and gained capital for corporate investments from the sale of friar estates which came under the US-instituted land reform program.

The religious and church workers that comprised the CNL also differentiated themselves from the reformist tradition cultivated by the American Jesuits since the 1930s to propagate the social encyclicals of the church, advocate social reforms, and carry out social action with the objective of improving upon and preserving the ruling system, and preventing the communists from winning the people and taking power. The American Jesuit, Fr. Walter Hogan became prominent in the Philippines for establishing the Institute of Social Order which trained the organizers of the Federation of Free Workers and the Federation of Free Farmers starting in the 1950s, in order to seize the initiative as the state cracked down on the suspected communist organizations of workers and peasants. They also pushed for the enactment of the Anti-Subversion Law to target suspected communists.

Special mention must be made of the Student Christian Movement of the Philippines, based in the state-owned University of the Philippines, in the university belt in Manila and the Protestant colleges and universities. It studied and published articles against US domination and the unjust social system in the Philippines. The Kih Rho, a militant Catholic youth and student organization, declared itself a national democratic organization. It promoted the line of the new democratic revolution not only in the Catholic schools and the National Union of Students of the Philippines but also worked to win over to the line such organizations as the Federation of Free Workers and Federation of Free Farmers. It actively opposed the rabid anti-communist line of Fr. Jose Blanco, S.J.

The officers and members of the CNL studied the documents of the Communist Party of the Philippines, especially the Program for a People's Democratic Revolution and Amado Guerrero's Philippine Society and Revolution, and engaged the communists in dialogues for mutual understanding and cooperation in the social, economic, political, and cultural fields. The Christian side did not oblige the Communists to study Christian theology.

Neither did the Communists oblige the Christians to study Marxism-Leninism. But certainly in the course of ever continuing dialogue, each side took interest in studying the principles of the other side, in appreciating the desire of the other side to join the cause of national and social liberation, and in creating the bridge of cooperation.

The Communists learned more deeply than ever about the faith and good works of the Christians. They distinguished the good Christians from the bad ones among the exploiting classes, who used religion as an opium to delude themselves and the people. On the other hand, the Christians learned to appreciate materialist dialectics and class analysis as tools for understanding and solving social problems and for changing society. Many do so without having to give up their religious faith. Some priest friends of mine also said that they accepted historical materialism but not dialectical materialism.

When Marcos declared martial law on 21 September 1972, the CNL played an important role in opposing the fascist dictatorship and in providing refuge and facilities to many people, especially the activists, who were targeted for arrest and detention. They also helped families in asking the military for the whereabouts of people arrested and detained, and in providing humanitarian aid and legal counsel to those in need. They did so even as then Cardinal Rufino Santos supported the proclamation of martial law and declared that it be given a chance to carry out reforms.

The CNL joined the National Democratic Front of the Philippines when it was established on 24 April 1973 as a united front of patriotic and progressive forces committed to work for the unity of the broad masses of the Filipino people in fighting the US-directed Marcos fascist dictatorship. It cooperated with the organizations that sought its help. It deployed CNL members to strengthen the urban underground. It played a key role in encouraging and supporting the La Tondeña workers' strike in 1975, and the consequent nationwide wave of workers' strikes in 300 workplaces that extended up to 1976.

It authorized CNL members to work in the countryside in order to do religious work and mass work, or join the New People's Army and become spokespersons or communicators to the people. Many priests, nuns, pastors and seminarians became communists and even joined the NPA in the course of working with communists and Red fighters in serving the people and fighting the enemy. There is a long list of martyrs and heroes who were religious and chose to become revolutionary fighters. There is also long list of religious who became political prisoners.

In the broad united front of the religious promoted by the CNL, the secular priests in the Philippine Priests Incorporated and the Association of Major Religious Superiors made significant contributions to the people's struggle against the Marcos fascist dictatorship. Many social action centers of the Catholic Church adopted the national democratic orientation and enjoyed the support of Bishop Julio X. Labayen and Fr. Luis Hechanova, head and executive director of the National Secretariat of Social Action (NASSA). Bishop Labayen inspired and supported the Basic Christian Communities-Community Organizing which became targets of propaganda and physical attacks by the military minions of the fascist dictatorship.

Archbishop Jaime Sin took over the archdiocese of Manila when Cardinal Santos died in 1973. By then, human rights violations had become rampant and more bloody, with forced disappearances, torture, and extrajudicial killings victimizing oppositionists, trade unionists, and peasant leaders, who were affiliated with the church and who were not at all connected to the revolutionary movement. The CNL played a significant role in persuading Cardinal Sin and the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines to criticize the fascist regime and demand justice for the victims of human rights violations.

However, Cardinal Sin would only proclaim a policy of critical collaboration towards the Marcos fascist regime. This policy would come to an end only on 13 February 1986 when the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines issued a pastoral letter declaring the regime illegitimate and immoral after the farcical snap presidential election of 1986.

In accordance with their own respective reasons, the Catholic and other Christian churches, the conservative opposition forces, the Communist Party of the Philippines, the US, sections of the reactionary armed forces, the chambers of commerce and industry, and other forces, converged on the decision to overthrow the Marcos regime. The broad masses of the people carried out gigantic mass actions in the national capital region and in the provinces to put the fascist dictatorship to an end.

IV. Continuance of the new democratic revolution and people's war

The downfall of the Marcos dictatorship did not result in the national and social liberation of the Filipino people. The ruling system of big compradors and landlords under US hegemony remained intact. From the monopoly of political power and bureaucratic loot, there was a swing back with a vengeance to the oligarchy of factions competing for power and wealth, and masquerading as democracy.

Every post-Marcos regime has been characterized by puppetry to US imperialism, collaboration with foreign and local exploiters, bureaucratic corruption, brutality, and gross human rights violations. It is therefore not surprising that the Filipino people and the revolutionary forces have persevered in the new democratic revolution through protracted people's war, and that every post-Marcos regime has failed to destroy the armed revolutionary movement.

In the course of the struggle against the Marcos fascist dictatorship, a broad range of opposition forces had an understanding that, immediately after the overthrow of Marcos, there would be a peace agreement between the Manila government and the revolutionary forces represented by the National Democratic Front of the Philippines. In accordance with such understanding, the revolutionary forces represented by the National Democratic Front of the Philippines discreetly reminded President Corazon Aquino of their willingness to negotiate an agreement for a just and lasting peace.

But Aquino was interested merely in a ceasefire agreement to allow her to consolidate her power. She had no interest in an agreement to address the roots of the armed conflict through basic social, economic, and political reforms. At any rate, the NDFP agreed with the Aquino regime in November 1986 to have a 60-day ceasefire to work out the agenda for substantive peace negotiations. Before the ceasefire agreement ran out, Aquino allowed her security forces to massacre peasant demonstrators in front of her palace on 23 January 1987, and then, in her own words, "unsheathed the sword of war" against the revolutionary forces on 22 March 1987, instead of investigating and finding out which military officers were culpable for the massacre.

When hard pressed by the mutinous military group called Reform the Armed Forces of the Philippines and by the worsening social and political crisis in the Philippines in 1989, she sent a series of emissaries to the NDFP to express her desire for peace negotiations. But she relented in December 1990 from exploratory talks. It would be her presidential successor Gen. Fidel Ramos who would seek peace negotiations more seriously in 1992.

The Manila government and the NDFP signed The Hague Joint Declaration on 01 September 1992 as the framework agreement for conducting the peace negotiations. This stipulates that the roots of the armed conflict are to be addressed by basic reforms in order to lay the basis for just and lasting peace; that national sovereignty, democracy, and social justice are the mutually acceptable principles guiding the negotiations; and that no side shall make any precondition that negate the character and purpose of negotiations. It sets forth the substantive agenda to be negotiated in sequence, namely: 1. respect for human rights and international humanitarian law; 2. social and economic reforms; 3. political and constitutional reforms; and 4. end of hostilities and disposition of forces. The Hague Joint Declaration also lays down the method of forging the comprehensive agreements through the formation of reciprocal working committees.

Before the end of the Ramos regime, the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL) was signed by the Negotiating Panels on 16 March 1998. The NDFP principal, Comrade Mariano Orosa, immediately approved it on 10 April 1998, while Ramos hesitated to approve it. It was his presidential successor Joseph Estrada who approved the agreement on 7 August 1998. However, since then, the Estrada and succeeding regimes continuously put up obstacles in violation of the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG) and CARHRIHL in order to prevent the negotiation on social and economic reforms.

The Christians for National Liberation and the broad masses of Christians have strongly supported the new democratic revolution through protracted people's war, the legal and peaceful democratic mass movement, and the campaign for a just and lasting peace. Bishops of the Catholic Church, the Philippine Independent Church, the Protestant denominations, and the lower clergy outside of the CNL have been calling for upholding national sovereignty and the national patrimony, social justice, respect for human rights, protection of the environment, and a just and lasting peace. During every regime of the Manila government, bishops have used their conferences and special bodies, like the Ecumenical Bishops Forum, Pilgrims for Peace and Philippine Ecumenical Peace Platform, to call for peace negotiations and to serve as bridge between the Manila government and NDFP.

The revolutionary forces and people represented by the NDFP are ever ready for serious peace negotiations to forge agreements with the Manila government for a just and lasting peace. But because this government refuses to address the roots of the civil war through peace negotiations, the revolutionary forces are justified to wage the new democratic revolution through protracted people's war. Along this general line, the revolutionary forces are currently pursuing their strategic plan of advancing from the stage of strategic defensive to that of the strategic stalemate.

The Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army, the revolutionary mass organizations of workers, peasants, youth, women, children, and cultural activists, and the organs of democratic power are strengthening themselves. In the course of the people's war, they are carrying out programs and campaigns to improve the conditions and lives of the people through self-organization, public education, health care, land reform, economic production, self-defense, arbitration of people's disputes, cultural upliftment, gender equality, and environmental protection.

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Oplan Bayanihan and the Prospects of Peace and Environmental Justice

Presentation at the Media Forum on Oplan Bayanihan

**and the Prospects of Peace and Environmental Justice, sponsored by the Apo Sandawa Lumadnung Panaghiusa sa Cotabato (ASLPC) and Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas-Probinsya sa Kutabato (KMP-PK),
December 9, 2013, Kidapawan City, North Cotabato**

Dear Compatriots and Friends,

Thank you for inviting me to be your speaker in this Media Forum on Oplan Bayanihan and the Prospects of Peace and Environmental Justice. I am mindful of your concern about the peace and order and environmental situation in Mindanao and I appreciate your desire to understand the root causes of the problems.

It is a privilege for me to share information and views with the forum participants who come from leading media institutions, youth and student organizations, civil society groups, academe, and church people in various affiliations. I am confident that our forum can shed more light on the issues and that we shall be better able to take them up in our efforts at public education and mobilization.

A. Oplan Bayanihan

1. Nature and purpose of the Oplan

Like Oplan Bantay Laya, Oplan Bayanihan is a national military plan designed by the US and based on the US Counterinsurgency Guide for the vain purpose of destroying or reducing the New People's Army to inconsequentiality. But supposedly unlike Oplan Bantay Laya, which had become notorious for gross and systematic violations of human rights, Oplan Bayanihan is designed to be more emphatic on psywar and intelligence work, without lessening combat operations but making them more effective through psywar and intelligence work.

The basic premise of the US Counterinsurgency Guide and Oplan Bayanihan is that a regime can defeat a revolutionary movement by being credited for good governance, being clean on the straight path, and efficiently delivering services to the people. Even if untrue, claims of economic success are important in psywar and far more important than undertaking peace negotiations, which are considered dispensable and which may be undertaken only for the purpose of psywar.

2. The key role for Aquino

As campaign financiers in 2010, the biggest foreign and domestic businessmen chose Aquino to become the president and play the key role in Oplan Bayanihan. He enjoyed a honeymoon of more than three years with the bourgeois mass media, which touted him as the paragon of a clean, honest and efficient government and as the miracle maker of an economy growing fast and bubbling with hot money from abroad.

In coordination with the military, the key civilian agencies of Aquino in combining psywar and intelligence work against the revolutionary movement are the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP), the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) Secretary, and the National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC) Chairman. They are in charge of deploying the dole outs under the Conditional Cash Transfer and the PAMANA funds in a futile attempt to undermine the mass base of the revolutionary forces and get intelligence at the community level about revolutionary fighters, mass activists and their families for the purpose of enticing them with payments, similar to those under the Amnesty and Rehabilitation Program under Cory Aquino and Ramos.

3. Unraveling of the Aquino regime

The false image of Aquino and his regime as clean, honest and efficient has unraveled. It began when the Napoles pork barrel scam related to the Priority Development Assistance Fund became exposed, uncovering Aquino as the pork barrel king who disburses for his personal gain and political advantage public funds in the Disbursement Acceleration Program and so many other lump-sum appropriations under his sole discretion.

Causing the Aquino regime to further unravel has been the disappearance of calamity funds and the failure of the regime to make pre-disaster preparations and to provide prompt and adequate rescue and relief assistance to the millions of victims of super typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda). The OPAPP, DSWD and NAPC have become notorious

for bureaucratic corruption rather than for promoting peace, aiding people in distress, and fighting poverty.

B. Prospects for peace

1. Sabotage of the peace process

At the very first formal meeting of the GRP and NDFP negotiating panels in Oslo in February 2011, the GRP attacked The Hague Joint Declaration as a document of perpetual division. The NDFP pointed out that said declaration had been the framework agreement making possible more than 10 major agreements, including the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL). The GRP proceeded in 2012 to declare the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG) as inoperative.

It has refused to release the political prisoners protected by the JASIG and the hundreds of political prisoners imprisoned by the Arroyo regime in violation of CARHRIHL. Absolutely ruthless and devoid of any human empathy, it has proceeded to imprison indefinitely more political prisoners. The NDFP cannot trust a regime that does not know how to respect agreements. When offered the possibility of truce and alliance or cooperation on the basis of a general declaration of common intent, the regime demanded surrender under the guise of “unilateral simultaneous indefinite ceasefires”, without reference to the agenda stipulated in The Hague Joint Declaration.

2. NDFP commitment to peace process

The NDFP remains committed to the peace negotiations in accordance with The Hague Joint Declaration and further agreements, despite the bad experience of negotiating with the Estrada, Arroyo, and Aquino regimes. The most important reason of the NDFP for persevering in the peace negotiations is to seek the solution of the basic social, economic, and political problems that victimize the people in their millions.

There is no significant indication whatsoever that the Aquino regime is interested in resuming the formal talks in the peace negotiations with the NDFP. Therefore, what the people need to do is to hasten the removal of the Aquino ruling clique from power and demand the commitment of the next president to resume the formal peace talks.

3. Crisis Requires the peace process

For the sake of the Filipino people, the peace negotiations must be resumed, especially in the face of the protracted and worsening crisis of the world capitalist system and the domestic ruling system. The people are already suffering a high rate of unemployment, soaring prices of basic goods and services, decreasing and deteriorating social services, widespread poverty and misery. The illusion of economic growth bloated by hot money will soon burst and the people will suffer far more than they do now.

The successful advance of the peace negotiations is not an impossibility. The peace process is a matter of building on what has been achieved. It has already succeeded in producing a substantive agreement, the CARHRIHL, within the framework of The Hague Joint Declaration. It is possible to have a comprehensive agreement on socioeconomic reforms, with land reform and national industrialization as the key provisions. It is also possible to have a comprehensive agreement on political and constitutional reforms, with national independence and people's democracy as the key provisions. On the basis of these substantive agreements, then it is possible to agree comprehensively on the end of hostilities and disposition of forces. The people must be aroused, organized and mobilized to demand the resumption of peace negotiations.

C. Prospects of environment justice

1. Environmental crisis in Mindanao

Nationwide, we see the wanton plunder of the natural resources and the destruction of the environment. The Philippines now has the second-lowest forest cover in the whole of Southeast Asia. The deforestation had been going on since the Spanish era in Luzon and Visayas, but in the past century has been principally caused by the operations of logging, agribusiness, and mining companies especially in Mindanao.

As of 2003 (the latest year for which official forestry data are available), the total remaining forest cover nationwide has gone down to just below 21 per cent. It is even worse in Mindanao where forest cover is only 15.2 per cent. The resultant loss of forest cover has left rural and urban communities alike more vulnerable to typhoons, constant soil erosion, landslides, heavy silting of rivers and lakes, biodiversity loss and diminished wildlife, and urban overheating.

The use of open pit mining and large amounts of chemicals to accelerate extraction of minerals, including magnetite or black sand mining along the coasts, have aggravated soil erosion and the poisoning of the streams, rivers, lakes and coastal waters at the expense of the peasants and fishermen. The expansion of plantations for the

production of bio-ethanol and such products for export like fruit, rubber and palm oil have involved excessive use of chemicals and grave imbalances in land use to the detriment of the environment and staple food production.

2. Responsibility for the crisis

The foreign multinational firms and their big comprador and high bureaucrat allies are mainly responsible for the destruction of the environment in the Philippines. The Aquino regime is reprehensible for emboldening illegal logging, unrestricted mining and the rapid expansion of plantations. It has consistently upheld the pro-foreign Mining Act of 1995, and has encouraged the influx of big foreign mining firms in Mindanao side by side with the militarization of mining areas. The regime made a show of declaring a so-called total log ban in natural forests. But in reality it has made numerous exemptions and even tolerates outright illegal logging by the AFP-CAFGU and local government units such as in the PICOP and Forest Research Institute areas.

The imperialist powers headed by the US are responsible, both historically and in current volumes, for the carbon emissions that are causing global warming. Natural disasters caused both by extreme weather events such as cyclones, and slow-onset hazards such as coastal flooding, have become more frequent and destructive because of the global warming.

Third world countries like the Philippines, which did not produce the bulk of greenhouse gases, are more vulnerable not only because they are directly in the path of tropical cyclone belts and overheated ocean currents but also because underdevelopment hinders their capacity to cope with disasters. The super typhoon Yolanda was definitely maximized by the warming of the Pacific Ocean.

As shown by the measly outcomes of the recent COP-19 climate talks in Warsaw, the imperialist powers stubbornly resist the Third World demand for them to compensate the victims of the natural disasters generated by global warming. They impose on the world the use of fossil fuel and retain the privilege of emitting carbon dioxide. For these reasons, it is but right for the oppressed peoples of the world to view the issue of climate change and its disastrous impacts as one of environmental injustice imposed by imperialism instead of being just a natural phenomenon that all countries face in equal measure.

It is true that the people, especially the most impoverished sections of the workers and peasants, are desperate enough to eke out a living in the margins at the expense of ecological balance and safe and healthy living conditions. But it is the height of callousness for the Aquino regime to put the blame on them for environmental problems and for living in disaster-prone areas, and even forcibly demolish and relocate their communities on that alibi. The broad masses of the people are the victims, not the culprits, of environmental injustice aggravated by human rights violations.

3. Attainment of environmental justice

For so long as the Philippines remains semicolonial and semifeudal, the imperialist powers and the reactionary puppets will continue to subject the Filipino people to environmental injustice. The way for the people to attain environmental justice is to struggle for national independence, democracy, social justice, development and international solidarity with the people of the world. But even now, we should be conscious of the need to stop the ruin of the environment and the wanton outflow of our precious nonrenewable resources, especially mineral ores, and do whatever is possible in this regard.

By gaining national and social liberation, a truly empowered Filipino people can prevent the plunder of natural resources and destruction of the environment. We can ban the imperialist and big comprador-landlord firms from taking away the natural resources as fast as they can while leaving the country more underdeveloped and the masses more impoverished than ever before. It becomes possible to protect and manage our natural resources and use them wisely by processing them for national industrialization and to support agricultural and all-sided rural development on the basis of agrarian reform.

With national industrialization and agrarian reform generating local production and employment many more times greater than what the imperialist and comprador-landlord firms can offer, it also becomes feasible for our people to adopt more ecologically wise methods of production, implement environmental protection, avoid geo-hazards, and cope with disasters more effectively through mass mobilization.

There is a direct link between the struggle for peace and the struggle for environmental justice. In fact, we have always said that the only basis for a genuine and lasting peace is on the basis of justice brought about by substantial social, economic, and political reforms. Fighting for environmental justice means struggling for such comprehensive reforms, towards a just and lasting peace.

Organized by the ILPS-Netherlands in Amsterdam

June 6, 2014

I wish to discuss with you how US imperialism has imposed itself on the Filipino people and violated their national sovereignty and thwarted their aspirations for democracy, social justice and development since 1898 by military, political, economic and cultural means.

In this connection, I wish to discuss first how monopoly capitalism or modern imperialism arose as the final stage in the development of capitalism and how the era of imperialism began. Monopoly capitalism is parasitic, decaying and moribund, opening more widely than before the possibility of socialism. In being imperialist, it is emphatically violent and aggressive in repressing revolution and in acquiring economic and political territory abroad.

As early as the middle of the 19th century, from 1848 to 1868, England showed at least two major characteristics of imperialism: its possession of vast colonies and its industrial monopoly by which it could draw monopoly profits or superprofits. It was the first among the capitalist countries in which free competition capitalism developed into monopoly capitalism as the dominant force in the economy.

However, it would be in the last three decades of the 19th century that several countries, including the US, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and Russia, would see the development of free competition capitalism to monopoly capitalism. Altogether with England, they manifested the five features of imperialism. The fifth feature, which is the completed division of the world by the capitalist powers, directly set the stage for imperialist wars:

1. the dominance of capitalist monopolies in the economy;
2. the merger of industrial and bank capital and the emergence of the finance oligarchy;
3. the greater importance of the export of surplus capital than the export of surplus commodities as the means to obtain superprofits;
4. the alliances and counter-alliances of cartels, syndicates and trusts on an international scale;
5. the completion of the division of the world by the great capitalist powers, covering underdeveloped or less developed countries or areas as economic territory (sources of cheap raw materials and cheap labor, captive markets and fields of investment) and as political territory (colonies, semi-colonies, protectorates, dependent countries and spheres of influence).

For a monopoly capitalist power, a certain country or area abroad becomes a more reliable economic territory when it is also a political territory acquired through military intervention or aggression. The newcomers in the colonial game like the US had to engage in acts of aggression in their emergence as imperialists. In comparison to the Western imperialist powers, Russia and Japan had developed monopoly capitalism to a lesser extent but aggressive use of military power enabled them to acquire territories from which to extract monopoly profits.

Then as now, the capitalist powers try to amicably divide the world market among themselves, until their economic competition and political rivalry break out into wars. The completion of the division of the world among the capitalist powers towards the end of the 19th century laid the ground for the violent struggle among them for the redivision of the world. Latecomers in the colonial game upset the balance of forces and pushed the outbreak of wars.

Thus, the era of modern imperialism was inaugurated by wars and took final shape in the period of 1898 to 1914. The Spanish-American War (1898), the Anglo-Boer War (1899–1902), the Russo-Japanese War (1904–05) and the economic crisis in Europe in 1900 were the chief historical landmarks in the new era. Lenin categorically stated that the era of imperialism did not begin earlier than 1898 to 1900 and that neither Marx nor Engels lived long enough to see it.

1. Perpetuated US aggression

The US fully assumed the character of an imperialist power, on the basis of monopoly capitalism, when it deliberately provoked the Spanish-American War of 1898 in order to seize the colonies of Spain: Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines. In connection with said war, the US pretended to make friends with the Aguinaldo junta in Hongkong and actually brought Aguinaldo back to the Philippines on an American cutter to proclaim Philippine

independence (under the “protection” of the US) and to resume the national war of independence against Spain.

The Filipino people succeeded in liberating themselves nationwide and were about to seize Intramuros, the walled citadel of the Spanish colonizers. But the US interfered with the deployment of Filipino troops for the purpose and maneuvered to prepare for the landing of more US troops. Behind the back of their supposed Filipino allies, the US intervenor arranged with the Spanish side a mock battle on August 13, 1898 to justify the surrender of the latter to the former. It was done on the day after Spain and the US signed an armistice agreement ending the Spanish-American War.

The US and Spain forged the Treaty of Paris of December 10, 1898 in which Spain sold the Philippines to the US for the amount of USD 20 million. On December 21, 1898 US President McKinley issued the Proclamation of Benevolent Assimilation to manifest the US plan to colonize the Philippines. The US started to unleash a war of aggression against the Filipino people on February 4, 1899. This has come to be known as the Filipino-American War. The US used superior military force and extreme barbarity of more than 126,000 troops to conquer the nation of 7,000,000 people. It ruthlessly carried out massacres, the torture of captives, the reconcentration of population, scorched earth tactics and food blockades. It killed more than 700,000 or 10 per cent of the Filipino people from 1899 to 1902, directly through its brutal operations and indirectly through consequent famines and epidemics. Likewise, it proceeded to kill 800,000 Filipinos up to 1916.

To keep the Philippines as a colony, the US established military bases at various strategic points. It organized the so-called Philippine Scouts as puppet troops and subsequently converted them into the Philippine Constabulary. As a result of relentless demands of the Filipino people for national independence, the US decided as early as 1935 to make the Philippines a semi-colony in 1946 after a ten-year transition period under the so-called Commonwealth government.

The National Defense Act of 1936 was this government’s first legislative act making the puppet constabulary the First Regular Army under the direct supervision of US Army’s Philippine Department. Commonwealth president Quezon made General Douglas MacArthur the field marshal of the puppet army. The US formed, indoctrinated, equipped and trained the puppet army. On the eve of World War II, it placed this puppet army within the frame of the US Army Forces in the Far East (USAFFE).

When World War II broke out in 1941, the Japanese fascists defeated the US army in Bataan and occupied the Philippines up to 1945. To recover the Philippines as a colony, the US coordinated with the USAFFE guerrillas. Before the grant of nominal independence to the Philippines in 1946, the US imposed on the puppet Filipino leaders the Treaty of General Relations which ensured the continuance of US military bases and the property rights of US citizens and corporations. This treaty even required in advance that the diplomatic relations of the Philippines would be subject to approval by the US.

After the Philippines became a semicolony, the US perpetuated its successful aggression and continued to control the Philippine state militarily. It obtained a military assistance agreement to make the Philippine armed services dependent on US planning, training, intelligence and equipment; and a military bases agreement for US military forces to stay in the Philippines for another 99 years. It also bound the Philippines to a mutual defense pact and a US controlled regional security pact, the South East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO).

Because of its military power over the Philippines, the US has been able to dominate the Philippine economy and politics and intervene at will in Philippine affairs since 1946. It manipulated the outcome of presidential elections in favor of the candidate most compliant with and servile to US interests in the Philippines and in the region.

It instigated the Marcos fascist dictatorship in 1972 in a futile attempt to suppress the revolutionary mass movement that had emerged and developed since 1961 because of the wanton extraction of superprofits by US corporation, bureaucratic corruption and the exhaustion of the land frontier.

The Filipino people were outraged that the fascist regime could persist for so long, from 1972 to 1986, because of US military and economic assistance to it. They were also incensed by the direct and indirect consequences of US planes, ships and troops operating in and around the US bases. Thus, after the downfall of Marcos, the framers of the 1987 constitution enjoyed overwhelming popular support and took courage in adopting provisions that banned foreign military bases, troops, facilities and nuclear weapons from the Philippines. This ban was indeed the fruit of the people’s revolutionary struggle against the fallen US-instigated dictatorship.

The military bases agreement with the US was terminated in 1991 by the Philippine Senate, with the open and strong support of the national democratic movement. But since then, the US has resorted to all sorts of

maneuvers to circumvent the constitutional ban on foreign military bases. By invoking the US-RP mutual defense pact. It has used the Balikatan joint US-Philippine military exercises and interoperability training as pretext for the forward stations and rotational presence of US troops in the Philippines.

It has been able to obtain the Visiting Forces Agreement and the Mutual Logistical Support Agreement to allow the entry and stationing of US military forces anywhere in the Philippines for any duration of time. It has used 9-11 and the so-called US global war on terror to justify US military presence and intervention in the Philippines. It has also expanded the pretexts for such Intervention. These include humanitarian aid, medical mission, civic action, disaster-related aid for rescue, relief and rehabilitation; and so on.

The latest pretext of the US for further entrenching itself militarily in the Philippines is to make a strategic pivot to Asia-Pacific region and to protect the country from a putative Chinese aggression in view of the overreaching claims of China over 90 per cent of the South China Sea, encroaching on 90 per cent of the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and 100 per cent of the extended continental shelf (ECS) of the Philippines. Thus, with the servile collaboration of the Aquino regime, the US has been able to obtain the so-called Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA).

This agreement allows the US to establish military bases in an indefinite number of so-called Agreed Areas, fortified at Philippine expense, paying no rent, enjoying perimeter security from puppet troops free of charge, barring Philippine authorities from knowing things and activities inside the US military enclaves or bases and allowing US air planes and ships to come and go, with the Philippine authorities barred by the US military from knowing whether such vessels carry nuclear, chemical, bacteriological and other weapons of mass destruction. Moreover, the agreement requires the AFP to provide or facilitate access by US forces to any place whatsoever in Philippine territory that the US decides.

Despite the treason and obsequiousness of the Aquino regime in acceding to EDCA, US President Obama in his recent visit to Manila clearly declared that the US is neutral over the Philippine-China maritime dispute in the West Philippine Sea and that US policy is not to counter or contain China. In fact, the US has a dual policy of cooperation and contention with China and makes its decisions according to US national interest. At any rate, the US has far more interest in relations with China than in those with the Philippines. The people should be alert to the possibility that the US and China could agree to jointly explore and exploit the oil, gas and other natural resources in the EEZ and ECS of the Philippines.

In the face of the perpetuated aggression of US imperialism in the Philippines, the Filipino people and their revolutionary forces have adopted the line of people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war. They are waging a civil war against the semicolonial political system. At the same time, they condemn the escalating military intervention of the US in favor of the puppet regime. They are therefore prepared to wage a war of national liberation should the US unleash a full-scale war of aggression. They are not afraid of such possibility but prepare against it.. They consider it an opportunity to realize justice for the heroes martyred by US imperialism and for the suffering of the millions of people as a consequence of the direct and indirect rule of US imperialism.

II. Continuing economic plunder

The US had a strategic motive and objective for seizing and making the Philippine its colony. This was connected with the expressed desire of the US to expand the international market for its manufactures, to turn the Pacific Ocean into an “American lake” for the purpose and to have a base for launching efforts to get a share of China in the frenzy of the capitalist powers to establish spheres of influence.

The US floated bonds in Wall Street to finance its war of aggression in the Philippines. Ultimately, it made the Filipino people pay for their own military conquest through taxation. But the biggest gain for US imperialism came from the extraction of superprofits from the colonial exchange of US manufactures and Philippine raw materials as well as from the direct and indirect US investments in the Philippines. In the process, the US imperialists turned the Philippine economy from feudal to semifeudal.

US imperialism did not have to eliminate feudalism. It merely superimposed the imperialist mode of exploitation to change the total complexion of the social economy to semifeudal. In an attempt to appease the people's hatred of the landed estates owned by the foreign religious orders, the US colonial government expropriated some of them for redistribution to the peasants. But the peasants could not afford to complete payments for the redistribution price. The land eventually fell into the hands of the landlord class.

The US colonial government lifted the feudal restrictions on the physical movement of peasants. This enabled peasants to open land in frontier areas or to seek jobs in urban areas, public works and mines. Bureaucrats and landlords enticed peasants to make their homesteads in frontier areas but ultimately they claimed and registered the land as their own. Merchant usurers also followed the peasants into frontier areas and eventually became landlords.

The US colonial rule differed significantly from that of the Spanish by taking superprofits from a far greater flow of manufactured imports and raw material exports, from the chronic need to take loans to cover trade deficits and new schemes of overconsumption and from the far greater inflow of direct foreign investments. The US opened the mines, expanded the plantations for raw-material export production and established a few factories manufacturing consumer products from locally available raw materials. The roads, bridges, ports and other means of transport and communications were improved for the growing domestic and foreign trade. The system of public and private schools was developed to produce the professionals and technicians for the expanded bureaucracy and business enterprises.

In the semifeudal economy and society, the joint class rule of the big compradors and landlords (one per cent of the population) arose and replaced the singular dominance of the landlord class in the feudal period of previous centuries. The intermediate social strata of middle bourgeois and urban petty bourgeoisie expanded and would ultimately come to 1 and 8 per cent, respectively. From a few percentage points, the working class grew to 15 per cent. The peasants descended from a feudal high of about 90 per cent to its current semifeudal level of about 75 per cent.

The US economic domination of the Philippines was interrupted by the Japanese invasion and occupation during World War II. Japan's imperialist character and war of aggression prevented it from making credible its slogan of “Greater East Asia co-prosperity”. The Japanese aggressors wrought havoc and destruction on the lives, communities and properties of Filipinos. In the course of recapturing the Philippines, especially in its haste to oust the Japanese through massive bombardment, the US added to and aggravated the destruction of lives and properties. US war damage payments were made mainly to the US corporations for reestablishing US economic domination of the Philippines.

The US did not only retain the property rights of US corporations and citizens through the Treaty of General Relations before the grant of nominal independence to the Philippines in 1946 but also imposed on the supposedly independent Philippine state the so-called Parity Amendment in the Philippine Constitution. This amendment allowed US corporations and citizens to have the same rights as Filipinos in owning public utilities and exploiting natural resources. Furthermore, through the Laurel-Langley Agreement, the US extracted from the Philippines the privilege of owning and operating all kinds of businesses without restriction.

A civil war broke out in the Philippines between the reactionary forces of foreign and feudal domination and the revolutionary forces of national liberation and democracy in 1948. The demand for national industrialization and land reform became so strong that the reactionary authorities had to fake land reform in the form of land resettlement programs and token expropriation of landed estates as well as to feign national industrialization in

the form of import-substitution manufacturing which was in fact reassembly and repackaging operations dependent on licensing, financing, technical and marketing agreements with US corporations.

The Philippine economy went from bad to worse when the Marcos regime went on a spending and borrowing spree to build infrastructure and conspicuous tourist facilities and opted for the so-called export-oriented manufacturing in export-processing zones and for the export of labor in the absence of real industrial development for generating local employment. Export-oriented manufacturing is a far worse kind of pseudo-industrialization than the import-substitution manufacturing. It overprices the imported components and underprices the exported semi-manufactures. Workers are mostly categorized as casuals, apprentices or learners. They are paid substandard wages and are deprived of job security. Their trade union and other democratic rights are curtailed.

To this day, export-oriented manufacturing is misrepresented as industrial development. It has been greatly set back by the Asian financial crisis of 1997 and the global financial meltdown of 2007-08. The reassembly and export of semi-conductors and other products have plunged. What has become glossier than export-oriented manufacturing is the bubble in office and residential towers and upscale tourist enclaves, which is now about to pop because of the growing flight of portfolio investments. All regimes since the time of the puppet president Ramos have gone into a mad frenzy of opening the entire country to foreign mining companies that ruin agriculture and the environment, preempt future industrialization and take mineral ores out of the country without paying the commensurate taxes.

Philippine economic policy has always been dictated by US imperialism. In the time of Marcos, the World Bank was active in pushing a Keynesian policy of undertaking public works to promote raw-material production and the colonial exchange of raw material exports and manufactured imports and thereby diverting resources and foreign loans from what should be a line of national industrialization. The first Aquino regime drew the Philippines further away from national industrialization by following the US-dictated policy of neoliberalism and carrying out trade liberalization at the expense of both local industry and even agriculture. The Ramos regime followed up the anti-industrialization policy by channeling huge resources and foreign loans to upscale private construction and tourist facilities.

Altogether the post-Marcos regimes have been bound to exporting raw materials and labor and have been trapped within the frame of the imperialist policy of neoliberal globalization under the so-called Washington Consensus of the IMF, the World Bank (especially its private investment arm IFC) and the WTO (including its GATT predecessor). The US has used these multilateral agencies to push the liberalization of trade and investments, privatization of public assets, deregulation of social and environmental protection and the denationalization of such underdeveloped economies as the Philippines. Like their imperialist masters, the puppet regimes in the Philippines have clung to the neoliberal policy because it suits their greed, they believe that they can always shift the burden of crisis to the people and they still have to see a more powerful revolutionary mass movement to challenge them.

Under the general auspices of the WTO and the proliferation of bilateral and multilateral free trade agreements with the US and other imperialist powers, the Philippines is prevented from upholding economic sovereignty, conserving its national patrimony for the benefit of the Filipino people and undertaking national industrialization and land reform. The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, the Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement and ASEAN Economic Community are frameworks for binding the Philippines to the imperialist system of plunder and particularly to its neoliberal policy of unbridled monopoly capitalist greed.

In the face of the continuing plunder of the Philippines by US imperialism, enjoying the collaboration of the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords, the Filipino people and their revolutionary forces are committed to fighting for national liberation and democracy, realizing social justice, conserving the national patrimony and carrying out a program of development through national industrialization and land reform. They can end the underdevelopment of the Philippines only by destroying the exploitative system of big compradors and landlords subservient to US imperialism and thereby releasing the patriotic and progressive forces to undertake genuine development and achieve social justice.

III. Unrelenting puppetry of officials

Even while it carried out its war of aggression against the Filipino people, the US sought to entice leaders of the Philippine revolutionary government to surrender. This caused a split within the Aguinaldo Cabinet, between the revolutionary members like Apolinario Mabini and Antonio Luna and the capitulationists like Pardo de Tavera,

Paterno and Buencamino. But the revolutionary mass movement was too strong to be derailed by the capitulationists, who were ridiculed as *asimilistas* and *Sajonistas*.

The US aggressors carried out a brutal war of conquest to serve the interests of US monopoly capitalism. But hypocritically they declared that they came to the Philippines to “civilize” and “Christianize” the people, after more than three centuries of Spanish colonial rule and Roman Catholic proselytization.. They also claimed to have no interest in possessing the Philippines but in teaching democracy and self-government to the Filipinos, despite the success of the Filipinos in exercising democracy by building a revolutionary government and army and defeating Spanish colonialism.

They touted Jeffersonian democracy to embellish modern imperialism. With this, they were confident of being able to coopt the bourgeois liberals leading the Philippine revolution. The Filipino bourgeois liberals derived their political enlightenment from the study of bourgeois liberalism in Europe. They did not arise as the offshoot of a manufacturing bourgeoisie as in Europe. In fact, they were children of landlords, colonial bureaucrats and merchants.

The US calculated that it could rely on a growing number of political collaborators by developing the semifeudal economy of the big compradors and landlords, using the educational system and the pensionado system of sending native scholars to US universities to promote a pro-US colonial mentality and expanding the bureaucracy and businesses to accommodate those produced by the schools.

After his capture in 1901, President Aguinaldo was threatened with death and coaxed by his US captors to issue a Peace Manifesto calling on the revolutionary forces to surrender. The leaders who turned against the revolution were given positions at various levels of the US colonial government and were encouraged to form in 1901 the Partido Federal to serve the colonial regime and to help it to discourage and suppress the revolutionary resistance of the people.

Those who continued to wage revolutionary resistance were subjected to a series of draconian laws and were made to suffer torture and death by hanging and other means. Even after several years from the formal end of the Filipino-American War, the US issued in 1907 the Flag Law prohibiting the Filipino people from displaying the Philippine flag. They continued to be subjected to massacres, arbitrary detention and torture, food blockades and reconcentration.

When the US calculated that it had sufficiently broken the armed revolutionary movement and trained a large corps of puppet politicians and professionals, it allowed the Nacionalista Party to exist and call for immediate, absolute and complete national independence. The Nacionalista Party was a reformist party, committed to demanding national independence only by legal and peaceful means and sending missions to Washington to plead for an eventual grant of independence.

Consequent to the inspiration of the victorious Great October Revolution in 1917 and the dire colonial and social conditions, the modern trade union movement which started in 1902 became relatively stronger and became the basis for the establishment of the Communist Party of the Philippine Islands in 1930. The US immediately tried to suppress this party by trumping up charges of sedition against the leaders. When the Great Depression worsened social conditions in the Philippines in the 1930s and the danger of fascism was running high, the rise of the broad anti-fascist Popular Front paved the way for the release of communist leaders from prisons and internal exile.

By 1935 the US was ready to establish the Commonwealth government as a transition to a semicolonial status for the Philippines. It approved the Philippine Constitution as framed by Filipino politicians and promised the grant of national independence by 1946. The Japanese imperialists and fascists invaded and occupied the Philippines from 1941 to 1945 and pretended to be even more generous than US imperialism by swiftly granting nominal independence to a puppet Philippine republic. In the course of the inter-imperialist war, the Communist Party was able to build a people’s army against Japan (*Hukbalahap*), local organs of political power and a powerful mass movement that confiscated land from the landlords.

During World War II, the US kept a Commonwealth government in exile in Washington and directed from Australia the Filipino guerrilla forces, which swore loyalty to the US Army Forces in the Far East. It was able to recover the Philippines in 1945 and grant national independence in 1946 to a group of Filipino puppets headed by Manuel Roxas who had broken away from the Nacionalista Party and formed the Liberal Party. Thus, the Philippines became a semicolony run by puppets who served US imperialism and the local exploiting classes of big compradors

and landlords.

The US and the local exploiting classes provoked the revolutionary resistance of the people by making impositions on them in violation of national independence and the national patrimony, by nullifying land reform and other social gains made by the anti-Japan revolutionary movement and by carrying out brutal campaigns of military suppression. The backbone of the armed revolutionary movement was broken in the early 1950s. But it succeeded in calling attention to the dire semicolonial and semifeudal conditions and the need for a democratic revolution led by the working class.

It seemed as if the phoney democracy of the big comprador-landlord oligarchs could go on forever as a game of musical chairs between the Nacionalista and Liberal parties, with each party trying to replace the other in periodic elections that they monopolized. The two parties were a duopoly patterned after that of the Republican and Democratic parties in US. But the chronic crisis of Philippine society kept on worsening, exposing the inability of every regime to solve the crisis, pointing to the need for a revolution but also tempting a president like Marcos to carry out a counterrevolution.

The Communist Party of the Philippines was reestablished in 1968 as the advanced detachment of the working class under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought (or Maoism). It rectified the errors and shortcomings of the previous revolutionary movement. It put forward the general line of people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war. It considered the peasantry as the main force of the revolution in combination with the proletariat. The basic worker-peasant alliance linked itself with the urban petty bourgeoisie as a revolutionary force and further with the middle bourgeoisie against the joint class dictatorship of the big compradors and landlords.

Upon the instigation of the US, Marcos launched a fascist dictatorship under the pretext of "saving the republic and building a new society" in 1972. He sought to destroy the armed revolutionary movements of the Filipino and Moro people. He succeeded only to inflame the resistance of the broad masses of the people. Eventually, the people totally discredited, isolated and overthrew the fascist regime. Even his US imperialist master turned against him when it became indubitably clear that he was more of a liability than an asset. Fearing that the revolutionary forces could grow strong enough to overthrow the entire ruling system, the US and the local exploiting classes decided to junk Marcos and go back to the old track of pseudo-democratic regimes.

The pseudo-democratic regimes, from that of Cory Aquino to her son Benigno III, have proven to be utterly servile to US imperialism, exploitative and oppressive, corrupt and brutal. They have imposed on the Filipino people the policies of neocolonialism and neoliberalism and have inflicted extremely terrible suffering on the people. A multiplicity of reactionary parties has not proven any better than the duopoly of the Nacionalista and Liberal parties or the one-party rule of Marcos. Bureaucrat capitalism has grown worse since the Marcos dictatorship. Thus, the Filipino people and their revolutionary forces have become ever more determined to overthrow the entire ruling system and consequently end US domination in order to fully realize national and social liberation.

IV. Persistence of colonial mentality

From the very start of its colonial rule in the Philippines, US imperialism was determined to dominate and control the Filipino people culturally aside from militarily, economically and politically. It sought to capture the hearts and minds of the people by misrepresenting itself as beneficent and altruistic and making the people forget about the extreme brutality of the US war of aggression through political propaganda and through the educational and cultural system. Thus, it dramatized the arrival of hundreds of American teachers on the ship Thomas and the conversion of some US troops to school teachers in pacified areas.

The US imperialists misrepresented themselves as far more gentle and kind than Spanish colonialists whom they demonized. And yet they cleverly forged a compromise between their own cultural imperialism and the feudalism of the dominant Roman Catholic Church. The US controlled the expanding public school system and allowed the church and its religious orders to control in the main the private educational system. It propagated a conservative and pro-imperialist kind of liberalism, while the religio-sectarian schools continued religious instruction and accepted the new colonial dispensation. It suppressed the expression of patriotism and anti-imperialism by political and mass leaders, by journalists, creative writers, artists and teachers.

A pro-US kind of colonial mentality supplanted the previous pro-Spanish kind among those educated in the schools under the US colonial regime. The US colonial authorities established the pensionado system, providing scholarships to bright students for higher studies in various fields in the US. When the pensionados returned,

they propagated their adulation of the US and were assured of promotions in the educational system, bureaucracy, business and professions. The supplantation of Spanish by English as the principal medium in the schools and in government guaranteed the predominance of a pro-US colonial mentality.

But such colonial mentality could never obliterate the patriotism and revolutionary aspirations of the Filipino people. In so many ways, the people demanded national independence and democracy and condemned the US colonial regime. Formations of the working people and the intelligentsia persevered in upholding and propagating patriotic and progressive ideas and sentiments. They were reinforced and revitalized by the establishment of the Communist Party of the Philippine Islands which was avowedly guided by Marxism-Leninism and which demanded a national, scientific and mass culture.

The influences of the Great October Revolution and the revolutionary movements in China, Spain, Germany, US and elsewhere reached the Philippines, especially when the Great Depression worsened and fascist and anti-fascist movements arose in various parts of the world. The US colonial authorities tried to combine anti-communism with colonial mentality to discourage the patriotic and progressive forces. But they failed because the economic and social crisis was worsening and the threat of fascism moved the people towards the struggle for national independence, democratic rights and social justice.

During their occupation of the Philippines from 1942 to 1945, the Japanese imperialists tried to ape the US imperialists in using the schools, mass media, puppet organizations such as the KALIBAPI, the Japanese language, and other cultural vehicles to impose on the people the most colonial aspect of their culture, including their fascist ideas and practices that carried markedly feudal vestiges, even their body language (e.g. deep bowing to show respect or submission). They aroused patriotic anger among the Filipino people. Many Filipinos did not send their children to the Japanese-controlled public schools to keep them away from Japanese indoctrination.

After their reconquest of the Philippines in 1946, the US imperialists misrepresented themselves as liberators of the Filipino people even as they were clearly reestablishing their military, economic, political and cultural dominance. They showed signs of wishing to postpone the grant of nominal independence, unless their unjust impositions were accepted. They were confronted by the old merger party of the Communist and Socialist parties that had led the People's Army Against Japan and by a broad Democratic Alliance of patriotic and progressive forces that demanded national independence and resisted the imperialist impositions.

From the US grant of nominal independence in 1946, when the Philippine ruling system became semicolonial, the US tried to perpetuate a pro-US colonial mentality among the Filipinos and combined it with anti-communism. It used the dominant political parties, the schools, the mass media, the churches, the movies, pop music and stage entertainment to tout the US as the defender of democracy or distract the people from the cause of national and social liberation in the Philippines and from the advancing forces of national liberation and socialism abroad.

The political ideas and sentiments generated by the duopoly of the Liberal and Nacionalista parties were pro-imperialist and reactionary. The higher political and educational authorities directed the school administrators and teachers to adopt the curricula and syllabi that they had approved. The US granted scholarships under the Fulbright and Smith-Mundt programs to maintain its influence in key universities and the entire educational system. It also used conferences, seminars and travel grants to promote pro-imperialist and anti-communist ideas and sentiments among academics, journalists, creative writers, artists, trade unionists and other people.

The Central Intelligence Agency became most notorious, through its front foundations (Asia Foundation, PEN and Congress for Cultural Freedom), in funding and manipulating cultural organizations and activities along the pro-imperialist and anti-communist line as a major part of the US-instigated Cold War. The reactionary authorities in state and religious schools were also notorious in trying to prevent the study of the works of the intellectual and political leaders of the old democratic revolution and oppose the speeches and writings of contemporary anti-imperialists like Claro Mayo Recto.

When the mass organizations that espoused the new democratic revolution grew in strength in the 1960s and early 1970s, the US foreign aid and educational agencies and private US foundations like those of Ford and Rockefeller intensified their interference in the educational and cultural field in the Philippines. After declaring martial law in 1972, Marcos established draconian control over mass media and cultural channels, and deepened the propaganda of his fascist dictatorship through the educational system with its censored curricula and syllabi. The fascist regime and the US also started to use the World Bank to fund so-called reforms to align education to US

policies.

The post-Marcos regimes have propagated anti-national and anti-democratic ideas and sentiments along the neocolonial and neoliberal line. US cultural imperialism has become even more pronounced. While one regime after another has increasingly channeled public funds to foreign debt servicing, bureaucratic corruption and military campaigns of suppression, all have reduced appropriations for state colleges and universities in order to press them to raise tuition fees and seek assistance from the private sector and US and foreign entities.

The US and other imperialist governmental agencies and private foundations fund and direct nongovernmental or so-called civil society organizations to subvert educational and cultural institutions and attack the cultural, educational and other works of the people's national democratic movement. US agencies like the Agency of International Development, the National Endowment of Democracy, the US Institute of Peace and the like are well known for funding groups for subverting and attacking the endeavors and aspirations of the Filipino people for national and social liberation.

More than ever the Filipino people and their revolutionary forces demand and struggle for a national, scientific and mass culture and education. The cadres and mass activists are propagating this patriotic and progressive type of culture and education and contributing creatively to its advance even in the schools and other cultural institutions of the ruling system. But certainly they are most effective in the mass movement, in the people's army and in the areas governed by the people's democratic government.

V. Perspective of the Filipino people in the new democratic revolution

The Filipino people and their revolutionary forces persevere in the struggle for national liberation and democracy under the leadership of the working class and its advanced detachment, the Communist Party of the Philippines. It is precisely through the revolutionary struggle that they build their strength to overthrow the ruling system and to establish a people's democratic state system. They are prepared to fight US imperialism as it escalates its military intervention and proceeds to a full scale war of aggression.

Both US imperialism and the ruling system of big compradors and landlords cannot persist forever in the Philippines. By their own unbridled greed and terrorism under the auspices of neocolonialism and neoliberalism, they increasingly expose their unjust character and bankruptcy and drive the people to intensify their struggle for national and social liberation. After winning the new democratic revolution, the Filipino people can proceed to the socialist stage of the Philippine revolution.

The betrayal of socialism by the modern revisionists since the late 1950s, culminating in their full restoration of capitalism in their respective countries from 1989 to 1991, led to the full sway of neocolonialism in the underdeveloped countries and neoliberalism in the entire world capitalist system. Since 2007-2008 when the US and other imperialist powers were hit hard by an economic and financial crisis comparable to that of the Great Depression, the conditions of exploitation and oppression have worsened as if without end; but have at the same time driven the broad masses of the people to wage resistance.

US imperialism has undermined its position as the sole superpower by becoming overdrawn to high tech military production and wars of aggression, by making China a major partner in neoliberal globalization, by relying on cheap Chinese labor to produce consumer goods, by undercutting manufacturing and employment in the US, by accelerating the financialization of the US economy and becoming a debtor to China, Japan and a host of other countries. The full entry of China and Russia into the ranks of big capitalist powers has not strengthened the world capitalist system but has made it more cramped and more prone to the intensification of inter-imperialist contradictions.

Up to the first decade of the 21st century, China and Russia have been acquiescent to the US engaging in wars of aggression, as in Iraq and Afghanistan. But subsequently, they have become wary of US expansionism and have formed the Shanghai Cooperation Organization to countervail the growing aggressiveness of the US and NATO. They have also promoted the BRICS as an economic bloc to serve as counterfoil to US arrogance in economic, trade and financial matters. The inter-imperialist contradictions are still apparently far from breaking out into direct or indirect war between any of the big capitalist powers, notwithstanding their involvement in civil strifes, such as those in Syria and Ukraine.

In East Asia, China has moved on from being known as the sponsor of the Chinese comprador big bourgeoisie collaborating with US and other multinational firms in sweatshop operations and private construction to being a rising industrial capitalist power, involving the nationalist collaboration of both state and private monopoly capitalism. But China is still avoiding being called a full imperialist power that uses aggression to grab both economic and political territory. Even in UN peacekeeping missions, it prefers to contribute police advisors rather than military troops.

In maritime disputes over the South China Sea, China is conspicuously overreaching and potentially violent. But so far it has not engaged in any act of aggression for the purpose of subjugating any country. The submission by the Philippines of its maritime dispute with China to the International Tribunal on the Law of the Sea is a peaceful act and could be a peaceful way of resolving the said maritime dispute and similar disputes. A situation in which China can always insist on indisputable sovereignty over 90 per cent of the South China Sea is more fraught with violence.

The reactionary Aquino regime has boasted that the US will protect the Philippines from China and has allowed the US to have military bases, troops, facilities, war materiel (tanks, warships and attack planes) and even nuclear weapons on Philippine territory under the new Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement, in flagrant violation of the 1987 constitution. In fact, the US has declared neutrality between the Philippines and China over their maritime dispute. It is deliberately maintaining a dual policy of cooperation and contention towards China. It is mindful that it has far more economic, trade, financial and security interests in China than in the Philippines. Even the Aquino ruling clique has lucrative relations with Chinese mining, construction, export-processing and marketing firms.

In the meantime, the long running provocative thrust of the neoconservative policy to make the US dominant in the entire 21st century and use a broad spectrum approach to put down any imperialist rival and the more recent provocations of the US pivot to Asia against China and the US-EU-NATO expansion into the Ukraine against Russia have pushed China and Russia to sign on May 21 a 30-year \$400 billion natural gas agreement. This agreement solidifies the alliance of China and Russia against the hegemonic schemes of the US and is at the center of the most pertinent economic, financial and trade agreements and is concomitant to a greatly increased security alliance and cooperation between the two giant neighbors. The struggle for a redivision of the world among the great capitalist powers is steadily developing before the huge earthquakes break out to serve as prelude to the unprecedented rise of the anti-imperialist and socialist movements.

The Filipino people and the revolutionary forces have to grasp the complexity of the world capitalist system today and study how to avail of opportunities presented by inter-imperialist contradictions as did the Bolsheviks when there was no preceding socialist country to aid them. They must resolutely raise the level of their revolutionary consciousness and fighting capabilities. They must be determined to win the people's democratic revolution and proceed to the socialist revolution. They must be prepared to confront and counter the No. 1 imperialist enemy at every stage.

They can be confident that the turmoil of the world capitalist system, wracked by protracted, intensifying and widening crisis, is the eve of renewed anti-imperialist and proletarian revolutions on a global scale. They must rely primarily on themselves in waging revolution as they have done successfully for so long, intensify the efforts to win the solidarity and support of other peoples and revolutionary movements and take advantage of the worsening global crisis, inter-imperialist contradictions and the rise and spread of anti-imperialist and proletarian revolutions on a global scale.

By Jan Victor Ayson. June 6, 2015

I have some complex questions on the issue of Chinese expansion and the US pivot to East Asia.

1. People are wondering about the stand of the mass movement and the revolutionary movement, as well, as yours on the issue of Chinese aggression in the Kalayaan group of islands and Bajo de Masinloc in the West Philippine Sea. Kindly state your personal analysis on this issue and your personal stand.

JMS: I resolutely and vigorously oppose the aggressive acts of China, especially the occupation of the Bajo de Masinloc and the ongoing reclamations being made in the Kalayaan group of islands. I have published my position in several articles and interviews.

I agree with the revolutionary underground forces and the open legal forces of the national democratic movement that have expressed their position against China's acts of aggression which seek to grab 100 per cent of the ECS and 80 per cent of the EEZ of the Philippines.

There is a new broad alliance called PINAS which oppose the US and China for violating Philippine national sovereignty and territorial integrity. PINAS will be launched on June 8 and will spearhead the mass actions against the US and China for committing the such violations.

2. The Aquino regime and its military and political underlings have repeatedly begged for US military assistance in the Filipino nation's territorial claims. Is it possible that US intervention would sustain this nation's territorial claims?

JMS: The US has expressed a neutral position on the maritime dispute between the Philippines and China and speaks only for freedom of navigation in the South China Sea. But it has expressed support for Japan's invalid claim on Daoyu islands on the basis of previous imperialist aggression of Japan.

It has its spy satellites always in operation. It has known about China's reclamations in the West Philippine Sea since the beginning. But it has not made any timely opposition.

It is mainly and essentially interested in making its own violations of Philippine national sovereignty and territorial integrity in collaboration with its Filipino puppets. It allows China's acts of aggression and yet cites them to further entrench itself in the Philippines and reestablish US military bases under the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA).

3. China's emerging economic power is the presumed target of the US "pivot" (another English word for rebalance) from the Middle East to East Asia. Kindly state your observations on the rebalance of American military forces on East Asia as a political scientist and an international situation observer.

JMS: The US pivot to East Asia or rebalance towards deploying 60 per cent of its naval assets and 50 per cent of its ground and air assets is meant to influence China's economic, social, political, military and cultural policies and affairs in the direction of favoring a pro-US big bourgeoisie within China and restraining the trend of Sino-Russian collaboration. At the same time, the US is unwittingly pushing China to strengthen its relations with Russia. US is using Japan as a pawn to pressure China.

4. What can the Filipino people do inspite of the Filipino nation's economic underdevelopment/maldevelopment, absence of military modernization for the defense of Philippine waters (lack of planes, ships and missiles), the shameless treason of the Philippine government's highest officials, and the Chinese expansion, the US pivot to East Asia, and current international events?

JMS: The Filipino people can become more resolute and militant in carrying out the people's revolution and realize full national sovereignty, the nationalization of the economy, the development of the economy through national industrialization and land reform, boycott against the hostile powers and disable or dismantle their enterprises on Philippine territory.

There are many people already proposing that mass organizations and the people's army can take offensive actions against the enterprises of hostile powers. They say that they can disable or even dismantle such enterprises, like mines, plantations, logging, power plants, warehouses, real estate businesses, towers, commercial and financial enterprises, and so on.

Many people say that they only need to have a patriotic will, a lighter or match box and cans of petrol to disable or even destroy any unwanted enterprise. They are outraged by China's reclamations and by the basic

condonation of these by the US. They oppose the US and China trying to divide and dominate the Philippines for their respective imperialist benefit.

Because of the ever worsening crisis of the world capitalist system, the contradictions among the imperialist powers will continue to intensify and will result in opportunities for revolutionary advances. The global crisis, depression and the imperialist wars of aggression inflict terrible suffering on the people. Thus, the people are bound to rise up and take their destiny into their own hands. The movements for national liberation, democracy and socialism will resurge to a new and higher level.

Talking with Jose Maria Sison

Interview by Quincy Saul for *Counter Punch*

September 25, 2015

This is the second part of an interview which appeared earlier this month in *Counterpunch*. Read part one here: [Burning Questions: Talking With José María Sison About Climate Change, Capitalism and Revolution](#).

Quincy Saul: José María Sison, the founding chairman of the Communist Party of the Philippines (described by the New York Times as “the world’s longest running communist insurgency”) goes into detail with Counterpunch about the theories of liberation which guide him and millions of others toward the horizon of a more just and sustainable world. From Marxism to Maoism, from today’s environmental crisis to the ancestral traditions of indigenous peoples, from peace to protracted war, “one of the last real revolutionaries standing,” as Jeffrey St. Clair calls him, weighs in, – with clarity, history, vision and humor – bringing us burning answers to the burning questions of our times.

Mao once referenced the legend of “The Foolish Old Man Who Removed the Mountains” (1947): about a man who refused to believe that it was impossible to remove two mountains, and set about with his sons to dig them up by hand over generations. Today, this story reads like a parable of ecological catastrophe in China. The ecological costs of industrial development in China have been well documented by many. What are the lessons to be learned from this? If socialism must be based on further development of the productive forces, then must socialism also be so toxic? Or must we think about the development of the productive forces in a new and different way? What went wrong? What is to be done?

JMS: The Foolish Old Man Who Removed the Mountains is a parable, which is an allegory and should be understood as such. It has a precise meaning and purpose. It refers to the removal of the mountains of imperialist and feudal domination. Imperialism and feudalism are man-made social phenomena which are exploitative and oppressive to the people. They are not natural objects to be preserved as a matter of ecological wisdom. They are plunderers of both human and natural resources.

The efforts of the foolish old man and his sons to level or combat the anti-people mountains of imperialism and feudalism are presumed to be wise, even if puny and insufficient, because the mountains can no longer be as high as before, and best of all, the angels (i.e. the people) take pity and come to help themselves and really level the said mountains. Now, do not proceed to accuse Mao of becoming a theologian and transgressing materialist philosophy.

In another famous piece of Mao, he uses the mountains in a simile which you might consider literally and literarily environment-friendly. He considers that the martyrdom of heroes is as heavy as a mountain, while the death of traitors is as light as a feather. There should be no overstretch beyond the clear literary intent and no argument that Mao is against poultry projects.

The socialist revolution and construction under the leadership of Mao should not be conflated or confused with the unbridled plundering and ravaging of the environment in the rapid restoration of capitalism by the Dengist anti-socialists. In this regard, the anti-Mao bureaucratic and private capitalists have satirized Mao as a “feudal socialist”, building socialism self-reliantly and in a sustainable way but on the stagnant feudal conditions of natural self-sufficiency.

Of course, the other more raucous attack on Mao is the caricature of the Great Leap Forward as nothing but the mobilization of the people to kill the birds and let the worms destroy the crops or waste the labor power in making flimsy uneconomic backyard iron furnaces. The Great Leap Forward was in fact a comprehensive social and economic plan to develop China self-reliantly in industry and agriculture, build the communes through social organization ahead of mechanization and defeat the imperialist blockade, the Soviet revisionist abandonment of mutually agreed projects and the natural calamities.

China’s economic growth during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution averaged 10 per cent annually despite the obviously falsified data for certain years by the anti-Mao anti-socialists. The economic plan was to develop agriculture as the basis of the economy, heavy industry as the lead factor and light industry as the bridge of the two aforesaid sectors. Up to the end of socialism in China, the metabolic relationship between nature and society was well-managed and well-conditioned by the absence of the pernicious collaboration of bureaucrat

monopoly capitalism, a rising private industrial bourgeoisie and the imperialist monopoly firms.

To be brief, I recall that the Chinese comrades whom I met were proud of the forest belts created to protect Beijing from sandstorms blowing in from deserts. Now, Beijing has become the emblem of China's ecological catastrophe in the concrete forms of runaway industrial pollution of the air and water and the destruction of the forest belts by private and public construction and industrial activity without taking into account social and ecological costs.

We can sing paeans to primitive communal life and pristine nature and impute an admirable balance between nature and the nomadic clans and more settled tribes. We can actually learn much from the communal and cooperative relations developed in primitive communal society and in extant pre-capitalist indigenous communities. But we are now faced with larger populations on a national scale, the availability of science and higher technology and socialism as the shining alternative to capitalism. Socialism must be based on the further development of both the social relations and the forces of production. We must take a proletarian revolutionary stand, mobilize the masses and use science and higher technology for this purpose.

We must avail of science and technology to solve the contradictions between industrial development and the environment, between physical and mental work, between cities and countryside and between industry and agriculture. We must move away from the model of monster cities. We must prefer small and medium cities, embed them with natural parks and encircled by forests and agricultural fields. We must locate industries properly, promote rural industries reduce or eliminate altogether fossil fuel, recycle waste and filter and properly dispose of toxic waste.

QS: Toward the end of his life, Marx devoted much study to the Iroquois/Haudenosaunee people of North America, and to the Russian peasant communes. Marx wrote that "we must not be afraid of the word archaic," and said about the Russian peasant commune that "it may thus become the direct starting point of the economic system towards which modern society is tending; it may open a new chapter that does not begin with its own suicide." He valued the contributions of indigenous peoples and their relations of production, on the grounds that they could be a foundation for socialism. A bit less than a century later, in his essay "Reform our Study" (1941), Mao ridiculed the Marxist-Leninist scholars "who cannot open their mouths without citing Ancient Greece; but as for their own ancestors – sorry they have forgotten... They have become gramophones and forget their duty to understand and create new things..." All this leads me to ask you to elaborate on the many indigenous practices in the Philippines which could be the foundations for building socialism. In particular, I think of bayanihan – "communal solidarity" – (not to be confused with its opposite — Oplan Bayanihan!). We can still see its results today in the ancient rice terraces of Ifugao, where sustainable production has been practiced since before the colonizers came. Also, I think of the self-sufficient farming communities which were base areas for the rebel Dagohoy republic from 1744-1829, which also practiced a form of agro-ecological bayanihan, supporting 10s of 1000s of remontados for over 80 years. Also, I think we should not ignore the spiritual traditions of the indigenous peoples of the Philippines, who revere the nonos [spirits] from which they ask permission before removing anything – plant, animal or mineral – from its place in the ecosystem. Finally, the agrarian communities living on the slopes of Mt. Banahaw, which live in some degree of peace and cooperation in a fusion of indigenous, nationalist and European spiritual traditions... and there are surely others... Do you believe that some of these ancestral indigenous forces and relations of production can be a launching off point for socialism/communism in the Philippines, "a new chapter which does not begin with its own suicide"?

JMS: Marx once referred to the "idiocy of rural life", criticized the French rich peasant as a remnant of barbarism and contrasted the proletariat as the leading revolutionary class, for being the most progressive political and productive force, to the peasantry as representing a backward system of production and as a class that can join the p revolution for a reactionary reason, like owning individual pieces of land, against the monopoly of land by the landlords.

By way of giving a complete picture of Marx, instead of a fragmentary one, it is good that you refer to Marx devoting much study to the Iroquois/Haudenosaunee people of North America, and to the Russian peasant communes. He appreciated how much we can learn from the communal and cooperative relations in primitive societies. In fact, communists adhere to the principle that socialism is based on the non-exploitative communal and cooperative life, with the aid of science and technology and higher forms of social organization that reject capitalist control for private profiteering.

In the Preface to the Russian Editions of the Communist Manifesto in 1882, Marx and Engels wrote the

following:

“But in Russia we find face to face with the rapidly developing capitalist swindle and bourgeois landed property, just beginning to develop, more than half the land owned in common by the peasants. Now the question is : Can the Russian obshchina (village community), though greatly undermined, yet a form of the primeval common ownership of land, pass directly to the higher of Communist common ownership? Or on the contrary, must it first pass through the same process of dissolution as constitutes the historical evolution of the West? The only answer to that possible today is this: If the Russian Revolution becomes the signal for a proletariat revolution in the West, so that both complement each other, the present Russian common ownership of land may serve as the starting point for a Communist development.”

Before and during the vigorous implementation of collectivization, the peasant communes supported the advance of socialist revolution and construction. It became necessary at a certain point for the greater mass of poor peasants to do away with the profiteering by the rich peasants (kulaks) during the period of the New Economic Policy that sought to revive the Russian economy from the devastation wrought by war and to overcome the scarcities.

In the new democratic stage of the Chinese revolution, the Chinese communists gave full play to rudimentary forms of cooperation in agricultural production and sideline occupations in conjunction with land reform. Building the communes in socialist China meant rising from a certain level of cooperation to a higher one in three stages. Mao emphasized cooperative social organization ahead of mechanization, which was not yet possible. He opposed the Soviet revisionist line of Khrushchov that agricultural cooperation was not possible ahead of mechanization.

You are correct in saying that Dagohoy and his followers in the southern Philippines and the highland tribes and remontados (lowland communities that took refuge in the mountains) in northern Luzon could effectively fight the Spanish colonizers because of their self-reliant communal and cooperative relations in agricultural production and otherwise. The same situation holds true among the Lumads (indigenous non-Muslim tribes) of Mindanao. The massive rice terraces in the mountains of Ifugao as well as other marvels of productive and social life among the indigenous peoples have been possible because of communal and cooperative relations. Like bayanihan in Tagalog, all ethnolinguistic communities in the Philippines have a term for communal solidarity.

As in the new democratic revolution in China, the Filipino communists give full play to rudimentary cooperation in agricultural production and in sideline occupations in conjunction with land reform. The rudimentary forms of cooperation are already being undertaken by the communities even before land reform. But they are promoted and enhanced more vigorously in order to set the peasants free from exploitation by the landlords and the merchant-usurers. The armed revolutionaries and the people can carry a protracted people's war because of a well-diversified agricultural economy made more efficient and productive through forms of cooperation, even if still simple and rudimentary.

Right now, the communal and cooperative relations still exemplified by the indigenous people and extant in the peasant communities of the majority Filipinos or Malays are being put to effective use in the current new democratic stage of the Philippine revolution. Filipino communists respect the belief systems attached by the local communities to their productive and social cooperation. They let the masses act in the furtherance of their rights and interests and learn from social practice.

They do educate and recruit to the Communist Party the most advanced elements among the masses. But the Filipino communists take the mass line. They must learn from the masses what is their situation, their needs and aspirations. On the basis of social investigation, they learn how to arouse, organize and mobilize the people. The people may pray hard to anitos, gods, God and the saints for a better crop or good health. But they never oppose the demonstrated efficacy of an agriculturist or health worker among the revolutionaries who come to work among them.

QS: Mao writes: “Unless the problem of method is solved, talk about the task is useless.” And elsewhere: “To become both wise and courageous one must acquire a method, a method to be employed in learning as well as in applying what has been learned.” Tell us about the method of the New People's Army. They are armed, but moreover they do a great deal of economic, social, and political work; more like community organizers with guns than most people's typical idea of a guerrilla. What is their method? How was this method developed?

JMS: You can assume that the cadres and members of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) have a

certain amount of knowledge in the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, in understanding a great deal more about the general line of people's democratic revolution with a socialist perspective and how to recruit communists from the mass movement.

The New People's Army (NPA) is the main political and armed instrument of the CPP and the Filipino in defeating the enemy and seizing political power. To make sure that the NPA remain a revolutionary force of the people and is not carried away by its armed power, the CPP exercises political leadership over the NPA through the Central Committee, Military Commission and the Party organs and organizations within the NPA. The NPA unit commander has command over administration and military operations but the political officer makes sure that the Party and the political line are in command over the military.

The main task of the NPA is to undertake politico-military training and carry out offensives against the enemy. A combat unit of the NPA may be ordered to carry out battles with short rest periods for a certain period of the year, say six months. But for the rest of the year, it is required to carry out mass work which includes doing social investigation in new and old areas, carrying out propaganda and grievance meetings, helping to build mass organizations and organs of political power and participating in campaigns to carry out land reform, raise production, engage in educational work, deliver health services, train the militia and self-defense units, stage cultural performances and resolve disputes among the people.

QS: How do you navigate practically and ideologically between "not taking a needle or piece of thread from the masses," and revolutionary taxation?

JMS: Taxes are not collected from the toiling masses of workers and peasants. But voluntary contributions are collected from them as a small percentage from gains made from land reform or from wage increases as a result of trade union work. While the percentage of the gains is set, the peasant or worker can negotiate a smaller contribution or none at all when the large size of the family or a major illness in the family or a natural disaster is taken into account. In such cases, the people's government can extend relief to those in need.

Taxation is a function of the people's government and is enforced by the people's army on entities enjoying the privilege of operating a business enterprise. It is usually 4 per cent of the gross revenues of the enterprise and is merely a tiny fraction of what the reactionary government collects. Like the people's contributions, taxes are used to support the cadres, the Red fighters and mass organizers, the administrative work of the organs of political power, social programs of health care and education, cooperative production projects, disaster relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

QS: The Chinese revolution was fought and won by the peasantry. But following the victory of the revolution, the peasantry was sacrificed for the cities: Mao wrote in 1949: "From now on, the formula followed in the past twenty years, 'First the rural areas, then the cities,' will be reversed and changed to the formula, 'First the cities, then the rural areas.'" In today's planet of slums, with urbanization continuing to accelerate, would you advocate a similar strategy? Or have times changed, calling for a different method and mode of economic development?

JMS: The claims against Mao are wrong. In the period of socialist revolution and construction, Mao's leadership took into account a balanced relationship between the cities and the countryside at every given time. It deliberately prevented vagabondage, greatly improved agriculture, restricted city-bound migration and thus did not generate slums. It is the anti-socialist counterrevolution started by Deng Xiaoping that put imperialist, big comprador and bureaucrat capitalist profit at the head of China's economic development and generated the big slums of migrant and low-paid workers in China. The migrant workers gravitated towards the sweatshops on the eastern coast of China.

As you acknowledge, Mao carried out the strategic line of protracted people's war, which involved encircling the cities from the countryside where the most numerous exploited class, the peasantry, resided and where there was a wide area of maneuver for the people's army against the initially far superior enemy force. The proletariat and its revolutionary party had to go to the peasants who were the main force of the revolution and who served as the basis for the growth of the people's from small to big and from weak to strong.

In completing the victory of the people's war, the largely peasant people's army under the leadership of the proletariat seized the cities nationwide and took over the camps and vantage points of the enemy army in order to enable the revolutionary party and the people to take over the industrial plants and other economic resources concentrated in the cities. This was the reason for the shift in emphasis from the countryside to the cities in terms of running the national government and leading the economy of the entire country. The Chinese Communist Party

led by Mao paid back its debt of gratitude to the peasant masses and the countryside in so many ways.

Land reform was completed nationwide for the benefit of the peasant masses through the cooperation of state power and mass mobilization. The imperialist and big comprador firms that used to ravage the peasant masses and natural resources were nationalized under the socialist system. Learning from the pioneering experience of the Soviet Union in socialist industrialization, China maintained agriculture as the basis of the Chinese economy in order to ensure self-reliance in food and some raw materials. The development of light industry was accelerated in order to provide basic consumer and producer goods to the peasant masses and to lighten the burden of providing food and raw materials for the workers in heavy and basic industries.

QS: Mao wrote famously that “The Aim of War is to Eliminate War... We are advocates of the abolition of war, we do not want war; but war can only be abolished through war, and in order to get rid of the gun it is necessary to take up the gun.” Please tell us your perspective about the peace talks, mediated by the Norwegians, which are still underway. What are your hopes for the resolution of the war and/or for the revolutionary war?

JMS: From the viewpoint of the revolutionary forces and the Filipino people, the civil war raging in the Philippines for more than 46 years can be ended by a clear victory of the new democratic revolution through a protracted people's war or by a negotiated just peace addressing the roots of the civil war and based on comprehensive agreements on social, economic and political reforms. The National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) has demonstrated that it can make with the Manila government an agreement, like the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law.

But the Manila government is so bound up with the US-dictated neoliberal economic policy that it has refused to make a Comprehensive Agreement on Social and Economic Reforms, with national industrialization and land reform as the core program. Under US advice, the Manila government has boasted so often that it can destroy or render the armed revolutionary movement irrelevant and that it has no use for negotiations except to obtain the surrender of the people's army.

The revolutionary forces and the Filipino people represented by the NDFP expect that while their revolutionary strength keeps on growing and the crisis of the world capitalist system and the domestic ruling system keeps on worsening, the reactionary rulers will find it necessary to engage in sincere and serious peace negotiations. The NDFP continues to cooperate with the Norwegian government third-party facilitator and a broad range of peace advocates in trying to bring the Manila government to the negotiating table.

QS: At the beginning of this year, Pope Francis came to the Philippines. The whole world watched when 12 year old Glyzelle Palomar asked the Pope: “Many children get involved in drugs and prostitution. Why does God allow these things to happen to us? The children are not guilty of anything.” The Pope called it “a question for which there is no answer.” How would you respond to Glyzelle?

JMS: I would respond to Glyzelle in the following manner: The biggest criminals in the Philippines are the big compradors, landlords and corrupt bureaucrats who assist the US and other imperialist powers in plundering the human and natural resources of the country, taking out superprofits and making the Filipino suffer underdevelopment, mass unemployment and widespread poverty. Under these conditions, the anti-social crimes of drug trafficking, prostitution and abuse of children are thriving, with the complicity of corrupt government officials and the military and police forces.

The Filipino people and their revolutionary forces can undertake certain measures to punish both the upscale and street criminals. And they are in the best position to eliminate criminal activities upon the complete victory of the new democratic revolution. This revolution realizes full national independence, democracy, social justice, development through national industrialization and land reform, a patriotic and progressive culture, protection of the environment and promotion of international solidarity of peoples for peace and development.

QS: On the theme of culture, in our previous interview, you recommended Mao's lectures at Yen'an. In those lectures, Mao said that one central goal in cultural work is to seek a unity between higher standards and popularization... can you give us some recommendations of cultural work which lives up to this ideal? “A dull witted army cannot defeat the enemy,” as Mao said. So also, please tell us about the cultural work of the NPA/NDFP/CPP.

JMS: Mao states in Talks at Yen'an Forum on Literature and Art: “What is meant by popularizing and by raising standards in works of literature and art? What is the relationship between these two tasks? Popular works are simpler and plainer, and therefore more readily accepted by the broad masses of the people today. Works of a higher quality, being more polished, are more difficult to produce and in general do not circulate so easily and quickly

among the masses at present.”

In the above quotation, Mao assumes what he states earlier that revolutionary literature and art are for the workers, peasants and soldiers (Red Fighters). Then, he proceeds to distinguish popular works and works of a higher quality. He uses popularization through popular works as the ground level for raising the level of literature and art in various forms.

We can cite as popular works, those which are simpler and plainer and more readily accepted by the broad masses of the people, like the declamatory poems and songs, drawings on posters, the graffiti on walls, effigies, short stories, skits and one-act plays, flag dances and short films that have been staged during mass protests, workers’ strikes and peasant grievance meetings. We can cite as works of higher quality, those which are more polished and more difficult to produce and circulate, such as novels, epics or whole volumes of poetry, opera, long plays, oil paintings, sculptures and feature films.

The popular works are in great abundance in both the legal mass movement and in the armed revolutionary movement in the countryside. In the latter case, units of the New People’s Army sharpen their fighting will with their own cultural works. Like the mass organizations, they entertain, enlighten and inspire their rural audiences with songs, dances, poetic recitations, skits and film shows. The popular works are effective for propaganda and agitation because they are addressed to the toiling masses, take up the burning issues and call on the masses to rise up. The works of higher quality are also of significant number. They are appreciated by the cadres and masses with a higher level of formal education and by allies who are highly educated in art and social issues,

There are popular works which are of high quality like the poems of Mao. Let me mention the poems of National Artists Amado V. Hernandez, Bienvenido Lumbera and many other poets. Revolutionary poems, which are considered masterpieces by teachers of literature, have been popularized by recitations or as songs with rousing music. I am fortunate to have some poems of mine become songs with excellent music. There are also revolutionary works of high quality which are popular and difficult to create. These include musicals like *Ang Mandirigma Ay Makata* (The Guerrilla Is a Poet), oil paintings of the social realists and feature films which are shown in movie houses or are already available on DVD.

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On the Purpose and Cost of Armed Struggle

Interview by Oliver X.A. Reyes and Erwin Romulo

July 13, 2017

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ESQUIRE: During what precise period were you directly involved in the leadership of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP)-New People's Army (NPA)? What was your role in the organization after your release from imprisonment in 1986 and for how long did that role last? What is your current position, if any, with the CPP-NPA?

JOSE MARIA SISON: I was the Chairman of the Central Committee of the CPP and was the over-all political officer of the NPA from the respective founding dates of the two organizations to the date of my capture by the Marcos fascist dictatorship on November 10, 1977. Since my release from military detention in 1986, I have been an academic and writer and called the Founding Chairman of the CPP by many journalists, without any objection from me because of the historicity of the title. Sometimes, I have been called the spiritual icon of the revolutionary movement. But more humbly speaking, I have been the Chief Political Consultant of the National Democratic Front Philippines (NDFP) in peace negotiations since 1992.

The Dutch courts and the European Court of Justice ruled in 2007 and 2009 respectively that I do not operate or run the CPP and NPA. In April 2013, the Government of the Philippines (GRP) through its presidential adviser on the peace process and negotiating panel chairman proclaimed that I have no influence over the CPP, NPA, and NDFP and thus decided to terminate the peace negotiations with the NDFP Negotiating Panel that is based in The Netherlands.

ESQ: What must the government do in order to resume the peace talks? What new steps would the NDFP be willing to take to enable the peace talks to resume?

JMS: The resumption of peace talks is possible. The position of the NDFP is that in principle the peace negotiations are still going on in the absence of a formal notice of termination from the GRP. The GRP can simply contact the NDFP directly or through the Royal Norwegian Government to express its desire to resume formal talks. Formal talks are done by the Negotiating Panels of the GRP and the NDFP. The NDFP does not set preconditions for such talks even as it demands compliance with existing agreements. The NDFP does not have to do anything but to wait for the approach of the GRP. It was the GRP last April which announced to the press that it was terminating the peace negotiations. At the same time, it has not given the formal notice of termination either because it arrogantly rejects all the previous agreements or it gives space for resumption of talks.

ESQ: In Latin America, many unapologetically leftist candidates have made successful presidential runs, such as Chavez of Venezuela, Morales of Bolivia, Correa of Ecuador, and even Lula of Brazil. Do you think it is possible for a candidate with a similar ideology to succeed under the prevailing electoral framework in the Philippines? Why do you think those candidates in Latin America were able to gain power through the ballot?

JMS: It is possible to have anti-imperialist and progressive presidents in the Philippines like the late Chavez, Morales and others if the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations succeed in making comprehensive agreements on social, economic, and political reforms to establish a just peace. But at the moment, the unreformed political and electoral system prevents anti-imperialist and progressive presidential candidates. Revolutionary observers say that Chavez, Morales, Correa and Lula have been successful in elections within the ruling system of the big bourgeoisie and the landlords because they are not Left enough to frighten the US and the local reactionary classes although they are Left enough to get the votes of the workers and peasants by asserting a certain measure of national independence and some social reforms. At any rate, the NDFP has been trying hard to create conditions similar to those in Venezuela and other countries in which patriots and progressives are not killed by the reactionaries but are elected by advocating national independence, democracy, social justice, development through land reform and national industrialization and a patriotic and progressive culture.

ESQ: Do you think that an anti-imperialist and progressive candidate could be democratically elected as President within the next 20 years?

JMS: Yes, within 20 years, there is more than enough time for the crises of the ruling system and global

system, the relentless struggle of the people for national liberation and democracy and the peace negotiations to generate conditions for the election of a President who is anti-imperialist and progressive, as in the countries of Latin America that you have mentioned.

ESQ: You were noted for steering the Philippine communist movement away from Soviet ideology in favor of Maoist thought. How would you characterize the current Chinese leadership's adherence to communist ideology or the ideals of Mao?

JMS: The post-Mao leadership in the Chinese Communist Party is the product of the Dengist counter-revolution and the fundamental shift from the socialist road to the capitalist road. By certain measures, China has become a major capitalist power. The post-Mao leadership in China does not really adhere to the revolutionary teachings of Mao and the previous great communist thinkers and leaders. But the prestige of Mao and the Communist Party in revolutionary times is being used by the current capitalist leaders of China to legitimize their rule.

ESQ: You wrote Philippine Society and Revolution under the name Amado Guerrero. Are there any of its organizing premises which you think are no longer applicable today?

JMS: The basic description of Philippine society as semicolonial and semifeudal, the need for a people's democratic revolution, the workers, peasants, and urban petty bourgeoisie as the motive forces of the revolution, the big compradors and landlords as the main adversaries and the socialist perspective of the revolution remain valid. I do not engage in nitpicking on my own work. The basic propositions remain valid. The US and local exploiting classes would not be so much bothered about the people's democratic revolution if this has lost its validity. The bankruptcy of the neoliberal economic policy has brought about a crisis that is comparable to the Great Depression and is generating social turmoil, wars of aggression and revolutionary wars on a global scale.

ESQ: Philippine Society and Revolution strongly articulates the imbalance of Philippine-US relations, as they had existed since 1898. However, with the withdrawal of the US bases and the lapse of highly imbalanced laws such as the Parity Act, the degree of intervention of the United States in Philippine affairs has seemingly decreased. Would you dispute that assessment?

JMS: Serious contradictions, not just imbalances, have characterized the relations of the US with the Philippines and the Filipino people. The US remains in control of the Philippine economy, politics, military and culture at the expense of the broad masses of the people. Even without the flagrant US military bases, the US has controlled the puppet regime and the Philippine armed forces and the police through advice, training, military supplies, and other means. Since the so-called US war on terror and more so since the so-called US pivot or strategic shift to East Asia, the US has been desirous of having more than forward stations inside Philippine military facilities. It is aiming to establish US military bases. At any rate, US air and naval vessels are patrolling the Philippines and its surrounding seas more frequently under various pretexts. Since the economic reconstruction of Japan and Europe in the 1960s, the US has taken cover under multilateral economic and trade agreements, aside from bilateral ones, to continue dominating the Philippine economy and in effect even Philippine politics and culture. The US controls the Philippines through bilateral arrangements and through such multilateral agencies as IMF, World Bank, and WTO.

ESQ: The Canadian academic Dominique Caouette has been quoted as saying about the CPP-NPA-led armed struggle: "There was never one Philippine Revolution but several revolutions ongoing at the same time." Do you agree with this assessment?

JMS: The Philippine revolution is being waged simultaneously in various ways: politically, economically, socially and culturally. However, these ways are interrelated and coordinated even if distinguishable from one another. You can ask Caouette whether he agrees with me. The people's war answers the central question of revolution, which is to seize power. Even before nationwide seizure of power, local organs of the people's democratic government are already being established to displace the reactionary government. Socioeconomic revolution is going on through genuine land reform, promoting cooperative production and favoring Filipino-owned industries. The cultural revolution is going on. It is advancing the cause of a national, scientific and people-serving cultural and educational system. Revolutionary educators, writers and artists, scientists and technologists, and other cultural workers and the great mass of activists of the national democratic movement are waging a cultural revolution.

ESQ: What concrete products of this cultural revolution have had a marked impact on Philippine public life over the

last few decades?

JMS: Since the 1960s, the cultural revolution along the national democratic line has continued inside and outside the schools and other institutions. It has popularized mass actions (the parliament of the street) to call for substantive change. It created the First Quarter Storm of 1970 which presaged the EDSA uprising that overthrew the Marcos dictatorship. It has brought forward a new democratic type of thinking and mass activity in the progressive party list groups, in the trade unions and other mass organizations, in the professions and, of course, in the armed revolution. It has promoted the national language and literature as well as the regional languages and literature. It has generated thinkers, writers, artists, scientists, and technologists who are committed to serve the people.

ESQ: One of the defining characteristics of the Maoist revolutionary model was the adoption of armed guerrilla tactics. It is an approach that inevitably leads to deaths among guerrilla fighters, the military, and civilians caught in the cross-fire. When you think about the thousands of fighters and civilians who had lost their lives since the 1960s, what thoughts cross your mind?

JMS: My thoughts go to the Bible, which says that just war can be waged against injustice, oppression and tyranny. The daily violence of exploitation goes on even when the exploited people are not resisting. When people wage people's war or guerrilla warfare, they have hope and have a chance of winning. The Filipino people celebrate the revolutionary wars against Spanish colonialism, US imperialism and Japanese fascism. Violence from the oppressed and exploited comes after the fact of violence from the imperialists, the big compradors, the landlords and corrupt government officials to accumulate wealth and cause poverty and hunger and deprive the people of timely and sufficient medical care. Those who accumulate wealth and power control the Philippine state. With the support of the US, they use organized violence (military, police, the courts and prisons) to preserve and protect their privileges against the people. It is said that tens of thousands have been killed in the current civil war in the Philippines since 1969. More than 90 per cent of them have been killed by the military, police and paramilitary forces of the reactionary state. They tend to kill many because most of the time they do not know who are the revolutionaries. Most of the victims are individuals and people who are merely suspected of being revolutionaries or of aiding the revolutionaries. It is not true that people are being killed merely in the crossfire. They are killed by the reactionary armed forces cold-bloodedly or in blind rage.

ESQ: Were you involved in any incidents wherein you had to take part as an armed combatant? How did those experiences (or those experiences of comrades) bear impact on the preferred strategies then of armed combat?

JMS: Whenever I expressed the wish to join a combat operation, the most responsible Party comrades and Red commanders dissuaded me from joining because supposedly my role was not in combat. But I was in the midst of firefights a number of times because our camp was attacked by the enemy forces. During camping and in marches, I simply had to share weal and woe, and the risks with the Red fighters. I took active part in politico-military training for the Red commanders and fighters of the New People's Army and in planning and reviewing tactical offensives. We learned from each other how to carry out tactical offensives in line with the strategy of people's war. I joined the military exercises, including the analysis and simulation of a major tactical offensive. My favorite part in military exercises was to demonstrate how to shoot accurately with the rifle. I was a marksman in ROTC.

ESQ: Have you had the opportunity to encounter or communicate with a family member of a soldier who had died because of the armed conflict? If you had, what was that encounter like?

JMS: I have been approached by close relatives of those held as prisoners of war by the New People's Army and I have helped them to the best of my ability. But I have not been approached by any family member of a soldier killed in the civil war. But if I were approached, I would express sympathy at a personal and humanitarian level. If the soldier came from the working class and peasantry, I could be tempted to say that he should have fought on the revolutionary side. But I would not yield to the temptation of moralizing or lecturing because it would run counter to the expression of sympathy and would be overstating the obvious that the exploited sometimes join the reactionary army because they have no other job opportunity.

ESQ: For many, the defining statistic of the armed struggle has been the number of lives lost. How would you convince them that despite that statistic, there was a point to the armed struggle, or that there is a purpose for it to continue?

JMS: I think that it is the system of oppression and exploitation that engenders the revolutionary armed

struggle of the oppressed and exploited. The people fight back the more they are subjected to oppression and exploitation. Thus, the armed strength of the NPA has grown from the level of 6,100 high-powered rifles to nearly 10,000 contrary to the false claims of the Arroyo and Aquino regimes that the NPA has been reduced to only 4000 from a level of 25,000 in 1986. More people are joining the armed revolution because they abhor the daily violence of exploitation and the gross and systematic violations of human rights. These are being committed with impunity by those in power. Like our revolutionary forefathers, our revolutionary contemporaries fight even harder because of the killing rampages of their enemy with superior military power.

ESQ: You are on record as saying that there have been hundreds of false charges made against you, many in connection with alleged killings of members of the NPA through purges made in the 1980s. Do you believe that these charges were made in connection with perceived split within the revolutionary movement by leaders that you have criticized such as Romy Kintanar and Popoy Lagman?

JMS: I was under maximum military detention from November 10, 1977 to March 5, 1986. From the time I was released, I became preoccupied with public speeches, academic lectures and press interviews until I left the Philippines on August 31, 1986. No chance for me to be involved in any of the wrongful killings, which were ascribed to Romy Kintanar and Popoy Lagman among others. But certain anti-communist quarters inside and outside of the reactionary armed forces deliberately try to confuse people by mixing up Kampanyang Ahos and other bloody witch-hunts of the 1980s with the Second Great Rectification Movement, which condemned and repudiated these crimes. The rectification movement was a campaign of ideological and political education within the CPP from 1992 to 1998 in order to correct major ideological and political errors which resulted in certain setbacks and even crimes.

ESQ: How would you define the degree of care that armed units of the CPP-NPA have taken in the protection of human rights, especially of civilians caught in conflict or of soldiers who have been captured? What actions should the current NPA take in response to the recent shooting of the wife of Vice-President Guingona by alleged members of the NPA?

JMS: The Red commanders and fighters of the NPA are sworn to uphold, defend and promote the human rights of the people. They are bound by the principles and policies of the CPP, NPA and NDFP in this regard. These include the Three Rules of Discipline and Eight Points of Attention, the Geneva Conventions and its Protocols and the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law. The Red commanders and fighters cannot preserve their strength and win battles against the military superiority of the reactionary armed forces if they do not protect the national and democratic rights of the people. They have political superiority over the reactionary army because they are the best sons and daughters of the people, they fight for the workers and peasants and have the inexhaustible support of the people. The CPP, NPA and NDFP have already declared that there was a misencounter between an NPA checkpoint force and the security force of Mrs. Guingona as mayor, because the latter had refused to stop and had run over the NPA checkpoint. They have expressed regrets and have apologized to the Guingona family. Nevertheless, the NDFP Negotiating Panel has learned that further investigations are being made in order to test the previous findings and conclusions.

ESQ: The matter of "revolutionary taxes" exacted by the NPA on political candidates or business enterprises in the countryside has been often reported in Philippine media. What had been the justification for such a practice, and should that practice continue to this day?

JMS: The people's democratic government has repeatedly made clear that it does not impose any tax on any candidate in the reactionary elections. The CPP has denied the claims of the reactionary government and other anticommunist entities that tax is imposed on electoral candidates. As a matter of united front policy, the revolutionary movement tolerates the electoral struggle of patriotic and progressive groups and elements. The people's democratic government taxes permissible businesses. Taxation is a function of the people's government. The tax revenues are used to finance the costs of administration, defense, land reform work, production assistance education, health work, cultural activities and other social services provided by the people's democratic government and the mass organizations.

ESQ: How do you feel today about the so-called Declaration of Autonomy of the Manila-Rizal Regional Committee of the CPP? Is there a possibility of reconciliation or unification with the other perceived ideological-left movement represented by Akbayan? What accommodations in ideology should materialize in order that such reconciliation could happen?

JMS: The Second Great Rectification Movement and the consequent intensified mass work by the revolutionary forces in both urban and rural areas overcame all the wrecking operations done by elements who separated from the CPP and later exposed themselves fully as special agents of the reactionary government. The Popoy Lagman group became an even smaller and inconsequential group serving as organizers of yellow unions and bourgeois politicians. Those previously misled by that group have returned to the CPP as early as 1994 according to reliable reports. There is no basis for reconciliation or unification of the CPP with Akbayan for the simple reason that Akbayan has always made clear that it is not communist and that it is not revolutionary but reformist. I have not seen any CPP statement condemning any dropout from the CPP for joining Akbayan.

ESQ: Do you believe that the changes to Philippine society that the armed struggle fought for can occur under the framework of the current Philippine Constitution?

JMS: The NDFP is seeking political and constitutional reforms through the peace negotiations because the constitution of the reactionary government, as it is now, will not allow basic social and economic reforms. The current constitution favors the property rights and interests of the big compradors and landlords as well as the US and other multinational firms against the toiling masses of workers and peasants and even against the middle class.

ESQ: Would the revision or the adoption of a new Constitution be among your negotiating points should peace talks resume with the government?

JMS: The third item in the substantive agenda of the peace negotiations is political and constitutional reforms. The Comprehensive Agreement on Political and Constitutional Reforms shall stipulate the constitutional reforms. We can anticipate proposals to simply amend the existing GRP constitution or to use the constitutions of the GRP and the people's revolutionary government as the basis for making a new constitution.

ESQ: Bayan Muna has been an active participant in Congress since the introduction of the party-list system. How do you assess the effectivity of Bayan Muna and similarly oriented parties in the Philippine legislature? Has the legislative role of Bayan Muna have had an impact on the role and tactics of the NPA?

JMS: The representatives of Bayan Muna and other progressive party list groups, which advocate national independence and democracy, have done well in proposing patriotic and progressive bills for the benefit of the people. Some of the bills pass with a tolerable amount of amendments and other bills are not passed or are mutilated by amendments. What the progressive party list groups can do in the reactionary Congress is extremely limited. It does not have much impact on the role and tactics of the NPA by way of changing them. Definitely, it does not persuade the NPA commanders and fighters to cease fighting and join the parliamentary struggle.

ESQ: What unexpected lessons did you learn during the decade or so you lived "underground" in the Philippines?

JMS: In the 1970s, I was sure and firm about the general line of people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war. But there were unexpected lessons to learn from the variables of the situation and from the surprises that the enemy tried to pull. Forced disappearances, arrests, torture and massacres by the enemy occurred frequently and suddenly and I had to think how to avoid or counteract these and how the revolutionary forces could move forward.

ESQ: What insights, if any, have you taken from Dutch or European politics or culture that you feel would find application in the Philippines?

JMS: We can learn from the history of Europe and The Netherlands that there must be a political will to break up the feudal system and carry out the industrial development of the Philippines. The liberal democratic revolution of the bourgeoisie and the revolutionary striving of the industrial proletariat for socialism have contributed to economic, social, political and cultural development. If we can carry out genuine land reform and national industrialization, then we can create the broad base for political and cultural development. We can build a New Philippines that is independent, democratic, socially just, progressive and peaceful. Unlike the capitalist powers of Europe, we can strive to make all-round advances without engaging in colonialism and imperialism and without having a big bourgeoisie that has brought about the current crisis that is comparable to the Great Depression.

ESQ: Have you kept up with contemporary Filipino culture? What was the last Filipino movie that you had seen?

JMS: Of course, I have kept up with contemporary Filipino culture, including literature, music, dance, painting, sculpture, films and so on. I saw most recently the film *Migrante*.

ESQ: Have you thought about that first day upon your return to the Philippines? What do you see yourself doing on that first day?

JMS: I will have a big party with relatives and friends to exchange pleasantries and start renewing personal relations.

On the People's Democratic Revolution

Prof. Jose Maria Sison answers questions of host Anghelo Godino on Chapter 3 of *Philippine Society and Revolution*: Anakbayan-Europe NDLine Online School, Pinas Serye with Tito Jo, June 28, 2020

1. What are the aims of the national democratic revolution? How is it different from other revolutions that have happened throughout Philippine history?

JMS: The most important aim of the national democratic revolution is to achieve full national independence and people's democracy. The old democratic revolution of 1896 was led by the liberal bourgeoisie and was aimed at building a bourgeois democratic republic. This time the new democratic revolution is led by the working class and is aimed at proceeding to the socialist revolution in consonance with the era of modern imperialism and the world proletarian revolution.

The revolutionary leadership of the working class and its vanguard party ensures that the new democratic revolution has a socialist perspective, takes a socialist direction and is the preparation for the socialist revolution. With the peasantry as the main force of the revolution, it is certain that the main content of the democratic revolution is fulfilled with the satisfaction of the peasant demand for agrarian revolution through free land distribution. And the line is set for agricultural cooperativization and mechanization in socialist society.

2. Why is it necessary for the revolution to study the different classes in the Philippine society?

JMS: It is necessary to study the different classes in Philippine society in order to know who are the friends and who are the enemies of the revolution.

The friends of the revolution are the working class, the peasantry, the urban petty bourgeoisie and the middle bourgeoisie. They are the motive forces of the revolution.

The enemies of the revolution are the comprador big bourgeoisie, the landlord class and the bureaucrat capitalists. They are the forces of counterrevolution that wish to perpetuate the ruling system of oppression and exploitation.

3. Please discuss the different classes in the Philippines. How do we determine who is the enemy and who are our friends in struggle?

JMS: In the long course of the people's democratic revolution, the enemy classes are the comprador big bourgeoisie, the landlord class and the bureaucrat capitalists.

The comprador big bourgeoisie is the chief financial and trading agent of the US and other imperialist countries. The landlord class perpetuates private ownership of lands and subjects the peasants and farm workers to feudal and semifeudal conditions of exploitation.

The bureaucrat capitalists are the political agents of the big compradors and landlords but they have become a distinct class by accumulating power and wealth by using their governmental authority. They have gained notoriety as political dynasties wanting to perpetuate themselves in power in order to accumulate private capital and land.

The big compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists are considered the class enemies because they exploit the people, especially the workers and peasants, and they use the semicolonial state to oppress the people and keep them within the bounds of the ruling system through violence and deception.

Within the framework of the broad united front policy and tactics, the CPP refers to these enemy classes as the reactionary classes in order to focus the term "enemy" on the most reactionary clique that is in power.

The sharpening of the term is meant to take advantage of the splits and among the reactionaries and narrow the target of the revolution to the ruling reactionary clique as the enemy in a given period.

I have previously explained that the friends of the revolution are the following: a. the working class as the leading class from the new democratic stage to the socialist stage of the Philippine revolution, b. the peasantry (essentially the poor and middle peasants and the seasonal farm workers) as the main force or democratic majority of the people and c. the middle social strata of the urban petty bourgeoisie and the middle bourgeoisie).

They are the friends of the revolution because they constitute the people and are the motive forces of the revolution. Their needs and demands are expressed in the program of people's democratic revolution. And they participate in order to realize said program. Their participation in the revolution spells the growth and advance of the revolution towards victory.

4. *Why are the workers called the leading class of the revolution?*

JMS: The working class is the leading class of the revolution because it is the most advanced productive and political force among the various classes in Philippine society and in the world.

It is the class that can sustain and further develop the industrialized economy even without the bourgeoisie. It is indispensable in the development of an industrialized socialist economy.

It is the class that is capable of overthrowing the state power of the bourgeoisie and replacing it with the state power of the proletariat and fulfilling the historic mission of socialist revolution and construction.

The working class has the most developed theory for revolutionary change and the accumulated practice of leading successful socialist revolutions. The theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism encompasses philosophy, political economy and social science.

The working class has created the Communist Party as the vanguard party to focus on revolutionary theory and practice on the basis of the revolutionary mass movement. The Communist Party is the instrument of the working class for leading the revolution from the people's democratic stage to the socialist stage of the revolution.

5. *Why are the peasants the “pangunahing pwersa” or the main force?*

JMS: The peasant class (mainly the poor and middle peasants and traditional seasonal farm workers) is still the most numerous class in the Philippines and comprise the democratic majority of the people. The satisfaction of their demand for land through agrarian revolution is the main content of the revolution.

The protracted people's war in the new democratic revolution is possible in the Philippines because the peasant class has provided the people's army with the social and physical terrain as the widest area of maneuver for the people's war against the enemy that is superior in terms of military personnel, equipment and training before the people's army gains the upperhand by capturing the weapons from the enemy.

The actual social investigation and class analysis done by the CPP belies the claim of the enemy that the Philippines is already a newly-industrialized country, even without having the capability to produce industrial capital goods. The trick of the enemy is to claim that of the 45 million labor force or manpower in the Philippines 58 per cent are workers in the service sector and 19.1 per cent are workers in the industry sector. Thus, the working class is now supposedly 77.1 per cent, while the peasantry has dwindled to 19.1 per cent without the need of genuine land reform and national industrialization.

The purpose of the enemy in making the peasantry dwindle and disappear is to conjure the illusion that industrial development is already removing the ground for protracted people's war. The statistical trick of the enemy is to credit the import-dependent service sector, bloated by neoliberal financing, with the employment of most of the rural and urban oddjobbers in the informal economy who are outflows of the rural surplus population, who still maintain connections with their peasant families and who seasonally work with them during planting and harvest periods.

The bourgeoisie can further make the peasants disappear by considering the family head as the only peasant in the family, by denying the fact that every able-bodied member of the peasant household participates in agricultural work and by making no differentiation between the few whole-year farm workers who operate hacienda machines and warehouses on the hand the traditional seasonal farm workers who have existed since biblical times on the other hand.

6. *What is the Communist Party of the Philippines and what role does it play in the national democratic revolution?*

JMS: The Communist Party of the Philippines is the advanced detachment or vanguard party of the Filipino working class. It is the principal instrument of the working class for leading the national democratic revolution and then the socialist revolution. The role of the CPP is to build itself as an ideological, political and organizational instrument of the working class and to realize the class leadership of the working class in the entire revolutionary movement of the people.

As the ideological instrument of the working class, the CPP is guided by Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and has applied this theory on the history, circumstances and revolutionary practice of the proletariat and people.

As political instrument, it has formulated the general line of people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war and with a socialist perspective and has done the political work to build itself, the people's army, the revolutionary mass organizations, the united front and the revolutionary organs of democratic power.

As the organizational instrument, it has built itself organizationally under the principle of democratic centralism in order to make collective decisions on the basis of democracy.

7. *Why is it erroneous to put the principal stress on mass work in the cities instead of in the countryside? Can you elaborate on the importance and balance of organizing in the cities and in the countryside?*

JMS: As far as I know, there has never been any CPP policy to put the principal stress on mass work in the cities instead of in the countryside. The objective fact is that historically and currently the urban-based mass movement has been the source of workers and educated youth redeployed for mass work or assignment to the people's army in the countryside.

The policy of the CPP has always been to dispatch Party cadres and members and mass activists to the countryside from the cities in order to help strengthen the CPP, the people's army, the mass organizations, the local organs of political power and the united front.

To favor mass work in the countryside, the CPP has always stressed that the general line is people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war and that the principal form of struggle is the revolutionary armed struggle which aims to overthrow the ruling system.

The CPP has always expected that the more revolutionaries from the cities joining their comrades in the countryside the faster would the armed revolution develop and build the people's democratic government in the countryside until this can get rid of the government of the big comprador, landlords and corrupt bureaucrats in the cities.

The strategic line of protracted people's war is to accumulate political and armed strength in the countryside until it becomes possible to overthrow the urban-based counterrevolutionary state.

8. *Is armed revolution necessary?*

JMS: History has shown that the proletariat has never won a new democratic revolution and establish socialism without armed revolution. There has never been a case of the bourgeoisie giving up its state power and its private ownership of the means of production voluntarily and peacefully.

The necessity of armed revolution is not due to any one-sided desire of the proletariat to use armed revolution. It arises because the bourgeoisie uses its class dictatorship or its organized system of violence called state power to prevent the proletariat from establishing socialism.

9. *Is participating in the parliamentary struggle important?*

JMS: Whenever there is space for participation in parliamentary struggle within any bourgeois ruling system, the communists and other progressives avail of that space while possible in order to push for reforms without becoming reformists and in order to indicate the need for revolutionary change.

Parliamentary struggle has its own distinct importance. It facilitates the spread of the program of struggle for national and social liberation. It contributes to the efforts to arouse, organize and mobilize the people for that struggle. But the genuine communists and revolutionaries are ever vigilant against the counterrevolutionary policies and acts of the reactionary classes.

10. *What are the three weapons of the revolution and what are the roles of each one?*

JMS: The three weapons of the Philippine revolution are the revolutionary vanguard party of the proletariat, revolutionary armed struggle and the united front. These are embodied by the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army and the National Democratic Front, respectively.

As vanguard party of the proletariat, the CPP realizes best the leading role of the working class by building itself through ideological, political and organizational work.

The NPA integrates the revolutionary armed struggle with the agrarian revolution and mass base building. Mass base building involves building the revolutionary mass organizations and the local organs of political power. The NDFP does its best to help build the basic worker-peasant alliance, win over the middle social strata and take advantage of the splits among the reactionaries and isolate, weaken and destroy the power of one enemy ruling clique after another.

11. *Please elaborate on the tasks of the revolution on the following fields: a) political field b) economic field c) military field d) cultural field and e) foreign relations field.*

JMS: The main tasks of the revolution in the political field is to propagate and apply the general program of people's democratic revolution and do everything necessary to arouse, organize and mobilize the people for strengthening the revolutionary forces and advancing the revolution towards total victory.

The main tasks of the revolution in the economic field is to uphold national economic sovereignty, protect the national patrimony and demand genuine land reform and national industrialization. When the revolutionary forces

are effective in the countryside, they can carry out land reform from the minimum to the maximum program and other socioeconomic programs for the benefit of the people.

The main tasks of the revolution in the military field is to fight the enemy and build the people's army as the main fighting force, the people's militia as local police force and as auxiliary of the people's army and the self-defense units within the revolutionary mass organizations as active defenders of the people and reserve force for the people's army and the people's militia.

The main tasks of the revolution in the cultural field is to promote and realize the national, scientific and mass culture and education. The revolutionaries carry out all kinds of cultural work to raise the revolutionary consciousness of the people by undertaking study sessions, publications, protest meetings, artistic works and performances.

The main tasks of the revolution in the field of foreign relations is to undertake campaigns of information, organizing and mobilization among the overseas Filipinos and the host and other peoples in various countries in order to build international solidarity and realize practical cooperation of mutual benefit among all peoples in the common struggle against imperialism and all reaction.

12. The national democratic revolution has a socialist perspective. How can the transition from the people's democracy to socialism be guaranteed?

JMS: The national democratic revolution is the preparation for the socialist revolution. Through the national democratic revolution, the working class and its vanguard party learn how to lead the broad masses of the people in waging revolution, set the socialist direction of the revolution and develop the forces and mass strength for establishing socialism.

The successful leadership of the working class in the national democratic revolution and the revolutionary forces it has built guarantee the establishment of socialism. At the same time, there shall still be some transitional measures of a bourgeois democratic character, like completing the land reform program and integrating the patriotic bourgeoisie into joint state and private enterprises.

The national democratic revolution is basically completed upon the seizure of political power from the bourgeoisie and other reactionary classes and thus the socialist revolution can commence immediately with the working class and its vanguard party building immediately the political system to unite and govern the people and taking over all the commanding heights of the economy, all strategic industries, main transport lines and all sources of energy and raw materials. The state proceeds to build socialist industry and cooperativize and mechanize agriculture in a series of five-year plans.

13. What are the major differences between a people's democracy and socialist state?

JMS: As in the historical example of China, the people's democratic form of government based on the worker-peasant alliance and the broad alliance of democratic forces can be maintained. But the essence and core of state power shall already be the class rule of the working class and shall be socialist. The big comprador-landlord-bureaucrat capitalist dictatorship shall be ended. Thus, the state power shall exist and run as the class dictatorship of the proletariat.

14. Do you think that Marxism-Leninism-Maoism will still be relevant after the national democratic revolution has claimed victory? How?

JMS: Marxism-Leninism-Maoism will become an even more necessary and relevant guide to the socialist revolution that follows the national democratic revolution. The revolutionary teachings and successful practice of the great communists in the fields of philosophy, political economy and social science will shed light on what the revolutionary proletariat and people can do, with due respect to history and circumstances of the country.

The proletarian revolutionaries will be guided by Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and will apply it creatively in the concrete conditions of the Philippines in order to carry out socialist revolution and construction, combat imperialism, revisionism and all reaction, prevent capitalist restoration and consolidate socialism under proletarian class dictatorship until imperialism is defeated and can no longer obstruct the road to communism.

Importance of the National Democratic Revolution in Relation to the Global Anti-Imperialist Movement

Presentation for Webinar #2 in Philippine Series,

ILPS Asia Pacific

September 11, 2020

Dear Webinar Participants,

First of all, I thank ILPS Asia Pacific for inviting me to speak on the importance of the national democratic revolution in the Philippines in the global anti-imperialist movement and in the context of the raging contradictions among the imperialists, especially the US and China.

I wish to present first the context of the worsening crisis of the world capitalist system and the raging conflicts among the imperialist powers, especially the US and China. Then I shall present the historical and current importance of the national democratic revolution not only to the Filipino people but to all the peoples in the Asia-Pacific region and the whole world.

As the crisis of the world capitalist system worsens, with the aggravation by COVID-19 and by the sharpening conflicts between the US and China, there is an urgent need for all peoples of the world to understand the situation in our respective countries, in the Asia-Pacific region and entire world. In this regard, let us learn from each other and help each other in waging anti-imperialist and democratic struggles.

1. Context of raging US-China conflicts amidst the rapidly worsening crisis of the world capitalist system

After enjoying three decades of prosperity from 1945 to 1975, the US began to be afflicted by stagflation. This was due to the crisis of overproduction in the world capitalist system because of the reconstruction and revival of the competitive economies of capitalist countries, especially Germany and Japan, which had suffered devastation from World War II.

The US adopted the neoliberal economic policy in 1979 in a futile attempt to overcome the crisis of overproduction at the expense of the working class and the peoples of the world. The logic of the policy is to maximize by all means the amount of capital in the hands of the monopoly bourgeoisie so that it can re-invest this to grow the economy and supposedly create more jobs. The neoliberal policy would actually aggravate the crisis of overproduction, bringing about more frequent and ever worse cycles of boom and bust.

Maximizing capital in the hands of the monopoly bourgeoisie has been done through tax cuts, wage freeze, limits on job tenure, cutbacks on social benefits and services, privatization of public assets, deregulation of restraints on the abuse of labor, women, children and the environment, liberalization of investment and trade and denationalization of underdeveloped and dependent economies. The imperialist powers used their multilateral agencies to make multilateral arrangements to harmonize their economic and trade relations and shift the burden of crisis to the underdeveloped countries.

Emerging from its costly wars of aggression in Indochina, the US hoped to make profits from military sales to the oil producing countries and expand production with the use of petrodollars deposited in Western banks. At the same time, the US succeeded in engaging the Soviet Union in an arms race in order to undermine and debilitate its economy while the Soviet social imperialists were making big mistakes in their foreign adventures, especially in Afghanistan.

The revisionist betrayal of socialism and capitalist restoration ran ahead in the Soviet Union but subsequently the Chinese revisionists headed by Deng Xiaoping were able to defeat the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR) in 1976 with a counterrevolutionary coup after the death of Mao Zedong.

The US had started rapprochement with China in 1972 in order to take advantage of the Sino-Soviet dispute but from 1978 onward the US saw its far greater opportunity to cultivate China as a capitalist partner upon the declaration of the GPCR as a complete catastrophe and upon the adoption of the Dengist policy of capitalist reforms and opening up for integration into the world capitalist system.

In the entire 1980s, the US outsourced consumer manufacturing to China's sweatshops. And after the 1989 uprisings in Tiananmen and elsewhere in China, the US acceded to the pleas of China's Dengist leaders to bring in more investments and technology to China. In the 1990s, China became the main US partner in the promotion

of the neoliberal policy of imperialist globalization and more so after China joined the World Trade Organization in 2001.

The US was so happy and jubilant over the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 and over the partnership with China that it overlooked the potential of two more imperialist powers, China and Russia, joining the world capitalist system, to aggravate the crisis of overproduction in the world capitalist system. As sole superpower in hubris in a supposedly unipolar world, the US could not see clearly the possible aggravation of the crisis of overproduction and its continued strategic decline.

With the single message that socialism was dead and so was anti-imperialism, the US carried out an ideological and political offensive in combination with the neoliberal economic offensive and the military offensives in the Middle East and other regions where in combination with Zionist Israel they acted to fill the vacuum left by the Soviet Union. The heavy costs of military expenditures and the aggravated crisis of overproduction accelerated the strategic decline of the US and caused the loss of its sole superpower status in a multilateral world.

In the years after the 2008 financial crisis, which resulted in an unprecedented global recession, the US strategic planners noticed the economic and military rise of China as a potential US economic and political rival. At the same time, it was becoming starkly clear that the US was on an accelerated decline because of the outsourcing of manufacturing, the financialization of the US economy, the leap in public debt and the extreme costs of overseas military bases and the endless wars of aggression mainly in Central Asia, Middle East and Africa.

Under the Obama presidency, the US took notice that it had not paid enough attention to the rise of China in the Asia-Pacific region. Thus, it declared a strategic pivot to East Asia in order to contain China in 2011 and pushed the Trans Pacific Partnership Arrangement without China in 2015. Under the Trump presidency, the US strategic planners issued the National Security Strategy in 2017 to target China as the US chief economic competitor and chief political rival. Subsequently Trump began in 2018 to denounce China as taking advantage of a two-tiered economy (state and private capitalism), using unfair economic, trade and financial practices and stealing technology from US companies and research laboratories.

Since then, there has been a sharpening of US-China contradictions over economic, trade, technology and security issues. The US wants to cut down China's export surpluses in trade with the US and weaken the Chinese economy and deprive it of the surplus capital to invest globally and dominate the countries covered by the Belt and Road Initiative as well as the South China Sea and the Indo-Pacific maritime route through which some 60 percent of world trade passes.

The US expects to benefit from a new Cold War, this time with China. But it has huge problems in decoupling from China and recovering the concessions and advantages it had given away. And China has the size and the experience in using state planning to counter the US and to hold its ground. But it is sitting on a mountain of bad debts and has been dependent on the trade surplus with the US for a long time. It is more likely that the two imperialist powers would weaken each other, while surely aggravating further the crisis of overproduction and the danger of more wars due to increasing confrontations in the Asia-Pacific region and elsewhere. At any rate, it is important to consider the consequences of the US-China conflicts to the Philippines and other countries of the world.

The US used to claim that with China abandoning the socialist cause and proletarian internationalism and withdrawing support from the revolutionary movements the anti-imperialist, democratic and socialist struggles of the people would wither away. They have not withered away but have resurged at every worsening of the global capitalist crisis. We can learn one major thing from developments since the defeat of the GPCR in 1976 that the increase in number of rival imperialist powers has aggravated the crisis of overproduction and has generated favorable conditions for anti-imperialist struggles and the resurgence of the world proletarian revolution.

II. Importance of the national democratic revolution in the Philippines and relevance to the global anti-imperialist movement

Now let us focus on the historic and current importance of the national democratic revolution in the Philippines. In the whole of Asia, the Filipino people led by the Katipunan were pioneers in waging the national democratic revolution of the bourgeois liberal type in 1896 and in winning national independence against Spanish colonialism in 1898. We achieved the great historic feat of defeating one Western colonial power impelled by mercantilist capitalism but came another Western power to colonize us on the impulse of monopoly capitalism or imperialism.

We valiantly resisted the war of aggression launched by US imperialism, which engaged in the mass murder of at least 250,000 Filipinos to consolidate its positions in Manila and other major cities by 1902 and proceeded to kill more people up to 1.5 million by 1913. It was through bloody conquest that the US was able to establish a colonial and semifeudal system in the Philippines.

Since 1946, when the US granted nominal independence, the Philippines has become its semicolony run by the political representatives of the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords at the national and lower levels of a puppet government, still under the economic, political, military and cultural dominance of US imperialism.

In the era of modern imperialism and proletarian revolution, the national democratic revolution in the Philippines has taken a new character, with the proletariat rather than the liberal bourgeoisie taking the lead in the revolutionary struggle of the broad masses of the people against foreign and feudal domination. It seeks the national and social liberation of the people from imperialism and the local exploiting classes and looks forwards to a socialist future.

The immediate demands of the national democratic revolution include the following: full national independence, democracy, social justice, economic development through genuine land reform and national industrialization, a national, scientific and mass culture; and international solidarity with all peoples for peace and development.

The most powerful forces of the Filipino people in today's national democratic revolution are the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army, the millions of people in the revolutionary mass organizations of workers, peasants, indigenous communities, women, youth, professionals and other social sectors (which are in the National Democratic Front of the Philippines) and the greater millions of people under the local organs of political power which constitute the people's democratic government now challenging the reactionary government of big compradors and landlords.

The CPP is guided by the theory of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and adheres to the general line of people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war. From a few scores of members in 1968, it now has tens of thousands of members who are spread nationwide and are deeply rooted among the oppressed and exploited masses of workers and peasants.

The CPP has created and led the New People's Army (NPA), which has thousands of Red fighters in more than 110 guerrilla fronts in 73 out of 81 Philippine provinces. The people's army is augmented by tens of thousands of people's militia members and hundreds of thousands of people in self-defense units of the revolutionary mass organizations, which are different from the legal democratic forces now being red-tagged by the state terrorists and their special agents, like the clerico-fascists and Trotskyites.

The people's army is invincible because it is the weapon of the Filipino people in their just struggle for full national independence, democracy and social justice against the extremely oppressive and exploitative ruling system. Thus, all the strategic operational plans of the US and its puppets have failed to destroy the NPA and the revolutionary mass movement from the time of Marcos to Duterte or from one tyrant to another.

The revolutionary perseverance, resilience and achievements of the Filipino proletariat and people in the national democratic revolution of the new type can be evaluated not only in terms of Philippine history and current circumstances but also in terms of how this revolution has withstood the revisionist betrayal of socialism and restoration of capitalism in the former Soviet Union and China and the consequent huge ideological, political and economic offensives of the US and all its imperialist and reactionary allies.

With the strategic economic and political partnership of the US and China breaking up, the current Duterte puppet regime tries to serve two conflicting imperialist masters for its selfish benefit. The regime still keeps the treaties, agreements and arrangements that make the US the No. 1 imperialist power dominating the Philippines as its semicolony. The US has condoned the regime's gross and systematic violations of human rights because of its pledge to use all foul means to destroy the armed revolutionary movement of the people and to cause charter change for granting to US corporations unlimited ownership of land, natural resources, public utilities and all types of businesses in the Philippines.

At the same time, the regime receives bribes in connection with high interest loans for overpriced infrastructure projects to be undertaken by Chinese contractors as well as from Chinese criminal syndicates smuggling illegal drugs and other contraband and operating casinos in the Philippines. In exchange, the regime has laid aside

the 2016 final judgment of the Permanent Arbitration Court and the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea which uphold the sovereign and maritime rights of the Filipino people over the West Philippine Sea. It abets China in building and militarizing artificial islands in the Philippine exclusive economic zone and in illegally claiming the marine and mineral resources of the Filipino people.

An absurd situation has arisen in the camps of the reactionary armed forces. The US maintains its military personnel, stockpiles and facilities in these camps under certain military agreements with the reactionary government. At the same time, the regime has allowed China Telcom-DITO to erect cell towers within the same camps. China has also delivered stockpiles of firearms and explosives, which most soldiers in the pro-US military do not like to use and which are being sold to private security agencies and gun runners by corrupt military officers.

It is an interesting question how long and how far can the Duterte regime serve two conflicting imperialist masters without getting squeezed and squashed. The US still considers the Philippines as its reliable base and unsinkable aircraft carrier. But China has now spy towers eavesdropping on US military facilities and it has seven island military bases in the Philippine exclusive economic zone. The US assures the Philippines and other littoral states of Southeast Asia of protection from China's illegal claim of owning 90 percent of the South China Sea. But in this regard Duterte joins China against the ASEAN colleagues of the Philippines.

As the crisis of the world capitalist system now worsens, the national democratic revolution in the Philippines stands out as one of the major torch bearers of the global anti-imperialist movement and the resurgence of the world proletarian revolution. It is a source of light and lessons for all peoples of the world in developing the various forms of anti-imperialist and democratic struggles, especially revolutionary struggle. Thus, US imperialism has licensed the Duterte regime to use every foul means to suppress it.

Long before the spread of COVID-19 spread, the crisis of the world capitalist system has worsened to the point of generating militant anti-imperialist and democratic mass actions of unprecedented magnitude and scale in so many countries, including the industrial capitalist and underdeveloped ones. The people have been agitated by the devastation wrought by the neoliberal policy on their lives, the austerity measures at their expense, the state terrorism and wars of aggression unleashed by the imperialist powers.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions being undertaken, the people have found ways of waging mass resistance through street actions and the use of the electronic media. In many instances, because of the extreme policies and actions taken by imperialist and reactionary governments, the people have made responses similar to those made by them in pre-pandemic times.

The Filipino people find powerful inspiration and abundant support for their national democratic revolution in the upsurges of anti-imperialist and democratic mass struggles abroad and they are doing their best to carry out their own mass struggles not only on Philippine issues but also on issues of concern to other peoples. They have engaged in global days of action as well as forums of various kinds and scales on issues of common concern against imperialism and all reaction.

While the imperialists and the reactionaries persist, they are capable of all sorts of violence and deception. Thus, aside from brazenly using the coercive apparatuses of the state to suppress the people, they launch ultra-reactionary currents and movements in order to cover up the root causes of the basic ills of society and try to mislead some sections of the the people against the people. Such currents and movements are those of fascism, racism, chauvinism, communalism, gender discrimination and Islamophobia. These have produced some effect in the election of the despotic type of leader through the electoral system controlled by the exploitative ruling class.

It is quite comical that US imperialism is deploying its Trotskyite hirelings to attack the CPP, the revolutionary forces in the NDFP and the broad range of legal democratic forces for supposedly enabling and supporting the Duterte terror regime, to use anti-Stalin stock phrases and deny the revolutionary leadership of the proletariat and the necessity of the new democratic and socialist stages in the Philippine revolution, to demand that the people's war be liquidated and that socialism be the main issue under semicolonial and semifeudal conditions and yet pontificate that socialism is impossible in any single country. In brief, the Trotskyites are being farcical in once more playing their worn-out role as anti-Stalin and anti-communist agents of US imperialism and the local reactionaries..

The global anti-imperialist movement must always be alert to the full range of deceptions and barbarities that the imperialist powers and their puppets commit in the violation of the basic national and democratic rights and

fundamental freedoms of the people and in the suppression of the demands, complaints and protests of the people. The crimes against the people range in kind from brutal frontal attacks of state terrorism or aggression to tactics of turning people against each other through methods of deception.

In continuing the national democratic revolution against tremendous odds, including the most brutal forms of suppression, the Filipino people demonstrate their determination, courage and capabilities to fight the imperialists and reactionaries. At the same time, they find common cause with the peoples of the world and seek international solidarity and support from them against imperialism and all reaction.

As the crisis of the world capitalist system is rapidly worsening, there is an urgent need for the people of the world to fight the escalating conditions of oppression and exploitation and to stop the plunder and degradation of the environment by monopoly capitalism. The revolutionary strength of the people is also needed to counter and stop the danger of direct world war among the imperialist powers and the attendant danger of a nuclear war of annihilation. The imperialist powers can be defeated and disarmed by the people in their homelands if their revolutionary mass movement is strong enough to confront and overcome them.

Celebrate Andres Bonifacio Day: Unite and Fight for Genuine National Independence and Democracy

November 30, 2019

We, the Filipino nation and all patriotic and progressive forces, celebrate today the 156th birth anniversary of Andres Bonifacio in order to honor him and the Katipunan for their revolutionary heroic deed of declaring and fighting for Philippine independence against Spanish colonialism in 1896.

We likewise honor all the national heroes who have followed their example in fighting against foreign and feudal domination. We make special mention of Kabataang Makabayan, founded on November 30, 1964, for striving to continue the unfinished revolution, interrupted by the US imperialist war of aggression and conquest of the Philippines soon after the people's victory over Spanish colonialism.

The best way to celebrate Bonifacio Day is to renew and reinvigorate the revolutionary unity and will of the Filipino people to continue the struggle for genuine national independence and democracy against the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system dominated by US imperialism and the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords.

This ruling system is now chiefly represented by the traitorous Duterte regime, which tries to serve two imperialist masters by keeping the all-sided overall dominance of US imperialism and at the same time selling out the sovereign rights of the Filipino nation over the West Philippine Sea and over its economy and natural resources in the entire archipelago.

The chronic crisis of the ruling system is worsening rapidly due to the policies of neoliberalism and state terrorism. Foreign monopoly capitalism extracts superprofits by keeping the Philippines underdeveloped and a cheap source of labor and raw materials and a denationalized and deregulated field of imperialist trade and investments.

The people are being subjected to worse conditions of exploitation, deteriorating working and living conditions, rising unemployment and mass poverty. While the local and foreign public debt is growing rapidly due to the importation and consumption of foreign manufactures, the Duterte regime has increased the tax burden at the expense of the ordinary people only to use the public funds to feed bureaucratic corruption and reinforce the instruments of state terrorism.

There is now a de facto regime of fascist dictatorship in the Philippines. Under the pretext of rabid anti-communism, the reactionary government is under a process of militarization and fascisation in accordance with Executive Order No. 70 for the purpose perpetuating and serving the three evil forces of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

The traitorous, tyrannical, genocidal, corrupt and swindler Duterte regime is imposing extreme and intolerable forms of exploitation and oppression on the Filipino people. It is therefore inciting and goading the people to fight back. It is driving them to rise up in mass protests for full national independence and democracy and to engage in the new democratic revolution with a socialist perspective.

Indeed, the conditions for the people's struggle for national and social liberation are favorable in the Philippines. So are the conditions abroad favorable for the revolutionary struggle. The world capitalist system is in grave crisis. It has been unable to solve the problem of stagnation and depression since 2008. The inter-imperialist contradictions are intensifying. For decades, US and Chinese monopoly capitalism were main partners in neoliberal globalization. Now, they are in a vortex of struggle for a redivision of the world.

The people of the world have undergone intolerable suffering from imperialist plunder, state terrorism, foreign military intervention and wars of aggression. In response, they have risen up in militant mass protests all over the world, especially against neoliberalism and fascism. These mass protests are bound to intensify and grow and stimulate the spread of people's war and the resurgence of the anti-imperialist and proletarian-socialist revolutionary struggles on a world scale.

In carrying out the new democratic revolution for more than 50 years, the Communist Party of the Philippines as leading force and the entire revolutionary movement of the Filipino people under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism have withstood and overcome the pro-imperialist currents of neocolonialism, anticommunism,

reactionary liberalism, social democracy and neo-Keynesianism, modern revisionism, neoliberalism and fascism.

They have stood out as torch bearer of the world anti-imperialist struggles and the world proletarian revolution and continue to grow in revolutionary strength and advance in concert with the peoples of the world, as did the Katipunan under Bonifacio when it was the leading force of the old democratic revolution. This was the first national liberation movement to defeat a Western colonial power in Asia, and served as the torch-bearer of liberal democratic revolution in Asia, long before the Chinese revolution of 1911 and the emergence of new states after World War II.

In carrying out the new democratic revolution, the Communist Party of the Philippines is inspired by the revolutionary spirit of Andres Bonifacio and the Katipunan. It is the New Katipunan at a new and higher level of revolutionary struggle, that of the people's democratic revolution with a socialist perspective, in the era of modern imperialism and the world proletarian revolution. It seeks to contribute the best it can to the achievement of national liberation, democracy and socialism in other countries.

Long live the revolutionary spirit of Andres Bonifacio and the Katipunan!

Intensify and carry forward the new democratic revolution of the Filipino people!

Long live the Philippine revolution and the Filipino people!

Long live proletarian internationalism and the international solidarity of peoples!

Defend the Rights and Welfare of Migrants and their Families Message to the Second Congress of Migrante Europe

December 8, 2019

I wish to convey warmest greetings of solidarity to Migrante Europe as a whole and to all the delegations present in this Second Congress of Migrante Europe. This is an occasion to take stock of the situation, celebrate the achievements, identify problems to be solved and set forth the tasks and methods to further strengthen Migrante Europe in the whole of Europe and in particular countries.

This is the time for you to renew your determination to serve the Filipino migrants and their families and I appreciate highly that in the theme of the congress definite tasks are already put forward. You must strengthen your unity and expand your ranks in order to raise your capabilities for social investigation and for arousing, organizing and mobilizing the migrant workers and their families. I presume you will be learning more about the general and specific conditions of the migrants and their families, tracing and deploying more organizers and instructors and carrying out campaigns to engage the migrants and their families.

You must promote and defend the rights and welfare of the migrants and their families in the face of adversities due to a reactionary Philippine government that is good at offering cheap labor to foreign employers and at collecting all sorts of fees but is bad at serving the migrants and in effect their families as well as tremendous odds due to worsening crisis of the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system in the Philippines and that of the world capitalist system which generate the conditions for escalating oppression and exploitation.

It is important to understand the general conditions and factors related to the overriding tasks of promoting and defending the rights and welfare of the migrants and their families so that they themselves can speak out and act in their just interest and gain the solidarity and support of the Filipino people, the host people and the people of the world.

You must raise the political consciousness and ability of the migrants and their families to contribute to and participate in the struggle for national freedom and democracy against the forces of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. These forces perpetuate the conditions of underdevelopment, unemployment and mass poverty and compel millions of Filipinos to seek employment abroad. It is an appalling fact that at least half of the Philippine labor force of 44 million cannot be employed by the Philippine economy: 12 million people have to be employed abroad and still 10 million remain unemployed.

We are confronted today by the extremely traitorous, tyrannical, genocidal, corrupt and deceptive Duterte regime. This is a regime that wastes the foreign exchange remittances of migrant workers and uses them not for economic and social development but for importdependent consumption, assurance of superprofits for imperialist and big comprador firms and banks and feeding bureaucratic and military corruption.

It is therefore the duty of Migrante Europe, the migrants and their families to exert all possible efforts to contribute to and participate in the struggle to end the Duterte regime within the context of the struggle for national freedom and democracy against the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system.

Long live Migrante Europe! Defend the rights and welfare of migrants and their families!

Advance the national democratic movement!

Long live the Filipino people! Long live international solidarity!

Interview by Steve Sweeney, International Editor, *Morning Star*

January 28, 2021

Before we get into the main questions, could you explain a bit about your background i.e. how you became politically active and describe your later arrest in the Philippines, detention and the subsequent case in the Netherlands.

JMS: While I was a graduate student and instructor in English language and literature at the University of the Philippines in 1959, I opposed the McCarthyite witchhunt being conducted by reactionary members of Congress. Faculty members and students were accused of violating the Anti-Subversion Law because they published supposedly pro-communist articles. These were actually critical of US imperialist domination and the ruling system of big compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists in the Philippines.

I felt challenged to defy the witchhunt and thus I took the initiative of forming the Student Cultural Association of the U.P. (SCAUP). Its general line was to defend academic freedom and the separation of church and state against the combined threats of anti-communism and religious bigotry and to promote the study of and struggle for the national and social liberation of the Filipino people against the semi-colonial and semi-feudal conditions in the Philippines. At the same time, we studied Marxism-Leninism discreetly for guidance in the current struggle in the direction of socialism.

The SCAUP was historically significant for being able to organize a demonstration of 5000 students which walked into Congress and literally scuttled the anticommunist hearings of the Committee on Anti-Filipino Activities on March 15, 1961. After this event, I was among the student activists who proceeded to promote the line of anti-imperialism and democracy in national student organizations. I was able to go to Indonesia on a scholarship grant to study the Indonesian language and the mass movement led by the Communist Party of Indonesia in the first half of 1962.

After I returned to Manila in the second half of 1962, I joined the research and education staff of the Workers' Party (Lapiang Manggagawa). I organized the seminars and edited publications for major labor federations as well as for the national peasant association MASAKA. I became the Vice Chairman for Education of the Workers Party from 1964 onward. I edited the *Progressive Review* from 1963 to 1967.

I was one of the founders and became the chairman of the Kabataang Makabayan (Patriotic Youth), a comprehensive youth organization of students, workers, peasants and professionals, from 1964 onward. I was a professorial lecturer in political science at the Lyceum of the Philippines from 1964 to early 1968. It was during this period that Duterte became one of my students.

It was in December 1962 when I was invited to join the old Communist Party of the Philippines and became in 1963 a member of the Executive Committee directly under then General Secretary Jesus Lava. The old CPP had a few active members and no branches. Thus, we built the branches among the workers, peasants and youth through ideological, political and organizational work.

Ideological and political differences arose in 1966 over the history, the circumstances and direction of the old party as well as over the Sino-Soviet ideological debate. The majority of party cadres and members joined me in the reestablishment of the Communist Party of the Philippines on December 26, 1968 and in the founding of the New People's Army on March 29, 1969.

We adopted and carried out the general line of people's democratic revolution under the leadership of the proletariat and with a socialist perspective and waged the people's war in accordance with the strategic line of encircling the cities from the countryside. The people's war grew in strength and advanced as the Marcos regime increasingly used brutal methods of suppression from 1969 onward and imposed fascist dictatorship on the people from 1972 to 1986.

I was captured by the military minions of the Marcos fascist regime on November 10, 1977. I was subjected to physical and mental torture and I was in solitary confinement for more than five years out of nine years of imprisonment. The fascist dictatorship unwittingly drove the people to wage both armed and legal forms of resistance. I was released from prison on March 5, 1986 some 10 days after the downfall of Marcos. All the charges against me for subversion and rebellion were nullified.

I went back to the University of the Philippines as visiting fellow with the rank of associate professor at the Institute of Asian Studies. At the end of August 1986, I left the Philippines for an international university tour that brought me to several countries in Asia, Europe and Latin America. I could not make it to the US because the McCarran Internal Security Act banned foreign communists from entering the US. Thus, I stayed on in The Netherlands until I was overtaken by the Aquino regime's cancellation of my Philippine passport and I was compelled to apply for political asylum by the threat of military re-arrest in the Philippines.

It was in November 2001 that then Philippine president Arroyo while on a working visit to the US requested the US government to designate the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army and myself as "foreign terrorists". It would be in August 2002 that the US would designate all the aforesaid three as "terrorists" without citing any evidence of any act of terrorism abroad by any of the three.

The Dutch government mechanically followed the US designation of the CPP, NPA and myself as terrorists. It withdrew its designation of me as terrorist after I asked for evidence of "my terrorist act" and it could not produce any, except a press clipping about the CPP threatening US military personnel. Still the Dutch government became the prime movant in putting my name in the EU "terrorist" list. It took me more than seven years of legal struggle to have my name removed from said list by final decision of the European Court of Justice in 2009.

In 2007 the Arroyo regime also caused my arrest and detention in The Netherlands by making false charges that had used Dutch territory to order the murder of certain persons in the Philippines. My Dutch legal counsel easily proved that the charges were false and these were dismissed by the district court of The Hague and then by the Dutch appellate court. But it would only be in early 2009 that the Dutch National Prosecution Service ceased to do any further investigation of the false charges.

You can visit my website www.josemariasison.org to read my short biographies and my legal case files. You can also find out from this website my biography in the *Biographical Dictionary of Marxism* by the British author Robert A. Gorman and book length biographies of me by Dr. Rainer Werning (*The Philippine Revolution: The Leader's View*) and Ninotchka Rosca (*At Home in the World: Portrait of a Revolutionary*).

1. *The Duterte government recently designated the CPP and the NPA as terrorist organizations, claiming its hand was forced by the international community.*

How do you evaluate this and why did the Duterte government make this move? Is it a sign of weakness and a bid to crush all opposition forces?

JMS: Duterte is lying by claiming that it is the international community that has forced his hand to designate the CPP and NPA as terrorist organizations. It is his own emulation of the Marcos fascist dictatorship and his own desire and scheme of imposing fascist dictatorship on the Filipino people that have motivated and driven him to designate the CPP and NPA as terrorists.

It is relevant to cite the fact that retired general Esperon is now the national security adviser and top hatchetman of Duterte in the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC) and was previously the chief of staff of the reactionary armed forces during the Arroyo regime that requested the US to designate the CPP and NPA as FTOs in 2001. But since then, one regime after another until Duterte's has avoided designating the CPP and NPA as "terrorist" in order to keep the door open for peace negotiations.

There is cold-bloodedness in the decision of Duterte to terminate the peace negotiations and designate the CPP and NPA as "terrorists" in quick sequence on November 23, 2017 and December 5, 2017, respectively. It is to scapegoat the CPP and NPA and give him the license to grab absolute power and enable absolute corruption.

It is obvious that from the subjective of Duterte he was acting as a "strong man" in terminating the peace negotiations, designating the CPP and NPA as "terrorists" and publicly vowing to destroy the revolutionary movement as well as all opposition forces. US President Trump saw a kindred spirit of the same meanness in Duterte when he instructed and emboldened the puppet to terminate the peace negotiations and destroy the CPP and NPA by purely military means when they met on November 13, 2017 or thereabouts.

Because the objective of Duterte is to grab absolute power and become a fascist dictator, he uses state terrorism to attack the CPP and NPA as the same means to suppress all opposition forces. The terms of the so-called Anti-Terrorism Law can be used to red-tag, frame up, arrest, torture, seize the bank account and kill anyone that criticizes and opposes Duterte's crimes of treason, tyranny, mass murder, plunder and prevarication.

There is one more overwhelming reason for Duterte to aim for full fascist dictatorship or at the least retain the power to rig the 2022 presidential elections in favor of a hand-picked successor. It is to preempt his arrest by

authority of the International Criminal Court or even more plausibly by authority of the Philippine court system under an anti-Duterte regime or by authority of the people's court of the people's democratic government.

2. *You recently described a perfect storm for fascist dictatorship in the Philippines. Can you explain what you meant, particularly regarding the classical Marxist definition. Does this need to be reevaluated?*

JMS: I use the meteorological term "perfect storm" to describe the calamitous convergence of extreme crisis conditions in the world capitalist system and the Philippine ruling system that can be taken advantage of by Duterte, as he is doing, in order to realize fascist dictatorship but can also serve as the exceedingly favorable conditions for the accelerated growth in strength and advance of the revolutionary movement, like the Marcos fascist dictatorship stimulated the revolutionary movement in the past from 1972 to 1986.

Having explained my metaphorical use of the phrase "perfect storm", I can focus now on what I mean by fascist dictatorship. It is a bourgeois kind of tyranny, despotism or open rule of terror that throws out of the window the pretenses, legal niceties and procedures of bourgeois democracy. In semicolonial and semifeudal Philippines, the comprador big bourgeoisie is the chief ruling class in combination with the corporate and traditional landlords. It is the class that was behind the Marcos fascist dictatorship and it is the class that Duterte depends on to fully realize fascist dictatorship.

In industrial capitalist countries, the fascist dictatorship like that of Hitler is used by the monopoly bourgeoisie when the social democrats fail to keep the social order. The worst form of pogroms and wars were perpetrated by fascist dictatorships in the 1930s to the end of World War II. Thus, the term "fascist dictatorship" has been construed by many Marxists as a phenomenon arising in industrial capitalist countries, with the industrial monopoly bourgeoisie behind the fascist dictatorship like that of Mussolini, Hitler and Tojo even as this bourgeois kind of tyranny also played on feudal, racist, xenophobic and other reactionary prejudices and institutions to their fascist advantage.

In class terms in semifeudal societies, the accomplished fascist dictatorships of Chiang Kaishek down to Ferdinand Marcos have been anchored on the big comprador bourgeoisie with strong necessary links with the monopoly bourgeoisie of the imperialist powers like the US. They have appeared in history as bourgeois tyranny or bourgeois open rule of terror doing away with all pretenses, niceties and procedures of bourgeois democracy, especially where these had previously existed.

But let us shift back to Europe, Lenin used the term "social fascists" and "social imperialists" to refer to social democrats who had no basing in bourgeois ownership of factories but who were subservient to the big bourgeois policies despite social democratic avowals of serving the proletariat. In one more sense, the Chinese Communist Party used to call the leaders of the CPSU as social fascists and social imperialists on the basis of state monopoly capitalism, especially during the time of Khrushchov and Brezhnev.

3. *The CPP has committed itself to peace talks with the Philippines government but says that Duterte needs to be removed to get the stalled negotiations back on track. Can you expand on this and the future prospects for implementation of the Comprehensive Agreement on Social and Economic Reforms (CASER)?*

JMS: It is the evaluation of the CPP that Duterte is hell-bent on fully realizing fascist dictatorship through the so-called Anti-Terrorism Law and through charter change on top of what he has already done previously like the all-out war policy, Proclamation 360 to terminate the peace negotiations in 2017, Proclamation 374 to designate the CPP and NPA as "terrorists" and Executive Order No. 70 to form the NTF-ELCAC to destroy the revolutionary movement for being "communist terrorist".

But for the sake of argument, let us say that Duterte does away with all these obstacles to peace negotiations. Then, there would be no more reason for the CPP to say that Duterte is against peace negotiations between the GRP and NDFP. But Duterte has gone too deep into the tunnel of anti-communism, dirty war and state terrorism. It would be a miracle for him to reverse his trajectory to hell.

There are better prospects for GRP-NDFP peace negotiations to be resumed after Duterte is out of power in 2022 in accordance with the 1987 GRP Constitution and for the mutual approval and implementation of the Comprehensive Agreement on Social and Economic Reforms. But there is no certainty for such better prospects because the usual ruling politicians in the Philippines are subject to the dictates of the US and other imperialist powers and by the big compradors and landlords.

4. *What level of support does the NPA have among the people can you give an assessment of current strength and numbers and explain the concepts of new power and people's government?*

How are the guerrilla fronts organized and why is this an important and legitimate part of the revolutionary struggle? How does the protracted people's war relate to the armed struggle in the Philippines?

JMS: The NPA enjoys great support of the people in the millions, especially the peasant masses, because of the general line of people's democratic revolution drawn up by the CPP. This line recognizes the peasant masses as more than 60 per cent of the population and the peasant struggle for land as the main content of the democratic revolution. The organized mass base of the CPP and NPA is conservatively estimated at 20 million people out of the Philippine population of 109 million.

Without the support of the millions of peasant masses and the rest of the people, the NPA would have been wiped out a long time ago by the military campaigns of suppression unleashed by the big comprador-landlord state from the time of Marcos to the present. On March 29, 1969 we started with only nine automatic rifles and 26 inferior firearms, consisting of single-shot rifles and hand guns, in the second district of the province of Tarlac. And we started with an organized mass base of only 80,000.

Now, the armed strength of the NPA is in the thousands, proximate to 10,000 nationwide, although the reactionary armed forces underestimate it at being only 2000 to 4000 and in their most absurd psywar claim that they have already decimated it more than three times its underestimated size. The strength of the NPA is actually amplified by tens of thousands in the people's militia and hundreds of thousands in the revolutionary mass organizations. In building the NPA, the CPP has integrated armed struggle with agrarian revolution and mass-base building.

The strategy and tactics of guerrilla warfare have been applied in carrying out the ongoing stage of strategic defensive in the people's war. The NPA deploys two-thirds of its armed personnel for mass work and one-third for periods of combat within short rest periods. Currently, it launches most often platoon-sized and sometimes company-size tactical offensives. It hopes to accumulate 25,000 automatic rifles to move into the stage of strategic stalemate and launch company-size and battalion-size offensives in regular mobile warfare.

The minimum land reform program has been carried out on the widest scale, involving the reduction of land rent, control of interest rates and elimination of usury, raising of farm wages, improving the farm gate prices of farm products and raising production in agriculture and sideline occupations. The maximum land reform program of land confiscation and free land distribution to the landless peasants have been carried out wherever possible.

There are more than 100 guerrilla fronts, covering large portions of 73 provinces of the 81 provinces of the Philippines. In these guerrilla fronts are built the local branches of the CPP, the full-time fighting units and its auxiliary forces in the people's militia and self-defense units in mass organizations, the revolutionary mass organizations of peasants, farm workers, women, youth and cultural activists, the inter-organizational and cause-oriented alliances and the local organs of political power constituting the people's democratic government.

5. How do you view the so-called new Cold War between the US and China and what is your assessment of the Biden administration, particularly in terms of global imperialism?

JMS: Biden took an active role in supporting the Bush regime by having a major hand in the making of the USA PATRIOT ACT and in the carrying out of the so-called global war on terror. He is very much an active part of the facade, operations and deep state of US imperialism. Thus, he has been able to outclass the more aggressive-looking but dumber Trump among the kingmakers within the US monopoly bourgeoisie, the mass media, think tanks and the so-called deep state of national security hard nuts.

With regard to the so-called Cold War between the US and China, Biden will try to pursue the same line that Trump took in starting the trade war with China in 2018. In the first place, it was Obama of the Democratic Party that was ahead of Trump in taking a position against China. He had adopted the so-called strategic pivot to East Asia in 2012 and pushed the TransPacific Partnership Agreement in 2016 (which excluded China) in order to counter the growing military and economic power of China and the accelerated strategic decline of the US due to the Bush policy of endless wars and the mortgage meltdown that brought about the Great Recession from 2008 onward.

After congratulating itself for a long time for helping China restore capitalism and integrate itself in the world capitalist system and become its main partner in carrying out the neoliberal policy of imperialist globalization, the US is now resentful about China having maintained a two-tiered economy of state and private monopoly capitalism and is regretful about having outsourced manufacturing to China in a big way and allowed it to earn large export surpluses and about having given to China all the opportunities to acquire higher technology from the US

through direct investments on US plants in China and through Chinese academics gaining access to US research laboratories and R & D facilities of US companies.

The crisis of the world capitalist system will grow worse, especially after the aggravation by the Covid-19 pandemic. Even as there is a sharp fall in production, the massive losses of jobs aggravate the crisis of overproduction. The contradiction between capital and labor is sharpening rapidly. The inter-imperialist contradictions are intensifying. And the most intense of these is the one between the US and China. Biden has already indicated that he will stand for the interest of US imperialism against China. Like Trump, he has put forward the slogan, Made In America. His state secretary Antony Blinken has spoken bluntly about standing up for US interests against China in economic and national security matters.

It is interesting to watch whether the US can increase its military assets in East Asia to secure the Indo-Pacific route and to reduce such assets in Central and West Asia and Africa. The US is now under a crushing public debt burden. It has to juggle its military assets and cannot simply increase them everywhere. To sabotage China's dream of reversing the maritime trade fostered by the West since the 16th century with a predominantly land route radiating from China, the US is now in the process of reducing China's export surpluses from trade with the US and is encouraging China's debtors in the Belt and Road Initiative to rise up against the onerous terms of their debt obligations.

6. Currently liberation struggles are being waged in many countries across the world. How do you view for example the Palestinian and Kurdish movements in the Middle East, in particular in relation to the national question?

JMS: The crisis of the world capitalist system will generate conditions of global depression worse than that in the 1930s as well as social discontent and various forms of popular resistance against capitalism and imperialism. Contradictions between labor and capital and among imperialist powers will intensify. The contradictions between the oppressed peoples and nations on one side and the imperialist powers and their client-states on the other side will intensify even more.

In this context, the Palestinian and Kurdish national liberation movements will rise more than ever before and will gain strength as the attention of the imperialist powers backing up Israeli Zionism and the Erdogan despotic expansionism will be compelled to further overextend themselves by so many national liberation movements rising up and waging armed struggle in various continents. Even within imperialist countries, the chauvinists, racists, fascists and other ultra-reactionaries are provoking the resistance of the people of color, the immigrants and their descendants.

7. How do you see the future of the Philippine revolution?

JMS: The future of the Philippine revolution is bright. At the moment, the Filipino proletarian revolutionaries are happy that their revolutionary movement is among those in the forefront of the worldwide struggle for national liberation, democracy and socialism and hope that they will be able to win greater victories self-reliantly and with the direct and indirect support from the expanding number of revolutionary movements of the proletariat and peoples in other countries.

I am confident that the rise of the anti-imperialist and democratic mass struggles on a global scale will usher in the resurgence of the world proletarian-socialist revolution. This will create a much wider area for the Philippine revolution to defend itself against imperialism and build socialism.

The revolutionary movements for national liberation, democracy and socialism will be able to help one another more than ever before.

There were those who thought in the 1990s that the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 and capitalist restoration in China, Russia and Eastern Europe spelled the death of the socialist cause.

But the increase of big imperialist powers upon the restoration of capitalism in Russia and China has sharpened inter-imperialist contradictions, is disturbing the balance of powers, accelerating the strategic decline of US imperialism and preparing the stage for the resurgence of the world proletarian-socialist revolution.

The US emerged as the winner of the Cold War and sole superpower after the collapse of the Soviet Union. But since the financial meltdown of 2007-2008, it has lost the crown of sole superpower in an increasingly multipolar world. The extent of industrial development in former socialist countries remains contributory to the worsening contradictions among the imperialist powers and between the social character of the forces of production and the monopoly capitalist relations of production.

8. Finally, how can people living in imperialist countries best support liberation struggles like that in the Philippines?

JMS: People living in the imperialist countries should develop the revolutionary movement where they are even as they are ready and willing to help the struggles for national liberation. By developing their own revolutionary movement, they enable themselves to extend moral, political and material support and assistance to the peoples waging struggles for national liberation in other countries. Whatever support that they are capable of extending at any given time will go a long way in inspiring other peoples in advancing their revolutionary struggles self-reliantly.

Acts of proletarian internationalism and anti-imperialist solidarity of people include sharing of experiences, views and publications, taking up issues for the benefit of the oppressed and exploited, exchange of personnel with various types of concerns and expertise, transfer of technology that is useful for revolutionary struggle and other concrete forms of assistance. All these are beneficial not only to the revolutionary movements being supported but also to the supporting revolutionary movements. The spread and intensification of the revolutionary struggles on a global scale redound to the benefit of each and every revolutionary movement.

Philippine History, Classes and Crisis, and United Front: A Review

February 28, 2021

Objective:

The study of Philippine history must be guided by the basic principles of historical materialism, Marxist political economy, and the teachings of Lenin regarding imperialism. This study centers on the people's history based on the development of the contradictions within society—the contradiction between the forces of production and the relations of production, the contradiction between the classes, and the contradiction between the old and the new.

It is the duty of every Filipino activists to study and deepen continually one's knowledge of the history of the Philippines. Only in this manner can the historical roots of the basic problems of the people and the semi-colonial and semi-feudal framework of Philippine society be understood. Only in this way can one comprehensively and deeply grasp the necessity of the people's democratic revolution and the basic task to liberate the Philippines from the burden of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

The fundamental conclusions drawn from the study of Philippine history may be used to guide the investigation and study the history and conditions of the regions, provinces, cities and municipalities, and even the barrios.

1. *Can you tell us what are the principal characteristics of the country, the Philippines?*

JMS: The Philippines is archipelagic, with 7,641 islands. The eleven largest islands are inhabited by 95 per cent of the people. The country has a total land area of 300,000 square kilometers. It has forested mountains, fertile plains and rich marine and mineral resources. The natural resources are comprehensive and can sustain agricultural and industrial development.

How about the Filipino people?

JMS: The Filipino people now number nearly 110 million. They belong to various ethnolinguistic communities. Eighty-five per cent belong to the Malay race. But they have a sense of Filipino nationhood as a result of fighting for national independence and democracy against Spanish colonialism, US imperialism and Japanese fascism. They have a national language which has spread through the educational system, mass media, political campaigns and commerce. They have a high level of literacy and have a large corps of skilled workers, professionals and technologists.

2. *What was the social system in various parts of the archipelago during the arrival of the Spanish colonialists?*

JMS: Upon the arrival of the Spanish colonialists in the Philippines in the 16th century, the Islamic sultanates in Mindanao were the most developed form of societies. In most parts of the Philippines, there were small societies characterized by patriarchal slavery and incipient feudalism. There were already urban areas with populations of 5000 to 20,000. At the same time, there were hill tribes and the primitive communal societies of the Aetas.

3. *Is it true that Magellan 'got lost' while searching for the Spice Island, in the Moluccas, that's why he ended up in the Philippines – as they often teach at school – at least during our youth?*

JMS: Magellan got snagged in the Philippines while he was on his way to the Moluccas. It was really his mission to find a new route for Spain in order to reach the Spice Islands by sailing on the Atlantic Ocean and through the Strait of Magellan (at the tip of South America) sailing across the Pacific to the Philippines before reaching the Spice Islands. Magellan had previously participated in the Portuguese conquest of Malacca in Malaysia and had taken from there his servant Enrique who came from the Moluccas.

How did the Spaniards colonize the country, then?

JMS: Magellan did not make a colonial foothold in 1527. He was killed by Lapulapu and his men on Mactan. The next expedition led by Legazpi on 1565 succeeded in starting the colonization of the Philippines. He established a Spanish settlement where Cebu City is now and was the first colonial governor until his death. From his Cebu base, he dispatched expeditions of his Spanish men and Visayan recruits to conquer other parts of the Visayas and Luzon. Subsequently, he would be able to get Spanish reinforcement from Acapulco, Mexico.

4. *What was the principal feature of the colonial and feudal economic system maintained by Spanish colonialism?*

JMS: The term colonial is distinctly political and the term feudal is distinctly economic. In conquering most of the Philippines and the people, Spain gained colonial power and authority over them and imposed on them a centralized system of administration. It also imposed the feudal system of giving land grants to military officers and colonial officials as reward for services to Spain and thereby they took control over large tracts of agricultural land and large numbers of peasants to till the land. This would become the foundation of the feudal system of haciendas.

5. What important development in Philippine society resulted in the Revolution of 1896?

JMS: When foreign trade accelerated between Manila and Acapulco and then between the Philippines and Europe in the 19th century, the friar estates expanded through outright landgrabbing at the expense of the natives (Filipinos), with the peasant masses most offended. A small number of Filipinos became educated at tertiary level, at first mostly priests in the first half of the century, and then professionals among the children of landlords, bureaucrats and merchants in the second half of the century.

The Filipino and mestizo priests launched the secularization movement to demand that the parishes be transferred to them from the Spanish religious orders. This caused a split within the Catholic church which resulted in the martyrdom of Fathers Gomez, Burgos and Zamora on February 17, 1872. Their martyrdom inflamed national consciousnesses against Spanish colonialism. The influence of the French Revolution reached the Philippine intelligentsia at first through European Masons and then through the Propaganda Movement based in Spain.

What is the basic character of the 1896 Philippine Revolution and how does it differ from the current revolution or social movement that is happening during our time?

JMS: The basic character of the 1896 Philippine Revolution was the old bourgeois-democratic type, heavily influenced by the bourgeois liberal ideology of the French revolution and was led by the intelligentsia who were offsprings of the native and mestizo landlord class, bureaucrats, and merchants. It was against the colonial and feudal system. Thus, it differs from the current bourgeois democratic revolution of the new type, under the leadership of the working class, guided by the theory of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and fighting for national and social liberation against imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism,

6. One of the many disputable or debatable topics taught at school is that the US saved the Philippines from the Spaniards. Some of the modern and more audacious historical films represent else ways. How and why did the US-imperialist did actually colonize the country?

JMS: Let us be clear about the sequence of historical events. First the Filipino people founded the Katipunan on July 7, 1892 and then this revolutionary organization declared independence and started the armed struggle in 1896. It was only afterwards that US representatives approached the Aguinaldo government in exile in Hong Kong to pretend offering help to the Filipino people.

The real motive of the US was to grab the Philippines from Spain and turn it into a US colony through the Spanish-American War and then peace negotiations in 1898. The Filipino revolutionaries refused to accept the US as the new colonial master. Thus, the Filipino-American war broke out, with the US conquering the Philippines by killing 1.5 million Filipinos. Since its brutal conquest of the Philippines, the US has propagandized that it has saved the Filipino people from the Spaniards and from their own "savagery."

7. What social system did the US imperialist establish in the Philippines? Is it still visible up to today or has it been wiped off by the Chinese imperialism?

JMS: US imperialism established a colonial and semifeudal system in the Philippines from 1902 to 1946, interrupted by the Japanese occupation during World War II. Then from 1946 onward, the US has dominated and maintained in the Philippines a semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system. It remains this way up to now. The US is the most dominant imperialist power in the Philippines. Chinese imperialism is challenging it but is still far below in terms of foreign direct investments despite the big number of big and middle compradors of Chinese ancestry.

8. What are the main features of the economic system established by US imperialism in the Philippines?

JMS: The economic system set up and developed by US imperialism in the Philippines has the following main features: the dominance of the direct investments of foreign monopoly firms and loans of foreign monopoly banks over such domestic ruling classes as the comprador big bourgeoisie, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists who ensure the production of raw materials and agricultural products for export in exchange for the importation of finished manufactures, including producer and consumer goods. This is a semifeudal capitalist economy ruled

mainly by the comprador big bourgeoisie in tandem with the landlord class.

9. *What are the main features of the political system under the colonial rule of US imperialism?*

JMS: While the Philippines was its colony, US imperialism was in charge of the governance and administration of the entire country, including the development of its political system, economy and culture. When the Philippines became its semicolony in 1946 through the grant of nominal independence, the US retained its military bases and the property rights of its corporations and citizens.

It made sure to control all aspects of Philippine society through treaties, agreements and arrangements but allowed the domestic ruling classes to take responsibility for all levels of government, from the national to the lower levels. A system of elections and appointments has been established for the ruling classes to select political leaders and bureaucrats.

How about the culture it propagated in the country – what are its main characteristics?

JMS: US imperialism has developed a pro-US colonial mentality against national or patriotic thinking and behavior, liberal tolerance for all bourgeois and feudal ideas and notions, anti-communist intolerance, rejection of the tradition and continuing validity of the Philippine Revolution and aversion to the national and democratic rights and interests of the Filipino people, especially the toiling masses of workers and peasants.

11. *As Filipinos, we really take pride in ourselves for being revolutionaries. Dugong katipunero, sabi nga natin; Tito, how did our ancestors resist during this period?*

JMS: Starting with the declaration of independence in 1896, our ancestors rose up in arms against Spanish colonialism and they succeeded in defeating it on 1898. And they continued the revolution against the US war of aggression that started on February 4, 1899.

12. *How about the Japanese, Tito, how and why did they invade us?*

JMS: The Japanese fascists and imperialists invaded the Philippines in 1941 and occupied our country until 1945. They presented themselves as enemies of Anglo-American imperialism and as friends of Philippine national independence and offered the Philippines a place in the so-called Asia co-prosperity sphere. They put up a puppet government but they were so brutal that the Filipino people waged a resolute war of national liberation against them.

13. *We have had three invasions by this time, how did the ruling class react or what did they do during this third invasion?*

JMS: The big compradors collaborated with the Japanese fascists, especially because the wealthiest among them were of Spanish ancestry and sympathized with the Spanish fascists. Other big compradors and many landlords tended to collaborate with the Japanese invaders.

What about the Filipino masses, how did they fight the Japanese?

JMS: The toiling masses of the Filipino people suffered the most from the severe oppression and exploitation by the Japanese invaders, especially the breakdown of production, inflation and brutality. They joined and supported the guerrilla movement against the Japanese invaders. The old Communist Party managed to form the Hukbalahap which succeeded in driving out the Japanese invaders from Central Luzon. The Igorot and Ilocano guerrilla fighters combined to wipe out 100,000 of 150,000 troops of Yamashita in the Cordilleras.

14. *Can you tell us the 'return-of-the-comeback' of the US-Imperialist in the country in 1946? Why and how did they return?*

JMS: The US had the superior air, naval and infantry assets to recover the Philippines from the Japanese. They also had the USAFFE guerrilla forces to cooperate with against the Japanese. The old Communist Party and the Hukbalahap did not develop armed strength beyond Central Luzon and some parts of the Southern Tagalog region and furthermore the Lava leadership of the old CP welcomed the return of the US.

15. *There was – and still is – a whole theatrical production under the US-imperialism. How did our society evolved then? What are the main features of a Philippine society under the claws of this Eagle?*

JMS: Well, the Philippines has remained semicolonial and semifeudal since the grant of nominal independence to the Philippines by US imperialism since 1946.

16. *Tito, how does the US maintain its control over the country?*

JMS: The US made sure that it got the Treaty of General Relations to continue dominating the Philippines by retaining US property rights and military bases. It made further treaties, agreements and arrangements to secure economic, military, cultural and political control over the Philippines. It has the most foreign direct investments in

the Philippines and has burdened the Philippines with loans.

17. *Last week, studied imperialism; how does the US maximize or maintain its control through the use of culture?*

JMS: Control of the Philippines by US imperialism through the use of culture has been effective from generation to generation because it has promoted the English language as the top language as well the so-called American way of life as supposedly the best, set up the public school system at all levels, it has promoted the higher training of academics and other professions in the US under scholarship and travel grants from the US government and private foundations, it has influenced the making of the curricula and choice of textbooks, it has dominated the mass media for information and entertainment, and so on.

18. *What about through international politics?*

JMS: Indeed, the hegemonic position of the US imperialism in international politics is always a major consideration of the Philippine reactionary state. The US binds the Philippines to bilateral and multilateral military treaties and involves the Philippines in US acts of military intervention and aggression, such as those against Korea, Vietnam, Indonesia and many other countries.

It involves the Philippines in various types of bilateral and multilateral economic and trade agreements. It has imposed the neoliberal economic policy regime on the Philippines. It uses diplomatic agents, advisory missions, academic institutions, mass media and think tanks to influence the thinking of all its client states with regard to international politics

18. *How did the Filipinos resist during this time and what did the puppet regime do to suppress this resistance?*

JMS: Since 1946, there have been some organizations and movements and outstanding leaders like Senators Recto and Tañada that criticized and resisted US imperialist dominance. Since the 1960s the national democratic movement of the Filipino people has resurged in order to struggle for national and social liberation from the three evil forces of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. Since 1968 and 1969, the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army have arisen to wage the people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war.

19. *Our next question is somewhat timely, Tito as we will talk about Marcos. We just commemorated the Barikada and the Diliman Commune, and of course, we will soon commemorate the EDSA Uprising. Tito, why did Marcos and his cronies declare Martial Law in the 70s?*

JMS: From 1969 onward, Marcos was harping on the line that the Philippines was a social volcano about to explode. Instead of solving the truly worsening crisis of the Philippine ruling system he was aggravating it and using it as excuse to beef up the military and police forces. He created incidents to justify the use of open terror by the coercive apparatuses of the state, He used several bombing incidents and then the Plaza Miranda grenade throwing incident as pretext for suspending the writ of habeas corpus on August 21, 1971. This was the key preparation for the martial law proclamation in 1972.

Talagang copy-cat si Duterte, ano po? What are the difference and similarities of Marcos and Duterte dictatorship?

JMS: Duterte indeed is a copy cat of his idol Marcos. Marcos was far more clever than Duterte, much younger when he started to plot his fascist dictatorship and still had plenty of allowance for taking foreign loans for showy infrastructure projects. In comparison, Duterte is now old, he is sick physically and mentally, he has bankrupted the economy and his own government because of corruption and military overspending and he has little allowance for borrowing from the crisis-stricken world capitalist system.

Best thing that can happen for the benefit of the Philippine revolution is for him to impose a fascist dictatorship on the people. He will be finished off in one or two years after that. Even right now he is the best recruiter of the CPP and NPA because of his traitorous, tyrannical, genocidal, corrupt and mendacious character.

20. *How did fascist dictatorial rule worsen the crisis of the semi-colonial and semi-feudal society?*

JMS: Absolute power through fascist dictatorship led to absolute corruption, with no restraint whatsoever. The broad masses of the people were revolted by both the violent abuse of political power and by the most scandalous corruption connected with the infrastructure projects and the foreign loans.

21. *Tito, enlighten us, or better yet, agitate us, remind us why we needed to fight. How did you, Tita Julie, and the rest resisted during the time of Marcos?*

JMS: We needed to fight the fascist dictatorship the best we could. We issued statements and other publications to encourage the people to fight the reign of terror and greed and to wage all forms of resistance, legal and otherwise. We did the best we could in helping build the revolutionary underground, waging every possible form

of open resistance and, most important of all, building the CPP, the NPA and the NDFP as revolutionary weapons of the Filipino people.

If you may give your opinion or observation, how are we doing now, are we giving you, us our forerunners any justice? What else can we do better?

JMS: The legal democratic forces and the armed revolutionary movement were much smaller and weaker from 1972 to 1986 than now. They are now much bigger and stronger nationwide and are deeply-rooted among the toiling masses. It should be easier now in less time to overthrow the projected fascist dictatorship of Duterte or to oust Sara as his dynastic successor through a repeat of the 2019 rigging of the elections.

Tito, there is a growing opposition against the fascism of Duterte, how can we maximize this?

JMS: The broad united front of patriotic and democratic forces should hold gigantic mass protest actions against the Duterte regime of terror and greed not only in the national capital region but on a nationwide scale.

If we see Hong Kong, Myanmar, South America, even our neighboring France and Germany, people are going out in AMASS! Do you see another People Power Revolution happening against Duterte?

JMS: Yes, I foresee the people's mass uprisings in the near future.

Pa-blast from the past naman po, Tito, how can we have a mass uprising against Duterte, any tips po?

JMS: The national democratic movement has a very deep and rich reservoir of experience, wisdom and methods for generating the mass uprisings similar to those in 1986. You can also expect the tyrannical regime to aggravate the crisis and problems and to make mistakes that will ignite the mass uprisings. Inflation, loss of jobs, mass hunger, mass murders and corruption will certainly rouse the people to rise up and overthrow the Duterte regime.

22. Tito, this is to give a factual answer to the skeptics, to those who were once part of the ND movement but become weary, to those who never believed in our struggle – please tell us briefly, how did the succeeding regimes up to Duterte exacerbated semi-feudalism and semi-colonialism?

JMS: Despite the constitutional ban on foreign military bases and forces in the Philippines, the US has been able to get these in effect through a series of military agreements like the MLSA, VFA and EDCA. This makes clear that the Philippines is a puppet state, a semicolony of the US. And of course, the Philippines is still a semicolony in an all round way: economically, politically and culturally. Under the US-imposed neoliberal economic policy regime, the Philippine economy remains semifeudal, a provider of cheap raw materials and cheap labor and importer of manufactured producer and consumer goods. It is deprived of genuine land reform and national industrialization.

23. Itong si Digong, Tito no, ilang ulit na niyang sinasabi na ayaw na niya makipagPeace Talks sa CPP-NDF-NPA, with or without the Talks, the revolutionary forces and the patriotic or the ND forces continue to advance the struggle. How and why do you think the people and the Party do it?

JMS: It is absolutely clear that Duterte terminated the peace negotiations in order to carry out an all-out war policy and a campaign of state terrorism. The Filipino people have no choice but to wage all forms of resistance, especially armed revolution. Unwittingly, the Duterte regime is providing the favorable conditions for people's war by committing so many crimes of treason, tyranny, butchery and plunder.

Classes And Crisis

Objectives:

A semicolonial and semifeudal society: this is the basic outline of Philippine society at present. We must grasp this objective truth firmly in order not only to understand correctly the real condition of society, the true nature and the roots of the debilitating crisis which has long afflicted the country, but also the correct revolutionary solution to this crisis.

This chapter sums up the principal issue of the country's history and present condition—by means of clarifying the mode of production and the corresponding state of politics and culture that US imperialism and its local puppets, the comprador-big bourgeoisie and the big landlord class, maintain. The crisis of the semi-colonial and semi-feudal society and its prominent manifestations in the crisis in economy, politics, foreign relations and culture are analyzed. This chapter also clarifies the classes in Philippine society and the basic exploitative and oppressive relations between the ruling classes and those who are dominated.

The correct analysis of the outline of classes in society is the foundation for understanding the basic character and the principal tasks of Philippine revolution. Without understanding the class analysis of the semi-colonial and semi-feudal outline of present society, one cannot understand the character of the chronic crisis of Philippine society and why the objective motion of the basic contradictions of this system creates the most favorable situation for advancing the armed revolution. It will not be possible to advance the revolution steadily in the correct direction.

The correct understanding of the outline of classes in society is also the guide for the social investigation and research of the concrete conditions of the people in different levels and scope. This is the correct means of determining the concrete condition of the people and society. And this concrete analysis of the concrete condition of society is the most important basis for establishing the correct tactics and slogans for advancing the revolutionary movement and struggle of the masses of the people.

The correct Marxist-Leninist analysis of the history and present condition of the Philippines is one of the most important achievements of the re-established Party in elevating the overall level of theoretical and political knowledge, as well as revolutionary activity, of the Filipino proletariat and people. However, since the latter half of the 'Seventies, upon the influence of assorted revisionists, reformists and fascist propaganda on the supposed capitalist development in the Philippines, certain elements within the Party began to declare and to encourage the casting of doubt on the semi-colonial and semi-feudal analysis of the country's social system. This questioning served as the basis for all sorts of doubts to be placed on the line of the people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war, supposedly in an effort to "develop," "refine," and "adapt" it. These efforts resulted eventually in grave deviations of insurrectionism and military adventurism combined with bourgeois populism, economism and a united-front line which collided with and liquidated the leadership of the Party and the socialist perspective of the people's democratic revolution.

With the Second Great Rectification Movement (SGRM), we are once again clarifying and further deepening the understanding of Party cadres and members of the correct class analysis of Philippine society as the basis for steadily and correctly upholding the revolutionary line of the Party.

1. What is the crisis of the semifeudal and semicolonial Philippines?

JMS: The crisis of the semicolonial and semifeudal Philippines arises from the continuing domination of the country by US imperialism despite the nominal grant of independence in 1946. There is an irreconcilable contradiction between the dominance of US imperialism and the desire of the Filipino people for real national independence.

The US has entrusted the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords and their political agents, the bureaucrat capitalists, to govern the people from the national to the local levels. For the ruling classes to stay subordinate and compliant, the US has kept the Philippine economy semifeudal, dependent on the production of agricultural products and raw materials for export and on the importation of producer and consumer goods, unable to produce basic metals, basic chemicals and machine tools.

This perpetuated colonial exchange of raw material exports and manufactured imports has consigned the Philippine economy to trade deficits that makes it ever dependent on foreign loans. Since the 1970s, the Philippines was allowed to produce a few semimanufactures for export and also to export cheap labor. But these have not resulted in the national industrialization of the country. There is always a grave contradiction between the

policy to keep the Philippine underdeveloped and impoverished and the people's desire for industrial development on the basis of its comprehensive and rich natural resources.

Why is it ever worsening?

JMS: The US and other foreign monopoly capitalist connive with the local exploiting classes to maintain the semicolonial and semifeudal relations for their mutual profit taking despite the growing population, unemployment and mass poverty on the one hand and the need for industrial development and social justice on the other hand.

2. What is the most dominant class in a semifeudal society?

JMS: The most dominant class in a semifeudal society is the comprador big bourgeoisie, which is the chief financial and trading agent of foreign monopoly capitalism. It often overlaps with the landlord class because of their need to produce agricultural products for export. Big compradors are often big landlords.

Do we have the same dominant class in the cities as well as in the countryside?

JMS: The comprador big bourgeoisie is based in the cities. Most of the landlords are based in the countryside.

Let us talk about the urban petty bourgeoisie Tito, how are they being exploited?

JMS: The urban petty bourgeoisie includes the intelligentsia and petty entrepreneurs and merchants. The intelligentsia receive fixed incomes termed as salaries and the entrepreneurs and merchants have fluctuating incomes within a certain range. The urban petty bourgeois can be in a very precarious situation when inflation arises and their incomes fall short of their subsistence needs. They are in the danger of losing their white collar jobs or joining the proletariat.

How about the workers, Tito? How bad is the exploitation of the workers under the Duterte government, especially under this pandemic?

JMS: The workers and peasants have suffered the most under the Duterte regime, especially during the pandemic. The workers were deprived of wages because of the lockdown. And they did not receive the promised economic assistance and mass testing. They have no income and yet prices of basic commodities have been rising fast.

3. How do the comprador-big bourgeoisie and the big landlord class use the neo-colonial state?

JMS: They finance the bourgeois political parties and candidates in order to dictate the policies of the neocolonial state. Their own family members and political agents become the bureaucrat capitalists who represent and favor the interests of the big compradors and landlords.

4. What may be considered as the main periods of intensified crisis in the history of the neocolonial state?

JMS: The main periods of intensified crisis have been during the fascist dictatorship of Marcos and now the tyrannical rule of Duterte.

5. Tito, please briefly explain – as review, what do we mean by culture?

JMS: The term culture encompasses the ideas, beliefs, customs, social habits, the level of intellectual development, the language, literature, music and arts, cuisine, mode of dressing and ornaments of an entire community.

By this definition of 'culture'; what is then crisis of the Philippine culture based upon?

JMS: The crisis has arisen from the use of culture to oppress and exploit the broad masses of the people. The Filipino people have been subjected to cultural domination that is colonial and imperialist, feudalist and obscurantist and prejudicial to the toiling masses of workers and peasants. Therefore, the people's democratic revolution fights for a national, scientific and mass culture.

What are the dominant forces in our culture?

JMS: The dominant forces in current reactionary Philippine culture are US imperialism, the Catholic Church and the local exploiting classes of big compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists. They set the rules, patterns and direction of the reactionary culture.

6. How do the US and the Catholic Church promote the anti-scientific culture?

JMS: The US has utilized science and technology in the service of monopoly capitalism or imperialism but is anti-scientific by violently opposing socialism as the way to respect the social character of the forces of production and to do away with the selfish anti-social character of the private capitalist appropriation of the product of labor.

As a matter of theology or philosophy and in its long history, the Catholic Church has super-imposed belief in

the supernatural and dogmas on science. It has a historical record of obscurantism and hindering the advance of science and giving legitimation to the reactionary interests of exploiting classes as well as to colonialism and foreign monopoly capitalism.

But of course, better than US imperialism, the Catholic Church has adjusted its doctrines in response to the needs and demands of the oppressed and exploited classes. Under the influence of the Second Vatican Council and the theology of liberation, the Christians for National Liberation has arisen and become an outstanding participant in the NDFP and in the revolutionary struggle of the people.

7. What are the guiding principles in recognizing classes and differentiating them from one another in society?

JMS: First of all you have to know the mode of production at the material or economic base of society: the forces and relations of production. The forces of production are the people in production and the means of production at their disposal. The relations of production refer to the ownership of the means of production, the organization of labor and the distribution of the product of labor. Thus, you can find out what are the exploiting and exploited classes in an exploitative class society.

8. Tito, we are often mixed up with 'big-comprador landlords', 'compradors', and 'landlords', and can you tell us the main characteristics of each?

JMS: I have already defined the comprador big bourgeoisie as the chief financial and trading agents of foreign monopoly capitalism. They are often big landlords themselves because historically and currently they use haciendas or plantations to produce export crops. But, there is a far greater number of landlords who use the traditional way of exacting land rent from their tenants in the production of food crops for domestic consumption.

9. Who are exploited and oppressed in a semi-colonial and semi-feudal society? Why are they exploited?

JMS: In the semifeudal economy of the Philippines, the basic exploiting and oppressive classes are the big compradors and landlords and the basic exploited and oppressed classes are the workers and peasants.

What are the main characteristics of the national bourgeoisie, rich peasants and middle peasants?

JMS: The national bourgeoisie is called the middle bourgeoisie because their enterprises are not as big as those owned by the imperialists and the big compradors. The rich peasants are sometimes called the rural bourgeoisie. They do token farm work themselves but in the main hire farm workers and rent out work animals and implements that they own. The middle peasants earn just enough to subsist.

Can we ally with the middle-class, rich and middle peasants and the national bourgeoisie against the ruling class and the US-Imperialism?

JMS: In the anti-feudal united front in the countryside, the proletariat and the Party rely mainly on the basic alliance of the poor peasants and farm workers, win over the middle peasants, keep the rich peasants neutral and take advantage of the contradictions between the enlightened gentry and despotic landlords in order to isolate and defeat the latter as the enemy.

In the national united front, the proletariat and the Party rely mainly on the basic alliance of the workers and peasants, win over the urban petty bourgeoisie and the middle or national bourgeoisie and take advantage of the splits among the reactionaries in order to isolate and defeat the imperialists and the worst of the reactionaries as the enemy at every given time.

Tito; we hear the term; despotic landlord, what is it? Is there such a thing as non-despotic landlord – aren't they all despotic since they own the land of our farmers?

JMS: Despotic landlords are those who have local political authority and act as local tyrants, deal harshly with their tenants and even incur blood debts. Enlightened landlords follow the laws and rules regarding land reform issued by the people's democratic government. They agree with the land reform policy and in return they get concessions.

10. Tito, who are the proletariat? What are their main characteristics?

JMS: The proletariat can be strictly described as the industrial workers in factories, warehouses, trading enterprises, mines, transport lines, operation of farm machines and other enterprises where the workers are paid wages. The traditional seasonal farm workers who receive wages and do not operate farm machines are also called rural proletariat.

Say for instance, you are a factory worker or a miner; are you automatically a proletariat? What if I am not a worker at all but I adhere to the principles of the proletariat, am I a proletarian then?

JMS: I have already explained which are the industrial workers, the modern proletariat by occupation. But it is

also possible for an industrial proletarian to gain the status of the proletarian revolutionary by becoming a Communist Party member. Some who do not originate from the proletariat can also become a proletarian revolutionaries by remolding themselves ideologically and politically and joining the Communist Party.

Who are the lumpens or the semi-proletariat?

JMS: The lumpens refer to anti-social elements. They may be dispossessed and disemployed elements who turn to anti-social or criminal activities to earn a living. They are vulnerable to recruitment by the enemy against the proletariat, unless the revolutionary organizations know how to handle them. Examples of the lumpens are those who engage in thievery, scamming, peddling illegal drugs, operating gambling and prostitution dens and cattle rusting.

11. Do we have a special group in our society? Who are they then?

JMS: You can define a certain special group according to occupation, gender, race, nationality, religion or otherwise in order to acknowledge it as worthy of attention and consideration. The individuals belonging to a special group may belong to different classes.

12. Tito, a series of attacks on the national minorities have already occurred just at the start of the year! We could only wish that there was a Dragon Dance and that they took Duterte with them! Why are they being oppressed? What is their social condition?

JMS: Indeed, the national minorities are being terribly oppressed. They are being subjected to state terrorism, including the bombing and destruction of their homes. Their right to self-determination is being violated. They are being driven out of their ancestral domain so that the landgrabbers, the plantation owners, the loggers and mining corporations can take over the land and plunder the natural resources.

How about the settlers; what is the social condition of the settlers?

JMS: The settlers are mostly poor peasants who come from other parts of the country. They go to the land frontier and to the ancestral domains of the indigenous people. They are peasant class brothers of the indigenous people and can be accommodated. They can be united against those foreign and domestic exploiters and oppressors who wish to grab the land and other natural resources.

Program for a People's Democratic Revolution (2016)

***Accomplish national liberation and democracy and pave the way
for a bright socialist future***

Since its reestablishment on December 26, 1968, the Communist Party of the Philippines has stood out as the advanced detachment of the Filipino proletariat and as the leading force in the Filipino people's democratic revolution. It has firmly upheld its revolutionary principles and won brilliant victories in revolutionary struggles against all forces that oppress and exploit the Filipino people. It is guided by Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, the universal theory of the revolutionary proletariat. It uses this theory in comprehending the history and concrete conditions of the Philippines and integrates it with the concrete practice of the Philippine revolution. Thus, it has led the Filipino people from one victory to another against US imperialism and the reactionary classes of the comprador big bourgeoisie and the landlord class in the semicolonial and semifeudal society.

The Party resolutely adheres to the proletarian revolutionary standpoint, viewpoint and method and ceaselessly studies the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Mao, Ho and other great communist thinkers and leaders. It reaffirms the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist criticism and repudiation of classical and modern revisionism, the blatant restoration of capitalism in revisionist-ruled countries and the errors of subjectivism and opportunism that were confronted and defeated by the First and Second Great Rectification Movements. The Party always stands ready in theory and practice to reaffirm basic revolutionary principles and to criticize and repudiate among Party cadres and members manifestations of subjectivism of the dogmatist and empiricist varieties and opportunism of the Right and "Left" varieties. In waging political struggle, the Party builds its own strength and that of the New People's Army and the national united front by relying on the masses and doing everything to arouse, organize and mobilize them for the revolutionary struggle. In its organizational life, the Party upholds democratic centralism and rejects bureaucratism and ultra-democracy.

Victories of the Party

The victories of the Communist Party of the Philippines flow from its adherence to Marxist-Leninist theory, the correct analysis of Philippine history and society, the revolutionary leadership of the working class, the program and line of the people's democratic revolution and the strategy and tactics of protracted people's war. These victories are the outcome of the correct proletarian revolutionary stand in ideological, political and organizational building and the arduous struggle and sacrifices of Party cadres and members and the broad masses of the people under their leadership.

By building and tempering itself in a prolonged and ceaseless revolutionary struggle, the Party has made its own unique contributions to the development of revolutionary theory and practice. It has attained a nationwide and mass character and nurtured a growing disciplined membership which engages in criticism and self-criticism to overcome errors and weaknesses and improve on its work and working style. It has gone deep among the toiling masses of workers and peasants and accumulated victories in the people's democratic revolution.

The Party started from scratch in resuming the Philippine revolution on the road of armed struggle. It overcame the obstacles posed by the Lava revisionist renegades and the Taruc-Sumulong gangster clique as well as the onslaughts of the reactionary state. Then it prevailed over the attempt of the US-Marcos clique to nip it in the bud and subsequently over the full-blown fascist dictatorship which sought to destroy it by the most cruel methods perpetrated against the broad masses of the people.

In the course of the antifascist, anti-imperialist and antifeudal struggle, the Party grew in strength and advanced the people's democratic revolution. On the basis of the revolutionary mass succeeded in building a people's army and national united front that became strong enough to cause the downfall of the fascist dictatorship in 1986. If not for the subjectivist and "Left" opportunist errors mostly in the 1980s, the Party and the people's army would have become even stronger. But even then, the New People's Army stands to this day as the strongest revolutionary army that the Filipino people have ever had.

The replacement of the US-Marcos regime by the series of pseudodemocratic regimes that started with the US-Aquino regime has not solved the fundamental problems of the persistent semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system but has only aggravated them. The same oligarchy of big compradors and landlords servile to the US and

other imperialist powers continue to rule the Philippines. The US has directed its puppet government to adopt and implement the neoliberal economic policy and other policies to undercut national independence, curtail democracy and violate human rights, prevent economic development through genuine land reform and national industrialization, suppress a national, scientific and mass culture and oppose international solidarity, peace and development against imperialist plunder and war.

The US-controlled big comprador-landlord system continues to deteriorate. The socioeconomic and political crises continue to worsen and deepen. The economy remains agrarian, poverty stricken, deficit-ridden, bankrupt and overburdened by superprofit remittances, mounting local and foreign debt, military expenditures, bureaucratic corruption and the high consumption of the exploiting classes. The restoration of bourgeois democratic embellishments on the ruling system is exposed as hypocritical by rampant human rights violations by the reactionary armed force and by the increasing armed factionalization and violent internal contradictions of the ruling classes. The ground is therefore fertile for the growth and advance of the people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war.

As the advanced detachment of the working class, the Communist Party of the Philippines is ever conscious of its duty to accomplish the people's democratic revolution and consequently carry out the historic mission of building socialism. As the most productive and progressive force in the entire history of mankind, the working class and its Party have the capability of comprehensively leading and developing the revolutionary forces for the liberation of all the toiling masses and the entire nation from foreign and feudal domination and proceeding to socialist revolution and construction.

The Party is confident of building socialism and steadily moving towards communism by following and developing Comrade Mao's theory and practice of continuing revolution under proletarian dictatorship by combating revisionism, preventing the restoration of capitalism and consolidating socialism. The revisionist betrayal of socialism and the full restoration of capitalism in former socialist countries made the imperialist powers deliriously happy and even gave them the illusion that history could no longer go beyond capitalism. But since then, the increase of competing capitalist powers has resulted in the accelerated worsening of the crisis of the world capitalist system, sharper inter-imperialist contradictions and a more bitter struggle for a redivision of the world.

In the meantime, the Party carries out the people's democratic revolution, which is correspondent to the semi-colonial and semifeudal character of Philippine society. The global context of modern imperialism and proletarian revolution remains more valid and clearer than ever before. The rapidly worsening crisis of the world capitalist system is generating the global and domestic conditions favorable to the accelerated development of the Party, the New People's Army and the united front as the three powerful weapons of the Filipino people. In waging revolution, the Party wields armed struggle and the united front as its weapons. It exercises absolute leadership over the New People's Army and conducts people's war as the principal form of struggle. It builds the united front both for the armed struggle and the legal forms of struggle. It wages all forms of struggle but armed struggle is the principal form because it carries out the central task of the revolution, which is to seize arms from the enemy, build people's democratic power and destroy the political power of the reactionary classes subservient to the US and other imperialist powers.

The Party and the armed revolution

Without the people's army, the people have nothing. Without people's war, the revolutionary forces and the people are powerless and the joint class dictatorship of the comprador big bourgeoisie and the landlord class can continue undiminished. Without the victory of people's war and the people's army, national liberation and social revolution are impossible.

The Party firmly applies the strategic line of encircling the cities from the countryside over a protracted period of time until conditions are ripe for seizing the cities in the strategic offensive. The people's army relies on a wide and deepgoing rural mass base, builds sustainable fighting units, lures in the enemy forces deep and finishes them off in a series of death traps. It engages in counterencirclements and counter-offensives. Whenever possible, it delivers hard blows on enemy weak points in the urban areas. In the main, it launches battles and campaigns of annihilation and accumulates strength in the countryside until it is capable of carrying out the strategic offensive against the enemy in cities and in final holdouts.

The New People's Army is not a purely military formation. Aside from being distinctively a fighting force, it performs political, productive, cultural and other tasks under the leadership of the Party. It differentiates itself from

the enemy armed forces (paid instruments of imperialism and the local exploiting classes) by serving the people and relying on them and enjoying their wholehearted participation and support in the armed struggle. The armed struggle is integrated with the carrying out of land reform and the building of the organs of political power and mass organizations in the countryside.

Short of the stage of the strategic offensive, the revolutionary movement must wage armed struggle mainly in the countryside. Here the people's army can have the most initiative in launching successful tactical offensives and the widest room for preserving itself and growing in strength. Here the armed struggle can be based on the largest possible mass support (that of the peasantry) and be combined with the most substantive democratic reform, which is land reform, and with the building of organs of political power and the mass organizations.

The horizontal multiplication of fighting units and guerrilla fronts is necessary for building up the revolutionary forces on a far greater scale of population and territory, carrying out extensive and intensive warfare and developing the mass base capable of sustaining the people's army. The enemy must be deprived of any visible target in the form of any armed unit which is prematurely large, nonsustainable and easily isolated. However, small units of the people's army, if absolutely dispersed and without any center of gravity, are vulnerable to enemy surveillance and attacks. In any case, the units of the people's army must keep a war of fluid movement and can do so only with the strong support of the masses.

The Party has successfully built the people's army in the countryside and all over the archipelago. The enemy armed forces are being forced to divide their strength not only in the countryside, but also in so many islands as a result of the people's war. Furthermore, they are being divided between cities and countryside and within the cities and camps as the result of contradictions among the reactionaries, military factionalism, the threats of coup and countercoup and armed challenges from the Bangsamoro struggle. The fighting units of the New People's Army are never lacking in targets against which it can concentrate superior strength in the tactical offensives of guerrilla warfare.

All over the country, there are several scores of guerrilla fronts, territorially distinguishable as the central and secondary districts and qualitatively distinguishable as stable guerrilla base areas, well developed guerrilla zones and unstable guerrilla zones. Guerrilla fronts include or influence town centers and provincial capitals and cities or portions thereof. As the people's war progresses, the people's army can control or liberate the less urbanized areas before taking on the urbanized areas. Major extractive and agricultural enterprises and lines of major transport, communications and power supply are always vulnerable to the actions of the people's army.

There is dialectical interaction and coordination between the armed struggle in the countryside and the legal democratic mass movement based in the cities. As the people's war develops and the ruling system tends to disintegrate, the legal democratic mass movement in the urban areas can surge forward more rapidly and mass actions can grow ever larger. Warfare by armed city partisans and commando units can also accelerate.

Uprisings in urban areas become possible in due time. They are best undertaken when the people's army has reached the stage of strategic offensive. Premature uprisings must be avoided so as not to jeopardize the legal democratic mass movement. The legal and defensive character of this movement must be respected. Its measure of success lies in ever larger mass mobilizations, solid organizing, militancy and aggravation of the political crisis and ever increasing direct support to the armed struggle in the countryside, and not in running far ahead of the balance of armed power through spontaneous mass violence.

The people's war is still in the stage of the strategic defensive and is striving to advance from the middle phase to advanced phase of this stage. It is laying the basis for the strategic stalemate. Because of the uneven development of the armed revolution and the offensive capabilities of the enemy, there will be localized stalemates of varying scales from the municipal level to higher levels (district, provincial and regional) before it can be proclaimed by the Party that the strategic stalemate has become prevalent on a national scale.

As the people's army further grows in strength, reaching the stage of the strategic stalemate on a nationwide scale, the US imperialists and possibly other foreign forces can be expected to escalate military intervention and even undertake all-out aggression. Victory can be assured by confidently strengthening the revolutionary forces and preparing against the worst. In view of the strategic importance of the Philippines and US military presence here, it is wishful thinking to expect that the United States, Japan and their Southeast Asian puppets can be caught napping.

Because the Party and the people's army have the determination to defeat the enemy completely on a

nationwide scale up to his final holdout, it is unavoidable for them to go through the initial, middle and final stages of the process of defeating the enemy. It is necessary for them at each stage to grow in strength and change the balance of forces in their favor before going on to the next stage. The probable course of development of the people's war includes the strategic stages of defensive, stalemate and offensive (or counteroffensive). Ultimately, the enemy must be reduced from a position of military superiority and strategic offensive to a position of military inferiority, strategic defensive and eventual total defeat.

The Party and the united front

The leadership of the working class, through its revolutionary party, is absolutely necessary in the united front for the people's democratic revolution. Otherwise the imperialists and the big bourgeoisie can derail the revolution before or after the seizure of power by using and manipulating any or all strata of the bourgeoisie: petty, middle and big. This has been repeatedly proven in the history of the world and the Philippines in the era of modern imperialism and proletarian revolution.

The Party leads the basic alliance of workers and peasants; the basic forces of the revolution, including the urban petty bourgeoisie; and the positive forces of the revolution, including the middle bourgeoisie whose dual character must be recognized. By having the aforesaid alliances, the Party further broaden the alliance by taking advantage of the splits among the reactionaries, availing of temporary, unreliable and unstable allies for the purpose of subjecting the enemy to the worst possible isolation, weakness and ripeness for destruction.

Directly or through the National Democratic Front, the Party can enter into formal and informal alliances, bilateral or multilateral with other entities, be they parties, associations or individuals, in order to build national unity, strengthen the revolutionary forces and pave the way for the people's democratic government. The Party and the people build the organs of political power along the line of the united front.

The Party always stands for the leading role of the working class in the united front and in the revolution. When it goes into any formal alliance, the Party maintains its independence and initiative; and does not allow a class other than the working class to become dominant and change the new democratic character of the Philippine revolution. Although the urban petty bourgeoisie is an important ally of the working class and is even a source of cadres who must first go through proletarian remolding, it should not be allowed to dissolve the leadership of the working class, dilute the national democratic program and derail the revolution.

By going to the countryside and building the people's army, the peasant movement and the people's revolutionary government, the Party builds and develops the basic alliance of the working class and peasantry as the foundation of the national united front. The national democratic revolution is thereby advanced. The antifeudal content of this revolution gets its due attention and is realized. Within the national united front, the antifeudal united front is pursued. It involves the Party relying on the poor peasants, farm workers and lower-middle peasants, winning over the rest of the middle peasants, neutralizing the rich peasants, and taking advantage of the splits among the landlords (persuading the enlightened gentry to comply with land reform) in order to isolate and destroy the despotic evil gentry. Upon the proven strength of the worker-peasant alliance, the Party can more easily attract the urban petty bourgeoisie, which is now suffering from the ravages of the social crisis, into the revolutionary movement and the national united front. The working class, peasantry and urban petty bourgeoisie comprise the basic forces of the Philippine revolution. The urban petty bourgeoisie is attracted to the revolutionary fold not by the weakening and denial but by the strengthening and affirmation of the working class leadership and the worker-peasant alliance.

These basic forces and the national bourgeoisie comprise the positive forces of the national united front. The latter is most cooperative in areas where the political power of the revolutionary forces is strong enough. The Party augments the strength of the broad united front by taking advantage of the splits within the reactionary classes of big compradors and landlords. The broadest range of positive forces and some sections of the reactionaries can narrow down, isolate and destroy the most counterrevolutionary force at a given time. Thus, one reactionary group after another can be defeated. The series of reactionary ruling cliques can be brought down until the entire ruling system collapses.

Self-reliance and international support

The Filipino people have accumulated revolutionary strength through the building of the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army, the National Democratic Front, the people's revolutionary government and the mass organizations. On this basis, the people can further advance in the people's democratic revolution

and ultimately win total victory.

The Party and the people have resolutely carried out the revolution self-reliantly and independently. It is the class enemy that has been dependent on a foreign power, US imperialism. It is therefore necessary and just for the Party and the people to seek international support in order to supplement internal strength and counter the escalating intervention and threat of aggression by the US and other foreign forces.

The Party firmly holds on to its perspective of carrying out socialist revolution and construction upon the total victory of the people's democratic revolution. Further on, the achievement of socialism shall be the basis for building communism. The Party is guided by Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and is armed beforehand by the Maoist theory and practice of continuing revolution under proletarian dictatorship through a series of cultural revolutions in order to combat revisionism, prevent capitalist restoration and consolidate socialism.

In seeking to discredit the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and to demoralize the ranks of the revolutionary movement, the imperialists and the local reactionaries harp on the defeat and disintegration of socialism by revisionist ruling cliques in certain countries. The restoration of capitalism is touted as democratization. But in fact in these countries, the bourgeois liberalization of the economy, politics and culture has paved the way for the return of bourgeois class dictatorship.

The Filipino proletariat and people have continuously been under the rule of the big bourgeoisie and landlord class; they have no choice but to wage revolutionary struggle for national liberation and democracy against such rule. The theory of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is the correct guide to the national democratic and socialist stages of the Philippine revolution. The full restoration of capitalism in certain countries serves to challenge the Filipino communists to study in advance the theory of continuing revolution under proletarian dictatorship.

It is a key task of the Communist Party in power to maintain and develop the proletarian revolutionary consciousness of the intelligentsia, bureaucrats and technocrats and dissuade them from becoming divorced from the toiling masses and becoming bourgeoisified in socialist society. The longstanding antirevisionist position of the Party since reestablishment has been vindicated. The lessons that can be learned from the peaceful evolution of socialism through revisionism to capitalism and the class dictatorship of the big bourgeoisie, are of great importance now and in the future.

In the aftermath of the disintegration of revisionist parties and regimes, the restoration of capitalism in certain countries and collapse of the Soviet Union in the period of 1989 to 1991, the US boasted of itself as the sole superpower and winner of the Cold War and proceeded to carry out anti-communist ideological and political offensives, escalate the neoliberal economic offensive of unbridled greed and plunder and unleash the neoconservative policy of full spectrum dominance and prime use of hightech military power for wars of aggression in order to maintain US imperialist hegemony in the 21st century.

For a while, there was a temporary ebb in the anti-imperialist and socialist movement in the world. But the fundamental contradictions within the world capitalist system have sharpened. The crisis of the world capitalist system has continuously worsened. The crisis of overproduction is accelerated by the neoliberal policy regime and the adoption of higher technology for higher profit. The reckless expansion of money and credit to buoy up or bail out the big banks and firms has served to generate one financial bubble after another which inevitably bursts and compounds the economic crisis with the financial crisis.

The strategic decline of the US has accelerated. It is well assisted by the economic competition and political rivalry provided by the former socialist countries, Russia and China. Contradictions among the imperialist powers have intensified, with the economic and security blocs of the US, European Union and Japan at odds with those of China and Russia. Social conditions are deteriorating in the capitalist countries. Social turbulence resulting from neocolonial and neoliberal impositions by imperialist powers characterizes their client-states in underdeveloped countries. The world is on the eve of unprecedented upheavals and social revolution. Time is in favor of the Philippine revolutionary forces as they persevere in struggle and accumulate victories.

Like the Bolsheviks in the period of the Second International and the rise of modern imperialism, the Filipino communists are holding high the red banner of the proletarian leadership, armed revolution and proletarian internationalism. They take advantage of the insoluble and worsening crisis of the world capitalist system and domestic ruling system. They ceaselessly build the revolutionary forces of the people and are confident of gaining more international support and making new contributions to the resurgence and advance of the anti-imperialist and socialist cause in the world proletarian revolution.

I. Critique of the semicolonial and semifeudal society

The United States was able to impose its colonial rule on the Philippines as a result of the brutal conquest of the Filipino people, the defeat of the old type of democratic revolution, the cooptation of its bourgeois leadership and the retention of feudal property rights at the beginning of the century.

Unlike Spain the old colonial ruler, driven by mercantile capitalism, the United States is an industrial capitalist or modern imperialist power driven by its industrial monopoly banks and firms to dominate other countries, export surplus capital and surplus commodities, plunder the raw materials and labor in the underdeveloped countries and extract superprofits under the guise of free enterprise and free trade.

In more than 300 years of colonial rule, Spain carried out plunder through conscripted labor, trading monopolies, feudal rent, religious tribute and taxation and developed a feudal system in the Philippines that matured under the stimulus of foreign trade in the nineteenth century.

The native population of the colonial and feudal society included landlords; a thin strip of entrepreneurs, merchants, master artisans and intelligentsia and a huge mass of peasantry comprising about 90 percent of the population. On top of this were the colonial bureaucrats, the foreign traders and the friar landlords.

The semifeudal mode of production

As soon as it could impose its direct colonial rule, the US started to transform the Philippine mode of production from a feudal to a semifeudal one. It expanded raw-material production for the industrial capitalist countries by introducing more equipment for the production of export crops and for opening the mines, allowing some low-value added and import-dependent enterprises subordinate to foreign monopoly and comprador firms, expanding the educational system for the needs of business and the bureaucracy, removing the feudal restrictions on the migration of peasants and improving transport and communications for increased domestic and foreign trade.

The pattern of investments is determined and limited by the dominant interests of the foreign monopoly firms and banks and by such local exploiting classes as the big compradors and landlords. To this day, the Philippine economy remains underdeveloped, agrarian and preindustrial.

Semifeudal is the most precise descriptive term for this economy because it points to the persistence of land as the principal means of production and main source of the surplus product as well as of the feudal production relations at the base of the economy and because it also points to the strategic dominance of a domestic big bourgeoisie which is not industrial but comprador and whose main source of Philippine-produced goods for trading is agricultural. Other terms, such as "free enterprise" and dependent capitalism, used by bourgeois economists refer only to certain aspects of the economy and not to the essential character of the entire economy.

The Philippines has a big population of nearly 110 million (the twelfth largest in the world) and a comprehensive natural resource base for industrialization. But imperialism and the local exploiting classes have prevented industrial development. Thus, the Philippines has remained without industrial foundation — no basic industries producing basic metals, chemicals, capital goods, core processes of electronic production and so on. The existing industrial enterprises are dependent on the importation of equipment, processed components, fuel and other raw materials.

At the peak of the Philippine social structure are the comprador big bourgeoisie and the landlord class as principal owners of the means of production that are not totally or mainly owned by foreign corporations. They comprise only about one percent of the population. The comprador big bourgeoisie has the most concentrated financial and economic power by owning commercial banks and major enterprises. It also doubles as landlord class by owning vast tracts of land. The entirety of the landlord class, including the noncomprador members, is the more widespread exploitative class.

The intermediate social strata are the middle and petty bourgeoisie. The middle bourgeoisie has for its core the owners of medium-type productive enterprises which use a significant amount of local labor and raw materials. It includes about one percent of the population. The petty bourgeoisie may be subdivided into the urban and rural sections. The urban petty bourgeoisie includes the small entrepreneurs and traders and the intelligentsia in general and is 6 to 8 percent of the population. The rural petty bourgeoisie includes the general run of owner-tillers of the land, including middle and rich peasants, and is around 15 percent of the population.

The basic toiling masses are the working class and peasantry. They are the basic producers of goods and services and are the most exploited people in the country. They comprise around 90 percent of the population. The working class, including the regular modern machine-operating farm workers but excluding the traditional farm

workers who are more than 95 percent of all farm workers, comprises 14 to 15 percent of the population. The entire peasantry comprises 75 percent of the population but the poor and lower middle peasants who often double as seasonal farm workers and as rural and urban odd jobbers are at least 60 percent of the population.

It is necessary to stress the semifeudal character of the social economy because there have been attempts to attack the general line of people's democratic revolution and the necessity of protracted people's war by misleading claims that the Philippine economy is already a newly industrialized country and is highly urbanized. The statistical tricks include (1) breaking apart the gross output value into agricultural, industrial and service sectors without reference to the lack of basic industries, nor to the mainly agricultural basing of the service sector and the falsity of employment statistics; (2) exclusion of the traditional seasonal farm workers and oddjobbers from the peasantry; and (3) classification of provincial cities and municipalities as urban and industrial although these are in fact basically rural in character, notwithstanding the existence of a small commercial core.

Semicolonial rule

As of July 4, 1946, the United States shifted from a direct to indirect colonial rule over the Philippines by granting nominal independence to a puppet neocolonial republic and allowing the political parties and politicians of the local exploiting classes of comprador big bourgeoisie and landlords to assume responsibility for national political rule and administration. The Philippines is semicolonial, independent in form but subservient in fact to the United States. The United States has maintained its strategic and all-round power over the Philippines through unequal treaties, agreements and arrangements in all spheres of Philippine society — socioeconomic, politico-military and cultural.

The social economy is an underdeveloped and semifeudal appendage of the US and the world capitalist system. The US and other foreign monopoly capitalists control the patterns of investments, consumption, trade and credit. They plunder the economy and ruin the environment in order to extract superprofits. The local exploiting classes are their economic and financial agents. Under the direction of the US and other foreign monopoly firms, they exploit the people and keep the country backward.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines is the main component of the joint class dictatorship of these exploiting classes and is dependent on the US for strategic planning, intelligence, training and logistics under the US-RP Military Assistance Pact. After being prohibited by the 1987 constitution from having military bases and troops in the Philippines and failing to extend the US-Military Bases Agreement in 1991, the US has reacquired extraterritorial prerogatives of its military forces by invoking the US-RP Mutual Defense Treaty and a series of pretexts, including joint military exercises, humanitarian action, war on terrorism and protection from China's expansionism.

The US has been able to reacquire military landing and supply rights through the Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement of 1992 (which would further become the Mutual Logistics Support Agreement), rotational military presence anywhere in the Philippines through the Visiting Forces Agreement of 1999 and military bases inside camps and reservations of the reactionary armed forces through the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (2014). The violation of Philippine sovereignty and territorial integrity continues. The Philippines is implicated and embroiled in US regional and global strategies of military intervention and aggression.

The established system of schools, mass media and other cultural institutions and mechanisms is under the ideological, political, organizational and financial control of the US and the local reactionary forces. The US has been able to influence and shape the educational and cultural system through US agencies, foundations, media corporations engaged in the dissemination of news and opinions, TV programs, movies and pop music, the World Bank and other UN agencies. Unless they undergo progressive political education and revolutionary ideological remolding, the intelligentsia and the rest of the urban petty bourgeoisie tend to be the passive transmission belt of imperialist and reactionary ideas although they may easily complain against the degree of exploitation which they suffer.

Semicolonial and semifeudal society is always in crisis because it is afflicted by the three rapacious forces of foreign monopoly capitalism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. These have imposed extreme conditions of exploitation and oppression on the broad masses of the people. Thus, there have always been fertile conditions for armed revolution.

In the wake of World War II and the US reconquest of the Philippines, national and social contradictions continued to cause social unrest and popular resistance against the US and the local exploiting classes. There was a people's army which had become tempered and grown in struggle against the Japanese imperialists.

However, the conditions favorable for armed revolution were not correctly acted upon by the leadership of the old merger party of the Communist Party and Socialist Party.

Such leadership did not put forward any program for a people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war and did not know how to build the revolutionary party of the proletariat and how to wield the weapons of armed struggle and the united front. Errors of subjectivism and opportunism, swinging from Right opportunism (parliamentarism as principal form) to "Left" opportunism (the 1950-62 policy of quick military victory in two years' time) and back again to Right opportunism (liquidationism and capitulationism) deprived the people of the revolutionary leadership of the proletariat.

Thus, the revolutionary movement was defeated and the enemy was able to consolidate its rule in the 1950s. It would be only after the resurgence of the anti-imperialist and antifeudal mass movement under the leadership of new proletarian revolutionary cadres in the 1960s that the Communist Party of the Philippines could be reestablished on the theoretical foundation of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and could unfold clearly the program of people's democratic revolution in 1968.

The reestablishment of the Party was timely. The chronic crisis of the ruling system was plunging to a new level of deterioration. The ruling classes and the ruling clique were increasingly incapable of ruling in the old way. The competing reactionary factions were talking of constitutional reforms and the Marcos ruling clique was clearly intending to use these in order to do away with the bourgeois-democratic facade of the big comprador-landlord system.

It was in the late 1960s that the land frontier of the country became exhausted and scarce for resettlement and homesteading by the ever increasing surplus labor in the countryside. Together with some US agri-corporations, the big compradors and the landlord class were grabbing the logged over lands and dispossessing the poor settlers and national minorities of their land. The lack of industrial development beyond the establishment of flimsy import-dependent manufacturing enterprises since the 1950s limited the absorption of the ever increasing surplus labor.

Simultaneous with the aggravation of the land problem, the unequal exchange of raw-material exports and manufactured imports was resulting in huge trade deficits and necessitating large amounts of foreign loans. One after the other, Philippine agricultural and mineral exports (coconut, copper, sugar, etc.) became depressed and increased the ranks of the unemployed in succeeding years. Under the stress of the socioeconomic crisis, the Marcos regime undertook further inflationary government spending and initiated the blatant use of official and unofficial armed units to win the elections in 1969 and 1971.

The reestablishment of the Communist Party of the Philippines in 1968, the resumption of the armed revolution in 1969 and surge of the First Quarter Storm of 1970 and the Diliman Commune of 1971, together with the protest mass actions up to 1972, inspired the working class and the entire people to intensify their struggle against the ruling system. The conflict among factions of the ruling classes also became more intense and bitter, especially after Marcos engineered the Plaza Miranda bombing and sought to scapegoat the Party and Senator Benigno S. Aquino as the perpetrators. The incident almost wiped out the national leadership of the electoral opposition party. Marcos used the incident to justify the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus on August 21, 1971 and prepare for the declaration of martial law in 1972.

The Marcos fascist regime

Under the instigation of US imperialism, Marcos declared martial law and imposed fascist dictatorship on the people on September 21, 1972. This categorically marked the inability of the comprador bourgeoisie and landlord class to rule in the old way. The entire bourgeois democratic facade of the ruling system crumbled as the despot subjected his political rivals, the legal democratic forces and the small clandestine revolutionary forces to brutal acts of suppression.

The United States propped up the Marcos fascist dictatorship by providing it with a massive flow of foreign loans to cover deficits, support infrastructure and other nonproductive projects, sustain a rapid military buildup as well as the high consumption and wealth-grabbing by a privileged few. The US, Japanese and other transnational firms and banks and the bureaucrat capitalists headed by Marcos looted the financial and economic system. Although Marcos and his cronies among the native exploiters got the lion's share, the other sections of the exploiting big comprador-landlord classes were quite satisfied with the spin-off from foreign loans until the imperialist credit system increasingly tightened from 1979 onward.

Despite the heavy inflow of foreign funds and the rapid buildup of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, the fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique failed to destroy the armed revolutionary movement led by the Party. Instead, all the legal and illegal forces of the people's democratic revolution self-reliantly grew in strength through hard struggle and by taking advantage of favorable factors such as the Moro armed resistance, broad opposition to the fascist regime and the persistent worsening of the economic and political crisis. When repression was at its most intense, the Party had scarcely any contact with nor assistance from any fraternal party abroad. On the other hand, the fascist regime made political capital out of its diplomatic and trade relations with other countries, including those that regarded themselves as socialist.

The self-reliant and consistent revolutionary struggle of the people undermined the fascist regime and caused it to fall in the end. The US and anti-Marcos reactionaries became convinced of the necessity of letting Marcos fall only because of their counterrevolutionary fear that if he stayed longer in power the armed revolutionary movement would advance faster. Thus, there came about a convergence of revolutionary and counterrevolutionary forces to bring about the fall of the Marcos ruling clique.

Immediately after Marcos foiled the US-instigated coup attempt of the Reform the AFP Movement (RAM), the people's uprising became dominant in isolating the Marcos regime and causing its downfall. But the balance of strength between the revolutionary and counterrevolutionary forces was still such that the US, the dominant Catholic church, the bourgeois opposition parties and the anti-Marcos sections of the exploiting classes could decide the character and composition of the new regime to be installed. The semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system remained intact.

The pseudodemocratic regimes

Since the popular overthrow of the Marcos fascist regime, a series of pseudo-democratic regimes headed by big comprador-landlord cliques beholden and subservient to US imperialism has ruled the Philippines. This corrupt oligarchy has rabidly followed the US-instigated neoliberal economic policy to exploit the people and plunder their natural resources. It has carried out state terrorism and strategic military plans in a futile attempt to suppress the people and their revolutionary forces. It has applauded all the wars of aggression that the US has unleashed in the Balkans, in Central Asia, West Asia, Africa and elsewhere.

The first Aquino regime (1986-92) adopted all the Marcos decrees antagonistic to the Filipino nation and the working class and favorable to the US and other foreign investors and creditors and the local exploiting classes. It pushed trade liberalization and opposed the line of national industrialization. It agreed with the imperialist banks to pay for the most odious foreign debts of the fascist regime. It pushed a new constitution that paid lip service to democracy but deprived the landless tillers of land and social justice by defining land reform as voluntary sale of land by the landlords and just compensation for land at fair market value. Thus, the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program was as fake as the bogus land reform program of Marcos, it was calculated to disable the peasants from completing payments for the land.

The regime pretended to engage the revolutionary movement in a ceasefire agreement in late 1986. As soon as it thought that it had consolidated its rule, it proceeded to "unsheathe the sword of war" and unleashed Oplan Lambat Bitag I against the people and revolutionary forces. Notwithstanding its repressive policy towards the revolutionary forces, it continued to be pressured by coup threats and coup attempts by the followers of Enrile in the AFP. The regime expanded the local public debt and could not show any significant improvement on the underdeveloped economy and the conditions of mass unemployment and poverty. The Marcos family and cronies were allowed to return to the Philippines and rejoin the political game after they gave a major share of their loot to the Cojuangco-Aquino family and its dummies.

The Ramos regime (1992-1998) became the special instrument of the US in patching up the splits within the reactionary armed forces since 1986 and converting mutiny ringleaders into politicians, managers and businessmen. It connived with the US in trying to overcome the 1991 end of US military bases and reacquire the prerogatives of military intervention. It carried out Oplan Lambat Bitag II and III against the revolutionary forces even as these were engaged in the Second Great Rectification Movement and focused on political education and mass work to lay the ground for tactical offensives which increased from 1996 onward. The regime sought to carry out peace negotiations with the National Democratic Front of the Philippines and the Moro National Liberation Front to obtain their capitulation. It succeeded with the latter. It was obsessed with peace and order as a condition for implementing the neoliberal economic policy. It pushed the privatization of state enterprises and the huge Fort

Bonifacio in order to obtain nonrenewable income, augment foreign and local borrowing and cover widening budgetary and trade deficits. It threw the economy wide open to foreign monopoly interests by pushing investment and trade liberalization and doing away with previous nationality requirements in mining, banking, retail trade, public utilities and other types of enterprises. It encouraged foreign corporations and big compradors firms to engage in building infrastructure and energy projects and private construction of office and residential towers and leisure facilities. The building boom seemed to be doing well forever until the Asian financial crisis of 1997 struck.

The Estrada regime (1998-2001) assumed power over a bankrupt government. There seemed to be no thriving enterprises from which to draw enough government revenues to cover expenses. The regime was advised by the IMF to reduce the budget deficit. International credit continued to be tight. The president did not have the usual money flows in government and private business from which to obtain bureaucratic loot. Thus, he sought to obtain this from the numbers game (jueteng) usually conceded to military officers and local government officials and from loans of the social security system for financing casinos. He became vulnerable to popular overthrow after being easily exposed for corruption, after up, setting the government budget by attacking the camps of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front aside from carrying out Oplan Makabayan against the revolutionary movement and after revealing himself as a puppet by concluding the Visiting Forces Agreement with the US. His successor kept him in prison on corruption charges to make sure that he could not claim back the presidency.

The Arroyo regime (2001-2010) arose after the overthrow of Estrada, with his vice president Gloria M. Arroyo taking over the presidency. Like all previous regimes, it had no program of genuine land reform and national industrialization. It relied heavily on remittances of overseas contract workers and incomes from call centers and tourism and pushed the privatization of state assets in order to raise nonrenewable revenues. When in 2004 budgetary deficits grew because of widescale tax avoidance and tax evasion, the regime pushed the enactment of the 12 per cent value added tax and the E-VAT to increase tax revenues and reduce the large deficits at the expense of the people. In the last two remaining years of the regime, the price of rice and oil became inflated and caused a fiscal crisis. This coincided with the financial crisis which began with the mortgage meltdown in the US and spread worldwide in 2008.

The Arroyo regime became politically unstable because of the public exposure of the electoral fraud that enabled Arroyo to win the 2004 presidential election. It became a target of public opprobrium also because of corruption charges against the president and her husband in various shady deals, including the NBN-ZTE Broadband Deal. It was rocked by mass protests as well by factionalism within the military and military coup attempts. Her relations with the Cojuangco-Aquino family broke down when she supported the decision of the Presidential Agrarian Reform Council or PARC to knock down the stock distribution option which enabled said family to avoid land reform of Hacienda Luisita. The Arroyo regime brutally carried out Oplan Bantay Laya I and II in a vain attempt to suppress the people and revolutionary forces. Human rights violations were so barbaric that the regime became notorious worldwide.

The second Aquino regime (2010-2016) benefited from a US scheme to use it for destroying the revolutionary movement or at least reducing it to “inconsequentiality” under Oplan Bayanihan. The scheme was to create the illusion of high growth of the Philippine economy with the use of “hot money” or portfolio investments from US and other foreign hedge funds. At the peak in 2013-14 these accounted for 65 per cent of the money flow. They went mainly to the stock and bond markets and were coursed through the banks which also used these to finance consumption-oriented enterprises, especially in real estate, and make possible higher government revenues for pork barrel allocations, military operations, big public-private partnership projects and dole out programs called PAMANA and Conditional Cash Transfer. But the “hot money” started to flow out in 2014 on expectations of interest hikes in the US and worse conditions of production slowdown and excessive debt in China.

Oplan Bayanihan was frustrated by the revolutionary forces of the people in Mindanao, Visayas and Luzon. The regions, subregions and guerrilla front that were under enemy attack prevailed and inspired other regions, subregions and guerrilla fronts to launch offensives. The bureaucrats and military officers headed by Aquino also rendered themselves ineffective because of their conspicuously extreme corruption and wealth-seeking. The scheme to prolong the ceasefire with the MILF and free more troops to fight the New People's Army by making false promises in the Draft Bangsamoro Basic Law was also rendered useless by the growth of the revolutionary strength of the NPA and the disgust of the MILF and the Moro people with the chicanery of the Aquino regime.

The Aquino regime displayed unabashed subservience to the US. It allowed more frequent US military

exercises, naval dockings and other operations. It gave the US military direct supervision over special police forces in conducting the operations leading to the Mamasapano incident. It signed the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) in April 2014 which allowed the US military to build restricted military facilities inside AFP camps and other arranged locations.

Revolutionary forces of the Filipino people

The small and weak revolutionary forces which the Marcos regime could not destroy from 1969 onward, despite the fascist dictatorship from 1972 to 1986, are now much bigger and stronger than before. They have continued to grow in strength, advance and be tempered through fierce struggle, against a 14-year fascist dictatorship and a series of pseudo-democratic regimes that exploit and oppress the people and carry out US-designed strategic operational plans of counterrevolutionary violence and deception against the people and their revolutionary forces.

At this point in time, it is clear that the ruling system cannot realize its constant objective to destroy the armed revolutionary movement. Sometimes, a ruling clique seeks to confuse and swindle the movement and people with the use of peace rhetoric which is nothing more than a call for pacification and surrender. The firm stand of the Party and the people is that a just peace is not possible without the satisfaction of the people's basic demands for national and social liberation.

The Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army, the National Democratic Front and the people's revolutionary government are invincible and victorious because they fight for a just revolutionary cause, which is the national and social liberation of the people from US imperialism and the local reactionary classes, because they are the instruments of the Filipino people for national liberation and democracy.

The most noteworthy achievement of these revolutionary forces is that they have preserved and strengthened themselves self-reliantly, without any substantial material assistance from abroad, against tremendous odds posed by a fascist dictatorship and a succession of pseudo-democratic regimes enjoying huge US military and financial assistance.

The objective domestic conditions for the further growth in strength and advance of the revolutionary forces are exceedingly favorable. The Filipino people, the Party and all other revolutionary forces have the resoluteness, tenacity and confidence to continue the people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war on the fertile ground of chronic economic, social and political crisis in the country aggravated by the world crisis. They feel well rewarded by the spread of Red political power in the countryside and enjoy high morale until it is time to seize the cities from the enemy.

They can see clearly the ever worsening crisis of the world capitalist system. US imperialism is in strategic decline and tries in vain to reverse the process only at the expense of other industrial capitalist powers but without hope of unilinear success. Economic competition and trade wars among the United States, Japan and Western Europe are now complicated and aggravated by the rise of China and Russia as capitalist rivals, amidst the increasingly depressed conditions of underdeveloped client-states. A struggle for the redivision of the world is occurring among capitalist powers in accordance with their relative strengths. The contradictions of the capitalist powers are sharpening in a crisis-stricken, stagnant and increasingly depressed capitalist world.

In the meantime, the United States is amicably seeking the sharing of military burden with Western Europe and Japan. The Japanese big bourgeoisie is taking advantage of the US decline and is building up its capacity to guarantee and support its economic expansionism with military power. At the same time, the US and Japan are combining to contain China. Insofar as the Philippines is concerned, they will increasingly cooperate to oppose the armed revolution in the Philippines.

As a result of the worsening conditions of exploitation and oppression, social and political turbulence is spreading and intensifying in the developed capitalist countries. In the underdeveloped countries and in the countries where the revisionist regimes gave way to the full restoration of capitalism, the social and political turbulence involves the emergence of the most reactionary monsters, including fascism, racism and religious bigotry. But ultimately the anti-imperialist and socialist cause will surge forward again.

II. Program for a People's Democratic Revolution

The general program of the Filipino people and the Communist Party of the Philippines is a people's democratic revolution. All Filipino communists must work and struggle to realize this long-term program and must be ready to sacrifice their lives if necessary in the struggle to bring about a new Philippines that is completely

independent, democratic, united, just and prosperous.

US imperialism and the local reactionary classes of big compradors and landlords will never voluntarily give up their power to oppress and exploit the people. They use armed violence to guarantee and preserve the system of exploitation. To end the semicolonial and semifeudal system, the people have necessarily taken the road of armed revolution and they must persevere in waging a protracted people's war until total victory is won.

In the political field, the Party must advance the revolutionary leadership of the proletariat and be at the core of the revolutionary mass movement of the basic toiling masses of workers and peasants and the middle social strata; fight to overthrow the reactionary state and the reactionary classes behind it; empower the people, especially the toiling masses, and establish a people's democratic government, a coalition or united front government of the working class, peasantry, the urban petty bourgeoisie and middle bourgeoisie. The imperialists lose the privilege to exploit and oppress the nation, and the exploiting classes the privilege to do likewise to the toiling masses.

In the economic field, the Party must establish a self-reliant economy freed from foreign monopoly capitalism and feudalism; carry out genuine and thoroughgoing land reform; undertake national industrialization; guarantee a just and prosperous people's livelihood; conserve the national patrimony and protect the environment; and make socialist construction possible. The commanding heights of the economy, including the banks and other financial institutions, existing strategic enterprises, major sources of raw materials and main instruments of transport and communications must be in the hands of the people's democratic state in order to ensure the planned development of the economy and lay the foundation of socialism.

In the military field, the Party must command and build the New People's Army as the main instrument of the people for smashing—through a people's war—the bureaucratic and military machinery of the joint class dictatorship of the comprador big bourgeoisie and the landlord class and for enabling the current organs of political power to develop the people's democratic state to arise on the basis of the local organs of political power. The strategic line of the people's war and the people's army is to encircle the cities from the countryside for as long as necessary until it becomes possible to seize power in the cities.

In the cultural field, the Party must promote among the people a national, scientific and mass system of culture and education, and combat all counterrevolutionary trends of thought through campaigns of education and information and with due respect to freedom of thought and belief. The patriotic spirit of the Filipino people must be intensified against imperialism and colonial mentality. The national cultural heritage must be cherished. Scientific education must prevail over superstition and obscurantism. Science and technology must serve the Filipino nation and its drive for all-round development. Free public education must be expanded. Education and culture must honor the heroic toiling masses and revolutionary cadres and fighters, and respond to their demands for social liberation and development.

In the field of foreign relations, the Party must realize an actively independent and peace-loving foreign policy and develop relations at the level of countries, peoples, parties and governments under the over-all guidance of proletarian internationalism. Priority must give to fraternal relations with revolutionary forces and movements abroad that are fighting for national liberation, peace and development against imperialism. The people's democratic state must have diplomatic and trade relations with all friendly countries, regardless of ideology and social system, in accordance with the policy of peaceful coexistence.

For greater clarity, the Party hereunder states ten points for its general program:

1. Overthrow the forces of US imperialist and feudal oppression

The overriding interest of the Filipino people now is to fight for the total victory of the people's democratic revolution. This can be achieved by defeating and overthrowing the forces of US imperialist and feudal domination whose basic interests lie in the continued national and class enslavement and exploitation of the Filipino people. The bureaucratic and military machinery of the big comprador-landlord state must be smashed and the fascist criminals and traitors must be punished.

Armed revolution must be waged to defeat the armed counterrevolution and the united front must bring together all positive forces and take advantage of the splits among the reactionaries in order to isolate and destroy the enemy. The Filipino people and their revolutionary forces must extirpate the power and influence of the US imperialists and the local exploiting classes.

The Party must build the people's democratic power in the countryside before it can seize the cities. It must fight, discredit and isolate the monopoly of political power by the reactionaries in the cities. In this regard, the

armed revolutionary movement and the legal democratic mass movement must complement and help each other in disintegrating and destroying the power of the enemy.

2. Establish a people's democratic state and a coalition government

The ultimate goal of the people's democratic revolution is the establishment of the people's democratic state and a coalition or united front government. The people's democratic state shall be under the leadership of the working class, founded on the basic alliance of the working class and peasantry, and shall include such other democratic classes as the urban petty bourgeoisie and national bourgeoisie. The Party as the ruling party, in representation of the working class, shall form the government as a coalition or united front of all democratic classes.

The National Democratic Front is a major and organized part and the most consolidated part of the united front. It serves to promote the united front for armed struggle, combine all available forces and elements to isolate and destroy the enemy and pave the way for higher organs of political power, a people's consultative assembly and a democratic coalition government of the broadest possible character.

In the course of protracted people's war, the working class and peasantry under the proletarian leadership and with the assistance of the New People's Army, establish organs of political power to form the armed independent regime or people's revolutionary government in the countryside and elsewhere possible. The people thereby learn to govern themselves, defend and advance their national independence and democratic gains and manage their relations with all friends and sympathizers. The people's revolutionary government is the preparatory government of the People's Democratic Republic of the Philippines.

3. Fight for national unity and democratic rights

The Party shall guarantee the firmest national unity based on the assertion of national sovereignty, the liberation of the entire nation from US imperialism and its stooges, the liberation of the working class and peasantry and the promotion of the rights and interests of all working people.

All patriotic and progressive classes, groups and individuals shall enjoy in principle and in fact civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights which have been trampled upon by US imperialism and the local exploiting classes. Consequent to the national freedom of the entire people toiling masses from class oppression and exploitation, individual freedom and public participation shall be promoted to the utmost, with guarantees of such democratic rights as freedom of person, domicile, thought, a belief, religious belief, speech and assembly and other rights in democratic bill of rights in the constitution of the people's democratic state.

All efforts shall be exerted by the state, cooperative and private sectors to provide every citizen a decent livelihood. Individual initiative and enterprise on the part of workers, peasants, fishermen, handicraftsmen, intellectuals, the urban petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie shall be respected, encouraged and assisted. The people's economic and political rights, the right to social services, health, education and others shall be guaranteed. The struggle of women for equal rights and equal opportunities shall be pursued against male chauvinism and feudal patriarchal values, institutions and mechanisms. The rights and welfare of children, as well as the elderly and persons with disability shall be ensured. Uphold the right of lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgenders to express their gender identity and support their struggle against all forms of discrimination. The rights and interests of overseas Filipinos shall be protected; they shall have the amplest contacts with kith and kin in the Philippines or shall be encouraged to return to their motherland and contribute their knowledge and skills to national development.

4. Uphold the principle of democratic centralism

The Party shall uphold the principle of democratic centralism in the people's democratic state system. The national government shall have central authority over the lower levels of government; and shall base its policies and decisions on the needs, demands and aspirations of the broad masses of the people and the lower levels of government. There shall be democratic deliberations and decision-making at every level of government; and there shall be consultations between higher and lower levels of government and between every level of government and the people. This is centralized leadership based on democracy and democracy guided by centralized authority.

At every level of the government (barrio, municipality, city, district, provincial and regional), there shall be elected representative bodies where decisions are taken democratically for their respective jurisdictions. A lower representative body shall be subordinate to the people's revolutionary congress which represents nationally the sovereign Filipino people. In all elections or voting on any question, the rule of the majority shall be followed.

The people shall be provided with all the means to express to the Party and the government their varied

interests and views at anytime. They shall supervise the Party, the government and its officials, criticize their errors and shortcomings and have the power of recall over government officials and effect the removal of Party officials who violate the rights and interests of the nation and the people. The people's democratic dictatorship, whose essence is proletarian dictatorship against the exploiting classes, shall promote socialist democracy and legality.

As the ruling party representing the proletariat and people and constitutionally committed to the historic mission of building socialism, the Party shall uphold and employ the principle of democratic centralism to further develop the intimate links between the Party and the state on the one hand and the broad masses of the people on the other hand, guarantee basic democratic rights and democratic life, develop the civil society and prevent bureaucracy or bureaucratic centralism and the subversion of the new state by modern revisionism and the bourgeoisie under the guise of classless or supraclass populism, liberalism, technocracy and other bourgeois trends of thought.

5. Build and cherish the New People's Army

There can be no people's democratic government without a people's army whose principal and most essential function is to defend and secure it. In the first place, the people's democratic government cannot be established without the victorious advance of the people's army. The people's army, composed mainly of fighters from the peasantry, must be under the leadership of the working class through the Party.

So long as there is a need for proletarian dictatorship and for building socialism, the people's army shall be under the direct and absolute leadership of the Party and this shall not be diminished by arguments of classlessness or supraclasslessness by nonproletarian, bourgeoisified and revisionist sections of the state.

The most pressing task of the people's army now is to defeat and destroy the US-created and US-supported reactionary Armed Forces of the Philippines and all other kinds of armed power in the hands of the exploiting classes and the reactionary state at all levels. The New People's Army shall develop several forms of armed forces: guerrilla units, regular mobile forces and regular forces on certain conditions. It shall also develop auxiliary and reserve forces as the people's militia, self-defense units based on mass organizations and armed city partisans. It shall be a force for fighting, politico-military training, propaganda, cultural work and production.

The people's army is closely linked with the toiling masses of the people. Under the leadership of the Party, this army constantly strengthens itself ideologically, politically and organizationally and through politico-military training and the armed struggle. The Party and the people must cherish the New People's Army and see to it that the people's fighters are well-provisioned and the needs and welfare of their immediate families are well attended to.

6. Solve the land problem.

The main content of the people's democratic revolution is the struggle of the peasants to solve the land problem. The revolution must satisfy the basic demand of the poor peasants and farm workers for land. The agrarian revolution is the necessary requirement for the vigorous and successful conduct of the armed struggle and the creation and consolidation of revolutionary base areas. The current minimum program of land reform is merely a preparation for the maximum program, which is the complete solution of the land problem.

Land shall be distributed free to the landless tillers. Land rent, exploitation of hired labor, usury, price manipulation and other feudal and semifeudal evils shall be wiped out. Mutual aid teams and labor exchange systems shall be promoted as the preliminary step towards higher forms of agricultural cooperation. Through agricultural cooperation, production shall be raised and well-planned, the sale of produce shall be assured at the best price possible and welfare services shall be guaranteed.

The Party shall ensure that the people's democratic government extend all possible and necessary support to raise agricultural production through capital construction, mechanization, technical assistance, financial assistance and so on. The expanded and higher purchasing power of the peasantry shall stimulate and increase industrial production. The basis of the national economy shall be agriculture because it fulfills the food and raw material requirements of expanding industrialization and because for some time the peasantry will constitute the majority of users and consumers of the products of industrialization.

Plantations and estates already efficiently operated on a mechanized basis shall be converted into state farms where the workers shall establish proletarian power and provide themselves with better working conditions. The vast tracts of export cropland in excess shall be subject to land reform and planted to other crops needed for domestic processing or consumption.

After the victory of agricultural cooperation and socialism in the countryside through a transition period, the Party shall ensure that there is no retrogression into the privatization of the use or ownership of the land, rural industries and other major means of production. Otherwise the restoration of capitalism will gain a wide base and agricultural production will eventually deteriorate as already proven in history.

7. Carry out national industrialization.

Foreign monopoly capitalism and domestic feudalism have hindered the growth of national industry and are therefore firmly opposed by the people's democratic revolution. The private ownership of the means of production and distribution by the big bourgeoisie and landlord class must be abolished. The strategic enterprises used by the US, Japanese and other foreign monopolies to dominate the entire Philippine economy must be nationalized while thoroughgoing land reform and the building of heavy and basic industries capable of producing basic metals, basic chemicals and capital goods must be carried out in order to achieve a well-founded comprehensive development of the national industry and economy.

Heavy and basic industries shall be the leading factor of the economy. Light industry shall be immediately undertaken to bridge heavy industry and agriculture and provide the producer and consumer goods most needed by the working people. The people's democratic government shall muster all efforts and resources needed for national industrialization, taking advantage of the large work force and comprehensive natural resource base of the country. In the transition period, when socialist and bourgeois-democratic economic measures overlap, there shall be such sectors in the national economy as the state sector, the cooperative sector, the joint state-private sector and the private sector of small and medium enterprises.

All major financial institutions, major sources of raw materials and energy, all heavy and basic industries, major lines of domestic and foreign trade and all nationalized enterprises shall be run by the state sector. All peasants, fishermen, handicraftsmen and the like shall be encouraged and provided with incentives to organize themselves into cooperatives to increase their productivity and assure themselves of a ready market. The joint state-private enterprise shall be a way for ensuring the operation of large enterprises previously owned privately and allowing the state to take ownership in phases. The private sector consisting of the mass of petty commodity producers and the patriotic entrepreneurs and merchants shall be encouraged to contribute positively to the economic construction.

The state and cooperative sectors of the economy shall be built up as factors of proletarian leadership and socialism. But all private initiatives in industry shall be encouraged and supported by the people's democratic government so long as such initiative does not monopolize or harm the people's livelihood or subvert the socialist sector of the economy. The government shall regulate private capital to protect the people's livelihood, promote the growth of the socialist economy and undertake measures to rehabilitate and protect the environment.

Upon the basic completion of the national democratic revolution through the seizure of political power, socialist revolution and construction shall commence. Public ownership of the means of production shall become dominant and state economic planning will direct the development of a well-balanced socialist economy. However, there shall be transitional concessions to certain positive forms of private enterprise.

After the socialist transformation of industry and the entire economy, the Party shall ensure that there is no retrogression into private ownership of the means of production. Otherwise the restoration of capitalism will occur and the foreign and domestic bourgeoisie will again exploit and oppress the people.

8. Promote a national, scientific and mass culture.

A people's democratic cultural revolution is necessary to rid the nation of the stultifying dominance of imperialist and feudal culture and education, including a colonial or fascist mentality, bourgeois decadent behavior and superstition. The cultural revolution must advance and promote a national, scientific and mass culture.

The working class through the Party assumes leadership in the field of culture and education in line with its leading revolutionary role; and provides the opportunity for all democratic intellectuals to raise their revolutionary consciousness and serve the people. While freedom of thought and religion are safeguarded and respected, there shall also be proper safeguards to keep this freedom from being systematically employed against the people's democratic revolution or the people's interest.

In the course of the protracted people's war, the Party wages mass campaigns to transform the backward villages into cultural bastions of the Philippine revolution. Cultural cadres and cultural battalions arise in the countryside. Illiteracy and superstition are diminished and eventually wiped out through education. The scientific spirit

of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and the program of people's democratic revolution are propagated. The cultural revolution, aimed at defeating all forms of exploitation and developing socialism, is a mass movement that is educative and persuasive and is facilitated by the modern means of communications.

The Party, the people's democratic government and all democratic forces shall see to it that the educational system and the mass media serve the national, scientific and democratic interests of the people. Education at all levels shall be free to everyone, depending on ability and without any discrimination due to lower economic class origin, gender, ethnicity, race, religion or lack of religious belief. The courses of study and study materials in the social sciences, philosophy, law, arts and letters and so forth shall be cleansed of pro-imperialist, feudalist, fascist and other pernicious biases and misinformation.

The Party promotes the national language as the principal medium of education, information and official communications, while at the same time giving due respect to other Philippine languages. National achievements in the arts and in literature shall be cherished. Current arts and literature with revolutionary content and expressing the struggles and aspirations of workers, peasants, fighters and other participants in the revolution shall be encouraged. Old forms as well as foreign forms of art and literature shall be adopted and infused with revolutionary content reflecting the needs and aspirations of the people.

The Party shall strive to gain greater access to the scientific knowledge, technology and cultural achievements available abroad to benefit the Filipino people and to encourage them as well to contribute to the progress of humanity and civilization. Filipino compatriots abroad shall also be encouraged to return to and serve the motherland continuously or for certain periods of time.

The Party shall promote proletarian revolutionary and socialist consciousness among the youth and the people through the instrumentality of institutions and the mass movement in the prospective socialist society. It shall adopt democratic and legal safeguards to prevent the old bourgeoisie and feudal reaction as well as a potential new bourgeoisie from eventually taking power from the proletariat and the people. The premature declaration of the end of classes and class struggle and the emergence of a bourgeoisified intelligentsia breed bureaucratism, revisionism and peaceful evolution from socialism to capitalism.

9. Respect the right to self-determination of the Bangsamoro and other national minorities.

All national minorities in the Philippines are entitled to the right to self-determination, including regional autonomy and the right to secede. They have the right to decide their own destiny; free themselves from national oppression, exploitation, chauvinism, racism and discrimination; achieve democracy; and pursue social progress in an all-round way. Such right can be invoked and exercised against a state that is oppressive or becomes oppressive.

The Party and the people's democratic government shall always uphold the national and democratic rights of the national minorities who compose 15 percent of the Philippine population. The national minorities shall be encouraged to take their rightful role and place in the people's democratic state and shall receive special consideration because of the extreme oppression and exploitation that they have suffered for so long in the hands of Spanish colonialism, US imperialism and the local reactionary classes. The Bangsamoro people, the largest national minority in the Philippines, have long developed their national self-identity and perseveres in their struggle for self-determination.

The Party leads the struggle against national oppression. The revolutionary forces must grow in strength among the national minorities and foster unity, cooperation and coordination between them and the rest of the people in combating the brutal campaigns of armed oppression, the grabbing of land from them, the plunder of natural resources in their areas, the imposition of absurdly low wages in plantations and mines, the paucity or lack of a just share in the social wealth and taxes produced from their areas, and all other phenomena of abuse, chauvinism and discrimination.

A new type of leadership, a revolutionary one, must be encouraged to rise from the national minorities so as to transform the traditional leadership and supplant those that have not only failed to fight for their rights but has also participated in their exploitation. Cadres of the Party and the revolution must be developed from among the national minorities.

10. Adopt an active independent foreign policy.

The US, together with its imperialist allies, continues to impose the neoliberal economic policy on the Philippines, extract superprofits by plundering the natural and human resources and escalate its military and other forms of intervention in Philippine affairs. It is bound to threaten or actually launch all-out aggression when the people's war reaches a certain stage of development. Thus, international support is absolutely necessary to supplement and complement the independent and self-reliant efforts of the revolutionary forces and the entire people.

The Party through the various revolutionary and progressive formations shall foster the development of the broadest possible international relations with all forces — be they parties, movements, institutions or governments — abroad. The largest and widest possible moral and material support from abroad is greatly needed for winning total victory in the people's democratic revolution.

Upon its establishment, the people's democratic government under the leadership of the Party shall abrogate all unequal treaties, agreements and arrangements with the US, Japan and their imperialist allies and shall proclaim an active independent foreign policy based on the national sovereignty of the Filipino people and consonant with the five principles of peaceful coexistence with all countries irrespective of ideology and social system.

The People's Democratic Republic of the Philippines shall develop the closest relations with the anti-imperialist and socialist countries, the neighboring countries in Southeast Asia, Northeast Asia and the Pacific and all the third world and other oppressed and exploited countries; and shall also undertake normal diplomatic and trade relations with capitalist countries. The People's Democratic Republic of the Philippines shall assume its rightful place in the United Nations and all other international organizations.

All levels of Philippine foreign relations shall be under the overall guidance of proletarian internationalism. The countries struggling for independence; nations, for liberation; and peoples, for revolution against any superpower and any form of reaction shall obtain all possible and appropriate support from a Philippines engaged in socialist revolution and construction.

In the pursuit of proletarian internationalism and an active independent foreign policy, the People's Democratic Republic of the Philippines and all revolutionary forces and the people of the Philippines shall respect the independence and territorial integrity of all countries and support the just revolutionary cause of the people; shall oppose colonialism, imperialism and neocolonialism and all forms of foreign intervention and aggression; and shall fight and work for justice, social progress, greater freedom and world peace.

III. Our Specific Program

So long as Philippine society remains semicolonial and semifeudal, our general program for a people's democratic revolution shall remain fundamentally unchanged. But from phase to phase in the general stage of people's democratic revolution, our immediate specific demands shall be subject to modification according to the changes in the situation.

In the course of revolutionary struggle, the Central Committee of the Party has the authority and duty to initiate and carry out the necessary modifications, subject to review by the next Party Congress.

Hereunder are our immediate specific demands:

In the political field

1. Unite the entire Filipino people along the line of the people's democratic revolution, wage a people's war against the US-controlled big comprador-landlord state and destroy its military, police and paramilitary forces as well as any foreign element or agency that engages in military intervention or aggression.

2. Build the armed independent regime or people's revolutionary government (organs of political power) in all possible areas at every possible level and develop the people's capability in the conduct of government in the course of armed struggle.

3. Uphold the class leadership of the proletariat along the general line, strengthen the ranks of the revolutionary forces ideologically, politically and organizationally, promptly rectify errors and shortcomings and exercise vigilance against wrong ideas in the movement as well as deceptive propaganda of the aggressive or sugarcoated type from the enemy and other reactionaries.

4. Propagate the program of the people's democratic revolution and the provisional rules of the people's revolutionary government, condemn the pro-imperialist and reactionary essence of the big comprador-landlord constitution and reject all counterrevolutionary laws, treaties and executive agreements made by the reactionary government.

5. Encourage the legal struggle of the patriotic and democratic parties, mass organizations, alliances and the

people in general; and campaign against the continuing suppression of the political rights of workers, peasants, intelligentsia, women, youth, national minorities, overseas Filipinos and other patriotic Filipinos fighting against imperialist and feudal oppression.

6. Prepare against the reemergence of an outright fascist regime, combat the persistent forces of fascism within and outside the Armed Forces of the Philippines and seek justice for the people, their leaders and organizations against the atrocities and abuses inflicted on them by the enemy.

7. Develop and apply a system of revolutionary justice for investigating, trying and punishing the die-hard fascists, the evil gentry, corrupt government officials and other antipeople criminals.

8. Cooperate with all organizations, groups and individuals in order to build the national united front for national liberation, democracy and a just peace and isolate the diehard enemies of the people's democratic revolution.

9. Replace, reorganize or render ineffective the agencies of the reactionary government at every level and make the revolutionary organs of political power more effective by every possible means.

10. Encourage career officials and rank-and-file employees in the reactionary government to cooperate with or support the revolutionary movement and assure all of them that, with the exception of those who have committed crimes, they shall be retained and shall enjoy tenure in the people's democratic government. Encourage the propeople, democratic and patriotic elements within the reactionary military and police to repudiate their fascist, puppet and mercenary orientation.

In the economic field

1. Condemn and reject all economic policies, treaties, executive agreements, investment laws, loan agreements, tax laws and other arrangements which grant US and other transnational corporations and banks excessive privileges and gains to the detriment of the Filipino people and the Philippine economy.

2. Encourage the people, including the national bourgeoisie, to build a self-reliant economy and discourage by whatever means possible (including boycott and confiscation) the importation of goods detrimental to the local production of goods by patriotic entrepreneurs.

3. Launch the mass campaigns for the reduction of land rent and interest rates and the raising of farm wages and prices of farm products in pursuance of the minimum program of land reform in the guerrilla fronts and carry out land redistribution at no cost to the landless tillers wherever possible, defensible and sustainable; and promote agricultural production through labor exchange and mutual aid teams and other forms of cooperation under the auspices of the peasant associations.

4. Improve the livelihood of the people by launching mass campaigns to promote production in an all-round way, generate employment, arrange fair wages and reasonable interest rates, exercise price control and organize people's cooperatives wherever possible.

5. Support the struggle of the various patriotic and progressive classes, parties and mass organizations for better economic and social conditions, rehabilitation and protection of the environment, and expose and oppose the destructive policies and the deceptive features of palliative reforms offered by the multinational corporations and the reactionary government.

6. Support the national minorities and other people in their struggle against landlords, landgrabbers, mining companies, logging concessionaires, plantations, government agencies and projects, military installations and reservations and ecozones that violate the people's rights and destroy or deprive them of their ancestral domain, properties and livelihood.

7. Encourage Filipino-owned industry and commerce by providing protection, market guarantees and other advantages in areas under the control of the revolutionary movement.

8. Outlaw and confiscate all ill-gotten wealth in the form of capital, land or otherwise and either restore this to the legitimate owners or appropriate it for the benefit of the revolutionary government or the people.

9. Adopt a system of collecting taxes and contributions on the basis of ability to pay and benefits gained from the revolutionary movement in order to support the work and social programs of the people's revolutionary government and the people's army.

10. Mobilize the people in the guerrilla fronts in organizing the provision of all necessary resources and possible social and technical services, especially in the spheres of education, health, production and so on.

In the military field

1. Accelerate the formation and politico-military training of the full-time and part-time guerrilla units of the New People's Army, the armed propaganda teams, the people's militia, self-defense units and armed city partisans on a nationwide scale; and build higher sustainable formations (with center of gravity in relative concentration and peripheral units in relative dispersal) that do not strain the mass base and exhaust cadres and resources and are always open to the multiplication of forces and coverage of more people and territory upon the seizure of more firearms.

2. Carry out actions against the US military bases and detachments, the US control of the Armed Forces of the Philippines as a puppet force and the escalating US military intervention; and condemn the treaties, executive agreements, arrangements, projects and exercises that militarily prop up the reactionary government and armed forces and perpetuate their puppetry to US imperialism and its war machine.

3. Expand and intensify the tactical offensives (ambushes, raids, arrests, sabotage and other operations) against the regular, police and paramilitary forces of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, capture and accumulate military equipment and bring the stage of the strategic defensive to the stage of strategic stalemate and further on to the stage of the strategic offensive.

4. Carry out extensive and intensive warfare against the escalating US military intervention, prepare against all-out aggression by the US or any other foreign power by multiplying guerrilla fronts and the appropriate armed units and upgrade the weapons and technology, mainly through confiscation and self-reliant production, and be ready to inflict high casualties on the US aggressor troops.

5. Arrest and detain for trial and punishment by the proper authorities all the counterrevolutionaries who have committed serious crimes as well as the spies and all subversive agents of foreign interventionists and aggressors and their local reactionary cohorts.

6. Campaign against the mustering of the youth, workers, peasants and national minorities for military training and service by the reactionaries and at the same time redirect those who cannot avoid such training and service to take up the revolutionary cause.

7. Disarm and disband the military and police bodyguards as well as private gangs of criminal syndicates and counterrevolutionaries and eliminate drug trafficking, cattle rustling, piracy, banditry and other forms of criminality preying on the people.

8. Encourage and organize the oppressed national minorities to take up arms against imperialist and feudal oppression.

9. Wage a war of annihilation but exercise leniency on captured combatants so as to demoralize and disintegrate the enemy forces.

10. Cooperate with all other armed organizations and movements fighting against imperialist and feudal oppression and take advantage of the factionalization of the ruling classes and the reactionary armed forces.

In the cultural field

1. Wage mass campaigns to develop a national, scientific and mass culture responsive to the needs and aspirations of the Filipino people and against imperialist and feudal control and influence over the educational system, mass media and other cultural institutions.

2. Cherish the national heritage and propagate Filipino or Pilipino as the national language and principal medium of instruction and official communications and the local languages for the benefit of the masses.

3. Build a new democratic system of education and mass media and reorient and reeducate the teachers and students, the professionals and the entire people on the need to develop Philippine society in all-round way.

4. Promote the people's democratic line in the study and practice of the social sciences, natural sciences, arts and letters, law, medicine, engineering and other fields of study and stress the need for harnessing science and technology for national industrialization, agricultural modernization and development and balanced development of the Philippine economy and protection of the environment. Develop the spirit of cooperativism among the peasantry.

5. Respect the freedom of thought and belief, use patient persuasion in gathering support for the people's democratic revolution and promote the united front of proletarian revolutionaries and progressive liberals in the intellectual field.

6. Support the progressive movements and actions among students, teachers and all intellectuals for better study, creative and living conditions, for a higher educational and cultural level, and for greater intellectual

freedom.

7. Wage mass campaigns to fight for free education at all levels and to wipe out illiteracy and superstition among the masses and promote the scientific and revolutionary spirit among them.

8. Encourage the development of progressives within the religious institutions, prevent such institutions (especially the dominant church) from becoming an effective tool of US imperialism and big comprador-landlord interests and combat Christian chauvinism against the Bangsamoro and other national minorities.

9. Wage relentless mass campaigns to expose and oppose every scheme of the US to use its direct agencies, US-controlled multilateral agencies and third countries to perpetuate and aggravate US imperialist dominance in Philippine education and culture.

10. Develop scientific health care through the promotion of health education, general sanitation, prevention of illnesses, sports, physical education and activity especially among the youth.

In the field of foreign relations

1. Uphold proletarian internationalism as the highest principle guiding all levels of foreign relations of the revolutionary movement, the growing people's revolutionary government and the prospective People's Democratic Republic of the Philippines.

2. Gather the largest and broadest possible international support for the revolutionary struggle of the Filipino people and victory of the people's democratic revolution against foreign domination and domestic reaction.

3. Develop close relations of solidarity and mutual support between the Philippine revolutionary movement, people's movements, mass organizations and alliances in the Philippines and those abroad, and together develop the international movement against imperialism and all reaction.

4. Develop close relations of the Communist Party of the Philippines with fraternal proletarian parties and other friendly parties in other countries.

5. Arouse, organize and mobilize Filipino compatriots abroad to uphold, defend and promote their rights and interests, directly participate in the Philippine revolution while abroad, and encourage them to return home to join the revolutionary struggle now and in the next stage of the Philippine revolution.

6. Work for the recognition of the status of belligerency of the Philippine revolutionary forces under the name of the National Democratic Front or the People's Revolutionary Government and pave the way for the People's Democratic Republic of the Philippines to have normal diplomatic and trade relations with other countries irrespective of ideology and social system and assume its rightful place in the United Nations and other international organizations.

7. Uphold a Philippine foreign policy anchored on national sovereignty and independence and in accordance with the five principles of international relations: a. mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty; b. mutual nonaggression; c. noninterference in each other's internal affairs; d. equality and mutual support and e. peaceful coexistence.

8. Develop the closest relations of the People's Democratic Republic of the Philippines with the anti-imperialist and socialist countries, the neighboring countries in Southeast Asia, Northeast Asia and the Pacific and all the third world and other countries which are oppressed and exploited.

9. Extend moral and other possible support to other revolutionary parties and people's movements and win total victory in the people's democratic revolution as a matter of internationalist duty.

10. Oppose the use of the United Nations and other international agencies (International Monetary Fund, World Bank, etc.) as tools of domination by the United States and other capitalist powers.

**Approved by the Second Congress
Communist Party of the Philippines
November 5, 2016**