



On the Marcos Fascist Dictatorship

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*On the Marcos
Fascist Dictatorship*



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Julieta de Lima
Editor

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Preface

I fully agree with the International Network for Philippine Studies (INPS) for prioritizing the publication of my book, *The Marcos Fascist Dictatorship*. It is necessary and appropriate to circulate this book in order to mark the forthcoming 50th anniversary of the martial law proclamation dated September 21, 1972, which launched the Marcos fascist dictatorship, and to wage a counter-offensive to the systematic campaign of the Marcos and Duterte political dynasties to misrepresent the traitorous, brutal and corrupt Marcos fascist rule from 1972 to 1986 as a golden era for the Filipino people.

Having been the Chairman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines from 1968 to 1977, I had the responsibility and duty to issue statements against the planning, preparations and implementation of the scheme of Ferdinand Marcos Sr to impose his fascist dictatorship on the Filipino people. Even while detained after my arrest on December 10, 1977, I continued to defy the dictatorship and issue statements not only on the charges against me before military commissions but also on the atrocities of the Marcos fascist regime and on the people's revolutionary struggle for national independence and democracy.

This book is highly important because it brings together all the major statements that are expressive and reflective of the principles, policies and decisions of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) as the most determined and fierce adversary of the Marcos dictatorship. Marcos thought that he was being clever by using anti-communism as the best pretext for his fascist dictatorship and his best way to gain US imperialist support. When he proclaimed martial law in 1972, he claimed that there were 10,000 fighters of the New People's Army but in fact, there were only 350 fighters with rifles mainly in Isabela. In full bombast, he declaimed that he was out to "save the republic and build a new society."

Because of the outlawing of the legal national democratic organizations by the fascist dictatorship, tens of thousands of mass activists from the toiling masses, youth, women and professionals went underground and joined the CPP and NPA from 1972 onward. Their organizations joined the National Democratic Front of the Philippines in April 1973. Because of his overweening arrogance, the fascist dictator was overconfident about his military strength and about his ability to deceive the people. And he never bothered to consider the use of peace negotiations for sabotaging the revolution or for any purpose. The military advisers of Marcos Junior are now prodding him to follow the example of his senior.

Marcos thought that aside from engaging in campaigns of military suppression against the revolutionary movement and the people, he could deceive them with a bogus land reform program and misrepresent his graft-laden infrastructure-building program as a program of industrial development. It is probable that Marcos Junior imagines that his neoliberal advisers can somehow conjure the illusion of economic growth. But once more the public debt burden is exceedingly heavy as in the waning years of the 1970s onward, when the fascist regime encountered difficulties in taking foreign loans.

From year to year, workers' strikes and protest mass actions, propaganda issuances from the underground and guerrilla offensives by the NPA grew steadily. By 1981 major mass organizations of the workers, peasants, youth, teachers and women of the national democratic movement had defiantly emerged. By 1982 a high rate of inflation appeared and economic difficulties. Thus, Benigno Aquino Jr thought it was time for him to return home and offer himself as replacement of Marcos, who in turn ordered his assassination. This crime on August 21, 1983 ignited the gigantic mass actions which kept on growing until the fall of Marcos on February 25, 1986. By the time that the US decided to junk Marcos in 1984, it had already become obvious that Marcos was more of a liability than an asset to US imperialism.

The publication of this book is in concert with the campaigns and activities of all patriotic and freedom-loving Filipino institutions, organizations and individuals to issue publications in order to debunk the Marcos campaign of disinformation. I wish to make special mention of the earlier project of *Tanggol Kasaysayan* to publish as book the speeches and papers submitted to a conference last February 22, 2022. I was the keynote speaker of the conference aimed at refreshing and reinvigorating the collective memory of the Filipino people about the Marcos fascist dictatorship and inspiring them to fight all attempts to revive and perpetuate such an evil rule of terror and greed.

It is our urgent task to carry out a sustained campaign of information and education to propagate the historical facts and truth about the Marcos fascist dictatorship because the most malevolent anti-national and

anti-democratic forces servile to US imperialism and the local exploiting classes of big compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists have succeeded in carrying out a counterrevolutionary campaign of violence and deception and in using automated electoral fraud in order to install the son and daughter of two tyrants as president and vice president, respectively.

The fascist dictator Marcos was ignominiously overthrown from power by the peoples' mass protests in February 1986. But he and his family were saved by their US masters from the people's wrath and were able to keep most of their ill-gotten wealth which they would eventually use to make a political comeback in their provincial bailiwicks and then in national politics. The semicolonial and semifeudal system and even the Aquinos and other rivals of the Marcoses did not take enough measures to make fully accountable the fascist dictator Marcos, his minions and heirs for arresting, detaining, torturing and murdering so many people and for plundering the economy in so many ways.

From 1986 onward, the victims of human rights violations had to go abroad to seek justice and compensation. Now, the Marcos political dynasty is once more at the pinnacle of reactionary powers and is in position to consolidate its ill-gotten wealth and power and further engage in state terrorism and plunder, with the alliance of the Duterte, Arroyo, Estrada, Enrile and other political dynasties. The political scoundrel Rodrigo Duterte has carried out the fraudulent and fake election of Marcos Junior to the presidency of the reactionary state.

However, he has left to the latter a bankrupt government and economy. In six years, he has been able to more than double the public debt of Php 5.9 trillion as of May 2016 to Php 12.5 trillion as of May 2022 as a result of wanton trade and budgetary deficits and public borrowing. He expects Marcos to have no choice but to follow the diktat of US imperialism, continue state terrorism, engage in plunder and try to deceive the people about the past rule of his father and host own current rule.

The broad masses of the Filipino, especially the toiling masses of workers and peasants, have no choice but to become more resolute and militant in fighting for their national and social liberation. They cannot submit themselves to the escalating conditions of oppression and exploitation. They abhor the campaigns of military suppression and the red-tagging for the purpose of intimidation, extortion, abduction and murder. They have had more than enough of the economic and social underdevelopment, massive accumulated unemployment, lower incomes even for the middle strata, soaring prices of basic goods and services, dearth or lack of social services because of bureaucratic corruption and military overspending, mass poverty and hunger.

The Filipino people are desirous of full national independence, democracy, social justice, economic development through genuine land reform and national industrialization, the blossoming of a patriotic, scientific and mass culture, independent foreign policy and international solidarity with all peoples of the world. They have no illusions that the imperialists and local reactionaries would ever give up voluntarily their greed for power and wealth. They are determined to wage a new democratic revolution under the leadership of the proletariat and its revolutionary party, win total victory through the protracted people's war and proceed to the stage of socialist revolution.

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August 15, 2022

Marcos Is a Fascist Puppet of US Imperialism

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Since US imperialism is in a grave economic and political crisis, it is inevitable that its Philippine puppet government finds itself in the same morass. That is because the imperialist master must squeeze more profits and political advantage from its semicolony like the Philippines. In a futile attempt to facilitate the intensification of exploitation and oppression, both master government and subject government collude in a partnership of deception. Thus, have the imperialist chieftain Nixon and the puppet chieftain Marcos adapted their rhetorics to that partnership.

The more the Philippines is laid prostrate by the bloodsucking activities of US imperialism and by the local reactionaries, the comprador big bourgeoisie, the landlord class and the bureaucrat capitalist, the more are Nixon and Marcos heard preaching “self-reliance” and “nationalism” in order to obscure the oppressive and exploitative relations imposed by the foreign and local tyrants on the Filipino people.

Marcos tries to take advantage of the fact that he was confronted with the kind of opposition put up by such a fossil of outright pro-imperialism as Osmeña in the last elections. Putting himself into false contrast with Osmeña, Marcos declares that his terroristic and fraudulent reelection is a victory of his “platform of nationalism.” In this manner, he tries to conceal the antinational and antidemocratic character of his regime and to put into disrepute the very slogan of nationalism that the national bourgeoisie and quite a number of intellectuals have been using to denounce the unjust impositions of US imperialism.

We can certainly expect Marcos to prate more often and even more raucously about his “New Filipinism” and “new morality” as a measure of his futile attempt to counteract the rising revolutionary mass movement and hoodwink the various classes and strata which are now increasingly suffering from the evils of US imperialism and puppetry. By his nature as the highest bureaucrat capitalist, with large comprador and landlord interests of his own, Marcos will continue to serve US imperialism and all the exploiting classes.

He will try to deceive those he can deceive and attack those he cannot deceive with the full force of the reactionary state. The more he acts as a fascist puppet of US imperialism, the more he tries to picture himself as a “nationalist.” This is his way of trying to parry off the attacks against his masters.

The broad masses of the Filipino people have been vigorously calling for the abrogation of unequal treaties and executive agreements that oppressively tie down the entire nation to US imperialism and the local reactionaries. But the clever bureaucrat capitalist Marcos, instead of unilaterally and clearly asserting the national sovereignty and democratic interests of the people, prefers to call vaguely for “renegotiation” and puts himself into the position of a broker or fixer. US imperialism actually goes into a duet with the Philippine puppet government in monotonously belching out the line of “renegotiation.” They stop their ugly duet as soon as they presume that they have sufficiently headed off the popular call for abrogation. They merely issue press statements calling for “renegotiation” only when an imperialist abuse, like the murder of a Filipino within the US military bases, occurs and becomes an occasion for the just demand for the abrogation of the US-RP Military Bases Agreement, Military Assistance Pact and Mutual Defense Treaty.

The termination of the Laurel-Langley Agreement is scheduled for 1974. Both US imperialism and the Filipino puppets led by Marcos have acted to renew and aggravate the same imperialist privileges contained therein. The Marcos puppet regime has, with canine devotion, continued to implement the recommendations of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank that were first implemented with gusto by Macapagal. The single purpose of these recommendations is to render the Philippine reactionary government financially desperate in preparation for the termination of the Laurel-Langley Agreement. After its first four-year term, the Marcos puppet regime now finds its own puppetry, corruption and the resulting bankruptcy of the reactionary government as the very excuse for begging US imperialism to grant trade preferences and “stabilization” loans in exchange for the extension of US privileges in the Philippine economy. Already US imperialism has extorted from the Philippines the Investment Incentives Act and the Magna Carta of Social Justice and Economic Freedom which are being deliberately propagandized as “nationalist” documents but which actually give all the incentives, guarantees and legal phrases that the US monopolies can easily use to perpetuate their economic and political domination of the country.

Because of the present state of financial bankruptcy on the part of the reactionary government, the US imperialists, the comprador big bourgeoisie and the landlord class are riding roughshod over the Filipino people even

more viciously. Nevertheless, while the Marcos reactionary regime piously calls for “austerity,” the broad masses of the Filipino people who have always led lives not only of austerity but of dire poverty can see through the hypocrisy even more easily. The inflation that has already started to smash the subsistence income of the toiling masses of workers and peasants will be more telling than any slogan dished out by the Marcos reactionary regime. At a time of deep financial and economic crisis for US imperialism and all other imperialist powers, the local reactionaries cannot perpetually rely on foreign investments in the form of loans and direct investments without getting into deeper economic and political trouble. The United States and other imperialist powers are now extracting every ounce of profit from the colonies and semicolonies in order to make up for their own internal economic crisis. Openly, they now speak frequently of their own nationalism as Nixon does.

The Marcos puppet regime has already dug its own political grave by incurring an extremely huge budgetary deficit and foreign debt. To pull back, it has to cut down credit and dollar support for the national bourgeoisie. It has to lay off government employees wholesale. Local enterprises which are so dependent on imported raw materials, spare parts and fuel will also have to lay off their workers in great droves and will further hold down the wages of those retained. The conditions of employment will worsen as the prices of commodities rise. Widespread strikes of the proletariat are certain to occur. The student masses who are so dependent on the salaries of their parents will intensify their campus and extramural protest actions against the reactionaries. The high prices of commodities and increased landlord and merchant exploitation of the peasantry will produce more armed fighters in the countryside. The reactionary government will increasingly fail to make its farcical tokens of “land reform.” The “civic action” of the reactionary armed forces will also be increasingly exposed as a mere camouflage for spying on and suppressing the people.

Marcos has seen the handwriting on the wall. That is why he is desperately resorting to counterrevolutionary dual tactics by calling himself “nationalist” even as he attacks the beginnings of widespread rebellion. It is his foolish illusion to stamp down the students and workers’ strikes in the city and the growing revolutionary mass movement in the countryside at an early stage. He obscures the actual depth of the crisis and the truth that more suppression will only engender more resistance. The reactionary armed forces have been ordered by the Marcos puppet regime in compliance with the dictation of US imperialism to concentrate in Tarlac in a futile attempt to suppress the peasant masses. Yet he is using the same tactics that have failed and that have proven to be disastrous for the reactionary puppet regime in south Vietnam. Mass murders and assassinations are being committed almost daily in Central Luzon. Innocent civilians are arrested arbitrarily and then tortured. Often times, they are misrepresented as “surrenderers.” Homes are ransacked daily by cowardly troops moving in battalion and regimental strength. The people’s democratic rights are abused with impunity. These are all committed by the Armed Forces of the Philippines, especially by Task Force Lawin, by the local PC command, “Monkees” and Home Defense Forces. After being thoroughly exposed and isolated as a mercenary force of US imperialism, the bulk of the Philcag has been brought home to participate in the suppression of the people.

Yet Marcos boasts of respecting civil liberties. To project an image that his regime is “democratic,” he calls for the repeal of the Anti-Subversion Law. This only exposes the fact that the reactionary government is colluding with the local revisionist renegades to combat the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People’s Army. Jesus Lava who is an idol of the local revisionist renegades has publicly stated with the effrontery of a scab that Marcos is veering towards their cause. Accommodation of the local revisionist renegades within the present system is in line with the counterrevolutionary alliance of US imperialism, Soviet social-imperialism and Japanese militarism in Asia today. Within the Philippines, the fascists and the local revisionist renegades collude and compete with each other under the mutual signboard of “nationalism” and in opposition to the Communist Party of the Philippines. The counterrevolutionary alliance of US imperialism, Soviet social-imperialism and Japanese militarism dictates upon the local fascists and local revisionist renegades to serve US imperialism in keeping a “low profile” and in opposing the people, communism and China.

The great Chairman Mao teaches us: “We must be clearheaded, that is, we must not believe the ‘nice words’ of the imperialists nor be intimidated by their bluster.”

Correctly describing the general trend of the world today, Chairman Mao says: “The enemy rots with every passing day, while for us things are getting better daily.”

Turn Grief into Revolutionary Courage and Militant Unity for National Democracy

First published in *Ang Bayan*, Vol. II, No. 2, February 28, 1970

We express the profoundest grief over the death of four student martyrs, the injury and maiming of several thousands of students and other patriots, the wanton mass arrests and illegal detention of several hundreds, kidnappings and tortures in interrogation rooms which were all perpetrated by the counterrevolutionary state in the course of and in connection with the militant mass demonstrations of January 26 and 30-31.

There is nothing more reasonable and urgent now than to turn our grief into revolutionary courage and to forge the most militant national democratic unity against US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism for which the Marcos puppet reactionary regime serves as the bloodthirsty hatchetman.

The Marcos puppet reactionary regime has long engaged in the bloody suppression of the people in both city and countryside. It goes down in Philippine history as a regime characterized by white terror and no amount of hypocritical rhetoric and subterfuge can ever wash its hands of the blood of students, workers, peasants and other patriots.

The bloody suppression of the militant mass demonstrations of January 26 and 30-31 is part of the systematic fascist suppression of the national freedom and democratic rights of the Filipino people. However, like all the other heinous crimes committed by the Marcos puppet reactionary regime, it has failed and will further fail to intimidate the broad masses of the people from fighting tit for tat and from fighting through to the end for a national democratic revolution.

The more the people are oppressed with counterrevolutionary violence, the more shall they resist with revolutionary violence. The violent actions of the counterrevolutionary state will only temper the people in revolutionary struggle. These will only serve to expose the utter bankruptcy and instability of the reactionary government, instead of cowing the people.

The people will never permit its finest sons and daughters to die in vain. The revolutionary courage of more than 50,000 demonstrators in front of Congress on January 26 and of another more than 50,000 in front of Malacañang Palace on January 30-31 has inspired them to fight ever more vigorously and steadfastly. A militant national democratic unity is now sweeping the land against the entire system that inflicts fascist brutality on the people and that causes the martyrdom of heroes.

There are now the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army which are guided by the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought and which are patriotically implementing the national democratic revolution in the Philippines. We have become more determined to fulfil our sacred responsibilities to the Filipino people as a result of the militant mass demonstrations of January 26 and 30-31.

We can never forget the cries of the unarmed demonstrators for arms and for the succor of the people's revolutionary armed forces at the moment that the counterrevolutionary state was mercilessly attacking them with high-caliber guns and truncheons. To these fellow Filipino patriots, we owe great inspiration and we are grateful that they have made it clear that only through armed revolution shall the Filipino people be able to liberate themselves from foreign and feudal oppression and exploitation.

Grasp the historic significance of January 26 and 30-31

The militant demonstrations of January 26 and 30-31 mark a new and higher stage in the national awakening of the Filipino people for the revolutionary struggle for national democracy and against US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. The unprecedented magnitude and militancy of these demonstrations are the outgrowth of long-term revolutionary efforts. They foretell beyond doubt the doom of the ruthless oppressors and exploiters of the broad masses of the people. They are the opening salvos for the more massive and more militant revolutionary rising of the Filipino people on a nationwide scale.

Never before has the revolutionary mass movement in the countryside been as well joined with the revolutionary mass movement in the city. The murder, maiming and mass arrests of people in the city by the reactionary armed forces and police have only served to unite them even more firmly with the people in the countryside who have long suffered the atrocities and impositions of the fascist brutes and their class masters. The militant mass demonstrations in the city have always raised the revolutionary spirit of the people and the Red fighters in the

countryside.

It is politically fatal for the reactionary state to have vented its brutality on that particular section of the people, the student youth, which is articulate, mobile and widespread. The student youth are extremely decisive in the preparation of public opinion for revolution on a nationwide scale and in winning over the vacillating sections of the population to the revolutionary cause of the oppressed and exploited masses.

The militant mass demonstrations of January 26 and 30-31 have succeeded in laying bare the basic rottenness of the entire system. To the entire nation have been exposed the rapacity and brutality of the counterrevolutionary state that is in the service of US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. The picture of the corrupt and fascist terrorist Marcos directly ordering all the services of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and all metropolitan police to attack the people can never be erased from the minds of the people.

On January 30-31, AFP chieftain General Yan, Philippine Army chieftain General Ileto, PC chieftain General Raval, Defense Force chieftain General Espino and the commanders of all other major services were in Malacañang to do the bidding of their fascist commander-in-chief. The events of the night of terror are more difficult for all the reactionaries to distort and misrepresent than all the previous massacres and other acts of terrorism committed by the Marcos puppet reactionary regime against the people.

The militant mass demonstrations of January 26 and 30-31 are certainly a further development of the protest actions of the previous decade. They are also the harbinger of a more turbulent revolutionary storm in the current decade of the seventies. They are clearly the expression of the revolutionary aspirations of the broad masses of the people for national democracy and against foreign, feudal and fascist oppression and exploitation. As US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism increase their oppression and exploitation of the people, there is no remedy but for the workers, peasants, students, the intelligentsia in general and the progressive sections of the national bourgeoisie to increase their resistance. The use of counterrevolutionary violence, restrictive procedures and doubletalk will only result in more intensified revolutionary violence.

The objective conditions for making revolution are extremely favorable both internationally and nationally. We are now in the era of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought. In every major contradiction in the world today, the people's revolutionary forces are rapidly isolating and defeating all the forces of counterrevolution. The oppressed nations, especially of Asia, Africa and Latin America, are daily delivering deadly blows on imperialism and social-imperialism. The proletariat is unceasingly fighting the bourgeoisie in capitalist and revisionist-ruled countries. Although the imperialist and social-imperialist countries collude, they also contend with each other; likewise, the imperialist countries maintain the same kind of dog-bite-dog relationship. The socialist countries of the People's Republic of China and of Albania continue to hold high the great red banner of the proletarian dictatorship against imperialism and social-imperialism. The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution has transformed the People's Republic of China into the great invincible iron bastion and center of the world proletarian revolution.

US imperialism and all the local reactionaries are in a state of bankruptcy, desperation and hysteria. Like its imperialist masters, the Marcos puppet reactionary regime is frantic about the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army, about the rapid growth of the revolutionary mass movement and about the spread of Mao Zedong Thought in the whole country.

US imperialism and the Marcos puppet reactionary regime are so bankrupt and desperate that they are now increasingly allowing the Japanese militarists and the Soviet revisionist social-imperialists to participate in the oppression and exploitation of the Filipino people, in the maintenance of the counterrevolutionary state and in the reinforcement of US imperialist domination. The Marcos puppet reactionary regime seeks to misrepresent its posture as nationalism. The militant mass demonstrations of January 26 and 30-31 have exposed it as fascist puppetry.

Reply to the lies of Marcos concerning the militant mass demonstrations

It is not strange that Marcos, the fascist puppet of US imperialism, should try to pinpoint the most advanced militants of the mass demonstrations of January 26 and 30-31 as "Maoists" or, to use appropriate words, adherents of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought. He is utterly afraid of the fact that the Communist Party of the Philippines is the force at the core of the revolutionary mass movement in the Philippines. He has the demagogue's illusion that he can isolate the universal ideology of the proletariat, Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought, by calling it a "foreign" ideology.

He is merely repeating the old tactic of the reactionaries of 1896 who sought to isolate Andres Bonifacio as a

“foreign agent” for having been inspired and guided by the old bourgeois democratic ideology of the French revolution. It is a futile and wornout tactic of those who actually represent the counterrevolutionary interests that are alien to the true national and democratic interests of the Filipino people. It is in a way also equivalent to expressing contempt for bourgeois philosophy or Christian theology by merely dismissing it as a foreign ideology without going into the concrete analysis of its class basis in Philippine history and society.

In this era, it is Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought that can give ideological clarity to the national democratic revolution of the Filipino people. It is the great red banner of the Filipino proletariat, now leading the national democratic revolution. It is the theoretical guide for the correct and concrete analysis of the history, problems, motive forces, targets, tasks and stages of the Philippine revolution. Even if Marcos, the terrorist puppet of US imperialism, shouts a million times about the “Maoists,” he cannot conceal the fact that he is the political hatchetman of the foreign and feudal oppressors and exploiters of the Filipino people. He can only succeed both by his words and deeds in showing the antagonistic difference between his real puppetry and the patriotism of communists who seek to apply the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought to the concrete practice of the Philippine revolution. He has only succeeded to call the attention of the revolutionary masses and youth to the need for the living study and application of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought.

Marcos, the fascist puppet of US imperialism, tries to confuse the issues of the militant mass demonstrations by raising the “issue of communism.” He has only made a fool of himself by doing so. We communists recognize that the nature of Philippine society is semicolonial and semifeudal and that the pressing issue is national democracy. The issue now in the Philippines is neither socialism nor communism. If Marcos is really daring to have a debate with communists, he should not seek it from modern revisionists and academic bureaucrats under his executive power. All that he has to do is to make a public statement of his views on the Program for a People’s Democratic Revolution of the Communist Party of the Philippines. The Communist Party of the Philippines will oblige him with an answer. The mendacity of the imperialist slogan of “communism versus democracy” will certainly be exposed. By this time, he should know that he cannot make any counterrevolutionary propaganda against the Party and the New People’s Army without being rebuffed.

It is as impossible for the Marcos puppet reactionary regime to remove communists from the revolutionary mass movement as it is impossible for it to remove all the fish from the sea. Not only can the Communist Party of the Philippines participate in but also it does lead the national democratic revolution. The revolutionary mass movement today would be lacking in strength and consistency without the theoretical guidance of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought and the practical leadership of the Communist Party of the Philippines. The more the reactionary state seeks to attack this truth, the closer that state shall come to its grave.

The militant mass demonstrations of January 26 and 30-31 have thoroughly succeeded in laying bare the counterrevolutionary character of the Marcos puppet reactionary regime. They have also turned Marcos into a blabbering fool in contrast to his posturing as an expert in counterrevolutionary dual tactics.

In his extreme hatred and fear of the people, he has been compelled to show off his criminal, intimidating, cowardly and mendacious character. On January 30-31, he lost all chances to pass on the blame to his subordinates as he was clearly the one directing the concentration of the reactionary military and police in and around Malacañang Palace. It was clear that he was directly responsible for the murder, maiming and mass arrests of demonstrators.

In a futile attempt to rationalize the murder, maiming and mass arrests of students and other patriotic demonstrators and also the mobilization of more than 12,000 troops from the Army, PC, Marines, Special Forces, Tabak Division, Task Force Lawin, Navy, Air Force and the Metrocom and the Manila Police Department, the USAFFE puppet “war hero” claims that he was put under siege by “men with an evil purpose” who were determined to seize Malacañang Palace from his family and that he was such a good commander-in-chief that he succeeded in warding off the attempt at a palace revolution.

The truth was that he was surrounded by unarmed people who were engaged in direct democratic action and who had to arm themselves with stones, placard handles, bottles and the like only when they had to defend themselves from the murderous rampage of the fascist brutes.

The gross misrepresentation of reality inevitably leads to a contradiction of terms that the sleekest liar cannot avoid. At one turn, Marcos claims that the militant mass demonstration of January 30-31 was a well-organized act of rebellion. At another turn, he slanders the militant demonstrators as a mob engaged in destructive anarchy and

vandalism. In the same breath he describes the militant mass demonstration as a well-organized plot to seize power that was either “communist-inspired” or “not communist inspired.”

As the present circumstances show, it is patently a big lie for the fascist puppet chieftain Marcos to claim that the Communist Party of the Philippines or any other group was engaged in deploying unarmed people to implement a putschist policy. It is clear that Marcos is desperately in need of an excuse for the murder, maiming and mass arrests of the demonstrators.

The fascist commander-in-chief Marcos has actually no reason yet to fear a coup d'état by any reactionary faction though his brazen use of fraud and terrorism in the last elections has severely exacerbated the internal contradictions of the counterrevolutionary state. The reactionaries, including the Nacionalista Party, the Liberal Party and the emergency CIA gangs like the Christian Social Movement, the Citizens National Electoral Assembly or any other, are at the moment mainly concerned with peddling the farce of constitutional convention to deceive the people with the illusion of “democracy” and give new blessings to imperialist and feudal privileges and also with exerting every malicious and brutal effort to stamp out the flames of the revolutionary armed struggle in the countryside and militant mass actions in the city. The Marcos puppet reactionary regime is still one with them in this evil enterprise.

For the general information of Marcos and his cowardly ilk, the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army are now engaged in a protracted people's war which is at this moment in the initial stage of strategic defensive in the countryside. The Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army are not putschists. They firmly adhere to Chairman Mao's strategic principle of encircling the cities from the countryside. All counterrevolutionaries should rest assured that the day will surely come when the people's armed forces shall have defeated the reactionary armed forces in the countryside and are ready to act in concert with general uprisings by workers and students in the final seizure of power in the city. It is simply malicious for the fascist puppet chieftain Marcos to claim that the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army would violate their basic principles. He seeks to cover up his crimes with an anticommunist hysteria.

The dirtiest slander that the fascist puppet chieftain seeks to make against the Communist Party of the Philippines is his statement that he can turn communist if he wants to but that for his love of democracy he does not want to. The Communist Party of the Philippines hereby tells Marcos that he can neither be a communist nor be a lover of democracy. He represents the counterrevolutionary interests that the Filipino people, the Communist Party of the Philippines and the national democratic revolution are so determinedly fighting against. He has not only robbed the people but he has also directly incurred blood debts in the course of performing his antinational, antidemocratic and anticommunist role of being the top running dog of US imperialism and such exploiting classes as the comprador bourgeoisie and the landlord class. He can seek alliance with or even membership in the local revisionist renegade groups but he should never dare seek it from the Communist Party of the Philippines.

The fascist puppet chieftain himself appeals hypocritically for “calmness” and “unity” after murdering, maiming and arresting en masse unarmed demonstrators engaged in direct democratic action. Not satisfied with the fascist brutality that he has already inflicted, he still threatens to use force against the people and gloats that he has not even used 1/30th of the available force that he can use. He brazenly implies that he can always murder, maim and arrest more people whenever he wants to. This incorrigible terrorist is really in need of a lesson from the people.

The Marcos puppet reactionary regime has aggravated the conditions for a revolutionary war. The fascist puppet Marcos can no longer go to any part of the country without fear of facing the wrath of the people. He is no longer in a position to embellish the increasing oppression and exploitation of the people with catchphrases and token acts. He has aggravated the suffering of the people in the city and countryside with too many massacres.

The fascist puppet chieftain Marcos can no longer stay in Malacañang or go anywhere without being conspicuously surrounded by too many armed guards. But even then the people will always shout their indignation against him and his regime. They show their indignation whenever they merely see the picture of Marcos and the reactionary troops and police.

No amount of trickery on the part of the Marcos puppet reactionary regime can absolve it from its criminal responsibility in the murder, maiming and mass arrests of the January 26 and 30-31 demonstrators. The Filipino people see through such tricks as trying to use the Catholic clergy against the demonstrators by holding a “thanksgiving mass” on the Malacañang grounds immediately after the demonstration or by putting the notorious

military criminal Raval side by side with Cardinal Santos to make a sham appeal for “calmness” and “sobriety”; holding congressional and police investigations to witch-hunt particular mass organizations and their leaders or to put the blame on everyone except Marcos and his masters; asking students to separate themselves from the workers and peasants or the students from each other; calling for opportunists; using anticommunist elements in the mass media to undermine the revolutionary mass movement; closing the schools and preventing the demonstrators from giving due honors to their martyrs; advising parents and school authorities to restrict the activities of students; saturating the city with troops and putting the people under military surveillance; putting the blame on the demonstrators for the death of their own fellow demonstrators; using the local revisionist renegades to complain about a “purely anti-Marcos line” and to speak merely of “an emerging pattern of repression” or “fascistic tendencies”; and so many other tricks. All of these tricks have only intensified the just anger of the people against the Marcos puppet reactionary regime and all other enemies of the national democratic revolution.

Expose the fascist puppetry of Marcos and the true state of the nation: on the January 26, 1970 demonstration

The January 26 demonstration was essentially a demonstration on the true state of the nation to debunk that mendacious “state of the nation” address of the fascist puppet chieftain Marcos and to condemn the gathering of the people’s oppressors and exploiters in Congress. The reactionaries, including the local revisionist renegades and the Catholic clergy and its political sacristans, sought but failed to misrepresent the mass demonstration as a demonstration to endorse such nonsense as a “nonpartisan” constitutional convention or “peaceful revolution.”

Fearing mass criticism and the exercise of the people’s democratic rights, the fascist despot Marcos gave verbal instructions to attack more than 50,000 demonstrators assembled outside the puppet reactionary legislature. He was incensed that a green papiermache crocodile with a US dollar sign symbolizing his greed and puppetry and a black coffin symbolizing his suppression of democracy were hurled by the people at him and his first lady, his well-known partner in corruption.

In seeking to terrorize the people with the brutal attack of 7,000 troops and police on the demonstrators on January 26, he created the immediate conditions for the more militant demonstration of January 30-31 which would unfold even more forcefully his fascist puppetry to US imperialism and the irrepressible aspirations of the people for national freedom and democracy.

The two demonstrations, especially the latter one, have sounded the keynote of the true state of the nation. They shall serve for a long time as a clear statement of the irreconcilable contradiction between the counterrevolutionary state and the broad masses of the people.

The Mendiola massacre is nothing but the culmination of a series of massacres and assassinations perpetrated in both city and countryside by the Marcos puppet regime. It is also a dialectical development of the shameless commission of fraud and terrorism in the last elections. In firm opposition to it is the kind of revolutionary courage and militant unity manifested by tens of thousands of demonstrators who counterattacked the enemy troops and police wave upon wave for more than six hours. While from the fascist puppet viewpoint of Marcos he deserves another war medal from US imperialism, the Filipino people have become ever more enraged to give him a one-ton medal. Indeed, in trying to ward off the small stones justly thrown at him and to retaliate vindictively against the people, the fool himself has picked up a big rock only to drop it on his feet.

The Marcos brand of nationalism has resoundingly been exposed by the people as fascist puppetry to US imperialism and to the local exploiting classes. The Filipino people have learned even more sharply the necessity of waging armed struggle to overthrow the national and class oppression and exploitation, precisely at a time that the reactionaries are trying to deceive them with such a farce as the 1971 constitutional convention. The striking truth of people’s war is being embraced by the people at a time that the reactionaries are at the end of their wits and mean to concoct gimmicks to strengthen their machinery of suppression.

The ugliest features of the reactionary state in a semicolonial and semifeudal society have become too conspicuous to be camouflaged by mere rhetoric. Undeniable to the entire nation now are the bloodthirsty use of the police trained by the US AID and the vicious military manipulated by the JUSMAG in “counterinsurgency” to suppress the people; the operation of murder gangs like the “Monkees,” Special Forces, Home Defense Forces and the Barrio Home Defense; the all-round US imperialist control over the Armed Forces of the Philippines; the combined use of private armies and regular reactionary troops in terrorizing the people, especially during the last elections; the puppet indoctrination of reactionary military officers in the National Defense College and in US military schools; the counterrevolutionary orientation of PMT and ROTC; and the expanded use of the deceptive concept

of “civic action” to displace civilian personnel with military personnel and perform espionage work on the people or the concept of “crowd control” to break up workers’ strikes, peasant actions and demonstrations.

It is futile for the Marcos puppet reactionary regime to boast of having a limitless amount of military force to suppress the Filipino people under the slogan of national discipline. The reactionary government is now in a state of bankruptcy after incurring huge internal and external debts in the course of intensifying the foreign, feudal and fascist oppression and exploitation of the broad masses of the people. Even the fascist troops and police have long found their government salaries to be inadequate; that is why they engage in all kinds of extortion activities and in the process they have become isolated from the people. The whole nation, especially the workers, peasants and urban petty bourgeoisie, is now terribly suffering from inflation, devaluation, increasing unemployment and higher taxes. The national bourgeoisie is finding itself crushed by a tight credit squeeze and the excessive impositions of the international monopoly bourgeoisie led by US imperialism. The masses of workers and unemployed, with the assistance of the urban petty bourgeoisie, especially the students, are bound to launch soon even more powerful mass actions against the counterrevolutionary state. In the countryside, the people’s war is advancing ever more vigorously against US imperialism and the local tyrants.

The Marcos puppet reactionary regime keeps on repeating that it has been for the purpose of “development” that it has incurred extremely heavy debts and a huge foreign trade deficit. The truth is that the Marcos puppet reactionary regime has only been implementing consistently the dictates of US imperialism (“recommendations” of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank) to improve the infrastructure for the colonial exchange of Philippine raw materials and foreign manufactures especially from the US, to facilitate the huge profit remittances of US monopolies and also to extend credit to them for their local operations, to intensify the import-export operations of the comprador bourgeoisie and to reinforce the hold of the hacendados on agriculture. The Marcos reactionary regime has faithfully served US imperialism and the local exploiting classes because its ringleaders do not only enjoy the status of compradors and landlords but they also exact their own share of exploitation through graft and corruption in their capacity as bureaucrat capitalists.

In intensifying their bloodsucking activities on the Filipino people, US imperialism and its local stooges have also calculated to create the conditions for the reactionary government to beg for “stabilization” loans and preferential trade from the United States in exchange for the perpetuation of parity rights and more imperialist privileges in the various aspects of Philippine society. Already the local reactionaries which include revisionist renegades, pseudonationalists and Christian “socialists” have already set the ground level for the continuation of US imperialist privileges by the terms of such legislations as the Investment Incentives Act and the Magna Carta of Social Justice and Economic Freedom.

The secret negotiations concerning the Laurel-Langley Agreement and other negotiations concerning other treaties with US imperialism are being synchronized with the worsening conditions of Philippine society and also with the farce of Constitutional Convention in 1971 which can only be expected to sanction once more the foreign and feudal oppression and exploitation of the Filipino people. To dissimulate their treasonous character, counterrevolutionaries have started to misrepresent themselves as nationalists and to dilute the ranks of democrats in an attempt to mislead them.

Advocacy of relations with the revisionist countries, especially with Soviet social-imperialism, is being misrepresented by the Marcos puppet reactionary regime, the Lava revisionist renegades and other reactionaries as the cornerstone of an “independent” foreign policy. US imperialism is actually behind the plot to cover up its increasing oppression and exploitation of the Filipino people by accommodating Japanese militarism and Soviet social-imperialism in the Philippines. Reeling from its economic and political difficulties, US imperialism is in need of Japan as its fugleman in Asia and the Soviet Union as its collaborator in the strategic imperialist alliance to oppose the people, revolution, communism and China.

Unite for the national democratic revolution

The militant mass demonstrations of January 26 and 30-31 have clearly spelled out the urgent need for a thoroughgoing national democratic revolution. The people who have experienced the fascist terror recognize now the need for such powerful weapons as a proletarian revolutionary party, a people’s army and a united front to be able to strike back at the enemy effectively and to achieve national democracy. It has become ever clearer that the vast majority of the Filipino people—the proletariat, the peasants, the urban petty bourgeoisie and, to some extent, the national bourgeoisie—must unite under the leadership of the proletariat and its party against all those foreign and

local tyrants that use the Marcos puppet reactionary clique as their pet running dog.

The necessity of propagating the Program for a People's Democratic Revolution of the Communist Party of the Philippines has become urgent among the participants of the demonstrations and in the entire nation. From the ranks of the militant demonstrators can be drawn those who will dedicatedly spread and put into practice Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought and the Party Program. The Party is now pressed upon to distribute to them the *Guide for Cadres and Members of the Communist Party of the Philippines*, *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* and *Quotations from Chairman Mao Zedong* and other basic instructive materials that can inspire them to fight US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism in the correct way.

The only way by which the Filipino people can carry the Philippine revolution forward at this stage of our national history is to unite with the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army on the basis of the Program for a People's Democratic Revolution. This program responds to the principal demand for national democracy made by the militant mass demonstrations of January 26 and 30-31.

We note with pride that the militant majority of the demonstrators of January 26 and 30-31 were the student youth. We urge them to seek further the support of workers and peasants, contingents of which were in the demonstrations. It is by enlarging and ensuring the support of the workers and peasants for the militant mass demonstrations of the student youth that the struggle for national democracy can be waged more effectively.

We urge the students to undertake the following: 1) Make a living study and application of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought and the Program for a People's Democratic Revolution; 2) Raise the level of revolutionary consciousness and practice among the students throughout the country; 3) Go to the workers either in places where they work or live and assist them to assume the revolutionary class leadership; 4) Go to your respective towns or barrios, if you have any, and promote the revolution in the countryside and on a nationwide scale; and 5) Wage a protracted people's war on the basis of mass work against US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

The student youth can take full advantage of the fact that they come not only from every area in Greater Manila but also from every province in the whole country. They are in a very good position to promote revolution throughout the land and they have the ability to learn from the masses and concentrate their concrete learning into revolutionary demands under the theoretical guidance of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought and the Program for a People's Democratic Revolution.

A particular form of organization that the students can adopt is the propaganda team (of at least three members) which assumes the specific task of arousing and mobilizing the students and workers in a well-defined area in the city; or the students, peasants, farm workers, the national minorities and fishermen in a well-defined area in the provinces. The mass work of student propaganda teams in urban areas and in provinces close to Manila will result in bigger and more articulate demonstrations and more powerful general strikes. The mass work of student propaganda teams in the provinces will create the best conditions for getting hold of a gun and fighting the armed counterrevolution successfully.

The minimum that can be done by the student youth is to shatter the superstructure of the semicolonial and semifeudal society. For them to engage in a cultural revolution or revolutionary propaganda is of decisive importance in the national democratic revolution. They can assist in building up the proletarian revolutionary leadership and the national democratic orientation. They can isolate the enemy diehards in such institutions as the various branches and levels of government, the reactionary parties and organizations, the mass media, business chambers, schools, churches, yellow trade unions, bogus peasant associations, and the whole gamut of the imperialist and feudal culture that are now opposing the main current of the militant mass demonstrations of January 26 and 30-31 and are seeking to uphold the present reactionary system. The student youth who take the initiative of forming their propaganda teams should be confident that many others are doing the same. If they are not yet members of the Communist Party of the Philippines, they shall certainly be approached by the Party for recruitment or for cooperation on the basis of what they have already contributed to the national democratic revolution. The student youth should feel confident that there are cadres of the Communist Party of the Philippines at every strategic point in the whole country and among them are former students who have remolded their thinking and are now in the crucible of the revolutionary armed struggle. They must realize at this early stage that to propel a revolutionary mass movement there must be a revolutionary party at the core to serve as the standard-bearer of the revolutionary theory. The people's democratic revolution is protracted. The student youth should be persistent,

hardworking, austere, patient and alert, shedding off their petty bourgeois individualism, impetuosity or excessive caution. So long as they persist in revolutionary struggle, they shall become tempered and many of them shall become proletarian revolutionary cadres. To you the student youth, the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army address three quotations from Chairman Mao concerning the youth:

The world is yours, as well as ours, but in the last analysis, it is yours. You young people, full of vigor and vitality, are in the bloom of life, like the sun at eight or nine in the morning. Our hope is placed on you. How should we judge whether a youth is a revolutionary?

How can we tell? There can only be one criterion, namely, whether or not he is willing to integrate himself with the broad masses of workers and peasants and does so in practice. If he is willing to do so and actually does so, he is a revolutionary; otherwise he is a nonrevolutionary or a counterrevolutionary. If today he integrates himself with the masses of workers and peasants, then today he is a revolutionary; if tomorrow he ceases to do so or turns round to oppress the common people, then he becomes a nonrevolutionary or a counterrevolutionary.

The intellectuals often tend to be subjective and individualistic, impractical in their thinking and irresolute in action until they have thrown themselves heart and soul into mass revolutionary struggles or made up their minds to serve the interests of the masses and become one with them.

Workers, peasants, students and progressive intellectuals, unite!
Down with US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism!
Down with the fascist acts of the Marcos puppet reactionary regime!
Be resolute, fear no sacrifice, surmount every difficulty to win victory!
Dare to struggle, dare to win!
Fear neither hardship nor death!
Long live the militant mass demonstrations of January 26 and 30-31!
Victory will belong to the Filipino people!
Long live the Communist Party of the Philippines!
Long live the New People's Army!
Long live Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought!

On the January 30-31 Demonstration

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The brutality of the reactionary state

Not satisfied with the brutal breaking up of the January 26 demonstration in front of Congress, the reactionary regime of Marcos perpetrated on January 30-31 far bloodier and more brutal crimes against more than 50,000 students, progressive intellectuals, workers and peasants who demonstrated in front of Malacañang.

Four student heroes enrolled in various large schools in the Greater Manila area were wantonly murdered with rifle fire by military troops and the police. Hundreds of other young men and women were seriously injured and maimed for life. They filled six large hospitals in the Greater Manila area. The savagery of the shooting and truncheon beating conducted by the reactionary troops and police was such that until now scores of demonstrators continue to be on the verge of death. Hundreds of militant demonstrators were arrested and wounded demonstrators were thrown into PC and Army trucks like hogs for the butcher house. Many of those arrested were subjected to torture and long hours of interrogation by PC investigators. Some of those apprehended are still being missed by their schoolmates and friends.

Even after the demonstration, the fascist brutes continued to kidnap and arrest students and other demonstration leaders in the futile attempt of the Marcos puppet reactionary regime to blackmail and intimidate them and forestall more and bigger mass protests against its bloody crimes against the people. Immediately after the demonstration, the reactionary government filed sedition charges against demonstration leaders and other militants, closed the schools in the Greater Manila area and turned its spies against patriotic students and leaders of mass organizations suspected of organizing more protest actions. A ban on protest demonstrations was brazenly imposed.

During and after the demonstrations, the fascist puppet chieftain Marcos called all his top henchmen in the major services of the reactionary armed forces and briefed them for more intensified suppression and intimidation of patriotic students and organizations. The US AID-trained brutes of the Manila police as well as those of the suburban areas were organized to be let loose on the demonstrators. Never has there been a more open and bloodier suppression of democratic rights in the city than the suppression of the demonstration of January 30-31.

The revolutionary courage of the students and other demonstrators

The militant participants of the January 26 demonstration in front of Congress were never cowed by the brutality of the reactionary state. They came back with more intense patriotism and courage to join the January 30-31 demonstration against the reactionary state and the fascist puppets of US imperialism.

The militant students, constituting the majority of the participants in the demonstrations, came in big numbers from 36 universities, colleges and high schools in Manila. Also participating were representatives from more than 40 universities and colleges in the provinces. Together with contingents of workers and peasants, they gave full play to the revolutionary spirit of "It is right to rebel" against US imperialism and local reaction. They fought tit for tat against the reactionary troops and police with explosives made on the spot, iron bars taken from street railings and stones. They commandeered a firetruck to break the main gate of Malacañang and a bus to break the lines of the advancing hordes of Metrocom men and set fire to several army and police vehicles, including trucks, jeeps and a cop motorcycle.

The patriotic demonstrators shouted revolutionary slogans condemning the fascist brutality of the reactionary state and calling on the workers, peasants, students and progressive intellectuals to unite against US imperialism, feudalism and the Marcos puppet reactionary regime.

The residents in the demonstration area were inspired by the dauntless revolutionary spirit of the demonstrators as they held their ground against the attacks of the armed brutes of the reactionary state. They took in many wounded demonstrators and even treated them.

Frightened out of his wits, the fascist puppet Marcos gave the order to shoot the patriotic demonstrators and had a helicopter ready for his immediate escape from the ire of the militant demonstrators. Apart from the 2,000 reactionary troops which unleashed the sanguinary suppression against the demonstrating masses, AFP chieftain Manuel Yan ordered the 12,000-man strong PC on "red alert," and the air force, navy and army on "blue alert." He

even summoned Task Force Lawin, the Marines and five companies of the Special Forces from Fort Magsaysay in Nueva Ecija to reinforce the troops in and around Manila. This has clearly shown the utter panic of the Marcos reactionary regime in confronting the militant masses of demonstrators. In mortal fear of further mass protest actions against its corrupt and brutal regime, it has kept a large number of reactionary troops in the Greater Manila area up to now.

After the demonstration of January 30-31, the patriotic students and other demonstrators have continuously fought in various forms the reactionary puppet regime and vowed to develop their struggle in scale and depth. Their dauntless revolutionary spirit has inspired and won the sympathy of the broad masses of the people throughout the country. Mass actions are sweeping the country in support of the January 30-31 demonstration and in protest against the fascist terror perpetrated by the Marcos puppet reactionary regime.

The revolutionary courage and heroism of the students have lifted the hearts of the oppressed and exploited people all over the country. They have in a big way fanned the flames of revolutionary struggle. The entire Filipino people are increasingly awakening to the need for armed revolutionary struggle in the face of armed counter-revolution.

Subsequent tactics of the enemy

Within 24 hours after the sanguinary suppression of the patriotic demonstrators, the fascist chieftain Marcos babbled in his “nationwide call” through the mass media that the militant mass demonstration was either “communist-inspired” and “not communist-inspired” in a desperate effort to tone down the immediate nationwide condemnation of his bloody crimes. Marcos has tried in vain to cover up the fact that the broad masses of the student demonstrators together with workers and peasants, are united in their common feeling of indignation against and in their resistance to his puppet reactionary regime and his US imperialist masters. He cannot hope to split the ranks of patriotic students, workers and peasants who will always rise up inasmuch as they have reached a new and higher level of consciousness against the enemies of national democracy.

Marcos has tried to wash his hands of the blood of the patriotic demonstrators brutally murdered and maimed by his henchmen—the reactionary military troops and police. He even has the impudence to demand gratitude from the people because he has exercised “tolerance” and restrained himself from murdering more students or formally suspending the privilege of habeas corpus. But his hypocritical speech cannot erase the fact of the unprecedented murder of four student youth and the maiming and mass arrests of hundreds of patriotic demonstrators under his regime nor can it hide the truth that all this is but a preparation for further bloody suppression of patriotic militants and organizations and the national democratic movement in general.

Marcos’ January 31st redbaiting statement has set the line for the subsequent bicameral hearings being conducted by Congress. It is evident from the pattern of interrogation in the hearings that militant and patriotic organizations are the object of this witchhunt. This again is a dirty scheme to divert the attention of the people from the bloody crimes of the Marcos reactionary regime and to stifle the growing mass movement of the Filipino people against US imperialism and its local reactionary allies. It is not surprising for such a politically bankrupt regime to concentrate its attack on those who truly speak and act for the national democratic interests of the people. Not a single one of its henchmen who brutally attacked the patriotic demonstrators has been apprehended and tried.

Far from putting the blame on the reactionary troops and police, Marcos even lauded their “exemplary” conduct in the murder, maiming and mass arrests of the patriotic militant demonstrators. Together with his gang of fascist brutes, Marcos led a field mass at Malacañang Park where he took the opportunity to exhort the troops of the reactionary armed forces to prepare for more sanguinary suppression of the people’s struggle for national liberation and democratic rights.

Marcos callously manipulates the Catholic Church through Cardinal Santos, the bishops and the priests to chasten the demonstrators for having militantly acted in defense of their democratic rights. True to his role as an apologist of the counterrevolutionary state which exploits and oppresses the Filipino people, Cardinal Santos is first of all “concerned” about the “destruction” of “private property” than about the wanton killing of four student demonstrators and the serious injury of hundreds of demonstrators by the Marcos fascist gang. He clamors for a “dialogue” only after a monologue of bullets burst out from the guns of the reactionary troops and police to

repress the indignant voices of the patriotic demonstrators who gathered on that historic day of January 30 and fought back for more than six hours till the early hours of January 31. In more cleverly couched terms so as not to appear “political,” he has also warned against “ideologies” which “sow disunity” among the people. This is a vicious attempt to hide the truth that never in the history of our country have the Filipino people forged such a militant unity against such a hopelessly corrupt regime which has extremely isolated itself from the overwhelming majority of the people because of its virulent opposition to their national democratic aspirations.

After the murder, maiming and mass arrests of patriotic demonstrators, the Marcos puppet regime would now dangle before the students monetary and other material bribes such as the promise of a \$0.6 million trust fund for so-called “student welfare programs and projects” and the creation of a “national student commission.” But the students know better. They are very much aware that this is but one face of the counterrevolutionary dual tactic of the fascist puppet regime to soften up their struggle against the reactionary state. They are more vigilant than ever about the dirty trick of buying off scabs in the student and youth movement.

In order to attack the surging patriotic student and youth movement, the Marcos reactionary regime is resorting to the use of fascist gangs and even the “Monkees.” It has also sent infiltrators and agents into youth meetings and conferences in the foolish hope of splitting the ranks of patriotic and militant organizations of youth and students.

The Marcos reactionary regime continues to mobilize thousands of military troops for guarding the Greater Manila area. It has ordered the PC authorities of various zones to organize their own “anti-riot” squads to suppress the rapidly spreading wave of indignation rallies and demonstrations against the brutal suppression of the patriotic demonstrators in Manila.

The puppet regime of Marcos in its role as the chief hatchetman of US imperialism and feudalism has been so discredited before the eyes of the broad masses of the Filipino people that only the most rabid counterrevolutionaries will ever try to save it from its inevitable doom as the local revisionist renegades are vainly attempting to do by crying in dismay about the “purely anti-Marcos” line of the recent militant mass demonstrations. Evidently, this is for the sole purpose of begging political capital from the Marcos reactionary regime in the form of allowing them to participate in bourgeois parliamentary politics.

Evaluation of the January 26 and January 30-31 demonstrations

The demonstrations of January 26 and January 30-31 came close on the heels of the student and worker demonstrations against the visit of US Vice President Agnew last December 29. They signify the new awakening of the Filipino people against US imperialism and the local reactionary puppets. They are a bugle call for more militant mass actions in the city for this year as well as the current decade.

These demonstrations have served to raise the consciousness of the masses of the Filipino people against the reactionary state which serves US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. The broad masses of the people have increasingly understood the need for revolutionary armed struggle against the armed counter-revolution and for overthrowing the present reactionary state. The demonstrations have served as a rich source of activists for the national democratic revolution and, therefore, of prospective members and fighters of the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People’s Army.

The revolutionary mass actions in the city are bound to develop in coordination with the surging agrarian revolution in the countryside. Under the leadership of the Communist Party of the Philippines, ideological, political and organizational preparations are continuously being made for intensified revolutionary armed struggle in the countryside and bigger mass actions in the city against US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. The entire reactionary system in the Philippines is rotting daily and the objective conditions for waging armed struggle are getting better daily.

Internationally, US imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism are plunging speedily into insoluble political and economic crises while the invincible forces of socialism and national liberation are surging in ever-victorious waves. The revolutionary situation has never been so excellent!

The students and progressive intellectuals who participated in the demonstrations of January 26 and January 30-31 have proven their revolutionary courage and militancy. By constantly studying and implementing Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought in a living way and by integrating themselves firmly with the masses of workers

and peasants, learning from as well as teaching them, they will certainly not fall back but march forward along the road of the struggle for national democracy.

The February 12 Demonstration

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The February 12 demonstration at Plaza Miranda shows beyond doubt that the revolutionary mass movement has already grown to such an extent that it cannot be trifled with. It is the fruit of a long period of consistent revolutionary efforts, especially of revolutionary propaganda during the last decade. The revolutionary mass movement is now thriving on objective conditions that are extremely favorable for advancing the national democratic revolution.

The February 12 demonstration at Plaza Miranda, attended by 100,000 people despite clever counterrevolutionary efforts to sabotage it, has strengthened the revolutionary spirit of the broad masses of the Filipino people. It has stirred simultaneous demonstrations in almost all major cities, provincial capitals and other places in the country. It is fired by the selfless sacrifice of four student martyrs, thousands of gravely injured people and hundreds of others arrested en masse by the fascist brutes under the orders of the Marcos fascist puppet clique acting on behalf of US imperialism and feudalism.

The February 12 demonstration proves that the Filipino people are courageous in the face of enemy intimidation and deception. It brilliantly shows that the struggle for national democracy is surging forward ever more vigorously under the powerful illumination of the universal ideology of the proletariat, Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought. Never before has there been such a demonstration as huge as the February 12 demonstration in the entire history of the revolutionary mass movement, not even in the 1946-50 period.

Marcos “nationalists” and Lava revisionist renegades

That the February 12 demonstration was almost completely sabotaged by counterrevolutionaries should deserve the keenest perception and study. The Marcos “nationalists” and the Lava revisionist renegades worked in concert with each other in a vicious attempt to scuttle the demonstration by using the tactic of raising the red banner only to attack it.

In a calculated attempt to minimize the responsibility of Marcos as a top running dog or as a big fascist puppet of US imperialism and as the chief political agent of the local exploiting classes, the Lava revisionist renegades took the initiative of peddling through the Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino (MPKP) spokesman as early as February 4 the erroneous line that “Marcos is only a small, although significant part” of “the neocolonial-bourgeois political system” (whatever that means) and to complain about a “purely anti-Marcos line.”

Taking the pretense of being more left than the Left, the Lava revisionist renegades actually tried to maneuver mass organizations into the idealist and rightist position of flying away from the concrete dialectics of the struggle, of glossing over the fascist brutality and puppetry of Marcos under the guise of being concerned with bigger issues beyond the current issue.

The reactionary line of the Lava revisionist renegades runs counter to the correct line that Marcos is a fascist puppet of US imperialism and chief representative of such local exploiting classes as the comprador bourgeoisie and the landlord class. In broadening the issues, we should never belittle the militant mass demonstrations of January 26 and 30-31 (and the criminal responsibility of Marcos) so long as we base ourselves on the mass mobilization ignited by them.

In a counterrevolutionary maneuver, the Marcos “nationalists” echoed the Marcos line of intimidation by spreading fear among the people that if the militant mass movement were intensified Marcos might be forced to seek further support from US imperialism or a CIA coup might occur. And the Lava revisionist renegades, always boastful of their connections in the innermost sanctums of the state and now so hopeful of manna from the Marcos reactionary regime, converged with the Marcos “nationalists” on the line of intimidation against the people.

The rightist essence of their “Left” phraseology is to prettify Marcos as one who neither belongs to the Left nor to the Right, as one who is not at all the principal rightist hatchetman of US imperialism and domestic feudalism today and as one who does not enjoy the support of the CIA. The Marcos “nationalists” and the Lava revisionist renegades would like to exculpate Marcos from the murder of four student heroes and two other people, the maiming of several thousands and the arrest of hundreds of people. What a treachery to the revolutionary movement! There was even the insidious and slanderous attempt by these counterrevolutionaries to picture the

revolutionary mass movement as a plaything of the CIA if it continued to take its militant course.

What was the result of the erroneous line of intimidation and deception of the Marcos “nationalists” and the Lava revisionist renegades? It led to a “dialogue,” empty concessions from Marcos and a vile agreement to call off the February 12 demonstration. The Lava revisionist renegades celebrated their treason the morning of February 12 with a press release in the name of the bourgeois pacifist organization Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation (BRPF) that “dialogues with President Marcos may be resorted to only as an occasion to further intensify the national democratic struggle.” In another press release of the same morning, the Lava revisionist renegades through the MPKP spokesman announced that they were in a quandary whether or not to join the February 12 demonstration in a vile attempt to confuse the masses.

It was good that the genuine leaders of the revolutionary mass movement were able to counteract firmly the malicious efforts of the Marcos “nationalists” and the Lava revisionist renegades. They realized that the dialectics of revolutionary struggle is concrete and that any political struggle develops step by step. They were clearheaded enough to see that the more Marcos resorts to violence the more will the people resist. Only the Marcos “nationalists” and the Lava revisionists will cower with their philosophy of survival in an attempt to protect their lucrative personal income and employment in the reactionary state.

What were the results of the vicious attempts of the state to suppress the militant mass demonstrations of January 26 and 30-31? A bigger avalanche of mass protest, which was February 12. Now, Marcos the fascist puppet chieftain should realize that he can no longer intimidate or deceive the people. He can just imagine how he would fare if 100,000 people marched on Malacañang Palace or even if only 1,000 activists would choose to go to the countryside to fight his rightist regime. The more he tries to intimidate or deceive the people the more will he accelerate the downfall of the counterrevolutionary state of which he is now the commander-in-chief.

If the fascist puppet chieftain Marcos should come to the brink of being overthrown and the CIA should try to salvage him or put another puppet in his place, then the revolutionary mass movement will only step up its revolutionary struggle, especially in the countryside. How much nicer it would be if the US imperialists and reactionaries in the Philippines can no longer boast of their regular elections! That would be a striking manifestation of how strong the revolutionary mass movement has become. Indeed, before an entire counterrevolutionary state as that of the Philippines falls, it could come to be steered by a series of tyrants and it will certainly do its worst with the aid of the imperialists. But this would not deter real revolutionaries from fighting continuously from one phase to another phase. It is stupid to blame revolutionaries for the rise of fascism and the supposed possibility of a rightist coup just as it is stupid to blame the heroic revolutionary Vietnamese people for the series of rightist coups and the large-scale invasion of south Vietnam by US imperialism. The Vietnamese people have continued to fight fiercely against the chain of puppet replacements for Ngo Dinh Diem made by the CIA.

The swindle that failed

What were those things promised by Marcos in exchange for calling off the February 12 demonstration? He promised thirteen nothings:

1. An interdepartmental committee will be constituted immediately to undertake a comprehensive review of American aid programs and foundations to find out if these are compatible or not with the nationalist aspirations of the Filipino people and whether these should be scrapped or not. Particular attention will be focused on American influence in the military, educational, economic and labor fields.

Our observation: Another committee of running dogs is another farce. A “review” by it is meaningless for the revolutionary mass movement. A comprehensive review of all these have already been made in the programs of militant mass organizations and the Communist Party of the Philippines.

2. The relief of three pro-American cabinet members—Executive Secretary Alejandro Melchor, Finance Secretary Cesar Virata and Defense Secretary Juan Ponce Enrile—shall be considered seriously.

Our observation: “Serious consideration” amounts to nothing. In the same tête-à-tête with the Movement for a Democratic Philippines, Marcos defended these well-known US agents as “nationalists.” What about Ople who has been a CIA asset since his Magsaysay days? And Marcos himself who bragged of CIA support in 1965?

3. The nationalist sector shall have a choice in all appointments to vital government departments and educational institutions particularly in education, labor, military, agriculture, economic planning bodies and the

University of the Philippines. The recall of the appointment of Alexander Sycip and Leonides Virata to the UP Board of Regents will be studied.

Our observation: What does Marcos mean by “nationalist sector”? Besides, offering government offices to bribe revolutionary activists is malicious. Puppetry to US imperialism characterizes the highest appointees of Marcos.

4. Trade and cultural ties will be instituted with Eastern European countries immediately with the sending of officially accredited representatives. The possibility of securing loans or aid from said countries shall be explored. Official attitude toward Peking and Moscow shall be taken up immediately with the Foreign Policy Council.

Our observation: This is obviously the booty being dangled before the Lava revisionist running dogs of Soviet social-imperialism for their cooperation with the Marcos fascist puppet regime. US imperialism has already instructed the Marcos fascist puppet clique to accommodate Soviet social-imperialism in line with the global counterrevolutionary alliance of opposing the people, communism and China. This is no concession. Relations with Soviet social-imperialism or the so-called “community of socialist states” referred to by the Lava revisionist renegades will only add to the intensification of the exploitation of the Filipino people. The Soviet Union is no longer a socialist country; it has become capitalist, social-fascist and social-imperialist. Soviet social-imperialist “loans” and “aid” are no different from US imperialist “loans” and “aid,” as proven in the cases of India, Indonesia and so many others.

5. Court charges against the staff members of the Dumaguete Times will be recommended for dropping. Majority of the cases filed for the January 26 and 30 demonstrations will likewise be dropped. The President will take a “bend backward” attitude towards cases that cannot be compromised in the interest of peace and order.

Our observation: There is no prima facie evidence against the staff members of Dumaguete Times. The charges against them should have been dropped a long time ago at the fiscal's office. With regard to those charged in connection with the demonstrations, the reactionary state has no right to make charges invoking the name of the people if it cannot even pinpoint the murderers of six people and all the perpetrators of the maiming and illegal detention of demonstrators.

6. The President will order an investigation of military and police authorities responsible for the death of four students and two non-students and the maiming of hundreds in the January 26 and 30 demonstrations. In the case of Manuel Alabado, US Tobacco Corporation union official, the President will order the prosecution of Tarlac provincial commander Col. Tomas Diaz.

Our observation: “Investigations” and “prosecutions” of military and police authorities have always ended up in their exculpation and commendation in cases where they commit the crime at the bidding of Marcos himself. Is it easily forgotten that Marcos commended and promoted his military accomplices in the murder of the four students and two other people, maiming of thousands and mass arrests of hundreds of people?

7. The military harassment, surveillance and wiretapping of the UP, PCC, Lyceum, the headquarters of the KM, SDK, MPKP and other nationalist groups will be stopped immediately.

Our observation: So many times has Marcos previously made orders for the military to stop its harassment, surveillance and wiretapping of the headquarters of organizations and homes of individuals.

8. Material assistance will be extended to the families of the victims of the January 30 rally.

Our observation: It is callous for Marcos to put on the bargaining table the question of extending material assistance to the families of the victims of his fascist brutality.

9. President Marcos will proclaim a January 30 Educational Fund Campaign to last 60 days to enable youth-peasant-labor groups represented to raise funds for the advancement of nationalism.

Our observation: So Marcos wants to seize the leadership over the revolutionary mass movement by issuing a proclamation to guide it in an educational and fund campaign. The target of the revolutionary mass movement becomes the principal motive force after one dialogue. That is a big joke. He arrogantly underestimates the revolutionary masses.

10. A thorough assessment of the Central Luzon problems will be made. The Monkees will be disbanded. Pampanga Gov. Francisco Nepomuceno and Angeles City Mayor Eugenio Suarez will be requested to go abroad so that armed elements and private armies which are not members of the AFP services in their areas can be disarmed and arrested.

The Home Defense Forces will be reassessed for possible scrapping and the dissolution of the Special Forces

and their reintegration to regular services shall be effected.

Our observation: How many times have Marcos and his military henchmen “disbanded” the “Monkees”? This beats the cat with nine lives. Only the New People’s Army, through its policy of annihilation, can do this. Marcos has the temerity to say that the AFP is the best among the devils and it wants to lord over Angeles City in the absence of Nepomuceno and Suarez.

Even as Marcos promises to reassess the Home Defense Forces for possible “scrapping” and “dissolution,” Brig. Gen. Garcia is supposed to have “scrapped” and “dissolved” them by press release. After all, scrapping and dissolution in the dictionary of Marcos and his military henchmen are synonymous to relabeling or reintegration into the same counterrevolutionary armed forces.

11. The administration will consider an increase in minimum wage both for industrial and agricultural workers. It will undertake a thorough probe of the sacada problem in Negros with the immediate dispatch of 15 impartial investigators. It will also consider a profitsharing plan involving private industries.

Our observation: Real wages have rapidly fallen under the rightist regime of Marcos. Mere consideration of wage adjustment at this stage is meaningless unless the workers themselves hold general strikes which will certainly come again into conflict with the military.

So many times in press releases, Marcos and Ople have investigated the sacada problem and they wish once more to launch an “investigating” expedition.

“Profitsharing” is a device being propagandized by pseudo-nationalists to cover up foreign monopoly control of Philippine corporations. It is also a device for capturing the meager savings of workers and dissuading them from exercising their democratic right to strike.

12. Government hospitals and medical services particularly the PGH and Dr. Jose Reyes Memorial Hospital shall enjoy priority status over other government programs.

The Medicare program shall be implemented and a broader coverage will be proposed to include workers in the private sector.

Our observation: These things were promised so many times before to other organizations and in other demonstrations.

13. The administration shall give top priority to the demands and problems of state colleges and universities. Our observation: These things were promised so many times before to other organizations in other demonstrations.

The lessons that we have learned

The Marcos “nationalists” and the Lava revisionist renegades apologize for the Marcos reactionary regime that it should not at all be blamed for the “accumulation” of wrongs left by “history.” The quickest riposte to this bit of counterrevolutionary idealism is that the Marcos reactionary regime is not only trying to perpetuate the imperialist and feudal oppression of the broad masses of the people but in his role as a fascist puppet is also trying to use every possible cruel means to intensify it. Certainly, Marcos all by himself cannot change the accumulation of historical wrongs without “the support of the people” but what he has been doing precisely is to aggravate the oppression of the people.

One important lesson that has been gained by revolutionary militants in the course of preparing for and realizing the February 12 demonstration is to maintain initiative and independence in a united front of various organizations and also not to engage in a “united front” with the Lava revisionist renegades and Marcos “nationalists.” It is impossible to have a united front with these counterrevolutionary scoundrels who will only take every opportunity to sabotage the revolutionary mass movement.

After transforming the Movement for the Advancement of Nationalism into an instrument of Marcos “nationalism” and modern revisionism, the Marcos “nationalists” and the Lava revisionist renegades are now maneuvering to sabotage further the revolutionary mass movement outside the Movement for the Advancement of Nationalism. The Lava revisionist renegades have been particularly clever in sneaking into the ranks of militant organizations while at the same time slandering the militant mass demonstrations of January 26 and 30-31 as actions going “along a disastrous adventurist line.”

It should always be kept in mind by all proletarian revolutionary cadres that a firm, clear and correct political

line is necessary to undo our doubts, fears and vacillations and frustrate the most clever saboteurs who try to creep into the revolutionary mass movement. Those who have been misled by the Marcos “nationalists” and Lava revisionist renegades should rectify their errors. They should not be misled by any attempt of the Lava revisionist renegades to cover up their ugly tracks even if they go to the extent of attacking the Marcos “nationalists” because the former have bigger pretensions as revolutionaries although they are in fact counterrevolutionaries and they always make it a point to attack real revolutionaries.

To underscore the heroism of the masses in militant demonstrations, the leading activists should cease to make too much protestations about their pacifist intentions and to broadcast that they could be infiltrated by “provocateurs.” The central fact in the January 26 and 30-31 demonstrations was that the masses were frontally and criminally attacked by the fascist henchmen of Marcos and that the masses in turn counterattacked in courageous self-defense. The leading activists and the masses should not flinch from pointing the accusing finger at the enemy in the most forthright manner.

The masses have correctly taken up the battlecry, “Makibaka, huwag matakot!” (Fight, don’t be cowed!) This is certainly far better and more inspiring than the bourgeois-pacifist top tune “We shall overcome” of the local revisionist renegades. There would have been no February 12 if there had been no January 26 and 30-31.

The February 18 Public Meeting

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New awakening

The February 18 Plaza Miranda public meeting, now widely called a people's congress, has proven that the new awakening of the Filipino people against US imperialism, feudalism and fascism is rising higher and can no longer be brought down by the reactionaries without being inflicted with more powerful blows.

Mass participation was even larger and even more vigorous than the February 12 public meeting. Tens of thousands of people from all walks of life thronged the plaza and filled the streets radiating from it. The public meeting was definitely larger than any held by the reactionaries of whatever party or organization.

The people who came were in outrage and shouted their determination to smash US imperialism and the local exploiting classes—all on whose behalf the Marcos fascist puppet regime is resorting to the use of murder both openly and secretly. All throughout the public meeting, the speakers and mass participants vigorously demanded the overthrow of US imperialism, feudalism and fascism.

A dramatic presentation reenacted the US conquest of the Philippines, the local mimicry of decadent imperialist culture and the brutality of the puppet politicians. It gave focus to the resistance made by the students against the reactionary troops and police in what is now known as the Battle of Mendiola.

Many people also came with numerous placards denouncing Japanese imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism as partners of US imperialism. The local revisionist renegades wanting to sneak into the mass action shuddered at the comprehensive scope of the protest. Previously, they had gloated over the fact that the fascist puppet chieftain Marcos had been singling out the “Maoists” as his enemy and making assurances that he would cooperate with the revisionist counterrevolutionaries.

From Plaza Miranda, a wave of people marched in the direction of Malacañang Palace. Completely outwitted, practically all the fascist brutes—from the city police to the crack troops of the reactionaries—deployed themselves in the vicinity of the fascist puppet chieftain's fortification. Brilliantly, the people marched wave upon wave towards the US embassy to express their just indignation against US imperialism, the No. 1 enemy of the Filipino people and master of the Marcos fascist puppet regime.

For the first time, the outer and inner gates of the US embassy were broken by demonstrators charging with sticks, stones and homemade bombs. Consequently, the demonstrators were able to make their way into the embassy grounds and buildings to smash whatever they could as a forceful expression of the people's protest against the transgression of their sovereignty and territorial integrity by US imperialism.

The fascist puppets converged on Roxas Blvd. to defend their master. All major services of the reactionary armed forces and the metropolitan police came with all their available forces. Immediately, a fretful US military officer in civilian clothes took command over the puppet troops and police.

But once more they were outwitted when the mass of demonstrators broke up into several groups and attacked such alien establishments as Caltex, Esso, Philamlife and other imperialist enterprises. They carefully avoided doing harm to petty bourgeois and middle bourgeois establishments, with the exception of a gossip center owned by a paid hack of the Marcos fascist puppet regime who has been virulently attacking the national democratic movement. Nevertheless, there were plainclothes and hooligans directed by the fascist puppet chieftain Marcos and his notorious co-puppet Villegas to indiscriminately attack private vehicles and small establishments in a futile attempt to smear the high prestige of the demonstrators.

All through the night as the fascist brutes arrested and beat up people at random, the number of those resisting them swelled. The resistance of the people of Manila spread as far as the student quarters of Sampaloc, with that portion of Claro M. Recto Avenue bounded by Legarda St. and Quezon Blvd. as the focus. The patriotic struggle against the fascist brutes continued until the wee hours of the following day. People threw every possible disposable object at them from windows and rooftops.

The puppets apologize to their imperialist master

The Marcos fascist puppet regime, through an old running dog of US imperialism, had obsequiously prepared an abject note of apology even before the US ambassador and CIA agent Byroade presented his note of protest

scolding the local puppets for their “dereliction of duty.” At the bidding of their imperialist master, all the local reactionaries deplored the patriotic mass action as “riotous vandalism.” The truly deplorable puppetry of these reactionaries became obvious when the people recalled that the US government had not even cared to make a reply to three diplomatic letters of the Philippine reactionary government concerning the murder of Filipinos by US personnel on three separate occasions.

Insinuating themselves in a meeting of the Movement for a Democratic Philippines, the counterrevolutionary revisionists masterminded by the Lava revisionist gang raised the question of whether to condemn or not the patriotic attack against the US embassy. The kind of question raised by these scoundrels exposed once more their utterly reactionary character. It also came to light that a small pack of these counterrevolutionary pretenders had joined the Plaza Miranda public meeting only to try vainly to discourage the people from marching to the US embassy.

With all the vehemence that they could command, the enemies of the national democratic movement condemned the revolutionary violence employed by the demonstrators as something veering from the submissive peace that they wished. The reactionaries completely obscured the counterrevolutionary violence unleashed by them against the people. The cruder propagandists among them complained most about the militant assault on the US embassy. The more clever among them attempted to discredit the main current of the public meeting and subsequent demonstration by complaining about the peripheral actions of those plainclothes and hooligans ordered by both Marcos and Villegas to attack private vehicles and small establishments.

The big hullabaloo raised by the reactionaries about the well-placed blows against US imperialism dealt by the demonstrators was actually meant to obscure the fact that scores of patriotic demonstrators were brutally treated by the reactionary troops and police in the vicinity of the US embassy and Malacañang Palace. No greater harm could be made by these fascist brutes only because the demonstrators had learned how to resist and outwit them.

The broad masses of the people, including positive elements in the metropolitan newspapers, wholeheartedly welcomed the patriotic attack against the US embassy. In answer to the reactionary comments that it was uncalled for, they angrily retorted that the demonstrations had cost US imperialism only a few dollars worth of glass and furniture. Even if the US embassy had been leveled to the ground, the amount of destruction is nothing compared to a day's profit or bloodsucking by US monopolies on the oppressed and exploited Filipino people.

For the last seven decades, US imperialism has continued to enjoy the fruits of conquest which entailed the murder of 700,000 Filipinos in the Filipino-American War of 1899-1902. Until now, US military base personnel continue to murder Filipinos and go scot-free with the full protection of their government.

More powerful blows against US imperialism and its local puppet diehards are bound to come. The symbolic attack against the US embassy are but an appropriate part of general preparations for more sanguinary struggles to resist and oust US imperialism. Even as the puppet reactionaries threaten to unleash campaigns of suppression, the Filipino people are bracing themselves for a more sustained and more determined revolutionary struggle.

Fascist puppet chieftain Marcos widens field of combat

Refusing to learn the lesson that more counterrevolutionary violence begets more revolutionary violence, the fascist puppet chieftain Marcos called to Camp Aguinaldo provincial governors and city mayors and instructed them to organize “strike forces” against the people. Little does he seem to realize that he can no longer intimidate the people who are becoming increasingly angry at him for intensifying their exploitation at the bidding of US imperialism and the local ruling classes.

Many, if not most, of the students now fighting him in the streets of Manila will themselves go very soon to their respective home provinces to explain the issue of imperialism, feudalism and fascism in the most concrete terms that they can learn from the masses themselves. As of now, people in the provinces have already started to manifest their indignation against Marcos as the chief political representative of the entire rotten system. As armed force is being prepared against them by the local tyrants, they should consider as a good opportunity for exposing in a sharper way the tyranny being suffered by the people and for proving the necessity of people's war in the countryside. As the field of combat widens, the Marcos fascist puppet regime and its imperialist masters as in Vietnam will find their financial and manpower resources more depleted.

The Marcos fascist puppet regime cannot always fool the people. It cannot indefinitely shoulder the expenses for “loyalty” rallies and for a bigger military machine. It will do so only by aggravating the inflation that has already

beset the nation and by exposing further the malevolence of his puppetry to US imperialism. US imperialism itself is now disastrously overextended all over the world and is suffering grave political and economic crises. In the long run, the foolish effort of the Marcos fascist puppet regime to save itself with more vicious means will only result in its more rapid downfall.

At the moment, the counterrevolutionary dual tactics being employed by the Marcos fascist puppet regime only reveal the desperate situation into which it has plunged itself. At one turn, it tries to sound ferocious in boasting about 50,000 fascist brutes and yet even at this early stage militant demonstrations have already shown greater number and unprecedented militancy. At another turn, it tries to sound sweet and cajoling and yet it is ruthlessly exposed as hypocritical by the objective course of events and by the powerful analysis made by the Communist Party of the Philippines, now employing Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought as the theoretical weapon.

The Marcos fascist puppet regime wishes to silence the revolutionary mass movement by murdering its leaders and activists. But it can no longer do so without attacking the people and committing serious political errors. The Communist Party of the Philippines is now deeply embedded among the broad masses of the people.

Bankruptcy of the entire reactionary state

The bankruptcy of the three branches of the reactionary government was laid bare on February 26. First, Philippine fascist puppet chieftain Marcos and Manila fascist puppet chieftain Villegas, personifying both the Nacionalista and Liberal parties, conspired to make use of their executive powers over the military and police to quell what was planned by the Movement for a Democratic Philippines as the third session of the people's congress. Second, the joint Senate-House committee allowed a paid agent of the Marcos fascist puppet regime to hog the limelight in casting slander against the activists and organizations participating in all previous demonstrations. Third, the Supreme Court which always takes pride in its seeming aloofness and black-robed pomposity once more displayed its ugly nature as a callous apparatus of the state. The reactionary state has resorted to the use of all its apparatuses for coercion, the army, the police, the prisons and the courts, to suppress the raging national democratic movement.

At so early a stage in the cultural revolution for the people's democratic revolution, all branches of the government have become exposed to the people as instruments of national and class oppression. Indeed, it is starkly clear that revolution is the best form of education. Without revolution, there would only be miseducation and the perpetuation of lies. National and class oppression would go on so long as wrong ideas and false hopes still pervaded society. Truth which cannot be had in the classroom is now flaming out from the crucible of the revolutionary mass struggle.

Despite the decision of the Supreme Court upholding the privilege of Villegas to use his police power to prevent people from assembling, thousands upon thousands of unarmed people still courageously assembled at Plaza Miranda on February 26 and were able to demonstrate that the real minority of reactionaries in Philippine society are riding roughshod over the real majority of the people.

Encouraged by the stupid decision of the Supreme Court, over 1,000 Manila policemen and another more than 1,000 Metrocom and armed forces men came in full combat gear and chased people out of Plaza Miranda and beat them up.

Those who were indiscriminately harmed by the police included people who were merely crossing the public plaza. By its own acts, the reactionary state has shown that it is merely usurping the name of the people to oppress and harm the people. The only reason why the real minority of oppressors and exploiters in Philippine society has been able to boast of a "silent majority" is because previously there was yet no revolutionary struggle of such intensity as the present to show who truly compose the majority and who truly compose the minority.

The real minority is composed of the exploiting classes whose diehards do not even make one percent of the population. The real majority is composed of the working class, the peasantry, the intelligentsia and the patriotic businessmen who together make more than 90 percent of the population. It is in the absence of revolutionary struggle that the real minority can usurp the name of the real majority by employing deception and violence. The real minority hates revolution because the reactionary government, parties, organizations, schools and other paraphernalia would be debunked as nothing but tools of oppression and exploitation. Revolution brings out the real majority and isolates the real minority.

After challenging and exposing the brutishness of the police at Plaza Miranda, the people proceeded in a series of waves to the Sunken Garden. The reverse of what Marcos and Villegas expected occurred there. The demonstrators sharpened their determination there and clarified who are the friends and who are the enemies of the Philippine revolution. They took special note of the fact that the reactionaries were trying to discredit the national democratic movement by infiltrating provocateurs into the demonstration in order to wreck petty bourgeois and middle bourgeois establishments and also evoke anti-Chinese chauvinism.

From the Sunken Garden, all the ten thousand demonstrators marched to the US embassy. From other points of the city, other demonstrators came to reinforce them. The police, Metrocom, PC and air force men were there in full force. Defiantly, the demonstrators threw stones, sticks and homemade bombs over the heads of the fascist puppets guarding the US embassy.

A running battle ensued between the patriotic demonstrators and the fascist puppets. The main force of five thousand demonstrators stood calmly in front of the US embassy as the battle of the puppet defenders of US imperialism cowered and became tied down across the long fence of the US embassy. At the same time, the rest of the demonstrators in compact groups ran around in circles as fast as they could to lob homemade explosives at the US embassy. Not a single militant was caught in the process. At the same time, demonstration marshals saw to it that the hired goons of Marcos and Villegas would not inflict as much damage on small establishments as before. Thus, several of these goons were caught and pummelled with blows by the demonstrators.

The lie of liberal democracy

Upon the instructions of the fascist puppet chieftain Marcos through a hot line, the city fascist puppet chieftain Villegas gave orders to go all out once more against the demonstrators. This was after the fascist brutes estimated that the demonstrators had run out of ammunition. But then at the same time the demonstrators had decided to move out in groups and in various directions.

Under their theory of “hot pursuit,” the fascist brutes gave chase to the demonstrators who seemed to be vanishing into thin air in the Quiapo and Sampaloc areas where student dormitories abound. Caught in a quandary, the puppet fools resorted to the braggadocio of throwing tear gas bombs at mere spectators and into the windows of student dormitories and other private residences. When the people simply rushed out of the area or were smoked out of their homes, the reactionary troops and police assumed them to be demonstrators, gave chase and mercilessly beat them up. As more people got hurt with truncheons, rifle butts and tear gas bombs, resistance and anger spread fast in the neighborhood as on February 18.

Tearing to shreds all pretensions of the reactionary state to academic freedom, the reactionary troops and police smashed their way into the Philippine College of Commerce over the objections of the college president, arrested and beat up everyone in sight inside the campus and ransacked every room. Faculty members and students were forced at gun point to sit down at the college quadrangle, were beaten up some more and were taunted by police and constabulary men. The uniformed rascals also went around picking up things to pocket and planting what they would consider as evidence of “subversive” activities.

The events of February 26 unfolded the irretrievable rottenness of the entire reactionary state. At the same time, they bore out the revolutionary courage of the people in the face of adversity. As a negative teacher, the reactionary state showed that when it speaks of democracy and constitutional rights it actually speaks of the privilege of the people’s enemies to oppress the people. This truth is borne out especially in time of crisis for a decadent political system.

On February 27, the fascist puppet chieftain Marcos pompously declaimed about liberal democracy. He said that the reactionary state was in no danger of a revolutionary overthrow but at the same time he threatened to employ more force against those who dare to demonstrate against his fascist puppet regime. He even boasted of having under his employ conservatives and radicals, as proof of his “liberal democracy.” This could be nothing but a bigger lie than “liberal democracy” in this period when the Filipino people are profusely shedding blood for the new democratic revolution.

Deftly making use of Villegas who is under his blackmail, Marcos is masterminding an anticommunist hysteria calculated to silence the people. He is now adopting the tactic of espousing “liberal democracy” and of blaming everyone else (Osmeña, CIA, CSM, Jesuits, etc.) for a possible palace revolution or assassination plot against him to smokescreen his insane plan of assassinating those he frenziedly attacked as “Maoists” on the day following the massacre of four students and two others. The practice of assassination has characterized the Marcos fascist puppet regime, especially in the provinces. It would be foolish for one to fail to see the sinister reason behind the well-publicized Marcos fear of assassination and insistent references to the principle of self-preservation. It is nothing but a flimsy excuse for the assassination of others, in the face of the growing mass protest movement against his fascist puppet regime.

A. An instrument of national and class oppression and exploitation

The essential nature of the Philippine Constitution since the very start has been its being an instrument of national and class oppression and exploitation. It is a constitution designed to synthesize and synchronize the interests of US imperialism and those of the local ruling classes under the camouflage of pious bourgeois populist expressions and the myth of self-government.

The making of the Philippine Constitution was part of the rotten deal to effect the false grant of independence by US imperialism to the Philippines under the Tydings-McDuffie Law. The convention of 1934-35 that drafted the constitution was packed by the political agents of US imperialism and those of the local ruling classes. Inevitably, the interests of the US imperialists, the big compradors, the landlords and the bureaucrat capitalists were given blessings by the convention. The constitution as a colonial piece of document was approved by the president of an alien government, the United States.

Never has the Philippine Constitution been free from its origin and nature as a legal instrument of national oppression and exploitation. Its colonial validity hinged on the Tydings-McDuffie Law. The constitution contained special provisions (Article XVIII) and the first ordinance appended in 1939 which demanded allegiance to the United States and which ensured the perpetuation of the political, economic, military and cultural control of the Philippines by the United States during the entire period of the Commonwealth. These made sure that even upon the false grant of Philippine independence by US imperialism the Philippines would still be under its control. It is a big crime to accede to this kind of constitution as has been done by the old merger party of the Communist Party and Socialist Party.

The US-RP Treaty of General Relations was signed on July 4, 1946 by both the US government and the Philippine puppet government so that corporations and citizens of the former would enjoy property rights like those of the latter in the Philippines, so that US military bases and reservations would remain in violation of territorial integrity and so that Philippine foreign relations would be under US control.

Not satisfied with the constitutional provision expressly allowing 40 percent foreign equity in Philippine corporations engaged in the exploitation of natural resources and operation of public utilities, the US imperialists extorted the Parity Amendment in exchange for war damage payments and trade preferences for the benefit of the big comprador-landlord-bureaucrat sector in the country. The Parity amendment which extends not only parity rights but even superior rights to US monopolies in law and in practice remains the most blatant manifestation of the colonial character of the Philippine Constitution. Until now, the Parity Amendment remains intact in the Laurel-Lan-gley Agreement.

To protect its huge economic interests in the Philippines, US imperialism further extorted the US-RP Military Bases Treaty, the Military Assistance Pact and the Mutual Defense Treaty. These military treaties ensure US extraterritorial rights, control of the puppet reactionary armed forces and the privilege of imperialist intervention in Philippine affairs under the guise of mutual defense. All of these violate the national sovereignty of the Filipino people and make the Philippine Constitution a rag of scorn

At present, the Philippine Constitution is patently a colonial document on incontrovertible grounds. It completely disregards the principle that for a colony or semicolony to liberate itself genuinely and fully from imperialist tyranny, there has to be a revolutionary assertion of the people's sovereignty and democratic rights. Instead, there is the cowardly acceptance of puppetry and the false notion that independence can be granted by an alien power to the people. It does not show how the political, economic, military and cultural dominance of US imperialism can be undone within the Philippines. The Parity Amendment and also the provision allowing 40 percent foreign equity in Philippine corporations nullify the very preamble which preaches the conservation of the national patrimony. There are so many executive agreements, treaties and statutes that have been passed to perpetuate puppetry to US imperialism in an all-round way. The constitution has often been invoked by the reactionaries to justify these.

The present constitution is essentially an instrument of class oppression and exploitation. To conceal the fact

that it is the biggest piece of class legislation, it obscures the basic class differences in Philippine society and dishonestly tries to incorporate in the general category of people the very ruling classes that oppress the democratic majority of the people, the masses of workers and peasants. By denying the existence of classes and class struggle, the present constitution seeks only to bless the kind of order where the reactionary state is used by the US imperialists, compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists to oppress and exploit the broad masses of the people.

The high-sounding terms of the preamble, declaration of principles and the bill of rights are mere bombast in the absence of clear class distinction. To take up one basic point: so it is recognized as a matter of constitutional right to be secure in one's property. Certainly, it would be a fundamental principle of democracy to recognize the right of workers and peasants to be secure in their hard-earned private property. But it is utterly wrong to recognize in the same breath the "equal" right of the big bourgeoisie and the landlord class to own property for the oppression and exploitation of the broad masses of the people. Under the present constitution, the reactionary state can only claim to "regulate" labor-capital and landlord-tenant relations and it is empowered to exercise compulsory "arbitration" in favor of the exploiting classes. In practice, the intervention of the reactionary state in the class struggle means the use of the police, armed forces, the courts and prisons against the workers and peasants.

All the twenty-one sections of the Bill of Rights (Article III) are negated essentially by the reality that it is the US imperialists and their local stooges, the big compradors, landlords and the bureaucrat capitalists, who monopolize the "freedoms" under the guise of enjoying them in their capacity as individuals or as corporate entities. The truth is that these tyrants in their class roles actually deprive the broad masses of the people, especially the workers and peasants, of their national, class as well as individual rights.

A constitution would not be useful to these oppressors and exploiters if it did not dangle deceptive promises before the oppressed and exploited masses. After recognizing the right of the ruling classes to be secure in their right to own the means of oppressing and exploiting the people, the constitution boasts of the right of expropriation and police power belonging to the state in the "public interest" or in time of its own emergency. The US imperialists, compradors and landlords can feel secure that their constitutional demand for "just compensation" will only reinforce, instead of decrease, their wealth and power. The present government is their own government. Their reactionary government is in no economic and political position to expropriate or cause the expropriation of the capital of the big bourgeoisie or the lands of the landlord class for redistribution to the peasants except for token purposes or when the landlords can exact a good price.

B. The forthcoming constitutional convention

False hopes are being raised about the 1971 constitutional convention as a possible means of "revolutionary" change to head off a real armed revolution of the broad masses of oppressed and exploited people. Reformists of various stripes and undisguised counterrevolutionaries play down the fact that this constitutional convention shall be held within an unchanged system under the sponsorship of a counterrevolutionary government in the service of US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. Erroneously, they play up the fantastic expectation that by a mere stroke of the pen after long-winded debates fundamental changes can be effected irrespective of the basic colonial and class character of the constitutional debaters.

A constitution can be nothing but a mere reflection or summing up of the general situation or particular balance of forces in a society. It cannot escape from the reality that antinational and antidemocratic forces, US imperialism, the comprador bourgeoisie, the landlord class and the bureaucrat capitalists dominate Philippine society. It is nothing but a fig leaf for a reactionary state. Never has it occurred in the entire history of mankind that a piece of document alone would suffice to persuade the foreign and local tyrants to leave their well-entrenched positions and ways.

It can never be hoped that US imperialism and the local exploiting classes shall allow themselves to be written off without a sanguinary fight. On the other hand, it can only be expected that these malefactors will exert every effort to have their political representatives elected to the constitutional convention in order to design the new constitution in such a manner as to deceive the people with glittering generalities and essentially permit national and class oppression and exploitation through some general terms in the same constitution or through the actual operation of the present system.

During the last whole decade, US imperialism and the local ruling classes have taken full advantage of the semicolonial and semifeudal status of the Philippines in preparing for the formal termination of the Laurel-Langley

Agreement in 1974 and for the perpetuation of their privileges. By manipulating the Philippine financial situation alone, US imperialism has succeeded in maneuvering the Philippine reactionary government into its position today of begging for “stabilization” loans and preferential trade in exchange for the recognition of US “vested rights” in the Philippines and the extension of “national treatment” (a synonym of “parity rights”) for its new investments.

By following the recommendations of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, two US-controlled financial institutions, the Philippine reactionary government has implemented the policy of decontrol which has facilitated the huge profit remittances of US monopolies and the aggravation of the colonial exchange of Philippine raw material exports and foreign manufacture imports benefitting the US monopolies and such evil local forces as the compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists.

Under the same recommendations, the Philippine reactionary government has made heavy expenditures mainly to provide the infrastructure for the imperialist domination of the country and for further reinforcing the economic and political power of the US imperialists, compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists. At the present moment, the external and internal debts of the reactionary government for such purposes have resulted in a crisis (inflation, balance of payments problem, increasing unemployment, heavy taxation and tight credit) especially during the fascist puppet regime of Marcos.

At this early stage, US imperialism and its puppets have clearly established the ground level for the retention of imperialist privileges as this is evident from the Investment Incentives Act and the Magna Carta of Social Justice and Economic Freedom, two pro-imperialist documents misrepresented as “nationalist.” Furthermore, the US-RP panels renegotiating the Laurel-Langley Agreement are colluding secretly to give more and bigger privileges to the US monopolies and are biding their time. Already the US imperialists have clearly exacted assurances for the extension of national treatment and incentives such as the privilege of monopolizing “preferred areas,” non-expropriation, investment insurance, tax exemption, tax credit and the like.

It is being made to appear by the reactionaries that it is progressive enough to limit foreign equity in the Philippine corporations to 40 or 30 percent but at the same time the reactionaries are determined to extend parity rights to US monopolies upon the “case to case” decisions to be made by an executive agency like the Board of Investments.

The US imperialists see clearly that it remains the policy of the Philippine reactionary government to attract foreign investments. But fearing the growing revolutionary mass movement that is profoundly aware of them as evil bloodsuckers, they are subsidizing the gang of Manglapus, the Christian Social Movement, to propagandize the finance capitalist idea of “profitsharing.” This sinister tactic of US imperialism is to dangle before the people the false hope of being able to buy out the incumbent US assets or to buy additional shares that US-owned or US-controlled corporations in the Philippines may issue. This is calculated not only to keep intact US involvements here but even to trap a big mass of small Filipino shareholders in corporations controlled by a solid bloc of US monopoly capital. The finance capitalist idea of “profitsharing” leads to the reactionary line of proportionate or relative decrease of US assets through “joint ventures” and through the stock market.

The idea of “democratizing” a \$100 million corporation by selling \$90 million incumbent shares or \$900 million additional shares to ill-paid Filipino workers is as fantastic as the old preposterous idea of liquidating or reducing landlordism by selling land to impoverished tenants as in the Agricultural Land Reform Code. The advocates of Christian socialism or “bayanocracy” (with “universal capitalism” as its main formula) are not simply playing the role of idiots. They have the sinister purpose of fooling the workers and peasants into accepting US imperialism and feudalism.

Under the present dire situation of the Philippines, the 1971 constitutional convention will only prove to be an occasion for updating the present reactionary constitution in a way as to express in a more deceptive language the impositions of US imperialism and their comprador-landlord-bureaucrat puppets. The political organizations and personalities that will prevail in this year’s election of convention delegates are organized, supported and manipulated by US imperialism, the comprador bourgeoisie, the landlord class and the bureaucrat capitalists.

These antinational and antidemocratic forces will use their well-tested political machineries, the Nacionalista Party, the Liberal Party and such other partisan groups as the Christian Social Movement and other allied organizations under the influence of the Catholic clergy. No matter how much politicians and narrow partisans of the type of Manglapus, Pelaez, Araneta and the Catholic bishops and parish priests try to misrepresent themselves as

“non-political,” the Nacionalista Party and Liberal Party will be the major determining forces either in a direct or indirect way. It is foolish to expect that the Pelaez bill or any such legislation will stop NP and LP partisans from running for the constitutional convention under the banner of the Cursillo or the Rotary Club.

The various organizations formed recently in connection with the constitutional convention will not have much say in the election of delegates different from the usual bunch of politicians. Some of these organizations misrepresenting themselves as “civil” or “non-political” can only lend bourgeois prestige to various personalities. The only political force with some amount of independence from the NP and LP but without any basic independence from US imperialism and the local ruling classes which might succeed in making a significant number of its candidates win is an organization or a group of organizations enjoying the support of the Catholic clergy.

The purpose of the Christian Social Movement and other religioussectarian political organizations in agitating for the exclusion or reduction of NP and LP influence in the forthcoming constitutional convention is to give the Catholic clergy and its political sacristans the biggest possible opportunity in their sinister attempt to dominate the constitutional convention on behalf of US imperialism and the local ruling classes and, of course, on behalf of the special interests of the Catholic Church. Truly progressive elements will be an extremely small minority in the constitutional convention.

The growing political activism of the Catholic clergy and its political sacristans under the guise of moral superiority will not reduce the filthiness of counterrevolutionary politics. The political intervention of the clergy is but an ingredient in the rise of fascism in this country. It is but another camouflage for the social cancer and reign of greed.

The manner of elections for the constitutional convention will be no different from that of previous elections for the bureaucracy. The constitutional convention will not simply be an occasion for debate among populist orators who take the name of the people in vain. US imperialism and the local reactionaries will grab as much privileges as they can. They will subsidize their political agents in their bid to get seats in the convention. The stakes are too big for them to be indifferent.

Especially now, they need the constitution to give blessings to the aggravation of their oppression and exploitation of the people. The candidates will fight bitterly for a position in the convention not only to gain prestige to be able to run for other elections later. They will fight bitterly because there is plenty of money to be gained by them by running and also by selling their delegate votes to the highest bidders when such big issues as foreign investments and feudal privileges come up in the agenda of the convention.

Within the convention, the delegates will be subjected to the same pressures and manipulations that those in the present reactionary government are subjected to. Money will flow in the constitution convention to make sure that privileges and compromises will be decided in favor of foreign and local tyrants. The people will be afforded only with debates comparing advantages and disadvantages of a number of alternatives within the range of puppetry to the foreign and local tyrants. The people will be provided with the spectacle of parliamentary debate with regard to mere questions of form. The reactionaries will exert every effort to focus public attention on such questions of form as whether to have a parliamentary or presidential form of government; a six-year term without re-election for the president or otherwise; a two-party system or electoral inspectors for all parties; suffrage for those 18 years of age; foreign loans or foreign direct investments from the same imperialist sources; and the like.

These questions of form will be used to obscure questions of substance such as the continued violation of national sovereignty and territorial integrity; plunder of the national patrimony by US imperialism and the antidemocratic and feudal right of landlords to own vast lands and exploit the peasant majority of the people. The extension of special privileges to the Catholic Church such as the medieval privilege of indoctrinating the youth, tax exemption in its business enterprises and possession of vast landed estates is also a major question of substance.

C. What is to be done

The main task of all proletarian revolutionaries and all those who adhere to the people’s democratic revolution is to expose and oppose the 1971 constitutional convention as a farce. In doing so, focus must be put on questions of substance. These questions can be drawn from the Program for a People’s Democratic Revolution of the Communist Party of Philippines. By raising the most important questions involving the national freedom and democratic rights of the people, the 1971 constitutional convention can be more easily shown up as a mere pretense to deceive the people once more.

The constitutional convention will certainly fail to liberate Filipino people from US imperialism and such other

oppressors and exploiters as the compradors, the landlords and the bureaucrat capitalists. It is only through an armed revolution that these can be overthrown by the workers, peasants and all patriotic and progressive strata of this society and that a new democratic constitution can be effected to sum up the correct relations and express the true aspirations of the people without being shamed and frustrated by clever provisions and escape clauses that in practice negate the most bombastic preamble and the most pious declaration of principles.

During the constitutional convention, mass actions assailing the basic reactionary pattern of convention deliberations will even be more important than the speeches and debates made by those few in the minority who will seem to be patriotic and progressive within the convention hall. Those few in the minority who will make positive contributions in the constitutional convention will be proven worthy of admiration only to the extent that they can expose and oppose both the covert and overt maneuvers of the reactionaries to use the constitution as another instrument for oppressing and exploiting the people. However, the moment that they start arranging compromises with the reactionaries they become the object of our just contempt. All those who will sign the final draft of the constitution despite all its counterrevolutionary provisions will only affirm their opposition to the true national and democratic interests and aspirations of the Filipino people.

Before, during and after the 1971 constitutional convention, the Program for a People's Democratic Revolution is the guide for taking the correct road of armed revolution. Only after an armed revolution has overthrown the exploiters with their oppressive laws can the Filipino people convene a revolutionary congress to draft and ratify a constitution that truly expresses their sovereign and democratic interests and aspirations.

The Lava revisionist renegades are condemnable for helping the barefaced counterrevolutionaries spread the false illusion that a constitutional convention can be the occasion for a peaceful putsch or that all legal possibilities can be exhausted. The reactionary state may favor them with more liberties and bigger opportunities for relations with their revisionist masters, the Soviet social-imperialists. But the true proletarian revolutionaries correctly view the constitutional convention as another swindle perpetrated on the people.

We should cease to be duped by the counterrevolutionary idealist cliché that "those who have less in life shall have more in law." Laws are deliberately passed by the foreign and local tyrants of this society precisely to deceive and oppress the broad masses of the people. What is pompously called the "rule of law" by the reactionaries is nothing but their own class rule.

It is now clear that the issues against US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism are widely understood and grasped by the Filipino people. A strong proof of this was the People's March which was launched last March 3.

The March 3 People's March earned the cheers, sympathy and support of the city residents as it started from the boundary of Manila and Quezon City passing through the districts of Sampaloc, Sta. Cruz, Tondo and Binondo where the masses of workers and poor people in the city dwell. Like an onrushing wave, the ranks of the marchers grew bigger and larger numbering more than 20,000 when it reached its converging point at Plaza Lawton.

Afterwards it proceeded to the US embassy and besieged this hated symbol of US imperialism in the country. This is a hard blow to the reactionary enemies who have been desperately smearing the militant demonstrators and organizations in the city by spreading the lie that mass actions and demonstrations do not enjoy the support of the masses of the people. The 23-kilometer march which lasted for six hours shook the whole city. Angry slogans "Down with US imperialism!," "Down with Feudalism!," "Down with the fascist puppet Marcos!" and "Long live the Filipino people!" thundered everywhere. The ever-rising enthusiasm of the marchers was further animated by their spirited chant: "Makibaka, huwag matakot!" (Fight, don't be cowed!)

In mortal fear of the angry protests of the workers, students and intellectuals, the Marcos fascist puppet regime panicked like a mad dog. Hurriedly, the reactionary state sent thousands of reactionary armed troops, police, Metrocom and special forces to suppress mercilessly the demonstrators. As before, guns, truncheons and tear gas bombs were used to disperse the marchers. Many were beaten and maimed. Many were unjustly arrested and jailed. During this fierce attack by the fascist beasts unleashed by the reactionary state, a student again died fighting—Enrique Sta. Brigida—adding one more to the list of heroes who have sacrificed their lives in the city and in the countryside to continue through to the end the struggle for national democracy.

The people once more witnessed how the Marcos fascist puppet regime acting on behalf of US imperialism and feudalism would ruthlessly suppress the democratic rights of the demonstrators. However, the bloody suppression of the March 3 People's March failed to intimidate the masses of workers, student and youth who joined the historic mass action. It only goaded them more to wage a resolute struggle for national democracy. With revolutionary courage, they fought back the fascist puppet military troops with stones, bottles, placard handles and homemade bombs. While this revolutionary and courageous struggle in the city has inspired the armed struggle waged in the countryside by the New People's Army under the leadership of the Communist Party of the Philippines, it has also shown how armed struggle in the countryside would enliven with news of victories the revolutionary mass actions and struggle in the city.

The meaning of the people's march

The March 3 People's March is another wave in the high tide of mass actions and demonstrations in the past months of January and February. It is a part of the national democratic cultural revolution which is now increasingly raging all over the country. This cultural revolution clearly explains the national democratic character of the present stage of the Philippine revolution. It shows that its main targets are US imperialism, local feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism and that its motive forces are the workers, peasants and the revolutionary section of the petty bourgeoisie.

This cultural revolution sharply points out that the only road towards the triumph of the national democratic revolution is armed struggle under the leadership of the working class and the Communist Party of the Philippines. The cultural revolution is a basic preparation for nationwide advance of the people's war in the countryside.

The People's March has brought closer and made more urgent to the broad masses of the people the necessity of the struggle against US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. It is now widely understood by the broad masses of the people that the ruthless exploitation of US imperialism and its local reactionary allies is the root cause of poverty and oppression of the Filipino nation. Now they can correctly interpret the present devaluation of the peso, high prices of commodities, unemployment, widespread hunger and suffering, graft and

corruption in the government and decadent culture. It is also widely understood that only through armed struggle can the people bring about the downfall of the enemies of national democracy.

The People's March is a clarion call for more widespread and more intensified mass actions, especially among the toiling people. The strike called by tens of thousands of drivers in Manila and suburbs paralyzed transportation in the metropolitan area. That these strikers coordinated with the demonstrating youth and students is a sign of a rapidly growing unity among the people, especially the proletariat and the student youth. There is no doubt that the March 3 People's March gave testimony to such a patriotic unity. There is now a very strong indication that a storm of workers' strikes would shake the cities in the near future side by side with the intensified armed struggle of peasant fighters in the countryside.

Enemy tactics of deception

At present, the enemy is cudgeling his brain to think out ways to destroy or weaken the movement for national democracy. The policy of deception is the other face of the same coin of the fascist suppression of the people. It is important in the struggle for national democracy to recognize the various tactics of deception, to expose and oppose them.

Heading the list of the targets of slander and intrigue of the reactionary state and the pseudo-revolutionaries are the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army and other revolutionary mass organizations. An example of this is the fake letter published in the *Philippine Collegian* of UP and carrying the patently forged signature of the commander-in-chief of the New People's Army. It is stated in the fake letter that it is dangerous for the students to continue their demonstrations against US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism because it might end up in a coup d'etat like what happened in Indonesia or that it might pave the way for a more ruthless puppet of US imperialism.

This is a shameless attempt to cover up the condemnable puppetry of the reactionary Marcos administration to US imperialism and to wash its hands of the blood of those it has murdered in the city and in the countryside. This trick of branding genuine revolutionaries as enemies of the people can no longer deceive the masses who now recognize who their friends are and who their enemies are. More and more people now accept and grasp the correct line and leadership of the Communist Party of the Philippines for a victorious national democratic revolution.

Another counterrevolutionary intrigue which is aimed at whipping up hatred against staunch supporters of the people's democratic revolution is the racist anti-Chinese line peddled by CIA agents like Bagatsing, scabs like Oca and Hernandez and others. Through a put-up and fake student organization, the reactionary state has attempted many times to mislead the masses of the Filipino people in their struggle against US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism by espousing a so-called "anti-Chinese imperialism" battle cry. Yet the anti-Chinese racists are actually agents of both the CIA and the Chiang bandit gang.

The Filipino revolutionaries appreciate and recognize the fact that the People's Republic of China is the iron bastion of the international revolutionary movement and the staunchest ally of the peoples of the world in struggle against US imperialism, modern revisionism and all reaction. The redbaiting tactic of the diehard anticommunists becomes ridiculous now that the masses of the people themselves are fighting their real class enemies.

The reactionary state has been getting the help of the counterrevolutionary revisionist Lava clique to discredit and sabotage true revolutionary organizations. By hoisting its banner of "peaceful approach," the revisionist Lava clique has betrayed the masses of the people by closing its eyes to the murder, torture, illegal arrest and other forms of persecution used by the Marcos fascist puppet regime.

An undeniable example of the despicable counterrevolutionary trait of the counterrevolutionary revisionist Lava clique is the slander leveled by the Lava-controlled Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino (MPKP) against the participants of the March 3 People's March. While the demonstrators fought back in self-defense against the fascist military troops guarding the US embassy, the extremely small band of revisionist traitors separated itself from the masses of demonstrators, sat it out there in front of the embassy unmindful of the bloody suppression of the People's March and enjoyed the protection of the police and Metrocom no less. The MPKP also issued a statement to the press denouncing the revolutionary violence resorted to by the workers and students in their defense against counterrevolutionary violence. This group even boasted that they had nothing to do with the US embassy struggle.

Not satisfied with accusing the demonstrators as "vandals," the reactionary government fielded its hired

goons and agents to infiltrate the ranks of the demonstrators. These goons and agents were instructed to stone and destroy small private establishments making it appear that the demonstrators were responsible for these acts of destruction. The flushing out of a plainclothes Metrocom agent who lobbed a tear gas bomb amidst the demonstrators was a clear proof of this dirty tactic of the reactionary military to paint a bad picture of demonstrations.

It is argued by the enemies of national democracy that mass actions and demonstrations are causing the crisis in the economy. The truth, however, is that the growing discontent of the masses of the people in the countryside and in the cities is caused by the very servitude of the Marcos reactionary regime to US imperialism and feudalism.

Through its hired publicists, the reactionary state is desperately trying to describe the demonstrations as the making of a “noisy minority.” The series of people’s marches have belied this. Everybody knows how the masses of city residents have appreciated, joined or supported the demonstrations.

No counterrevolutionary propaganda can deny the fact that the national democratic revolution will achieve victory because more than 90 percent of the masses—the workers, the peasants and progressive intellectuals—are on the side of the revolution. The vilification campaign and tactics of deception of the enemy against the national democratic movement will never cease, and the more they will be intensified as the revolution advances. Indeed, to be attacked by the enemy is a good thing.

Broaden the revolutionary front

While we lay bare and fight the counterrevolutionary schemes of the enemy of the national democratic revolution, it is necessary to expand the revolutionary front. The present excellent revolutionary situation offers the best opportunity to unite under the banner of national democratic revolution all the classes oppressed and exploited by US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

The past mass actions and demonstrations which have been mainly participated in by the youth and students have shaken the whole nation and have brought fear among the ruling classes. It must be recognized that these patriotic actions constitute a forward step towards a more intense struggle of the broad masses of working people for national democracy.

Every revolutionary must devote his full attention and efforts to firmly integrating the activities of the youth and students to the workers’ movement in the city and the peasant movement in the countryside.

The fast rising revolutionary movement can no longer be stopped. The broad masses of the people are now certain of victory because there is now the correct leadership of the Communist Party of the Philippines which is guided by Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought.

In the months to come, there will occur more intense and more widespread mass actions that will surely shake the regime of US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. The mighty crushing blows that this movement will deal the enemy will certainly open wider the road of the national democratic revolution.

On the March 17 Poor People's March

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Hundreds of thousands of people once more thronged the streets of Manila and suburbs on March 17 during the Poor People's March. It culminated the series of mass actions, in what is now called the First Quarter Storm of 1970 launched by the masses of workers, peasants, student youth and progressive intellectuals in the cities and countryside to demonstrate their persistent struggle against the evils of US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. The March 17 Poor People's March was another declaration of support made by the masses in the city for the people's democratic revolution, particularly for the armed struggle now being resolutely waged by the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army.

The March 17 Poor People's March completely isolated and excluded the bourgeois reactionary reactionary gang of the Lavas, the Philippine agents of modern revisionism. Many of those previously hoodwinked by this counterrevolutionary tool of US imperialism saw through the political bankruptcy of the revisionist ringleaders, and adopted the slogans raised by the revolutionary masses.

The march

The March 17 Poor People's March started before noon with the four groups of marchers coming from four separate points: Quezon City, Makati, Caloocan and Tondo. Wave upon wave, the marchers converged at the university belt in Sampaloc area. Already numbering tens of thousands, they were to be met and joined by thousands more of cheering students coming from the many colleges and universities in the area. From Sampaloc, the marchers swelled through the main streets and avenues of Manila on its way to Plaza Moriones in Tondo to convoke the public trial for US imperialism, feudalism, the Marcos fascist puppet regime and other big enemies of the Filipino masses.

Hundreds of thousands filled the sidewalks as city residents poured out of their houses to applaud or join the march. Everywhere still more people from side streets hurried to reach up with the gigantic march. The people cheered and shouted words of support and encouragement. They, especially the poor people of Sta. Cruz and Tondo, manifested their support by handing out to the marchers food and refreshment, cigarettes and cash contributions. The marchers became even more enthusiastic in holding high their banners and placards. Newcomers reinforced the march and made it even more vigorous and militant. Workers came out of the factories to cheer the marchers and express their support. Thousands of them left their chores and joined the march. The busy people in stores and markets paused from their work to watch and cheer the massive march. The March 17 Poor People's March once more exposed the lie that national democratic mass actions do not enjoy the support and sympathy of the masses of the people.

The intense summer heat and the blistering 30-kilometer meandering trek to Plaza Moriones never broke the revolutionary spirit of the marchers. Hunger and thirst and fatigue never made them desert the ranks of the march.

Thousands of leaflets and manifestos explaining the issues of the struggle against US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism were distributed to the people along the way. Grasping the correct line of people's democratic revolution, the marchers lofted banners and placards proclaiming: "Long live people's war!", "Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun," "People's war is the answer to martial law" and "Long live the agrarian revolution!" Through their placards and banners, the marchers denounced and condemned US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. All throughout the long march they sang revolutionary songs and chanted the now famous chant: "Makibaka, huwag matakot!" (Fight, don't be cowed!). The Poor People's March as part of the growing cultural revolution was clearly aimed to arouse and mobilize the masses further for a people's democratic revolution.

The people's court

The public trial for US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism was the highlight of the March 17 Poor People's March. The big criminals exploiting and oppressing the Filipino people were named and tried. Effigies of the criminals were displayed on the stage at Plaza Moriones. Various speakers representing the participating organizations and groups in the march took turns in stating and proving the colossal crimes of the

people's enemies.

Pointed out as among the biggest crimes committed by US imperialism against the Filipino people were: (1) The devaluation of the peso and the practice of international usury through the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, US private banks and other imperialist banks; (2) Economic plunder of the Philippines and super-profit remittances by the US monopolies; (3) Masterminding the fascist suppression of the Filipino people and the manipulation of the Marcos puppet regime, the military and police against the patriotic mass movement; and (4) Transgression of Philippine sovereignty and territory and criminal acts inside and outside of US military bases in the country.

The Marcos fascist puppet regime was held responsible for the following crimes: (1) Rising prices due to puppetry to US imperialism; (2) Complicity in the oppression and exploitation of the workers, peasants, students and other patriotic elements of the population by US imperialists, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists; (3) Colossal graft and corruption; (4) Fascistic acts of his regime like massacres, assassinations and other coercive activities suppressing people's democratic rights in both city and countryside; and (5) Fraud and terrorism in the last elections. The masses of workers, peasants and student youth attending the public trial shouted their judgment and condemnation of US imperialism and the Marcos fascist puppet regime.

The Manila fascist puppet chieftain was also put on trial for his complicity with US imperialism and the fascist puppet Marcos regime in the brutal suppression of mass actions and demonstrations in the city and for the murder of seven young demonstrators. Genuine labor leaders took turns in assailing fake labor leaders like Ople, Oca and others and pointing out their crimes against the Filipino working class.

The clerico-fascists, the Anti-Communist League and the local Guomindang reactionaries were likewise exposed and denounced. The reactionary courts, Congress and the reactionary mass media were also tried and condemned as instruments of US imperialism and domestic feudalism.

Peasant leaders also denounced the Taruc-Sumulong gangster clique for its crimes against the peasants in Central Luzon and against the revolution. The Taruc-Sumulong gangster clique was exposed for its counterrevolutionary acts of class collaboration, capitulationism and class betrayal like begging for amnesty from the Marcos fascist puppet regime, collaboration with landlords to oppress the peasants and extortion activities among the masses.

After the repudiation of the Taruc-Sumulong gangster clique, the thousands of people attending the trial publicly acclaimed the New People's Army as the true army of the people against US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. A fiery speaker was cheered the longest when he courageously said: "As we have the people's march, the people's congress and the people's tribunal, we have the people's army, too, the New People's Army. Long live the New People's Army!"

This expression of support for the New People's Army, which is under the leadership of the Communist Party of the Philippines, is to be expected from the masses of demonstrators and marchers in view of the fact that they clearly recognize the truth of Chairman Mao's statement: "Without a people's army, the people have nothing." The people's army is the instrument for executing the people's judgment.

Once more fascist violence

Before, during and after March 17, the local reactionaries led by their fascist puppet chieftain tried to make use of their power to counteract the Poor People's March. Through the reactionary mass media, the Marcos fascist puppet regime spread the lie that the marchers would commit acts of vandalism and destruction to property. At the same time, it gave orders to the Manila puppet chieftain Villegas not to issue any rally permit. Villegas at first refused to grant the permit for the march on the flimsy ground that he did not know personally the person who applied for the permit. But knowing that the broad masses of the people would push through with the march even without the permit, Villegas issued it at the eleventh hour after much dilly-dallying. Having failed miserably to stop the Poor People's March, the Marcos fascist puppet regime resorted to violent means.

At the start of the march, police, hired goons and plainclothes military infiltrators lobbed tear gas bombs at the ranks of the marchers. Obviously, it was an attempt to disrupt and disperse the marchers from proceeding to Plaza Moriones. At Plaza Moriones before the start of the public trial, secret agents of the reactionary government hurled a tear gas bomb in the direction of the stage. They missed their target and instead the bomb exploded near a group of children. This resulted in serious injuries to the children and discomfort to the entire neighborhood in the vicinity. The demonstrators alerted themselves and caught one hired goon in the act of lobbing a homemade

bomb at the assembled marchers.

A battle between the marchers and the fascist military brutes came when the march proceeded to the US embassy. Thousands of military troops sealed the bridges leading to the US embassy. But the marchers overpowered them and broke through the cordon. Near the US embassy, the brutes hurled their tear gas bombs at the marchers. The marchers retaliated by throwing their own homemade bombs at the enemy. The police and military troops soon attacked the marchers with their truncheons and guns.

Many marchers were injured but they fought courageously with their placard handles, sticks, stones, bottles and homemade bombs. Utterly confused, the fascist brutes fired their guns at the people, hitting one seriously and injuring several others. The battle lasted for some hours until the marchers dispersed. From then on, the police and the military troops beat up and arrested the remaining marchers who were not able to slip through the cordon of the reinforcing troops and who were helpless as they were unarmed.

The fascist brutality inflicted by the Marcos fascist puppet regime on the participants of the March 17 Poor People's March will long remain in the minds of the people. It shows how so utterly afraid the Marcos fascist puppet regime is of mass criticism that it would resort to brutality and murder.

The prairie fire

The revolutionary struggle of the masses of the Filipino people against US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism is vigorously developing throughout the country. Never before have the major cities and provincial centers witnessed a storm of massive rallies, demonstrations and strikes as in the months of January, February and March. By the end of February alone, the masses in the countryside have launched a succession of more than 40 national democratic mass actions of unprecedented strength.

Even before the historic January 26 and 30 massive demonstrations, students, teachers and progressive intellectuals in numerous colleges and universities in places outside of Manila were already holding protest strikes against the reactionary educational system and against the national crisis bred by the Marcos puppet regime. The storm of rallies, demonstrations and strikes in Manila greatly stirred the masses of the people in the countryside to action.

Open mass struggles soon caught fire among the peasants especially in such provinces as Negros and Laguna which are under extreme landlord oppression. Not to be muffled by the deliberate silence of the reactionary mass media were the indignant voices of the workers in many cities and provincial centers who struck and staged demonstrations to demand increase in wages to cope up with the decreasing value of the peso brought about by devaluation.

Following the March 3 People's March and the March 17 Poor People's March, the masses of workers, peasants and student youth in a significant number of provincial cities and capitals persisted in holding their own people's marches. Aside from tackling local issues and problems, the people in the countryside joined the attack against US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. Through their manifestos and banners they expressed their support for the national democratic struggle.

The revolutionary mass actions in the countryside were likewise brutally suppressed by the Marcos fascist puppet regime. In Baguio, Cebu and Davao, many demonstrators and youth activists were beaten, arrested and charged in court. Through the local bureaucrat capitalists, the PC provincial command and local police, the Marcos puppet regime unleashed fascist violence upon the masses in the countryside. The provincial "strike forces" was purposely organized to terrorize and cow them. However, despite all these, the struggle of the masses in the provinces became more widespread.

Undeniably, the revolutionary struggle of the masses of the people in the city and countryside has been inspired by the heroic armed struggle of the New People's Army under the guidance of the Communist Party of the Philippines in Northern and Central Luzon. The victorious and successful military operations of the New People's Army in inflicting deadly blows to enemy troops have greatly encouraged the masses of workers, peasants, student youth and progressive intellectuals all throughout the country to step up their fight against their exploiters and oppressors.

The Marcos Puppet Regime, 1966-1986

From Philippine Society and Revolution, July 30, 1970

What Magsaysay had done in 1953, transfer from the Liberal Party to the Nacionalista Party to become no less than the presidential candidate, Ferdinand Marcos did in 1965 without having to account for any change of political principles, thus exposing once more the absence of any basic difference between the two puppet reactionary parties. Marcos had been no less than the president of the party he had left and the close associate of Macapagal.

Marcos defeated Macapagal in the election of 1965 to become the sixth president of the puppet republic. After one term, he ran for reelection in 1969 and won over Sergio Osmeña, Jr. of the Liberal Party. Each time in the two presidential elections, he faced an opponent raucously claiming to be the more efficient running dog of US imperialism. On the other hand, US imperialism wanted a puppet of the Marcos type, one who could most effectively make use of counterrevolutionary dual tactics in a period marked by the rise of the revolutionary mass movement in both city and countryside.

While sounding “nationalist” interested in the economic emancipation of the Filipino nation and pledging to let the Laurel-Langley Agreement, particularly parity rights, lapse in 1974, the Marcos puppet regime enacted as early as 1967 the Investment Incentives Law which declares it the state policy to encourage foreign investments and defines a corporation with a maximum foreign equity of 40 percent as a “Philippine national.” By this definition, the US imperialists can create a system of interlocking corporations by which a “Philippine national” already bearing and camouflaging 40 percent equity invests in another corporation and actually increases foreign equity in the latter corporation beyond 40 percent. The law, however, clearly allows foreign equity to exceed 40 percent in an old or new corporation registered with the Board of Investments and to remain so indefinitely as long as “Philippine nationals” do not buy the shares of stock offered in the stock exchange on the eleventh year after registration. In guaranteeing the property rights of foreign investors, the Investment Incentives Law goes to the extent of guaranteeing the right of nonexpropriation and exposes the primacy of foreign investments over any pretension of the present puppet state to sovereign rights. The “incentives” offered law are unprecedentedly abusive of the sovereign Filipino people and are geared to aggravating the colonial status of the Philippines.

An insidious propaganda drive supporting the perpetuation of the interests of the US monopolies in the Philippines has been unleashed by the counterrevolutionaries, especially by the US CIA and the American Jesuits through the Manglapus-Manahan gang. Brandishing their slogans of “peaceful revolution,” “constitutional reform” and “profit-sharing,” the Christian Social Movement, the Movement for the Advancement of Nationalism, the Congressional Economic Planning Office and several other reformist groups spread the mendacious line that the nationalization of the economy could be advanced through legislation and through the stock market. The workers are told that they can become capitalists and can participate in joint ventures with foreign investors by going to the stock market to buy their own shares and putting on mortgage their future wages. This is akin to the old lie repeatedly told to the landless peasants that they can become landowners by buying land from the landlords.

There has been so much ado about another colonial Constitutional Convention. It is publicized as a channel for changing the status quo. The actual purpose of the Constitutional Convention, however, is to adjust the wording of the colonial constitution to such a law as the Investment Incentives Law and the treaty of friendship, commerce and navigation between the US and the Philippines which is now being prepared. The broad masses of the people are reminded at every turn that they have to attract and be hospitable to “dollar-bringing tourists,” meaning to say, the US monopolies. Every town or barrio is made to expect itself as a possible tourist spot in a clever campaign to counteract the growing sentiment of the people against US imperialism.

Rendering completely inutile the reformist view that the economic interests of US imperialism could be taken over by the reactionary government or Filipino businessmen in accordance with “due process” and “just compensation,” the Marcos puppet regime has faithfully followed the dictation of US imperialism to exhaust the financial resources of the reactionary government and to overburden the people with inflation and repeated devaluation. Despite the raising of taxes, the internal debt of the reactionary government has risen to the level of at least P6.0 billion because of the profligate spending on projects that merely deepen the semicolonial and semifeudal

character of the economy. On top of this internal debt, an external debt of more than \$1.9 billion has been incurred mainly with US imperialism. Thus, the nation is severely afflicted with a financial crisis of unprecedented proportions. The broad masses of the people have to suffer steeply rising prices as a result of the rapid erosion of the purchasing value of the peso from within and from without.

Taking advantage of the financial plight of the Philippine puppet government, US imperialism through the International Monetary Fund has dictated the devaluation of the peso at the expense of the broad masses of the people. At the beginning of 1970, the value of the peso sank to the level of more than P6.00 per US dollar from the previous level of P3.90 per US dollar. This is the second time in only eight years that devaluation has been imposed on the people without any corresponding increases in their income. Since 1962, the prices of many basic commodities have gone up by more than 150 percent. There is not a single commodity in the Philippines that is not affected by the rising costs of imported fuel, equipment, spare parts, raw materials, and the like.

The Filipino national bourgeoisie is daily facing bankruptcy because its products are being squeezed out of the local market and it cannot avail itself of adequate credit assistance from a bankrupt puppet government.

As a result of the peso devaluation, the value of US assets in the Philippines and also of Philippine foreign debt has automatically increased. It is idle and downright stupid to expect the reactionary government or private Filipino stock buyers to be able to buy out the US monopolies. On the other hand, the reactionary government has become worse as a beggar of usurious foreign loans and Filipino-owned enterprises have become more than ever subject to takeover, assimilation or crushing by the US monopolies. Devaluation has only made the Philippines more dependent on the US dollar and has only served to aggravate the semicolonial and semifeudal character of the economy.

Though the Marcos puppet regime has flamboyantly declared so many towns in the country, especially in Central Luzon, as land reform areas, the reactionary government is simply bereft of the financial resources to carry out what it hypocritically labels as a land reform program. In the countryside of the Philippines, it has become too clear that only by waging a people's war can the peasantry achieve agrarian revolution. In the city, the proletariat is pressed hard by mass layoffs and by the inflation caused by the workings of imperialism within and without the country.

Only the reactionary classes in Philippine society have shared in the exploitative privileges and gains enjoyed by US imperialism. The comprador big bourgeois and the big landlord class have been extremely favored by the automatic increase of the peso equivalent of their dollar earnings on their raw material exports. They are the principal beneficiaries of the various public works projects facilitating the movement of raw material exports and finished manufacture imports. They have received various forms of "export incentives." They have been extended the biggest loans in constructing and reconstructing milling facilities. Playing up to the trick of US imperialism of using preferential trade for sugar as a lever for increasing its privileges in the Philippines, the Marcos puppet regime has extended the biggest loans for the construction of new sugar mills at so many points in the country. In the disposition of government funds and the granting of government approval for business projects, the bureaucrat capitalists led by Marcos have aggravated the economic crisis by exacting kickbacks on all sorts of government contracts.

As a rabid puppet of US imperialism, Marcos has outdone Macapagal in sending Filipino mercenary troops to participate in the US war of aggression in Vietnam and Indochina in general. Despite the worsening bankruptcy of the reactionary government, he dispatched the Philcag (Philippine Civic Action Group) to South Vietnam. Until now, there are Filipino mercenaries there who merely carry other labels, the Philcon, Operation Brotherhood and engineering firms. US imperialism brazenly uses its military bases and Philippine skies and waters to conduct its wars of aggression in Asia. On US military bases here, US military personnel continue to murder, rape, and commit all kinds of abuses against the Filipino people and yet the Marcos puppet regime, like all previous puppet regimes, has conspired with the US imperialists in holding "negotiations" that end in upholding the latter's extraterritorial rights.

and troops to attack the anti-imperialist protest actions of the people.

The Marcos puppet regime has echoed every "new" policy and followed every "new" step taken by US imperialism. It follows Nixon's "new Asia policy" of "making Asians fight Asians." It rabidly supports the US-Japanese partnership in the Pacific and the troublemaking activities of this partnership in Asia. It bows to the US imperialist policy of reviving Japanese militarism and making it play the role of fugleman for US imperialism in Asia.

Resurgent Japanese militarism is being promoted as the “regional leader” of Asia through the Asian Development Bank, the Asian Pacific Council (ASPAC), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Southeast Asian Ministers Economic Council (SEAMEC), the “Asian Forum” and the like.

Even before the ratification of the unequal Japan-RP Treaty of Amity, Commerce and Navigation, the Marcos puppet regime has encouraged the Japanese monopolies to invade the Philippines. They now rank as the second biggest foreign investor. Japanese commodities are being dumped into the country and Japanese investments are penetrating every major field of business activity. Japan today is next only to the United States in getting Philippine raw materials and ranks first in getting copper concentrates, logs, molasses and iron ores. Japan’s share of Philippine foreign trade is now more than 30 percent. Its military vessels and fishing fleets do not respect the territorial waters of the Philippines. In a desperate attempt to hoodwink the Filipino people about Japan, the Marcos puppet regime is bandying about the lie that Japan is a benevolent aid-giver and actually begs for loans from it in exchange for the plunder of Philippine natural resources and exploitation of the people. Its war reparations payments which have been grabbed by the local reactionaries for themselves are even misrepresented as gracious aid to the people. The strategic Pan-Philippine highway is obsequiously called the Japanese Friendship Highway.

The Marcos puppet regime has also steadily opened the way for trade and diplomatic relations with Soviet social-imperialism and other revisionist countries in line with the US imperialist policy of maintaining a global alliance with the Soviet Union in opposing China, the people, revolution, and communism. In a futile attempt to deflect attention from itself, US imperialism is raising the joint oppression and exploitation of the Filipino people by the United States, Japan and the Soviet Union. In this connection, there is an imperialist scheme to whip up the evil wind of modern revisionism inside the country. The local agents of modern revisionism, the bourgeois reactionary gang of the Lavas, are being accommodated in the arena of bourgeois parliamentarism in the imperialist scheme to sabotage the revolutionary mass movement.

In carrying out its reactionary policies, the Marcos puppet regime has inevitably laid out its fascist character. Unable to cope with the political and economic crisis into which it has pushed the nation and also unable to deceive the people with such hypocritical slogans as “this nation can be great again” or “new Filipinism,” it has ruthlessly employed the apparatuses of the state to suppress the broad masses of the people through selective and mass terrorism. In conducting its anti-democratic campaign, it cynically waves the banner of “liberal democracy”.

Through the JUSMAG, US imperialism is supplying more military equipment to the reactionary armed forces and is egging them on to launch counterinsurgency campaigns, that is to say, to attack the broad masses of the people. Through AID, US imperialism is also providing communications and anti-riot equipment to attack mass organizations and disperse protest actions. US military personnel have even taken to the field of supervising police and military operations. The buildup of local fascism by US imperialism is clearly intended to quell the growing revolutionary mass movement inflamed by the rapid deterioration of the ruling system.

As fascism is on the rise, private armies and official murder units, such as the “Monkees,” “BSDU,” “Home Defense Forces,” “Special Forces,” “provincial strike forces” and the like brazenly commit atrocities against the people. Even as the tyrannical character of the reactionary government has clearly emerged, the counterrevolutionaries rig up reformist groups to whip up confidence in the reactionary government and slander the revolutionary mass movement.

Massacres, mass arrests, kidnappings, assassinations, rape, arson, extortion and looting of homes have characterized the Marcos puppet regime. The Culatingan massacre, Corregidor massacre, Lapiang Malaya massacre, Capas massacre, the Mendiola massacre and the Tarlac massacre are blatant proofs of its fascist character and they typify the many more atrocities inflicted on the workers, peasants, students, intellectuals, and the national minorities. In the last presidential elections, it made use of fraud and terrorism on an unprecedented scale to ensure its continuance in power. Government funds and facilities and both the reactionary government armed forces and the warlord gangs were employed on an unprecedented scale to keep the Marcos fascist clique in power.

Under the Marcos puppet regime, the revolutionary mass movement has risen to new heights. In 1966 repeated mass protests against Philippine involvement in the US war of aggression in Vietnam culminated on October 23 and 24 when the Manila summit attended by the US imperialist chieftain Johnson and the Asian puppet chieftains were dealt powerful blows by a multitude of workers, peasants and students. In 1967 powerful demonstrations condemned the economic enslavement of the people by the US monopolies; the US military bases and

the atrocities being committed therein; and the US war of aggression in Vietnam. In 1968 militant demonstrations broke out all over the country against the US-RP negotiations preparing the extension of “national treatment” to US monopolies beyond 1974, against US military bases, against the further Americanization of the University of the Philippines and the entire educational system and against Anglo-American support for “Malaysia.”

The whole year of 1969 was spanned by student and teacher rebellions against the reactionary educational system, by peasant demonstrations in Manila against the landlords and the fascist rule in the countryside and by workers’ strikes supported by student activists. The coming of the US imperialist chieftains Nixon and Agnew on two separate occasions was met by fiercely militant demonstrations. While militant mass actions raged in Manila and other urban centers, revolutionary workers, students and intellectuals went in larger numbers than before to the countryside to conduct rural surveys and mass work among the peasants. The cultural revolution of a new-democratic type advanced rapidly under the leadership of the reestablished Communist Party of the Philippines.

From year to year, despite fascist brutality, the revolutionary mass movement has intensified, increasing in frequency, becoming larger, spreading throughout the province and delivering a clearer revolutionary message among the people. In 1970, unprecedented mass actions involving 50,000 to 100,000 direct participants on each occasion unfolded as a great summation of revolutionary efforts in the past decade and as a striking storm signal for the entire current decade. These started with the January 26 and 30-31 demonstrations of workers, peasants, students and intellectuals. Efforts of the reactionaries to raise the counterrevolutionary slogan of “peaceful revolution” were drowned out by the revolutionary slogan of the masses of “protracted people’s war” in answer to the fascist brutality unleashed against them and also in answer to the repeated threats of the Marcos puppet regime to make a formal declaration of martial law. The First Quarter Storm of 1970 marked the maturation of the cultural revolution spearheaded by the revolutionary youth oriented to Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought and conscious of the people’s democratic revolution. The essence of the cultural revolution clearly emerged as being the propaganda movement for the national-democratic struggle against US imperialism, feudalism, and bureaucrat capitalism.

Confronted with the increasingly fierce opposition of the revolutionary masses, the Marcos puppet regime has harped on formally declaring martial law notwithstanding the fact that it has wantonly practiced fascist terror in both city and countryside, especially so in the latter where uniformed troops and their goon assistants vent their ire on the peasant masses. By resorting to more counterrevolutionary violence, the Marcos puppet regime is enraging the people and is hastening the collapse of the semicolonial and semifeudal system.

The Marcos puppet regime can no longer attack the revolutionary masses without being counterattacked. The Communist Party of the Philippines has been reestablished under the powerful inspiration of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought and has taken the road of armed revolution in order to fight for national liberation and people’s democracy. The New People’s Army under the leadership of the Party is vigorously establishing revolutionary bases in the countryside and is advancing from victory to victory in a protracted people’s war. The Communist Party of the Philippines is today applying Chairman Mao’s strategic principle of encircling the cities from the countryside.

At the end of 1969, which marked only less than a year of its existence, the New People’s Army inflicted on the enemy a death casualty which was well more than 150 percent higher than the average annual death casualty of the enemy during the period of 1966-68 when the peasant guerrillas significantly raised the level of armed resistance from the level of immediately preceding years. From March 29, 1969 to March 29, 1970, the New People’s Army wiped out at least 200 enemy troops, spies, local tyrants, and bad elements.

Despite the fact that they have been singled out for attack by the enemy, the Party and the New People’s Army have successfully withstood enemy-assaults and have gained greater strength. That is because they are waging a revolutionary armed struggle in defense of the broad masses of the people.

The Scheme to Prolong US Domination

From Philippine Society and Revolution, July 30, 1970

In the last 10 years, the crisis in the Philippine economy has rapidly worsened. This has been the result of the vicious maneuvers of US imperialism to shift the burden of its economic crisis at home to its colonies and semi-colonies and also to prepare for the termination of the Laurel-Langley Agreement and the Parity Amendment. The scheme of US imperialism is to put the Philippines into such a desperate financial situation as to ensure the prolongation of imperialist privileges. At the same time, all-out military and police preparations and actual operations are conducted to counteract the revolutionary mass movement inflamed by the economic crisis. Counterrevolutionary reformist campaigns are also waged to sow confusion in the ranks of the revolutionary masses.

As a result of the full and immediate decontrol of foreign exchange at the start of the Macapagal puppet regime, US business firms remitted profits heavily and the comprador-landlords used their dollar earnings as they pleased. The dollar reserves of the reactionary government were depleted and the peso sank in value from P2.00 to P3.90 per US dollar in the absence of sufficient dollars to support it. To maintain the peso at its new level, the Philippine reactionary government was extended "stabilization" loans at onerous terms. But these loans were mainly sucked up by US firms and their comprador-landlord and bureaucrat allies. The puppet chieftain Macapagal promoted the "open-door" policy on foreign investments and the idea of "joint ventures" and allowed US subsidiaries to grab the foreign loans in remitting profits, building up their local assets, taking over Filipino enterprises or overloading them with foreign loans in preparation for being taken over and the like.

During the first four years of the Marcos puppet regime, US imperialism went high on aggravating the puppet policies of the Macapagal regime. The Marcos puppet regime was even more efficient in implementing the recommendations made by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank as early as 1960. It was able to increase taxes ostensibly of those with the ability to pay, who in turn shifted the tax burden to the broad masses of the people in the form of steeply rising prices. The Marcos puppet regime profligately made expenditures on public works and other inflationary projects. The US subsidiaries and the comprador-landlords were extended the biggest government loans and guarantees. There was a splurge on luxuries, buildup of sugar mills, mining projects and mining speculation. The bureaucrat capitalists exacted the most stupendous amounts of kickbacks on import-export contracts, especially in contracts with foreign machinery and construction firms.

At the beginning of 1970, it was clear that the Marcos puppet regime had succeeded in making the Philippines more bankrupt than ever before, with a big internal and external debt. The peso sank to another low level, at more than P6.00 per US dollar. In only eight years, the peso suffered a devaluation of more than 200 percent in relation to the US dollar. The International Monetary Fund, functioning as the agency of US imperialism, dictated the devaluation of the peso as a precondition for the rescheduling of loan payments and also for the granting of new loans by US imperialism. The automatic result of the peso devaluation was the increase in the price of all commodities and the increase in value of all foreign debts.

In February 1970, the peso value of the \$1.5 billion foreign debt rose from P5.85 billion to at least P9.3 billion (at the unsettled rate of P6.20 per US dollar) excluding interest which also rose. In June, only five months after, the foreign debts reached \$1.9 billion or at least P11.78 billion excluding interest. Annual interest payments alone on these debts consumed half of the dollar earnings on Philippine raw material exports. In this process, US imperialism is the worst usurer in the whole world. The Philippines does not stop begging for foreign loans from US imperialism because it has to import many vital commodities which its colonial economy does not produce and because it has to service previous foreign debts. The rapid increase in the value of such foreign loans can only concretely mean ever cheaper raw materials and cheaper local labor for US imperialism and an ever-higher cost of importing finished products from the United States and other imperialist countries. The working people are today suffering from the higher prices of commodities; their real income has gone down and no adequate adjustment has been made by the puppet government. The daily minimum wage has been re-fixed at P8.00 for industrial workers, a mere increase of 33 percent, yet the devaluation is at least 60 percent and continues to cut down real wages in a rapid way.

A puppet government that is bankrupt cannot be expected to undertake the expropriation of US assets with US dollars. It is both politically and economically impossible for that puppet government to do so. The repeated devaluation of the peso has increased the value of these alien assets and has favored their buildup in so many

related ways. As a matter of fact, the US monopolies have deliberately increased their assets in the Philippines from \$440 million in 1962 to at least \$2.0 billion (book value) in 1969. They did so by bringing in only a small amount of direct investments and by borrowing heavily from local credit sources. They sucked up the very same laws that they had extended to the Philippine puppet government at onerous terms. The rapid buildup of US interests, inside and outside the areas of "parity rights" is obviously calculated to effect a firmer internal US political and economic control of the Philippines. It is to prepare for the termination of the Laurel-Langley Agreement and the Parity Amendment and to nullify any notion that US assets could be bought out within the framework of reactionary laws.

In the light of the financial bankruptcy of the reactionary government and the severe impoverishment of the Filipino people, it is clearly counterrevolutionary to advocate the "peaceful nationalization" of the economy or to hope that the mere formal termination of the Laurel-Langley Agreement and the Parity Amendment would automatically inaugurate economic independence. Besides, the majority of US investments (more than 50 percent) are now outside the areas of "parity rights" and are therefore legally allowed to stick in business entities where US investors can own and control more than 40 percent.

In order to promote the acceptance of US investments in the Philippines, US imperialism is actually subsidizing counterrevolutionary organizations and movements spouting such nonsense as "peaceful revolution," "constitutional reform," "due process," "just compensation," "profit-sharing," "joint ventures," "hospitality to foreign guests" and other such hogwash. These counterrevolutionary slogans are all intended to slur over the viciousness of US monopoly capital and to head off the revolutionary mass movement clamoring for people's war against US imperialism and all its local lackeys.

Not even the national bourgeoisie can hope to increase its share in the exploitation of the Filipino people. This social stratum is daily facing bankruptcy. The few commodities that it produces locally cannot escape the rising cost of importing fuel, equipment, spare parts, raw materials and the like. The local sources of credit have practically dried up for the national bourgeoisie. More than this local stratum, the Japanese militarists and the Soviet social-imperialists have the better chance of joining up or competing with US imperialism in the exploitation of the people.

The Investment Incentives Law was enacted to pave the way for the continuance and aggravation of US economic control over the Philippines after the termination of the Laurel-Langley Agreement and the Parity Amendment. The Constitutional Convention now being played up by the counterrevolutionaries as a channel for "change" in Philippine society is actually a step towards allowing the US monopolies to own more than 40 percent equity beyond 1974, even in the utilization of public lands, exploitation of natural resources and the operation of public utilities. As certain as dominance of comprador and landlord delegates in the Constitutional Convention, the accommodation of the Investment Incentives Law and an unequal treaty of friendship, commerce and navigation with the United States will be carried out by the most significant amendments in the colonial constitution.

The Investment Incentives Law empowers the Board of Investments, a mere agency of the puppet president, to allow US-dominated enterprises to persist or be set up in the Philippines even without limiting their equity capital to a maximum of 40 percent in corporations as per requirements of the present constitution. Section 19, Paragraph 3 of the investments law allows foreign investors to own even 100 percent equity in local corporations provided that they merely signify their intention of selling shares of stock to Filipinos or "Philippine nationals" within 10 years from the date of registration of such corporations. On the eleventh year, these corporations are supposed to actually offer for sale shares of stock in the stock exchange. But if Filipinos and "Philippine nationals" fail to buy enough shares to reduce direct foreign equity to 40 percent, so much the better for the foreign investors because they would be permitted to continue owning equity beyond 40 percent for 20 years from the date of registration of the corporations. After one period of 20 years, these corporations may again be permitted to stay under unlimited US ownership and control for another period of 20 years.

The Investment Incentives Law sanctifies the "Philippine national," a corporation with a maximum of 40 percent foreign equity in its capital structure. Thus, there is so much talk nowadays about giving "national treatment to US investments among the puppet politicians. The outlandish definition of "Philippine national " is calculated to allow the US monopolies to hold more than 40 percent equity even in local corporations where they are restricted to a maximum limit of 40 percent equity. For an illustration, let us have corporations A and B. If corporation A bears 40 percent foreign equity and qualifies as a "Philippine national," it can acquire and hold 60 percent

equity in corporation B side by side with 40 percent equity directly headed by foreign investors. In such an interlocking relationship, corporation A actually effects 64 percent foreign equity in corporation B, if one were to do away with legal blinders. In turn, corporation B will certainly have an impact on corporation A in favor of foreign control.

It is already sufficient for the US monopolies to own and control 40 percent equity in order to control an entire corporation internally. This is easily effected by keeping solid 40 percent equity in the hands of foreign investors and keeping diffused through the stock market the 60 percent among Filipino petty shareholders. It is an old trick of monopoly capitalists to use a small but solid block of shares to control a big mass of small shareholders. It is in line with this imperialist trick that there is a huge campaign for “profit-sharing” (an obscurantist term for stock manipulation) to mislead some wage-earners and petty-bourgeois elements to surrender their meager savings and future earnings to the exploiters or allow the US monopolies and the local reactionaries to rob the Social Security System (SSS), the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS), the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) and the Philippine National Bank (PNB). The US imperialists, rapacious as they are, wish to have more levers for retaining their political and economic power over the Philippines.

There are other ways by which the US monopolies could continue controlling and enjoying ownership of more than 40 percent of the capital in a corporation and also more than 40 percent of the profits even after the termination of the Laurel-Langley Agreement and the Parity Amendment. These were obsequiously explained by the Philippine panel to the American panel in the negotiations on the Laurel-Langley Agreement. The US monopolies could hold non-voting shares and bonds in corporations, exercise credit control, impose management contracts, manipulate purchase agreements and technical assistance contracts and so many others that reactionary power permits. Moreover, the Braderman-Virata negotiations have sought to perpetuate “parity rights” by simply replacing the term with a new one, “national treatment,” in the treaty of friendship, commerce and navigation now being cooked up. In the communique issued by the negotiators, it is evident that the US imperialists and their local running dogs are willing to remove US “parity rights” only from the field of retail trade.

The Investment Incentives Law worsens the economic enslavement of the Filipino people and sells off every semblance of Philippine sovereignty to US imperialism. The puppet state is bound by this law never to expropriate or requisition foreign assets. It is also bound to provide US dollars to foreign investors for the repatriation of investment, remittance of earnings and payment of all foreign loans and contractual obligations. In addition to these basic privileges, the US investors through their corporations registered with the Board of Investments enjoy such “incentives” as capital-gains tax exemption, tax allowance, tax exemption on sale of stock dividends, deduction of organizational and pre-operating expenses, accelerated depreciation, net operating loss carryover, tax credit, tax exemption on imported capital equipment, employment of foreign nationals, deduction for expansion reinvestment, protection from government competition, preference in grant of government loans, absorption of GSIS and SSS funds and special export incentives.

The Investment Incentives Law has set a pattern of legislation intended to perpetuate US ownership and control of local firms to the extent of 100 percent. The Export Incentives Law allows foreign equity up to 55 percent in export industries and up to 100 percent in pioneer industries engaged in export. Following the dictates of their US imperialist masters, the reactionaries have also taken to creating free trade zones, like the Mariveles Free Trade Zone, to let the US monopolies have permanent economic enclaves where they are beyond the tax laws of the Philippine puppet government.

US imperialism is using both peaceful and violent methods of suppressing the Filipino people's clamor for national liberation and democracy. The CIA and other subversive agencies of US imperialism are subsidizing and manipulating various branches of the puppet government,

“civic” and “reform” organizations, educational and cultural institutions and the reactionary mass media to wage a propaganda campaign designed to whip up a “climate for foreign investments” and an atmosphere of anti-communist hysteria. At the same time, all-out violent efforts are being exerted to “nip in the bud” the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army, meaning to say, the broad masses of the people who have risen to shake off their colonial shackles. Increased military supplies and training in counterinsurgency techniques are being extended to local police forces through the AID Office of Public Safety and to the reactionary armed forces through the JUSMAG. So many fascist crimes are being committed in the name of anticommunism against the people. The Marcos fascist puppet regime daily promotes the rise of fascism in an attempt to cow the people.

Whenever a dastardly crime is committed by US military personnel and there are widespread demands for justice which find their way even into the reactionary press, the puppet government goes through the motion of asking the US Embassy for renegotiations on the US-RP Military Bases Agreement. When the din dies down, talk of having renegotiations also ties down. What is made to prevail is the treacherous idea that the foreign military bases provide a dollar income for the puppet government. A measly annual income of about \$130 million to \$150 million from the US military bases for the puppet government and vice lords is clearly not enough to pay for the transgression of Philippine sovereignty and territorial integrity and also the actual economic deprivation and sabotage resulting from the occupation of potential agricultural and mineral lands and the wanton smuggling of US goods through the US military bases.

Whenever US imperialism wages a war of aggression against another country, the Philippine puppet government never hesitates to call for or join a war council under the direction of US imperialism. The necessity for US imperialism to hold on to its military bases in the Philippines becomes more clear. These military bases are the ultimate guarantee for the protection of its foreign investments in the Philippines and also for launching wars of aggression in Asia. Despite all talks of US “withdrawal” from Asia, US imperialism repeatedly insists that it will remain a “Pacific power”. Sham talk of “withdrawal” is only intended to give Filipino running dogs an occasion to beg US imperialism to stay. Whenever the demand for US withdrawal is raised by the broad masses of the people, the local diehard reactionaries say that it is untimely to “renegotiate” treaties when the Philippines is suffering from an economic crisis and is begging for foreign loans.

Being fast isolated as the Number One enemy of the world’s peoples and the Filipino people, US imperialism is desperately trying to dissimulate its role as the principal oppressor and exploiter. As before, it wants to make the Philippine government appear to be begging of its own volition for investments not only from the United States but also from so-called international financial institutions and consortia and such other imperialist countries as Japan and the Soviet Union, among others. In imposing its imperialist policies on the Philippine puppet government, the United States does not only make use of the AID and its other direct agencies but also the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, international consortia, various agencies of the United Nations and “regional” organizations. But when an internal analysis is made of the accounts, it is US imperialism that inevitably comes out as the principal bloodsucker.

Aggravating the old bilateral and multilateral treaties and agreements shackling the Philippines, US imperialism encourages the Philippine puppet government to promote such new “regional” arrangements as the Asian Pacific Council (ASPAC), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Southeast Asian Ministers’ Economic Council (SEAMEC) and others. These are ballyhooed as regional organizations independent of US imperialism but are clearly composed of the puppet government bound to US imperialism in so many ways. Efforts of US imperialism to hide behind such farcical organizations are being intensified under the “Nixon Doctrine” of “making Asians fight Asians.” But US imperialism can never conceal its aggressive nature; it will always keep and use its military personnel abroad as much as it can.

At any rate, US imperialism is rapidly reviving Japanese militarism to serve as its principal Asian instrument and is accommodating it in the Philippines. It has the pipe dream of retaining Japan as its fogleman in Asia. In line with the wishes of US imperialism, the Marcos puppet regime has been maneuvering to have the unequal Japan-RP Treaty of Amity, Commerce and Navigation ratified. Even without this treaty, Japan is being allowed to participate in the plunder of Philippine mineral, marine, forest and agricultural resources. It is being allowed to make investments and dump its goods in the Philippine market. It now ranks second only to the United States in investments and control of Philippine foreign trade.²² The reactionaries wish to give Japan the special privilege of moving as it pleases its fishing fleets as well as its naval vessels in Philippine territorial waters.

US imperialism is also calculatingly compelling the Philippines to open diplomatic and trade relations with Soviet social-imperialism. Under the guise of being able to extend loans, especially in the form of capital goods, Soviet social-imperialism is trying to get a share of raw material products from the Philippines, dispose of its shoddy commodities in the Philippine market and impose usury. Like Japan, Soviet social-imperialism is being maneuvered by US imperialism to overextend itself in the defense of the world capitalist system and share in the responsibility of maintaining reactionary governments that are basically puppets to US imperialism.

US imperialism is specifically interested in allowing Soviet social-imperialism to help the local revisionist renegades sabotage the revolutionary mass movement and help the reactionary government foster the illusion that

there is democracy. Eager to benefit from the accommodation being granted by US imperialism, the Lava revisionist renegades, the Philippine agents of Soviet social-imperialism, have on many occasions fed to the reactionary armed forces information against the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army and the broad masses of the people. They have conducted slander campaigns and bloody forms of intrigue against the people.

The strategic alliance of US imperialism, Japanese militarism and Soviet social-imperialism into which the Philippine puppet government has been drawn is basically directed against the people, revolution, communism and China. In this arrangement, US imperialism makes use of Japanese militarism to keep in check Soviet social-imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism to keep in check Japanese militarism. While they ally themselves against their common enemies, they cannot but contend among themselves as imperialist powers for the redivision of the world. This is a self-defeating arrangement.

Though US imperialism is relatively strong in the Philippines, it has actually become weak on a world scale. It can no longer postpone its collapse. This is now the era of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought when imperialism is heading for total collapse and socialism is marching toward world victory.

Unlike in the last two world wars when it could take advantage of the disaster of other imperialist powers, US imperialism now finds itself being pushed to its own total disaster by the worldwide anti-imperialist struggle. By overextending itself throughout the world in order to oppress the people, US imperialism is now being struck hard by more and more people and in more and more places than it can cope with. People's wars are raging all over the world, especially in Asia, Africa and Latin America. At this stage, when so many oppressed peoples have risen up to make revolution the main trend, US imperialism is rapidly heading for total collapse. If it were to launch a world war, it would only hasten its own destruction. If it did not, it still would have no chance of winning its wars of aggression as those against the peoples of Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and other countries. In the homeland of US imperialism, the white and black proletariat are intensifying their revolutionary struggle against the bellicose impositions of the big bourgeoisie. US imperialism makes alliances with other imperialist powers but the latter never fails to take advantage of its plight. Though it appears to be a huge monster, US imperialism is in essence a paper tiger in the throes of its deathbed struggle.

While US imperialism and its allies are heading for disaster, the Chinese and Albanian peoples are consolidating socialism and ensuring a powerful rear base for the worldwide anti-imperialist struggle. The international united front is ever expanding to isolate counterrevolutionary diehards. All oppressed peoples can look forward to a bright future as they arm themselves with the same basic weapons with which the Chinese and Albanian peoples have achieved their glorious victories. The Philippine Revolution is today illumined by the great universal truth of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought. The Communist Party of the Philippines, the revolutionary party of the Filipino proletariat, has become reestablished on a correct theoretical basis to lead the people to victory.

Reformism and Modern Revisionism

From Philippine Society and Revolution, July 30, 1970

The intensification of reformist and revisionist activity is complementary to the intensification of fascist activity. The diehard reactionaries will never cease to employ reformist tricks even while they commit heinous counterrevolutionary deeds. They will go to the extent of consorting with the modern revisionists. Reformism and modern revisionism are the brittle shields of fascism.

It is an absolutely foolish hope that legal possibilities can be exhausted before waging an armed revolution. There can be no end to law-making and parliamentary hocus-pocus if the reactionaries are not opposed by an armed revolution. They can even rewrite their constitution but merely to put more embellishments on it. At this critical stage of Philippine history, the reactionaries find it convenient to rig up another Constitutional Convention and float talks of “peaceful revolution.”

Certain laws of the reactionaries can be taken advantage of only for tactical purposes. He is a fool who believes that the reactionary laws could be turned all the time against their own makers, especially when the dividing line between the broad masses of the people and the oppressor minority has been clearly drawn. Any review of history will yield not a single instance when the reactionaries peacefully allowed their class privileges to be written off.

At a time when the people are clamoring for people’s war to oppose the daily violence of foreign and feudal exploitation, there is an increasing use of “revolutionary” phrases even among diehard counterrevolutionaries. The spokesmen of comprador and landlord organizations and the bureaucrat capitalists in the executive, legislative and judicial branches of the reactionary government talk of making “structural reforms” in every conceivable forum. All of a sudden, it seems that everyone is becoming revolutionary, including the counterrevolutionaries. But by a mere analysis of the words of the reactionaries, we can clearly see that they will permit a “revolution” only “from the top” or merely “in the heart of the individual.” They reserve the bitterest words of damnation for the real revolutionaries among the broad masses of the people. They talk of “revolution” mainly to justify or slur over the fascist barbarities inflicted on the people. To prove this point, one has only to examine the pronouncements of such counterrevolutionary entities as Marcos and his minions, the Christian Social Movement and other clerical organizations, and so on and so forth.

When the most violent means are already being employed against the revolutionary masses, the reactionaries resort to the sweetest words of concern. There is more talk of “civic work,” “community development,” “philanthropy,” “social action,” “welfare state,” “constitutional reform” and “profit-sharing.” At the moment, there is clearly a proliferation of organizations spouting so many lies. The CIA and the American Jesuits are today extremely active in putting up and running reformist organizations.³⁰ What needs only to be done is to expose the class character of the organizers and supporters behind them.

The Marcos “nationalists” and the Lava revisionist renegades are also busy nowadays trying to soften up the harsh fascist picture of the Marcos puppet regime and are collaborating to facilitate the aggravation of imperialist domination. They are working hand-in-glove in the Movement for the Advancement of Nationalism, the Congressional Economic Planning Office, the U.P. Law Center and so many other organizations pretending to be anti-imperialist but always insisting that only concessions can be asked from US imperialism and the local exploiting classes and that the struggle be limited to parliamentary struggle.

The Lava revisionist renegades are being given all the liberty that they need to sabotage the revolutionary mass movement. They are at their old game, with the support of US imperialism, the Marcos puppet regime and Soviet social-imperialism. They specialize in spreading slander through the Movement for the Advancement of Nationalism and committing bloody acts of intrigue through the Monkees-Armeng Bayan-Masaka (Lava) gang against the revolutionary masses. Like its social-imperialist masters, the bourgeois reactionary gang of the Lavas is shifting from the “peaceful” talk of Khrushchov to the undisguised deeds of violence of Brezhnev against the proletarian revolutionaries and the people.

The Marcos puppet regime and the Lava revisionist renegades are steadily moving towards diplomatic and trade relations with Soviet social-imperialism under the guarantees provided by US imperialism and Japanese militarism. The false hope is being dangled before the national bourgeoisie and before those who take the viewpoint of the national bourgeoisie that Soviet social-imperialism can provide anti-imperialist assistance to them.

It is all a lie that Soviet social-imperialism can extend support to the nation or even only to the national

bourgeoisie. More than it can assist any section of the Philippine Revolution, Soviet social-imperialism will only be able to reinforce to some extent the presently tottering puppet state and connive with the comprador big bourgeoisie in cheating the Filipino people in the exchange of overpriced and shoddy Soviet commodities and Philippine raw materials. US imperialism is interested in allowing Soviet social-imperialism some share in the exploitation of the Philippines only because they are allied in opposing the people, revolution, communism and China.

Diplomatic and trade relations with Soviet social-imperialism is very attractive to the Marcos puppet regime. It is because Soviet social-imperialism and the Marcos puppet regime have one-thing in common: they both have a bureaucrat-capitalist character. The only difference between them is that one is monopoly bureaucrat-capitalist and the other is puppet bureaucrat-capitalist. Bureaucrat capitalists can always come into relations with each other so long as there are people for them to exploit.

Bureaucrat capitalism today is trying to prolong its existence with the assistance of US imperialism, Japanese militarism and Soviet social-imperialism. It is also trying to cover up its evil deeds with the reformist endorsement of the most reactionary feudal institution in the country. But the Filipino people have learned enough of their own history and problems to be deceived.

All Blows against US Imperialism and its Running Dogs Are Fine

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Like all blows against US imperialism and its running dogs, the February 2 to 10 general strike of transport workers, fishermen, students and other patriotic segments of the population against the US oil monopolies is fine. The student-teacher boycott of classes, the barricading of streets and the seizure of the University of the Philippines in militant support of the anti-imperialist strike are likewise fine.

As a result of these mass protest actions, US imperialism and its running dogs—principally the Marcos fascist puppet clique—have become more isolated throughout the country. These patriotic actions can be repeated, intensified and expanded to aggravate the isolation of the enemy.

The spirit of braving and resisting the fascist acts and threats of violence should be carried forward. The Communist Party of the Philippines, the national democratic mass organizations and the broad masses of the people can always employ the tactics of united front to prepare for, if not prevent, an all-out military attack by the Marcos fascist puppet clique against assemblies of protest in cities.

It was possible on January 25 to hold marches and a people's congress in front of Congress to expose the true state of the nation and condemn the Plaza Miranda massacre during the first general strike. It was also possible on January 30 to hold marches and another people's congress at Plaza Miranda to commemorate the heroic martyrdom of those who first fell during the first quarter storm of last year and to prepare for the second general strike.

All of these were possible because of a broad and militant mass support and the correctness of the proletarian leadership. So, it was subsequently possible to conduct the second general strike. Though the enemy deployed more military troops and police to impose the dictates of the US oil monopolies, the general strike advanced further and succeeded to make clearer to the people the main cause of their suffering—US imperialism and its running dogs. The anti-imperialist strike became even more militant as the enemy resorted to counterrevolutionary violence, including the murder of five protesters, serious injuries to hundreds, mass arrests and torture in police precincts.

The outstanding characteristic of the second general strike was the forging of more intimate links among workers and students on a wider scale in the national and class struggle for people's democracy. The seizure of the University of the Philippines, especially of its radio station and printing press, and the student-worker barricades all over Greater Manila constituted new victories in the national democratic cultural revolution which is rapidly promoting the ideological and political leadership of the proletariat and rallying the peasantry and the urban petty bourgeoisie to follow this leadership on a national scale.

The second general strike served to expose more fully the reactionary nature of the state that is in the service of US imperialism and the local reactionaries. The issue of rising prices of such strategically important commodities as the petroleum products which was raised in the strike taught the broad masses of the people that it is US imperialism that is causing the unbearable economic hardship of the whole nation. The wanton attacks of the fascist military troops and police once more showed clearly that US imperialism will not hesitate to use its armed puppets to repress the people's aspirations for national freedom and democracy.

The second general strike constituted another test of the revolutionary mettle of the workers and student activists. It further tempered them in revolutionary struggle. The successful integration of revolutionary theory with the practical problems of the strike assured the continuous development of proletarian revolutionary cadres.

The second general strike drew more clearly the demarcation line between the revolutionaries and the sham revolutionaries. In that great revolutionary struggle, traitors and saboteurs like the Lava revisionist renegades, the CIA-instigated clerico-fascists and labor aristocrats of the Oca, Lacsina and Lazaro types were exposed and cast away. Though seemingly different from each other, they were one in turning against the broad masses of the people. They found themselves together crying in dismay, "It's terrible!" at the sight of the revolutionary masses.

While the reactionary mass media pretended to sympathize with their petty-bourgeois mass of readers, they in the final analysis supported the US oil monopolies and the comprador big bourgeoisie that comprise their largest source of advertising income. The ultra-reactionary mass media were most vicious in joining the Lava revisionist

renegades, the clerico-fascists and the labor aristocrats in calling the main current of the revolutionary mass movement as the “radical fringe.” In the glare of bourgeois publicity, there was much ado by reactionary politicians about taking up the case of the US oil monopolies in Congress and the Supreme Court in a vain attempt to cover up the antinational and antidemocratic nature of the entire puppet government.

The violent assaults by the Marcos fascist puppet clique and the blustering airs of various counterrevolutionary saboteurs during the second general strike reinforced the truth that the rebelling masses successfully struck at the evils plaguing the people and all the more convinced true revolutionaries of the correctness of their action. Chairman Mao correctly pointed out: “I hold that it is bad as far as we are concerned if a person, a political party, an army or a school is not attacked by the enemy, for in that case it would definitely mean that we have sunk to the level of the enemy. It is good if we are attacked by the enemy, since it proves that we have drawn a clear line of demarcation between the enemy and ourselves. It is still better if the enemy attacks us wildly and paints us as utterly black and without a single virtue; it demonstrates that we have not only drawn a clear line of demarcation between the enemy and ourselves but achieved a great deal in our work.”

In praise of the revolutionary mass movement, the Party once more raises its clenched fist in revolutionary salute and declares, “It’s fine!”

Long live the national democratic mass organizations!

Long live the ever-growing unity and strength of the revolutionary workers, peasants, urban petty bourgeoisie and all other patriots!

Down with US imperialism and its running dogs, the Marcos fascist puppet clique and such counterrevolutionary cliques as the Lava revisionist renegades, clerico-fascists and the labor aristocrats!

Long live the Philippine revolution!

Kidnapping and Murder of Carlos B. del Rosario Perpetrated by the Marcos-Lava-Lacsina Conspiracy

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The puppet reactionary government under the Marcos fascist puppet clique kidnapped Carlos B. del Rosario, an outstanding leader of the Movement for a Democratic Philippines, on the evening of March 19. An investigation conducted by national democratic mass organizations showed that a group of fascist gangsters seized del Rosario a little after 10:00 p.m., just after he had walked out of the campus of the Philippine College of Commerce where he taught.

At the time that he was bodily seized, the fascist gangsters staged a “fraternity rumble” to divert attention from his kidnapping. In this related incident, five student activists were mauled, stabbed and wounded by the fascist gangsters who pretended to be members of “warring” school fraternities.

It is realistic to assume that Carlos B. del Rosario was tortured and murdered in the course of enemy interrogation concerning the national democratic movement. It is the overwhelming view of all his comrades and colleagues in the national democratic movement that he died a heroic death in the service of the people. He was murdered at a time that he was at the helm of preparations for the March 29 and 30 congress of the Movement for a Democratic Philippines.

Fittingly, militant marches from different points in Greater Manila converged to make a gigantic demonstration on April 12 to protest the fascist crime before Malacañang Palace and to pay tribute to a great revolutionary comrade, Carlos B. del Rosario. Circumstances surrounding del Rosario’s kidnapping clearly show that the Marcos fascist puppet clique acted to murder him on the basis of information provided by the Lava revisionist renegades and the labor aristocrat Lacsina.

Thus it has been absolutely correct for all democratic mass organizations to expose and condemn the Lava revisionist renegades and the labor aristocrat Lacsina (who have recently been brought together by cultural and trade union delegations of the Soviet revisionist social-imperialists) as the principal accomplices of the Marcos fascist puppet clique.

The January 1971 issue of *Struggle*, a Lavaite mouthpiece published by the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation (Philippines, Inc.) carried a long article slandering the revolutionary mass movement and pointing out who could be some members of the Communist Party of the Philippines adhering to Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought.

Flimsily using the expression “movement” to stand for the old merger party of the Communist Party of the Philippines and the Socialist Party, the article specifically mentioned Carlos B. del Rosario as among those who had something to do with the “movement” and who chose to repudiate it to reestablish the Communist Party of the Philippines under the supreme guidance of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought.

In many other publications, the Lava revisionist renegades have consistently tried to insinuate who are responsible for the propagation of Mao Zedong Thought and the upsurge of the revolutionary mass movement. In several instances, even before their renewed alliance with the labor aristocrat Lacsina, the Lava revisionist renegades have publicly threatened to use the “Armeng Bayan,” a proven special outfit of Task Force Lawin, against activists in the revolutionary mass movement.

Lately, the ringleaders of the Lava revisionist renegade clique and certain diehards of such Lava-controlled outfits as the Masaka, MPKP, BRPF and CTUP have been sporting pistols and revolvers (cal. 0.38s and 0.45s which entail government permit) and challenging mass activists to duels in public places. For his part, the counterrevolutionary labor aristocrat Ignacio Lacsina started last January 29 to issue press statements attacking what he called the “fanatical fringe” of the national democratic mass movement and what he called “the cult of Mao.” He issued these in a desperate attempt to cover up his exposure as a special imperialist agent and as a crooked lawyer in the trade union movement by an increasing number of member unions in his own National Association of Trade Unions (an affiliate of the revisionist-controlled World Federation of Trade Unions). In an attempt to cow the rebel trade unions, he sent word to Carlos B. del Rosario through a NATU functionary, Rodolfo del Rosario, threatening him with murder and boasting of special connections with the Metrocom chieftain, Brig. Gen.

Ordoñez, a brother-in-law of a close lawyer-partner of Lacsina. Then in a press statement first appearing in the Manila Chronicle and then repeated in the Philippines Free Press in an article by Edward Kiunisala, Lacsina maliciously declared that Carlos B. del Rosario was being “retained” in the executive council of the Socialist Party of the Philippines in his capacity as the “personal representative” of Jose Ma. Sison. Del Rosario promptly issued press statements exposing Lacsina’s fabrication and also the fact that the Socialist Party of the Philippines is an “organization” that comes out only when bourgeois election time approaches and Lacsina tries to sell “labor votes” to reactionary politicians. Various organizations of the national democratic movement continue to inquire into the kidnapping and murder of del Rosario. While they do so, defense department chieftain Ponce Enrile issues statements casting such intrigues as that del Rosario must have “slipped away to Peking” or that he must have been killed by his own comrades. While the available evidence shows that the reactionary government was directly responsible for the kidnapping and murder, further investigation is being conducted to determine the full complicity of the armed goons of the Lava revisionist renegades and the labor aristocrats Lacsina in the commission of the crime. The Lava revisionist renegades have become notorious for masterminding many acts of bloody intrigue perpetrated by the Monkees-Masaka-Armeng Bayan. Also Lacsina has become notorious among his fellow yellow trade unionists for operating a “military commission” of the NATU. Since January 1971, armed goons of the Monkees-Masaka-Armeng Bayan and the “military commission” have met a number of times in Cainta, Rizal and Cabiao, Nueva Ecija. The Lava revisionist renegades and their ally Lacsina may regard themselves clever in perpetrating crimes and intrigues. But they can expect punishment from the people’s court in the long run. They can also expect the fate of Alibasbas who became a tool of the reactionary armed forces only to be eliminated by his new-found master. The counterrevolutionary alliance of the Lava revisionist renegades and the labor aristocrat Lacsina is extremely loose and transitory. They will eventually set upon each other like vultures in serving Soviet social-imperialism, US imperialism and the local reactionaries. The Lava-Nemenzo-Pomeroy apparat and the Lacsina-Lansang apparat of the Soviet modern revisionists have unhappy days ahead of them. Their differences will in due time be fought out treacherously and bloodily. In the light of the situation in which the Lava revisionist renegades and the labor aristocrat Lacsina actively serve as special informers and agents of the reactionary government, the national democratic movement is intensifying its campaign to expose their counterrevolutionary activities and to isolate them together with their counterrevolutionary masters, US imperialism, Soviet social-imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

We Unite with All Patriotic and Progressive Forces against the Tyranny of Marcos Terrorism

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The Communist Party of the Philippines on its own behalf and also on behalf of the New People's Army which it leads expresses the strongest indignation over the Plaza Miranda massacre of August 21 which resulted in the death and injury of so many people, including the top leadership of the Liberal Party.

The dastardly act is directed not only against the Liberal Party but also against all opposition and the entire Filipino people. The terrorist character and the mad scheming of the US-Marcos clique are amply proven not only by the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus on a nationwide scale and without any basis. Beyond doubt, the Marcos fascist puppet clique is bent on monopolizing political power through militarist, anticommunist and antidemocratic methods.

The US-Marcos clique has steadily taken to the path of fascist dictatorship against the broad masses of the people. We are witness today to the imposition of an undisguised militarist rule. The US-Marcos regime is employing every method it can borrow from the black book of Hitler in order to create an anticommunist hysteria, silence every kind of opposition and monopolize political power at gunpoint. The University of the Philippines only recently was turned into a "guinea pig" for sinister efforts of CIA "psywar" experts to turn the tide of the strike movement and the new democratic cultural revolution in urban areas throughout the country.

The US-Marcos clique has become so mad and desperate that it would commit any crime under the "anti-Maoist" line to perpetuate its ill-gotten power and wealth and preserve the interests of its foreign and feudal masters. Only recently, Marcos himself raised "communism" as the main issue against all his political enemies and accused them specifically of cooperating with "Maoists." All of a sudden, he reverses himself by calling the criminal attackers of the Liberal Party as "Maoists." It is absolutely stupid and callous for the US-Marcos clique to blame the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army for every evil that its own minions perpetrate. Its haste in trying to make the Party and the people's army its scapegoats only betrays its criminal responsibility for the Plaza Miranda massacre.

The US-Marcos clique without much ado condemns Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought in the proclamation suspending the writ of habeas corpus. In this regard, we invite all to study the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao Zedong to find out for themselves whether these great communist leaders allow terrorist bombing or not. We Filipino Communists are bound by Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought and we always rely on the awakening and mobilization of the masses in their millions.

In pursuing its "anti-Maoist" line, the US-Marcos clique has gone so far as to cooperate with and coddle the bogus communist party of the Lava revisionist fascists. Both counterrevolutionaries have cooperated in fascist crimes such as those perpetrated in Central Luzon and lately in the Greater Manila area. They have joined up in establishing BSDUs in certain areas and in perpetrating acts of bloody intrigue in several instances.

The Communist Party of the Philippines, together with the New People's Army, has consistently refused to be drawn in by such enemy provocations as kidnapping, assassination, harassment and bloody disruption of rallies in urban areas. That is because we wish to give full play to the strike movement and the new democratic cultural revolution. It is in the countryside that we are engaged in armed struggle which is on the strategic defensive and on tactical offensives. In waging armed struggle, we have dealt the most ruthless blows only on diehard enemies.

The US-Marcos clique continues to overstep. The suspension of the writ of habeas corpus on a nationwide scale and without limit is in so many respects worse than all massacres it has covertly and overtly perpetrated. This means mass arrests, pogroms, and the systematic suppression of democratic rights. In its sick thinking, the US-Marcos clique imagines that it can nip the revolutionary mass movement "in the bud." But thanks to the US-Marcos clique itself, the level of revolutionary consciousness and strength among the people has risen even higher for effective resistance.

There is nothing to fear from the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus or the imposition of martial law. The situation which the US-Marcos clique has created in Greater Manila and throughout the country is no different from the situation in Tarlac, Pampanga, Isabela and many other areas where the Party, the people's army and the revolutionary masses themselves create their own freedom of action by uniting and taking the initiative in their

hands and fighting the enemy.

We unite with all patriotic and progressive forces that are willing to purge the country of the fascist tyranny and puppetry of the Marcos ruling clique. By isolating and destroying the Marcos fascist puppet clique, we advance the revolutionary mass movement against US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

- Long live the Filipino people!
- Long live the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People’s Army!
- Long live the Philippine revolution!
- Long live the national united front!
- Long live the spirit of the martyrs for the people’s democratic cause!
- People’s war is the answer to martial law!

On the Partial Lifting of the Writ Suspension

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Even before the brazen suspension of the writ of habeas corpus, the bodies of victims in such Marcos-type acts of terror as the Corregidor massacre and the kidnapping of Carlos B. del Rosario and Francisco C. Sison could not be produced in the reactionary courts.

The partial lifting of the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus does not in any way diminish the insatiable greed of the US-Marcos regime for power and wealth. It is a flimsy trick to adorn the ugly truth that the US-Marcos clique does not hesitate to commit the most dastardly crimes to keep itself in power.

The daily mass actions since August 23 have brought the national democratic struggle to a new and higher stage and have aggravated the isolation of the US-Marcos clique. A comparison between the September 13th rally of the Movement of Concerned Citizens for Civil Liberties (MCCCCL) and the September 17th rally of the Veterans Federation of the Philippines shows the strength of the masses and the weakness of the enemy. And now the chief fascist puppet chieftain has to take some pretense at heeding public opinion so that his gang can perpetrate more crimes against the people.

The democratic leaders and other persons apprehended under the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus are still in the military stockades. An extraordinary state of intimidation still persists in the most strategic centers of public opinion and therefore still compels several hundreds of non-communist democrats to desist from appearing in public.

Every day that Malacañang and the Supreme Court fail to heed popular demands for the total lifting of the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus strengthens the cause of the revolutionary mass movement.

More massive demonstrations under the banner of the national united front are necessary to assert the people's democratic rights. At the same time, the people should become more prepared against the violent actions launched by the Marcos fascist puppet clique under the US "counterinsurgency" program in both cities and countryside.

The Plaza Miranda massacre and the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus have intensified on a national scale the violent contradictions between reactionary cliques, whose conflicts previously seemed to be restricted to local areas. The attempt of the US-Marcos regime to whip up an anticommunist hysteria is nothing but a cover to crush all kinds of opposition, whether communist or non-communist.

The political and economic crisis of US imperialism at home and abroad has reached such a point that in a semicolony like the Philippines the puppet reactionaries must wrangle violently among themselves. The "show window of democracy in Asia" is all in shambles. The ruling puppet clique is brazenly taking the path of other puppet ruling cliques in Asia. The evils of US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism are unmasked more clearly than ever before.

The US-Marcos regime itself has thrown away its mask of "liberal democracy." Its "democratic revolution" is nothing but a fascist counterrevolution. The antinational and antidemocratic nature of the reactionary state is completely exposed.

The US-Marcos regime raves about crushing the Communist Party of the Philippines. But experience under the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus has shown that whereas a single communist cannot be definitely identified the diehard reactionaries aggravate their own isolation by having to assault the entire nation and people. The effectiveness of our underground is well tested and proven. It is bound to improve even further in the face of fascist onslaughts.

The suspension of the writ of habeas corpus has strengthened both the proletarian party and the revolutionary mass movement. The lies that the US-Marcos regime fling at us have only served to stress the truth of our national and democratic integrity. The "anti-Maoist" conspiracy of the US-Marcos clique and the Lava revisionist renegades has utterly failed.

Under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought, the Communist Party of the Philippines can never be crushed. Its ideological and political line makes it invincible. It has a broad mass character and always fights on just grounds. Its main organization is the New People's Army which is engaged in a protracted people's

war. It employs the united front to win over the broad masses of the people in their millions.

Today, the broad masses of the people recognize the Communist Party of the Philippines as the only force capable of leading the Philippine revolution forward to victory.

Chief US puppet Ferdinand E. Marcos, in a recent speech before businessmen, rattled off a chain of claims in an attempt to show that the Philippine economy had improved under his fascist regime. He forecast, in the fashion of a sorcerer, that the economic situation would improve “further” in 1972.

As usual, he merely mouthed the policies dictated by US advisers, the IMF, World Bank and other agencies of US imperialism. The stark realities were there to see: the economy had suffered from an unprecedented inflation since 1969 and was still on its rapid backslide. By no stretch of the imagination could the prospects for the new year be encouraging.

The people suffer increasing unemployment, fast declining purchasing power of the peso, unmitigated increase in the cost of living (prices of basic commodities, house rental, electric and telephone rates, transportation rates, tuition fees and other needs), higher taxes and the threat of more of them, and deteriorating peace and order (rampant killings, robbery, kidnappings, mass arrests and other crimes).

Since the de facto peso devaluation via the floating rate on February 21, 1970, the broad masses of the people have been agitated by a grave economic crisis. The steeply rising prices have pushed the workers to demand for higher wages and strikes have become common among business and industrial houses. Credit has tightened further because the government has been grabbing more and more private funds to shore itself up. Cost of imported raw materials to feed the local industries has remained prohibitive. The government is foisting more taxes on top of so many, while bureaucratic corruption has further cramped the initiative of the national bourgeoisie in the face of intensifying competition from foreign capital spurred by state policies barefacedly geared toward attracting more foreign capital to exploit and plunder the country.

The devaluation of the Philippine peso in February 1970 was prescribed by US imperialism through the International Monetary Fund as a precondition for the Philippines to be able to have its old external debts “rolled over” as well as secure new external debts. Through this measure, US imperialism sought to shift on a part of the burden of its own worsening financial and economic crises to the broad masses of the Filipino people. As is to be expected, the prescription has only exacerbated the internal crisis. Inflation persisted and breakdown in industry and agriculture ensued, spawning price increases and worsening unemployment. The so-called technocrats harnessed by the US-Marcos regime exhausted their expertise and failed to stem the deterioration of the economy.

These so-called technocrats have simply proven themselves servitors of the US imperialists and the domestic ruling classes. The policies and stopgap measures that they push have only served to accommodate the rapaciousness of the US monopoly capitalists, the comprador-landlords and the bureaucrat capitalists and spawned the outright graft and bureaucratic corruption of the US-Marcos clique at the expense of the broad masses of the people. Also, the external factors bred by the intensifying worldwide crisis of imperialism have aggravated the internal economic crisis.

It was, in fact, the worldwide crisis of imperialism, the decay and decline of the entire capitalist system, that set the destructive forces at work in the Philippine economy.

A concrete manifestation of the worldwide crisis of imperialism is the deterioration of the value of the US dollar which from 1944 to 1958 held undisputed sway over the world capitalist economy. Since 1958 when US imperialism intensified its wars of aggression in various areas of the world, the dollar consistently lost value vis-à-vis the currencies of other capitalist countries, such as Japan and West Germany. US imperialism accumulated external debts by war spending, maintaining military bases overseas and supporting unpopular regimes in client-states.

US imperialism built up a balance of payments deficit running to \$10.7 billion as of 1970. So heavy has been its spending for its war of aggression in Vietnam, which in any case it cannot hope to win. Inflationary pressures at home caused a rise in consumer prices from a 3 percent rate of increase in 1967 to 6.6 percent in 1969, something alarming for Americans struggling to maintain a high standard of living. The US economy's growth rate dwindled from an average of 5 percent in 1965-68 to only 3 percent in 1970. The unemployment level rose from 3.3 percent in 1968 to 5.9 percent in 1970, which is serious for a highly industrialized country. In certain areas in the United States, unemployment went up to as high as several tens of percent.

The measures to “protect the dollar” adopted by the Nixon ruling clique on August 15, 1971 showed that US imperialism respects no commitment it makes with other nations when its interests are threatened. By suspending the convertibility of the dollar into gold to stop speculations in the major currency markets where the dollar had been losing value, US imperialism threw overboard the Bretton Woods Agreement⁴ (IMF Articles of Agreement) and set off a chain of crises for the currencies of other capitalist countries principally Japan, West Germany and other West European countries.

Not satisfied with junking an international commitment, the Nixon ruling clique slapped a 10 percent additional tax or surcharge on US imports to protect domestic industries on the slump. As a result, exports to the United States became more expensive and were therefore discouraged. This move spurred protests and threats of retaliatory action on US exports by the countries affected. For small exporting countries such as the Philippines, this meant a tremendous blow to the effort to build up dollar earnings so as to meet growing payment requirements for imports and foreign loans.

The Nixon ruling clique used these unilateral measures as clubs to force the other big capitalist nations to upvalue their currencies vis-à-vis the dollar instead of the other way around, as these countries had demanded. Principal US protagonists were Japan, West Germany, France and other West European nations. These countries opposed the Nixon position because upvaluing their currencies without any devaluation of the US dollar would make their exports much costlier than those of the United States in the world market, thus diminishing their competitive position in world trade.

A temporary compromise was reached among the capitalist countries within the “Group of Ten.” US imperialism agreed to increase the price of gold from \$35 per ounce to \$38, thus devaluing the dollar by 7.89 percent on December 18, 1971. It also agreed to lift the 10 percent import surcharge. In return, the other capitalist countries agreed to upvalue their currencies.

The net effect of the accord is still to the advantage of US imperialism at the expense of the other capitalist countries. Japan and West Germany have in fact started to suffer slowdown in production, the former predicting its gross national product growth rate to be reduced by more than half the 10 percent average over the last few years. These two countries are now contending with rising prices and growing unemployment.

Intensified trade war is inevitable among the imperialist countries: a battle for exports markets, for a redivision of the countries of the world as economic preserves. US imperialism is bent on waging a trade offensive in areas dominated by other big trading countries, but Japan, West Germany and the European Economic Community are not likely to take this lying down. This trade war will mean further exploitation of colonies and semicolonies, like the Philippines.

In this trade war, US imperialism will try hard to remain dominant, arguing the need to preserve the world capitalist system with the United States as its center. In fact, US imperialism has long laid the foundation for holding on to its status as No. 1 imperialist power. It has kept a tight hold on West Germany and the rest of Western Europe through its military bases and its overseas investments now either well-entrenched in key industries or safely tied up with local capital all over Europe. It has made Japan its fugleman in Asia by tying up its remilitarization with the US privilege of maintaining military bases all over Japanese territory and by forcing it to open up its investment fields to US monopoly capital via joint ventures which require less dollar outflow. Japan remains US imperialism’s biggest military ward in Asia, a fact that has only fanned the fire of protest and anti-imperialist and anti-militarist struggle of the Japanese people.

The crisis of imperialism is not likely to be solved either on the short range or over the long haul. Since it carries within itself the seed of its own destruction, imperialism will reel from one crisis to another. The raging anti-imperialist movement of the world within and outside the capitalist countries and the growing strength of socialism with the People’s Republic of China as its iron bastion will not give imperialism any respite, till its doom.

Meanwhile, the Philippines under a puppet regime of US imperialism will continue to be pressed down by the crisis of imperialism. There is no prospect of improvement in the Philippines’ balance of payments position. Contrary to earlier projections of a surplus by monetary authorities, the year 1971 was projected to end with a deficit because of falling prices of primary exports and the high cost of imports of capital goods, raw materials and other basic commodities composing the bulk of Philippine imports. Higher price of crude oil, for instance, greatly boosted the value of imports. Now the US and British monopoly oil companies are seeking another round of price increases for gasoline and other products from crude oil. The US-Marcos regime is bound to grant such price

increases as well as those asked by other foreign monopolies, to the detriment of the consumers.

The continuing payments imbalance will not permit a fixing of the new peso rate, hence speculation and inflation will persist. Fixing the rate would spawn new problems since the peso will surely go down further in value following the US dollar.

Filipino entrepreneurs must also contend with intensified competition from and growing dominance of US and Japanese monopoly capital and other foreigners. The policies adopted by the US-Marcos clique through the Board of Investments have opened the gates to the invasion by Japanese monopoly capital of key sectors of the economy, such as mining, merchandising and manufacturing. US and Japanese monopoly capital, including Guomindang capital, has been allowed to dominate the field of oil exploration, as well as various manufacturing sectors.

Japanese monopoly capital poses the newest and gravest danger to the Philippine economy, particularly because it is squarely tied up with US monopoly capital in many areas. While records of the Securities and Exchange Commission show that Japanese monopoly investments in the country amounted to only ₱91.6 million as of June 1971, Japanese publications indicate that they have reached \$450 million, which presumably includes capital equipment sold on long-term payment terms. But even on the comparatively smaller figure of the SEC, records of that office reported in the bourgeois press show that Japanese firms had borrowed from local sources no less than ₱15.5 million.

The US-Marcos clique directly facilitated the entry of Japanese capital into the country, proving itself a true servitor of foreign monopoly interests. In 1967 the chief US puppet Marcos directed the National Economic Council and the department of commerce to allow 17 Japanese liaison offices to do business here, despite the nonratification of the “treaty of friendship, commerce and navigation” which is an unequal treaty in favor of the Japanese. Subsequently, under the Investment Incentives Act, the BOI rolled out the red carpet for Japanese monopoly and other foreign capital.

This collusion between US-Japanese monopoly capital and the US-Marcos clique, unless stopped by the resolute struggle of the Filipino people, will aggravate the already wanton exploitation of the country’s natural resources and the foreign monopoly domination of the national economy. Militarist Japan is determined to appropriate for itself the raw material resources of the Philippines, as well as those of other countries like Indonesia, to feed its bloating industries and fuel its military machine. By 1980, Japanese militarism is projected to require 80 percent of the world’s supply of raw materials. With the other imperialist countries competing with Japan, what would remain for indigenous industries in the raw-material-supplying countries?

In the face of these realities of world imperialism and the Philippine economy, the Filipino people shall not relent in their struggle to destroy the stronghold of imperialism in the country and sweep away all local lackeys. They will carry on the fight for national liberation and join forces with all other anti-imperialist forces all over the world.

Notes

Under the IMF Articles of Agreement signed in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, USA in 1944, the US dollar was made the basis for settling the values of all currencies of countries in the capitalist world, to facilitate world trade and currency exchanges. This was done because the US dollar then was the world’s strongest currency as a result of the unprecedented boom in the US economy fueled by armaments production during World War II.

While all currencies are supposed to be fixed in value in relation to the dollar, the value of the dollar was in turn pegged in relation to gold; that is, a dollar could be exchanged for one-thirty-fifth ($\frac{1}{35}$) of an ounce of gold (which explains the \$35 per ounce gold price).

Theoretically, any country in possession of US dollars may present these to the United States in exchange for gold. The United States was supposed to keep a sufficient reserve of gold to make good this exchange anytime. But the US gold reserve in Fort Knox dwindled from \$26 billion worth at the end of the war to only \$9.7 billion by August of 1971. Against this low reserve, governments and private sectors in Europe hold \$95 billion in US currency and \$15 billion in Japan, all theoretically exchangeable for gold by the United States. The United States, however, is no longer in a position to make good the exchange.

This situation caused alarm among the dollar holders in Europe and in Japan and as a consequence of massive speculation, the dollar gradually lost value in the currency exchange markets. On the other hand, the currencies of the other big capitalist countries which had built up dollar reserves rose in value in terms of the US dollar. Thus, the US dollar lost its reliability as a medium of exchange in international trade and currency transactions.

The pressure of the countries with huge dollar holdings for the dollar to devalue and US imperialism's insistence against devaluation caused the monetary crisis in the capitalist world to escalate.

The general outcome of mass protest actions last year demonstrates more clearly than ever that the revolutionary determination of the broad masses of the people can render ineffectual all the evil machinations of the US-Marcos regime to extend its tentacles of oppression and exploitation. Chairman Mao teaches us: "All reactionaries are paper tigers. In appearance, the reactionaries are terrifying, but in reality they are not so powerful. From a long-term point of view, it is not the reactionaries but the people who are really powerful."

An examination of the counterrevolutionary tactics of the US-Marcos clique establishes the truth of this statement. Using patently dual tactics, the Marcos fascist puppet clique, with the full blessings of US imperialism, commits the blackest counterrevolutionary deeds and at the same time attempts to sweet-talk the people into complacency with false promises of "reform." In the field of counterrevolutionary propaganda, meanwhile, it strains to advance the laborious argument that the crimes and massacres it commits are the doing either of genuine revolutionaries or its political enemies. All these steps are taken in the vain hope that they will prevent the irrepressible advance of the national democratic movement and the revolutionary upsurge of the broad masses of the people.

Thus, early this year, reactionary hacks in the pay of the US-Marcos regime sought to mislead the masses by blaming the exploited jeepney drivers for the general strike that lasted from January 5 to 13, deliberately ignoring the fact that the rise in oil prices was dictated by the US imperialist oil cartel and slavishly implemented by the Marcos fascist puppet clique. Malacañang itself even went so far as to tag "pressure groups," particularly the Lopez business group, as responsible for financing the strikers and inciting them to violence.

What was obvious even at that time, however, was that the reactionary state led by the fascist puppet Marcos and controlled by US imperialism had already been oiled to suppress the strike by means of counterrevolutionary violence. In a vain effort to sabotage the rightful dissent of the masses, fully armed reactionary soldiers and army trucks were unleashed for transportation purposes. And in the January 13 worker-student march and rally that capped the strike, UIOG forces under the minor puppet Roquito Ablan, under directions from Marcos, tried to break up the demonstrators with the use of high-powered guns, in the process killing five persons and injuring hundreds of others.

The revolutionary upsurge of the masses continued despite the combine use of reactionary propaganda and counterrevolutionary violence, despite the willful murder of five people. Contrary to the divide-and-rule tactics of the fascist puppet Marcos, the jeepney drivers hand in hand with the militant youth consolidated their ranks. By February they had consolidated ideologically, politically and organizationally, thereby girding themselves for more confrontations with the exploitative US imperialist oil cartel and the oppressive Marcos fascist clique. Shortly before, the workers, also hand in hand with the militant youth, had also done the same.

The murderous hand of the fascist puppet Marcos struck once again when, on May Day 1971, one woman worker and two students were felled by the bullets of fascist troops. The fact that the battle-gearred troops were positioned on the grounds, offices and rooftops of Congress, and were in addition backed up by a machinegun-rattling helicopter, speaks for itself.

The martyrdom of the three May Day patriots, however, only inspired broader and more intense mass actions. On June 11, youth, workers, intellectuals and professionals rallied to demand the release of a patriotic youth leader, Nilo Tayag. In Mindanao and throughout the country, demonstrations were held to protest the continued massacre of Muslims. Since August 24, pocket-size demonstrations as well as rallies commanding as many as 50,000 participants have been held throughout the country. The People's Long March Against Poverty and Fascism, the second to start from a point in the countryside and the first to converge in the city from two points in Luzon, took place October 20-24, ending up before a crowd of 30,000 in Plaza Miranda.

The ever increasing frequency of mass actions throughout the country is one concrete manifestation of the futility of all schemes of the Marcos fascist puppet clique to perpetuate itself in power and to protect the interests of US imperialism. As the US imperialist race after superprofits becomes more and more hectic due to its balance of payments problem, the need to suppress revolutionary mass movements becomes more and more urgent on

the part of the reactionaries. However, as the Manila-Rizal Regional Council of the Communist Party of the Philippines correctly assessed after the Caloocan massacre, the seriously aggravating economic conditions only serve to demonstrate the bankruptcy of the system, while the escalation of fascist terrorism in the urban areas provides more effective and sharper weapons in waging the national democratic cultural revolution among the masses.

Paper tigers do not vanish of themselves; they have to be torn up and set to fire. The events of the past year show that without determined implementation of the correct political line, economic hardships and acts of fascist terrorism will not entirely result in the advance of the national democratic cultural revolution.

As the Party accurately concluded as early as January of 1971, legal mass struggle in the city must persist even as the underground is strengthened “to provide a powerful support to mass activities and to counteract enemy schemes in the most appropriate ways.” The correctness of these measures was proven when, in the latter part of the year, the US-Marcos clique, hectically running the reactionary race toward military dictatorship, reached a new mark characterized by Hitlerite terrorist schemes. That up to now the enemy has not managed to take a single patch of the underground only goes to show that the underground has succeeded in concealing itself from the enemy and is now counteracting enemy schemes in the most appropriate ways, thereby making possible the persistence of legal mass struggle in the city.

Anti-Communist Campaign of the US-Marcos Clique Brings About its further Isolation

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At no other time was the national united front so broad as the months after the second Plaza Miranda massacre and the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus by the terrorist chieftain Marcos. Contrary to the designs of the US-Marcos clique, all attempts to isolate proletarian revolutionaries through the stepped-up propaganda campaign against communism and the Communist Party of the Philippines and to cow the masses into submission through white terror miserably failed. By the end of the year the US-Marcos clique itself had been isolated by an unprecedented revolutionary upsurge of the broad masses of the people.

The second Plaza Miranda massacre, the writ suspension and the Supreme Court decision were merely the culmination of all attempts to muzzle all kinds of opposition to the US-Marcos terrorist regime. These attempts were consistently carried out by the US-Marcos clique, with the special assistance of the Lava revisionist renegades who kept on harping with the ruling clique on the “anti-Maoist” theme. These attempts started as early as January 1971, when the offices of Esso and Caltex were bombed as a pretext to divert the people’s anger from the US imperialist oil cartel (which was then increasing oil prices) to some imagined “revolutionary” group (a so-called “Popular Revolutionary Front”) which has turned out to be merely an adjunct of the Lava revisionist gang.

Smear tactics were employed during the University of the Philippines student elections in June. With the blessing of the US-Marcos clique and under the direction of various CIA “psywar” experts, a veritable dry run of the second Plaza Miranda massacre was staged. Among the stage tricks used in this particular drama were fake manifestos, fake slogans, planted “evidences” of vandalism, and an assortment of goons with plaster marks. The aim of the drama was to blacken the prestige of the militant student radicals and thereby bring about the capture of the student council by the reactionary diehards on campus. The Lava revisionist renegades assisted the US-Marcos clique in this operation to obscure real fascism with outcries of “radical fascism.”

The military precision with which the UP scheme had been executed was repeated over and over in the months that followed. On August 21 the Liberal Party rally in Plaza Miranda was bombed, resulting in the death of ten on-lookers, including several children, and injuries to scores of others. As if the terrorist chieftain had been afraid that he did not make his point clear, more bombings were performed the next day, this time on the Nawasa main pipe, various government offices and the gardens of two notorious Marcos running dogs. A few months after, eight towns in Ilocos Sur were raided with the ruthlessness and wildness of a shooting spree that could be mustered only by a counterrevolutionary clique out to terrorize the people. The modus operandi of the fascist criminals is too undeniably clear.

The obvious motive behind all these sinister acts of terrorism has been to create the “appropriate” atmosphere for the imposition of martial law. Barely three hours after the Plaza Miranda bombing and with all the secrecy of one with patently evil designs, the terrorist chieftain Marcos signed the papers proclaiming the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus and blaming the revolutionary mass movement for the heinous crime. The next day the reactionary armed forces started their rampage of arrests, in the process plucking a wide assortment of political prisoners. Four months later, after making a pretense of listening to the counsel for the political prisoners, the reactionary Supreme Court came out with the ludicrous decision that the terrorist chieftain had the right to his own opinions and therefore the right to take away the writ of habeas corpus. In an attempt to further sugarcoat its anti-democratic acts with a semblance of legality, the US-Marcos clique, through its hatchetmen in Congress, sought to revive the hated “Committee on Un-Filipino Activities” (CUFA), which in the 1950s became notorious for its witchhunting sorties.

To back up its incursions into the democratic rights of the people, the US-Marcos regime stepped up its propaganda campaign against communism and the Communist Party of the Philippine just before the bourgeois elections of November 8. A nationwide campaign in the form of radio-TV commercials was launched under cover of a counterrevolutionary veterans groups headed by a notorious running dog of US imperialism.

It is entirely correct to conclude that the campaign had the long-range purpose of preparing the minds of the people for the eventual imposition of martial law, considering that the radio-TV commercials cost a whopping one million pesos, were translated into the major dialects and widely disseminated all over the country, and vainly

tried to discredit the revolutionary mass movement by falsely picturing the militants as bomb throwers and dope addicts. In sum, the commercials provided the discordant background for such orchestrated acts of terrorism as the second Plaza Miranda massacre, the Ilocos Sur shootout, and even the Taytay kidnapping, in which two of the remaining henchmen of the Lava renegade gang, with the full blessings of the US-Marcos clique, shot a policeman and terrorized two families, most of whom were children.

As it is obvious now, only the fascist mastermind Marcos and his terrorist gang believed their own lies. After the spate of bombings and raids in 1971, even the reactionary press was compelled to reflect the raging public opinion against the “Reichstag fire” tactics and anti-democratic abuses of the US-Marcos clique.

Mass protest against the suspension of the writ started as early as August 24 and has been going on ever since. On September 12, 50,000 youths, workers and professionals gathered at Plaza Miranda to denounce the writ suspension. On October 1, 5 and 12, thousands of people, including notable civil libertarians, marched to Caloocan despite every manner of harassment dealt by the Marcos running dog Asistio. The dispersal of the rallies of October 1 and 5 by armed thugs wearing plaster marks, and the death of seven persons, including a seven-year old newsboy, in the second rally, only served to heighten the anger of the people and bring them marching resolutely back to Caloocan on October 12.

On October 20 the People’s Long March Against Poverty and Fascism started from two points, one in Angeles City, Pampanga, and the other in Los Baños, Laguna. A significant contribution to the national democratic cultural revolution, the Long March passed through several provinces and ended in Plaza Miranda on October 24 before a crowd of 30,000, thus reaching not only a substantial section of city residents, but also tens of thousands of peasants in the countryside. The Long March was synchronized with rallies and shorter marches in communities throughout the country.

It is quite clear now that there is no way of stopping the revolutionary upsurge of the broad masses of the people. Terrorism only aggravates the political and economic crisis of the ruling system and goads the people to rise up in revolt. Indeed, sinister acts of terrorism such as those committed in the north and in the south by the US-Marcos regime only serve to exacerbate the people’s sufferings brought about by the evils of US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

Thus, even as the US-Marcos clique and the Lava revisionist renegade clique engage in an anti-communist conspiracy, the prestige and strength of the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People’s Army which it leads continue to rise vigorously. Within so short a period of time, it has been demonstrated how effective has been the application of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought on Philippine conditions. For this reason, the US-Marcos clique has become so terrified that it blames the Communists for every kind of opposition that emerges against it. When the fascist chieftain Marcos blames the Communists for the struggle of the Mindanao national minorities for self-determination or for the general strike of government workers, he merely succeeds in giving credit to the Communist Party of the Philippines for its indefatigable heroic efforts to overthrow US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

Statement on the Cabugao Massacre

April 26, 1972

I have heard over the radio and read in the metropolitan newspapers reports concerning the abominable massacre of innocent people in my hometown of Cabugao, Ilocos Sur on April 25th, day of the town fiesta. Among the more than ten dead and more than two hundred wounded are men, women, youth and children that are personally close to me either as close kinsmen, friends or closest relations of my kinsmen and friends. Among those who suffered bruises were my own mother, sister and youngest brother.

It is obvious that I should be personally touched by a tragic crime that has befallen my own dear relatives and townsfolk. But over and above personal feelings, I would firm up my own conviction that only the people can bring justice to themselves. Even as I extend my deepest condolences to the victims and their families, I appeal to the people of my hometown and everyone else to unite and fight the evil forces that try to terrorize them.

It is not the US-Marcos clique that can bring justice to them. On the other hand, this clique is basically responsible for the perpetration of the Cabugao massacre. By seeking to disarm the people, it has insisted on its own privilege to monopolize arms and allow its minions (particularly the Crisologo-Villanueva clique) to commit crimes with their own arms.

The Marcos-Crisologo-Villanueva combine has long sought to impose martial law in Ilocos Sur in order to make impotent and suppress their political enemies. Using its own fascist minions, it has perpetrated all sorts of crimes in the province only to cite scapegoats and carry out their scheme of stepping up the militarist repression of the people. The desperate shooting rampages in eight Ilocos Sur towns in December 1971 are still fresh in the minds of the people.

All the talk of Marcos about “peace and order” is hypocritical. It is a camouflage for the violence that his clique daily unleashes against the people; it is a mere excuse to grab public funds for building up his personal wealth and the fascist military.

The Cabugao massacre done in the monstrous style of the unforgettable Plaza Miranda massacre is now part of the long list of massacres which has made the regime of the US-Marcos clique utterly notorious and despicable in every region and in the entire history of the country. To cite only the most recent fascist crimes of the US-Marcos clique, the Cabugao massacre is part of that fascist trend that has brought about the massacre of workers and student activists at a factory in Malabon, Rizal; the entire campaign of massacres in Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon and Bicol region; and the unabated massacre of the national minorities in Mindanao.

Marcos and I come from the north. And I tell him that the “solid north” (a term to denote regionalism in favor of a reactionary Ilocano politician seeking national office) is no longer his political capital. The broad masses of Ilocanos, who are mainly workers, peasants, small property owners, students can low government employees are united with the broad masses of the Filipino people in condemning Marcos as an unmitigated fascist monster.

Northern Luzon CPP Regional Committee Condemns Culpability of US-Marcos Clique in Cabugao Massacre

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The Northern Luzon Regional Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines strongly condemns the US-Marcos clique as culpable for the Cabugao massacre last April 25 which claimed the lives of 13 people and wounded several hundred others and considers as utterly preposterous and malicious the “number one theory” that the New People’s Army was behind the grenade-throwing.

The glaring logic of the Cabugao massacre is to preserve and expand by every foul means the monopoly of power of the US-Marcos clique in the whole country and of its local henchmen in the Ilocos region. Before and after the Cabugao massacre, the Marcos fascist puppet clique has fully armed its local minions, the Crisologo-Villanueva warlord faction, and has let loose the reactionary armed forces against the people.

The attempt to make a scapegoat of the New People’s Army is in the style of the Marcos fascist puppet regime’s scheme to lay the blame on the Party and the people’s army for the Plaza Miranda massacre last August 21 and for the senseless shooting rampages in Ilocos Sur last December, crimes for which the Marcos fascist puppet clique itself is responsible. By pinning the blame once more on the New People’s Army, it hopes to engage with greater impunity in more repressive fascist actions against the people.

Fascist terror has indeed become the hallmark of the Marcos fascist puppet regime as it finds itself increasingly rejected by and isolated from the people, especially from the people of Northern Luzon whom Mr. Marcos always imagines to be his “bulwark.”

The Marcos fascist puppet clique stands on record as the number one co-conspirator and condoner of the Crisologo-Villanueva warlord faction in Ilocos Sur. Together they have long had a scheme of imposing martial law in the province in order to suppress their political enemies

The fact is that the reactionary armed forces under the orders of Marcos are already riding roughshod over the people. The Cabugao massacre is in line with the nationwide imposition of fascist terror against the peasants in the countryside, against the workers and student activists in the cities, and against the national minorities in Mindanao.

There is no sense in expecting justice from the Marcos fascist puppet regime which has shown consistency in coming up to the defense of the interests of US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. Since the assumption of power by the US-Marcos clique in 1965, not a single one of those responsible for numerous massacres has ever been apprehended and punished.

The criminal culpability and utter hypocrisy of the Marcos fascist puppet regime is too obvious. It is the people who will eventually give the Marcos fascist puppet clique its just desert. Right now, the US-Marcos clique is caught in the prairie fire of people’s war in Northern Luzon, and it is here where the people’s revolutionary armed forces are dealing the most telling blows on US imperialism and its local lackeys.

In his 1972 state-of-the nation address, fascist puppet chieftain Marcos expresses his terror in the face of the consistent advance of the revolutionary movement and the worsening crisis of imperialism.

On the domestic scene, he refers to the “reestablishment of the Communist Party of the Philippines, with a Jacobin zeal for domination and conquests, the creation of communist front organizations, the Maoist uprisings” as his greatest alarm. The fascist and anticommunist maniac unwittingly pays tribute to the Party, though he strains to misrepresent it. He has long made himself ridiculous by styling himself as a philosopher of “liberal democracy” and at the same time failing to understand that Jacobinism is a bourgeois anarchist trend of thought. His criminal attempts to misrepresent and suppress by wanton force the ever growing democratic organizations and democratic mass actions have met not only with the people’s derision but with fiercer revolutionary anger as well. Unmindful of the fact that the US military bases are widely known as the biggest distributing points for dope, he sinks to the lowest absurdity by linking through innuendo the problem of dope addiction to the rise of the national democratic movement among the youth.

In the international scene, Marcos is most shaken by the impact of the restoration of the legitimate rights of the People’s Republic of China in the United Nations and the irrepressible trend that this reflects—an irrepressible trend whereby countries want independence, nations want liberation and people want revolution. As a puppet chieftain, he is troubled by the worsening crisis of his imperialist masters and of his own regime. The US-Marcos clique is trying to fumble for straws to hold on to. However, while admitting that “many of the major decisions that affect our daily lives are made not in our own country but in the distant centers of the world,” Marcos does not mention even once the fact that the puppetry of his regime to US imperialism has kept up and aggravated the people’s suffering.

It is only by way of exculpating himself that he states that what the people are suffering from they suffer “with the rest of the world” and that whatever problems are there now have been “spawned by past errors and misjudgments.” He spreads the blame because he wishes to take no blame. He wishes to obscure the fact that his six years as the puppet chieftain have each made the people’s suffering more acute. Turning reality upside down, he paints himself as an innocent scapegoat and not the seeker of scapegoats. Thus, he chatters: It is ancient propensity of men to look for scapegoats in adversity. This has been the easy foundation of most political criticism. But political responsibility obliges us to look for causes. The search for scapegoats is always a futile exercise. Indeed, it is a futile exercise for the US-Marcos clique to look for scapegoats and even more futile for it to be hypocritical about its own propensities. Marcos volunteers to describe his kind of leadership as a “three-headed Janus looking back, front and forward.” This grotesque leadership is really three-headed, but its heads are US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

The “Peace and Order” Bait of the US-Marcos Clique

Tyranny always results in popular resistance. But in its narrow calculations, the US-Marcos clique takes the stand that more tyranny will stop popular resistance. Thus, Marcos as chief spokesman of his clique declares that he is determined to pursue the “classic solutions” to the “problem of internal subversion.” Such “classic solutions” are “a strengthened military capability; and intensified social and economic development as a means of improving the national capacity to resist dissidence.” What he means exactly is militarism and fascism to intensify foreign and feudal oppression.

In the past, the ruling clique in the country has always pretended to espouse or implement a “five-year economic program” as a gimmick to justify its retention of power beyond its current elective tenure or at least to justify its malversation of huge public funds. But the US-Marcos clique is the very first to demand a five-year military program that guarantees the Armed Forces of the Philippines ₱1.5 billion or ₱300 million annually, in addition to the constantly rising yearly budgetary outlays. The additional appropriations are meant to increase the number of troops to 83,000 or more, military purchases from US imperialism, fascist military training and paramilitary units under the cover of “citizenship training for defense.” For fiscal year 1972-73, the reactionary armed forces are expected to get ₱1.5 billion, about 25 percent of the national budget. The other departments of the reactionary

government do not receive any financial assurance commensurate to that given to the military. On the other hand, they receive from year to year decreasing appropriations, have to lay off employees by the tens of thousands and have to cut down on their projects and activities.

This five-year military program being espoused by the US-Marcos clique is in line with the Nixon doctrine. Among the several points under this doctrine is that the puppet countries should spend more for their military forces and should be made to pay heavily for US military goods. This would allow US imperialism to lessen its critical military expenditures and to make profits on its military sales. Thus, both the US imperialist and the Philippine puppet policymakers not talk loud about a “self-reliant defense posture.”

The US-Marcos clique always takes advantage of the very mischief that it makes. After the second Plaza Miranda massacre of 1971, it tried to present itself as the protector of the Liberal Party whose entire top leadership it had almost wiped out. Failing in this attempt, it went on witchhunting the Liberal Party as a tool of the Communist Party. After the stinging defeat of his clique in the 1971 elections, Marcos again offered to form a National Council of Reconciliation with the Liberal Party. He was rebuffed. Lately, however, it appears that his persistent efforts to inveigle the Liberal Party is paying off with the simple trick of using the slogan “peace and order.”

By using the slogan “peace and order” as a bait, the US-Marcos clique may to quite an extent get what he wants to step up militarism and fascism. But the internal contradictions among the reactionaries, particularly between those who are in Malacañang and those who expect to be there after Marcos, do not change overnight. As recent experience and the current trend shows, the US-Marcos clique is bent on using its anti-communist campaigns to attack even the legal opposition of various trends.

Marcos frankly states that he wants all local police forces, which are now under various political parties, to be under the command and disposition of the reactionary armed forces. In this connection, he has seen to it that his close relatives and cronies are in command of the reactionary armed forces. To the people, it is clear that the US-Marcos clique is bent on making nationwide the extortions and brutal abuses of the Metrocom; the Metrocom provides the experience by which the abuses of reactionary armed forces add up to the abuses of local police forces.

Marcos talks loud about running after “private armies,” crooks in police organizations and security agencies whose armed membership now runs to around 27,000 (according to official records). But the actual scheme is for the US-Marcos clique to monopolize armed power and to crack down on the “private armies” of those opposing it. In previous years, the US-Marcos clique has strictly implemented firearms license laws against its oppositors but at the same time it has freely supplied licensed and unlicensed arms to its followers.

The US-Marcos clique is not satisfied with the grave abuses it has committed under various proclamations suspending the writ of habeas corpus and also under the present fascist “Anti-Subversion Law.” To this day, Marcos continues to speak of “intolerable increase of insurgent activity” and to refer to the second Plaza Miranda massacre as if it were the handiwork of the victims and scapegoats themselves (despite the fact that it also wants people to believe now that it was the handiwork of living-out prisoners). He now proposes a “new concept of penology” to be followed by the state. He raves that “persons socially dangerous should be placed under confinement even before they have actually struck their victims.” In the same manner that he called the imprisonment of democratic activists after the second Plaza Miranda massacre as “preventive,” he chooses to call the imprisonment under his new concept “precautionary” and “therapeutic.” Marcos appears to be reading lately the social-fascist laws in the Soviet Union. Under his new concept, there is no more need to quibble about the basis of suspending the writ of habeas corpus, because even the courts may properly be made to believe that someone is criminal though he has not yet committed the crime.

Bleak picture of the Philippine economy

The fascist puppet chieftain Marcos still boasts of his policy of continuing devaluation (“floating rate”) adopted in 1970 as the greatest economic measure that he has ever adopted. He cites this as the most outstanding of what he calls “basic changes” or “economic policy reforms of sweeping character.” Indeed, it has been a policy of wide devastating effect on the livelihood of the people. It has raised the value of the dollar income of the local big bourgeoisie and depressed the income of the toiling masses. It has drastically raised the prices of basic commodities and aggravated the high rate of unemployment. Scrounging for revenues to maintain its corrupt and bureaucrat operations, the US-Marcos clique has also to make “tax and tariff” reforms that only result in increasing the burden of the people.

To claim success for his economic policies, Marcos invokes the fact that “we continue to witness the unfailing vote of confidence shown by the international bodies regarding our economic capability as gauged from the on-stream of external financial assistance.” He deliberately tries to cover the fact that it is the business of the imperialist vultures to suck the blood of the Filipino people by lending usury capital and dictating on its use for imperialist benefit. In his enumeration of the ills afflicting the people, Marcos deliberately avoids mentioning the fact that under his regime the Philippines has become indebted to the tune of more than \$2.0 billion. The “favorable” opinion of the Consultative Group in Paris, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the US Export-Import Bank, the International Development Association, US Development Program, the Asian Development Bank, and the Japanese banks cannot be something to be proud of but something to be ashamed of.

Marcos is most concerned about attracting foreign direct investments. His four-year economic program continues to be nothing but a list of US projects and recommendations emanating from the World Bank and other imperialist entities. He is most elated by the “progressive car manufacturing program” of Ford Motors; increased banana production; the export incentives act in favor of the imperialists and compradors; the “growing sophistication” of techniques in marketing and high finance manipulation; “experimentation” in agricultural research institutions; nonproductive “infrastructure” projects; irrigation facilities for the benefit of landlords; satellite communications, and the like. Because of the grossly uneven and lopsided development of the Philippine economy, Marcos is compelled to speak in self-contradicting terms. So, he says that the “process of economic development ... has a way of exposing hidden unemployment into ‘open’ unemployment.”

The worsening economic crisis of imperialism, glaringly manifested by its monetary and trade crisis, has compelled the reactionary government to persist in its policy of continuing devaluation and has led on to a drop of prices of and decrease of demand for major traditional Philippine exports, especially lumber products, copper and coconut products. The Philippines suffered in the past year a trade deficit, with imports amounting to \$1.1511 billion and exports, ₱1.118 billion. In the absence of a dollar surplus, the Philippines has to incur new debts to pay for old debts and keep up a steady stream of imports. To compel the perpetuation of its colonial privileges (“vested rights” and “national treatment”), the United States is now threatening to reduce the sugar quota of the Philippines.

The balance of payments position of the Philippines has been aggravated by the heavy importation of rice. The year 1971 witnessed the utter failure of the “miracle rice” program of the US-Marcos clique; the “miracle rice” varieties turned out to be unstable and the fertilizers used made the “tungro” (plant disease) resistant and epidemic in scale. The large-scale conversion of ricelands into sugarlands in Luzon and Visayas and the expansion of banana and pineapple plantations in Mindanao have gravely cut down local rice production. The civil strife provoked by the US-Marcos clique in Cotabato and Lanao del Norte, the rice granary of the South, has also resulted in the abandonment or destruction of rice crops. Of course, the typhoons and lack of milling facilities have had their own share of bringing down local rice production.

Marcos can offer no effective solutions to the rice crisis in the country. He can only propose the “abolition of the RCA” and its replacement by the “National Grains Authority.” This simply means giving the same dog a different tag; it is an old, old Marcos trick to merely change the names of things when they have become too obnoxious. When such a simple trick cannot be used, Marcos resorts to long-winded and high flown rhetoric as when he describes 1971 for the national minorities of Mindanao as a “year of hope in the face of many challenges.” The truth is that it was a year of the most barbaric massacres and untold fascist abuses by both the reactionary armed forces and the lumpen proletarian “Ilagas.”

All over the land, the peasant masses have had no respite from feudal and semifeudal exploitation. Marcos can only cite artificial figures like his having been able to proclaim 236 municipalities in 20 provinces as “leasehold areas” and the Land Bank having been able to purchase a mere 9,600 hectares. One may call the arrangement “tenancy” or “leasehold” but the poor peasants are still compelled to pay exorbitant land rent and interest rates. With regards to the extremely limited “expropriations” made by the reactionary government, past experience and simple arithmetic show that the poor peasants can never afford to pay the redistribution price of land.

Marcos has the temerity to claim the increasing militancy of peasants and farm workers as his own achievement. And in the same breath, he mentions the fact that they have been jailed en masse in Davao, Tarlac, Negros and Laguna. Imprisonment and the mangling of one’s bones are not the only risks that militant organizers have to face in the countryside. Massacres and selective kidnapping and murder perpetrated by the landlords’ goons and

the reactionary armed forces are common occurrences under the US-Marcos clique.

Marcos also boasts that out of 1,051 strikeable cases handled by the Labor Department only 129 exploded into actual strikes. These figures do not mean that the economic demands of the workers have been satisfied. On the other hand, they reveal the large-scale suppression of the workers' movement. Marcos also boasts of the Labor Department having been able to assist 95,000 workers in US military bases in the Philippines and over 16,000 in US military bases in Southeast Asia and the Pacific area. The truth is that by a common agreement the US and Philippine governments can individually or jointly disregard the right of base workers to unionize and to raise demands. When the base workers in the Philippines stages a strike last year, the reactionary armed forces were dispatched by Marcos to suppress the strike. The antagonistic attitude of the US-Marcos clique to the workers' movement is well displayed in the May Day 1971 massacre of workers, including a woman workers, in front of Congress and the constant presence and brutality of the reactionary troops and police at strike areas.

The US-Marcos clique is antagonistic not only to the toiling masses of workers and peasants but also to the students who have rallied to the cause of these oppressed. A scheme is now well under way by which the educational system is to be converted fully into a tool for narrowing the perspective of the youth to seeking technical jobs in a limited number of imperialist enterprises and projects. The scheme is also meant to effect a reorganization which will throw out of the state colleges and universities progressive-minded teachers. Marcos boasts of this scheme as "educational reform" related to "economic development." This is actually a wastage of educational funds for imperialist purposes.

Overthrow the US-Marcos Dictatorship to Achieve National Freedom and Democracy

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The essence of the formal declaration of martial law through Proclamation No. 1081 is the brazen imposition of the US-Marcos dictatorship on the entire Filipino nation and people. This proclamation is in effect the formal declaration of civil war by the US-Marcos clique against the broad masses of the people. At the same time, it is in the final analysis the death sentence for its criminal authors because the people shall win in the end through revolutionary struggle.

As a result of the complete self-exposure of the US-Marcos dictatorship, the conditions for the rapid advance of the Philippine revolution against US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism have become far more excellent than ever before. The ranks of the revolutionary movement have rapidly broadened and the various forms of revolutionary struggle, principally armed struggle, have further intensified.

A new level of revolutionary struggle has come about. All over the country, the people are brimming with revolutionary hatred for the US-Marcos dictatorship, the violent opposite of national freedom and democracy which they cherish. It is starkly clear to everyone that a fascist dictatorship, seeking to perpetuate itself through counterrevolutionary violence, can be overthrown only through revolutionary violence. The US-Marcos clique has only dug deeper its grave.

The usurpation of absolute power by the US-Marcos dictatorship

With an autocratic arrogance reminiscent of absolute monarchy in feudal times, the US-Marcos clique has converted Article VII, Section 10, Paragraph 2 of the reactionary constitution into an overall license to suppress the sovereign rights of the Filipino people in violation of every concept of republicanism. It is the absurd stand of the US-Marcos dictatorship that it can declare and implement an “unlimited form of martial law.” If the fascist logic of the dictatorship were to be followed, this particular constitutional provision should have merited being the Preamble, Article I or Article II, but never lower than Article III entitled “Bill of Rights” of the reactionary constitution. Indeed, fascist dictators themselves wantonly violate the priority of principles laid down hypocritically in bourgeois constitutions and pick constitutional provisions out of context in order to suit their tyranny.

Without bothering to get any authorization from Congress, Marcos highhandedly signed Proclamation No. 1081 on September 21 and subsequently signed corresponding general orders, letters of instruction and a presidential decree on September 22 and September 23 before finally making them public at 7:15 on the evening of September 23, 1972. In his “background” speech for his prior acts, all essentially calculated to usurp and concentrate absolute governmental power in his hands and suppress every kind of democratic and revolutionary opposition to his regime, he boasted of wanting “to save the republic and to reform society” and of doing so in his capacity as commander-in-chief of the reactionary armed forces alone. In this regard, the puppet dictator Marcos keeps repeating “I” and “me personally” to stress his autocratic pretensions.

Proclamation No. 1081 lays down at length the pretexts for martial law and dictatorship, such as that there is not only a “state of rebellion” and “subversion” but even “an actual state of war” throughout the country, including the Greater Manila area. This is supposed to be due to a “criminal conspiracy” of such diverse groups of men as the Communist Party of the Philippines; the Liberal Party; the publishers, editors and other journalists; members of the constitutional convention; Manila TV-radio broadcasters; leaders and members of mass organizations of workers, peasants, students, teachers and professionals, women and others; the national minorities, especially those of Mindanao; and even such unwholesome groups as crime syndicates, petty warlords and the Lava revisionist renegades. Then, the proclamation orders the reactionary armed forces to put the entire country under martial law and detain indefinitely at the whim of the commander-in-chief all those deemed opposed to his fascist puppet regime.

The promulgation of Proclamation No. 1081 immediately violates Article VI, Section 26 of the reactionary constitution which clearly states that “in times of war or other national emergency, the Congress may by law authorize the President, for a limited period and subject to such restrictions as it may prescribe, to promulgate rules and regulations to carry out a declared national policy.” This constitutional provision points out the authority of Congress and the necessity of having a declared national policy emanating from it. Marcos did not bother to consult

Congress as the national policy-making body of the reactionary government before signing his fascist proclamation. He even went farther by issuing General Order No. 1 and Presidential Decree No. 1 which put Congress to naught.

General Order No. 1 proclaims that the entire nation and the entire government, including all its agencies and instrumentalities, are under the absolute authority of the US-Marcos dictatorship. Under this order, both the legislative department and the judicial department, coequals and coordinates of the executive department under the constitution, are arbitrarily rendered inutile and even nonexistent. This order also carries with it the implication that the commander-in-chief of the reactionary armed forces can at whim disregard and violate anyone's right to public office by virtue of election or civil service rules. In effect, the fascist dictatorship has torn to pieces the very same constitution which it pretends to defend and draw authority from.

The promulgation of Presidential Decree No. 1 clearly shows that Marcos has arrogated unto himself the prerogatives and functions of Congress or the legislative department. Under this decree, the "Integrated Reorganization Plan" is simply declared "part of the law of the land" despite the fact that this is a pending congressional bill. The fascist dictator has even seen it fit to berate Congress for not having had enough sense to pass this bill before. By way of confirming the dissolution or absorption by him of Congress, he invited a number of congressmen on September 25 only to tell them to become "models in their communities" and to threaten them veiledly with dispossession of their property by the Bureau of Internal Revenue. To stress the point that he has assumed fascist dictatorial powers, he has ordered the detention of several members of Congress in military camps or placed them under house arrest or under threat of detention and other punitive measures.

General Order No. 3 clearly puts all actions of the US-Marcos dictatorship above the civilian courts, including the Supreme Court. It takes away from these the prerogative of trying seven categories of cases of vital importance, such as those involving: 1) the validity, legality or constitutionality of any decree, order or acts issued, promulgated or performed by the dictator himself or his duly designated representative; 2) the validity, legality or constitutionality of any rules, orders or acts issued, promulgated or performed by public servants pursuant to decrees, orders, rules and regulations issued and promulgated "by me" or by "my duly designated representative" pursuant to Proclamation No. 1081; 3) crimes against national security and the law of nations; 4) crimes against the fundamental laws of the state; 5) crimes against public order; 6) usurpation of authority, rank, title, and improper use of names, uniforms and insignia; and 7) crimes committed by public officers.

The abovementioned cases are put within the exclusive jurisdiction of military commissions or military courts created by the chief of staff of the reactionary armed forces and under the direction of the dictatorship. In other words, the US-Marcos dictatorship and its fascist minions can commit every crime with absolute impunity. Marcos himself has scorned the petition of detainees for the writ of habeas corpus in the Supreme Court as an exercise in futility since he claims now to be the sole authority on judicial matters as commander-in-chief of the reactionary armed forces. He has also declared that he will remove and replace public officials in any government department, including the judiciary; in fact, he has already demanded the resignation of all judges of the lower civilian courts and special courts like the Court of Industrial Relations and Court of Agrarian Relations. The scope of authority given to the military courts is so comprehensive that all civilian courts, including the Supreme Court, are left with no more cases to try, except some of a marginal nature.

General Order No. 3 orders that the present officers and employees of all executive departments, bureaus, offices, agencies and instrumentalities of the national government, government-owned or controlled corporations, as well as all governments of all the provinces, cities and municipalities and barrios can remain in office only at the pleasure of the US-Marcos dictatorship and can no longer consider as sufficient basis for tenure previous elections or civil service eligibility.

Provincial governors and town and city mayors are now so much threatened that some of those who were previously critical of the US-Marcos clique, especially those from the Liberal Party, have started to sing paeans for Marcos as if the criminal character of this scoundrel can be appeased by capitulation. Presidential Decree No. 1 emphasizes the threat of dismissal against appointive officials and employees even without due process and due cause. The real intention of the "Integrated Reorganization Plan" is to effect mass dismissal of civilian employees so that their salaries could be used for the purposes of the fascist military although the avowed intention of the dictatorship is to reduce the costs of government by "weeding out" those whom it categorizes as "corrupt, inefficient, ignorant and useless." By acting on the sole basis that he is the commander-in-chief of the reactionary

armed forces and by implementing his line of “unlimited martial law” above and beyond the entire constitution, Marcos has supplanted “civilian authority” with “military authority,” notwithstanding his previous declaration on September 23 that there was “no military takeover,” and has calculated to perpetuate his dictatorship, notwithstanding his oft-repeated claim that he wants the “national emergency” to end “as soon as possible.” In his address to his military lapdogs on September 26, the dictator himself declared: “By and large, the military in the Philippines have demonstrated their capacity to govern, rule and exact obedience.... This is the first new principle or main manifestation in the New Society which we would like to create: that there is a breed of men capable not only of ruling others but of governing themselves.... we must thank you and the men under you, noncommissioned officers and enlisted men, all the way down to the lowest level, have shown and demonstrated that this principle in which we believe, that is, that the military can be given all the power....” For all intents and purposes, the US-Marcos dictatorship is hell-bent on employing an armed minority of men (at the moment only about 65,000 including noncombatant personnel) to ride roughshod over the people. This is absolutely necessary as the dictatorship intends to perpetuate itself for “two years or more” (as revealed by top CIA agent Alejandro Melchor in a press interview in the United States, after making a special report on the Philippine situation to his US imperialist masters). This is far beyond the one year and three months that is left of the constitutional tenure of Marcos.

The suppression of the basic democratic rights of the people

In line with the vile scheme of the US-Marcos dictatorship to perpetuate itself in power, General Order No. 2, General Order No. 4 and General Order No. 5 are all aimed at directly intimidating and actually curtailing and suppressing the basic democratic rights of the broad masses of the people. Of course, these are closely related to General Order No. 3 which, elaborating on Proclamation No. 1081, subjects the people to final judgment by their fascist persecutors.

General Order No. 2 reiterates the order for mass arrests and mass detention immediately embodied in Proclamation No. 1081. It orders the fascist troops to arrest and detain for as long as it pleases the dictatorship “such persons as may have committed crimes and offenses in furtherance or on the occasion of or incident to or in connection with the crimes of insurrection or rebellion, as well as persons who have committed crimes against national security and the law of nations, crimes against public order, crimes involving usurpation of authority, title, improper use of name, uniform and insignia, including persons guilty of crimes as public officers, as well as those persons who may have violated any decree or order promulgated by me personally or promulgated upon my direction.”

Under this order, anyone can be blacklisted by the US-Marcos dictatorship, blackmailed or actually put through sham trial in the military courts and punished arbitrarily. In the first wave of nationwide mass arrests, conducted from 9:00 p.m. of September 22 to 6:00 a.m. of September 23, several thousands of leading personalities in various legal endeavors and common people were apprehended and thrown into military camps and many of these were brutally tortured or even murdered. So far, only a little over a hundred detainees in the Manila-Rizal region have been reported through the Marcos-controlled government radio stations and the Marcos-owned Kanlaon Broadcasting System (KBS) and Daily Express.

General Order No. 4 orders the maintenance of a daily curfew throughout the Philippines from 12:00 midnight to 4:00 in the morning. This has immediately resulted in the disruption of the livelihood of a great number of people, including workers on the night shift, fishermen, market vendors, transport workers and businessmen, restaurant employees, street pedlars and so many others. To disregard this order infringing on the free movement of the people is to suffer brutal treatment and indefinite detention in a military camp and subsequently in a prison camp. Exemptions to this order can be taken only from a military commander-in-charge in the given area. That military officer acts as the overlord in the area. Within or outside curfew time, it is now the fascist troops roaming the streets who commit all sorts of crimes, frequently extortion, robbery, maulings, drunken behavior and rape. Anyone who complains can easily get accused of slandering the dictator Marcos and the fascist military.

General Order No. 5 orders the suppression of the basic democratic rights of free assembly and free expression. This is directed against the workers, peasants, youth and all other sections of the population, including political parties, trade unions and other mass organizations. It prohibits under pain of fascist punishment all rallies and demonstrations and other forms of mass actions, including strikes and picketing by workers and others, in vital industries such as in companies engaged in the manufacture or processing as well as in the distribution of fuel, gas, gasoline and fuel or lubricating oil, in companies engaged in the production or processing of essential

commodities or products for export, and in companies engaged in banking of any kind, as well as in hospitals and in schools and colleges.

It is clear by this order that while he acts as a dictator towards the broad masses of the people, Marcos is a despicable puppet of the big bourgeoisie, especially the US imperialists. He is specially interested in suppressing protest mass actions against the US oil monopolies and their arbitrary price hiking. At any rate, he is violently opposed to all forms of democratic assembly and expression. He has gone as far as to issue a special order to the armed forces, particularly his secret agents, to eavesdrop on ordinary conversations in order to catch people for “rumormongering.”

Letter of Instruction No. 1 also involves the suppression of the democratic right of free expression. It orders the Press Secretary of the Department of Public Information (DPI) after Presidential Decree No. 1, to take over all newspapers, magazines, radio and television facilities and all other media of communications, wherever they are. The closure of the major Manila newspapers and radio and TV stations has disrupted the livelihood of printing workers, journalists, staff employees, radio-TV talents, newsboys, newspaper dealers and so many others. Pursuant to Letter of Instruction No. 1, the DPI secretary has started to issue his own department orders. Department Order No. 1 orders, among others, that all materials for publication in the newspapers or broadcast on radio and television shall have to carry the approval of the Department of Public Information and that these shall have to fall in with the fascist dictatorship and strictly avoid expressing the true national and democratic interests of the Filipino people. Department Order No. 2 orders that no printer may print any newspaper, periodical, news sheet, pamphlet, leaflet or any publication for mass dissemination of any kind without approval of the Department of Public Information and that these shall also have to conform with Department Order No. 1. Because of bureaucratic run-around involved in getting approval for printing orders, the livelihood not only of the press owners but also of the printing workers are adversely affected.

The US-Marcos dictatorship wants to monopolize all channels of information with the vain hope of controlling the minds of the people with its lies. Its fascist totalitarianism leaves no room for such other channels of information as those owned by the Roceses, Lopezes, Locsins and the like though these have never gone beyond legal criticism of the obvious excesses of the US-Marcos clique and have as a matter of fact given utmost space to Malacañang press releases. In the meantime, it is only those channels of information that are owned by the fascist government (like Radio Philippines Network; Philippine Broadcasting System and the like); those that are owned directly or indirectly by fascist dictator Marcos (like Kanlaon Broadcasting System, Daily Express, Liwayway, Banawag, Hiligaynon, Bisaya, and the like); and those owned by foreign imperialist entities, especially American, (Philippines Herald, Radio Mindanao Network, Interisland Broadcasting System and the like) that are allowed to operate.

This new development is what Marcos calls fighting “subversion” with “sophistication.” This is what we call the crudeness of fascism, the complete unmasking of the ugly face of a fascist dictatorship. Unwittingly, the US-Marcos dictatorship has only convinced the broad masses of the people of the necessity and urgency of putting out and distributing underground publications and resorting to other forms of mass communications (including secret meetings in urban areas and mass meetings in the rural areas). It must also be pointed out that it is impossible for the fascist authorities to guard all medium and small printing presses in the country, not to mention some small presses securely kept in the underground.

Gone berserk in its attempt to suppress every kind of opposition to its unjust rule, the US-Marcos dictatorship has as one of its initial acts suspended classes at all levels. Though the initial suspension of classes is only for one week, this has been extended indefinitely at the high school, college and graduate levels. School teachers in primary and elementary schools are now under threat of being dismissed if they disobey strict orders to wage a hysterical campaign of anticommunist indoctrination and propaganda for the fascist dictatorship. Progressive teachers and students, including officers of student governments, are being apprehended or threatened with detention. Such fascist tactics have only served to increase the number of men and women who are very articulate in denouncing the US-Marcos dictatorship. The indefinite closure of all private high schools and colleges have angered all the teachers whose livelihood has been unduly disrupted and the students’ parents who are acutely concerned about the time and living expenses of their children going to waste.

General Order No. 6 and General Order No. 7 are both intended to consolidate control by the US-Marcos dictatorship of firearms and ammunitions in the hands of the reactionary armed forces and police forces and also

those in the hands of security agencies and warlords. The first order prohibits the carrying of firearms by private persons and orders the arrest of all persons doing so unless they are authorized by the dictatorship. Marcos himself has declared in his “background” speech that carrying of firearms outside the residence, even if covered by license but without permission of the reactionary armed forces, is punishable by death. The second order requires that all highpowered firearms in the hands of private security agencies, public or private corporations (including gun stores) and private individuals, and those under temporary custody of the Bureau of Customs, Bureau of Posts and clerks of courts (apart from those in pending court cases) be turned over immediately to the firearms and explosives units of the Philippine Constabulary.

To camouflage its real intention of controlling arms for its fascist purposes, the US-Marcos dictatorship has raved mad about “peace and order” and has even pretended to arrest and confiscate token numbers of arms from notorious warlords who are close to it, like Ablan, Bocalan, Crisologo and the like. But the warlords and crime gangs are actually not surrendering their arms. Only some police forces, private corporations and individuals opposed to the US-Marcos dictatorship are being forced to turn over their registered arms to the Philippine Constabulary. As a result, these entities are being rendered helpless before the fascist gangsters, warlords and ordinary armed criminals. Letter of Instruction No. 2 orders the Secretary of National Defense to “take over” the management, control and operation of the Manila Electric Company (MERALCO), the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company (PLDT), the National Waterworks and Sewerage Authority (NAWASA), the Philippine National Railways (PNR), the Philippine Air Lines (PAL), Air Manila, Filipinas Orient Airways, and other public utilities. Once more, the US-Marcos dictatorship deliberately refuses even only to mention the US oil companies and other US-owned public utility firms in the Philippines.

The “takeover” of public utilities is neither to achieve nationalization nor to crush an armed opposition in the premises. The NAWASA and PNR are government corporations long under trusted military appointees of Marcos. The PLDT and Air Manila are private corporations controlled and owned by Marcos himself through dummies. The PAL and Filipinas Orient Airways continue to be private corporations under the ownership and control of Marcos’ big bourgeois confreres. The real target for spite of the US-Marcos dictatorship is MERALCO and the Lopezes who are owners of controlling stocks. The military-takeover management here really makes it a point to boss around, go over the company accounts and meddle in operations. Though Marcos himself is a noncontrolling co-owner of this public utility firm, he wants to once more tighten the screw against the Lopezes whom he wants to support his dictatorship completely, especially with the use of the Lopez-owned Manila Chronicle and ABS-CBN radio-television network.

Letter of Instruction No. 3 orders the Secretary of National Defense to take over the possession, control and operation of all privately owned aircraft and watercraft of Philippine registry and also to control the movement of nonmilitary foreign-owned and foreign-registered aircraft and watercraft of whatever make. The avowed intention of the US-Marcos dictatorship in this regard is to prevent the escape of his reactionary rivals for power either by sea or by air in their private yachts or private planes. Letters of Instruction Nos. 4, 5, 6, and 7 to the Secretary of Foreign Affairs, the Secretary of Justice, the Secretary of Finance and the Governor of the Central Bank, respectively, are also openly intended to prevent the “escape from the country” of the enemies of the US-Marcos dictatorship. But, of course, the instructions, from Instruction No. 3 to Instruction No. 7, are all meant to curtail the free flow of information regarding the despicableness by which the US-Marcos dictatorship has come about. Only after assuring itself of complete control of the mass media and also the detention of a sweeping range of critics has the dictatorship allowed, under guard of troops, spies and censors, the transmission of messages via international and domestic carriers and communication firms.

In a vain attempt to deceive the peasant masses, the big landlord and landgrabber Marcos has announced that he has issued Presidential Decree No. 2 proclaiming the whole country as a “land reform area.” This is plain drivel of a demagogue. Since the law to be applied is basically the old Agricultural Land Reform Code, which is reactionary by both origin and amendments, nothing will come out of the decree except that it will serve to worsen the plight of the peasant masses as has been proven in previous “land reform areas.” The code is essentially nothing more than a set of instructions for the landlord class to exploit the peasantry further. In making his decree, Marcos even fails to conceal his malice as he sternly warns the tenant peasants to “respect” and be “fair and just” to the landlords. The dictatorship is hellbent on preventing the peasant masses from forming their own associations and is busier than ever in criminally assaulting and rounding up those who have their own militant associations.

The reactionary armed forces are now frenziedly attacking the peasant masses and accusing them of being guerilla fighters of the New People's Army. Thus, the US-Marcos dictatorship has become isolated not only in the urban areas but also in the countryside where the flames of people's war are rapidly spreading.

The "show window of democracy in Asia" which was much touted by US imperialism and its puppets in the past has completely proven to be mere soap bubble. It is now completely gone. Because of its boundless greed for power and wealth, the US-Marcos dictatorship has forced on everyone in the Philippines the choice between armed revolution and armed counterrevolution. The people's revolutionary struggle for national freedom and democracy has become ever more vigorous and fiercer. In this regard, it is worth taking up CIA agent Melchor's description of his criminal accomplice Marcos, as one who has put his head on the block. This description is very apt. The Filipino people are going to literally chop off Marcos' head in due time, unless his US imperialist masters will first do so in the manner that they did to the abominable Ngo Dinh Diem. At any rate, the Filipino people will continue to maintain their armed strength and fight on even as some other dog would be groomed as one more puppet dictator by US imperialism. In the face of the present fascist tyranny, the broad masses of the Filipino people know how to fight for their freedom.

The fabrication of the "state of national emergency"

An actual state of martial law has long existed in many parts of the country, especially in Central Luzon, Northern Luzon, Southern Luzon and Mindanao, even before the formal declaration of martial law covering the entire country. The fascist minions of the US-Marcos clique under the black banners of military task forces have long operated as the supreme wielders of political authority, abusing and blackmailing the people; robbing and extorting from them; rounding them up and incarcerating them indefinitely on false charges; barging into homes and even burning them; committing kidnappings, murder and massacres; and raping the womenfolk with impunity.

These are the concrete manifestations, especially in the countryside, of the trend of militarization and fascization so well condemned by the people throughout the land. These are the bitter results of the more than fivefold increase of the official military budget from 1966 to 1972; the system of conspiracy between the commander-in-chief and his favorites in the reactionary armed forces; the rapid increase in troops and equipment; the fielding of so many "task forces" and "paramilitary units" (BSDUs and "Monkees"); the vicious employment of the Anti-Subversion Law; the intensification of fascist training in "home defense" centers; the militarist intrusion into civilian offices and functions either under the signboard of "civic action" or "accommodation of retirees from the military service"; the secret but widescale issuance of military rank to civilian officials; the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus; the unremitting "psywar" campaigns for the acceptance of martial law; the adoption of "contingency plans"; committing crimes of bloody intrigue for the purpose of pitting one group against another; and so many others.

The real situation in certain parts of the country is now being turned into a nationwide situation through the formal declaration of martial law. The US-Marcos dictatorship is bent on committing all kinds of fascist crimes against the broad masses of the people in order to suppress their clamor for national freedom and democracy, province by province and island by island. The fascist dictatorship has the illusion that it can freely do so as long as it has the absolute power over the entire reactionary government and monopoly of the legal channels of communications such as those rendered in the Manila-Rizal region and other urban areas. Thus, aside from trying to hunt down the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army, it has to terrorize the democratic mass organizations, the mass media, the Liberal Party, sections of the Nacionalista Party, sections of the constitutional convention and all patriotic and democratic personages. This is to serve notice to all who can disseminate information and opinions widely to keep silent about fascist crimes that are aimed at protecting the interests of US imperialism and at the same time perpetuating the Marcos puppet gang in power. To achieve its vile scheme, the US-Marcos clique has had to resort to a number of tricks resting mainly on the myth of "urban terrorism." A series of a few bombings is made in the urban areas, blamed on communists and all other democratic forces, turned into an argument for "contingency plans" and, presto, there is a "state of national emergency" which is used as a pretext for doing away with all channels of mass communications except those of the commander-in-chief and his dictatorship.

The dry run for the big trick that is the current "state of national emergency" was the Plaza Miranda massacre on August 21, 1971 and the subsequent suspension of the writ of habeas corpus until January of this year. In the massacre caused by two grenades, nine were killed and more than a hundred people were seriously wounded

including almost all the top leaders of the Liberal Party. Within two hours after the incident, the US-Marcos clique was already on radio blaming the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army and democratic mass organizations for the dastardly crime. Then, less than three hours after the massacre, the US-Marcos clique issued only to the reactionary armed forces and without public knowledge until August 23, the presidential proclamation suspending the writ of habeas corpus and ordering the mass arrest of prominent democratic personages and activists of democratic mass organizations. Immediately after the massacre, there also followed a series of nine petty bombings which had no other motive but to buttress the false public claims of the US-Marcos clique and which could have been committed in certain well-guarded places, like the Manila City Hall and the residence of Rep. Cojuangco, only by a conspiracy in which Marcos himself was involved.

What gave away the bloody hands of the US-Marcos clique with regard to the Plaza Miranda massacre was that Marcos and his lieutenant Enrile readily blamed so many people, including a college president and a prominent radio commentator, and entire mass organizations for a crime which was essentially a conspiracy and, therefore, could have involved only a handful of persons in both planning and execution. The broad masses of the people and the survivors of the massacre themselves pointed the finger of blame on the US-Marcos clique, which had been responsible for so many previous massacres. The false accusations of the US-Marcos clique became more ludicrous and incredible when the leaders of the Liberal Party were finally accused of trying to kill themselves in order to get public sympathy and win the elections. The suspension of the writ of habeas corpus was "lifted" only after the US-Marcos clique appeared satisfied with something, like the Supreme Court decision acclaiming the presidential privilege to suspend the writ, giving credence to a piece of fabrication like the "July-August Plan" and above all noting the existence of a state of rebellion and likewise of a declaration of war from the Communist Party of the Philippines. Then, in a complete turnabout from its previous propaganda of anticommunist lies, the US-Marcos clique charged in court for the Plaza Miranda massacre not some communists but some living-out prisoners of the national penitentiary, which is run by a trusted agent of the US-Marcos clique.

The fascist tricks of the US-Marcos clique did not end with the Plaza Miranda massacre, however. The clique merely took a breather for a few months from its November 1971 electoral defeat. Soon came another series of petty bombings, a total of 16 minor detonations (from March 15 to September 18, 1972) most of which caused only some petty damage on some government and privately owned buildings and three of which were the most serious, causing one death and injuries to more than twenty people. In addition, there were "discoveries" of bombs at Congress and the Department of Foreign Affairs and two patently fake casualtyless ambushes, one supposedly on a Metrocom car and another on Defense Secretary Enrile himself. Most of the bombings and other incidents were made during the months of August and September 1972 immediately prior to Proclamation No. 1081.

It was during the months of August and September, when thirteen of the abovesited incidents were made, that the US-Marcos clique took the posture of raving mad about "urban terrorism" and "urban guerrilla warfare." Within seconds after every incident, Marcos and his fascist minions would rail against the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army and democratic mass organizations and threaten to adopt some "contingency plans." Everyday the front pages of the Manila newspapers would scream and the radio would blare with the quick allegations of the US-Marcos clique. During this period, the Communist Party of the Philippines issued through Ang Bayan two statements refuting the false accusations of the fascist clique; some quotations from these statements found their way into Manila newspapers. As during the white terror that followed the Plaza Miranda massacre, the Party reaffirmed its adherence to the theory of people's war and the strategic line of encircling the cities from the countryside and strongly condemned terrorist acts where the most likely victims are the people and likewise the stupid "psywar" campaign unleashed by the enemy to cause a mammoth-sized hysteria from a few petty incidents.

A few of the bombings before June 1972 had been claimed by the Lava revisionist renegades in their anticommunist publications as their own doing. And in three bombings, where there were casualties, evidence clearly pointed to the US-Marcos clique as the mastermind and culprit. A PC sergeant belonging to the PC firearms and explosives unit was actually caught by the Manila Police and confessed to being on a "special mission" in connection with the most serious bombing, that at Joe's Department Store. Two AFP plainclothesmen taking a ride in a jeep marked "for official use only" were seen by eyewitnesses in connection with the bombing at the Manila City Hall. Three PC men in uniform were also seen in the process of bomb emplacement and getaway in a PC truck by

three delegates of the constitutional convention in connection with the bombing at the Quezon City Hall.

Despite all evidences and clues gathered, the US-Marcos clique did not only continue to insist on its false anti-communist charges but also maneuvered to suppress evidence pointing to its own criminal responsibility. The maneuvers of the clique were so crudely evident that eventually the leaders of the Liberal Party and journalists of the Manila newspapers stood up to raise questions of doubt and also to denounce certain actuations of the powers that be. Then came the public exposure of "Operation Sagittarius" which unmasked the plans of the US-Marcos clique to declare martial law under the guise of taking "contingency plans" to follow up the terrorist incidents made by the clique itself. This operational plan had been leaked out to a member of the Senate by a top-ranking military officer. It was at this point, covering a period of about two weeks prior to Proclamation No. 1081, that the US-Marcos clique intensified its efforts to terrorize all its critics by telling them that they could be kidnapped or assassinated.

As if it could deceive the people by a mere repetition of lies, Proclamation No. 1081 continues to treat the incidents, which were mostly bombings in urban areas, as the key factor in declaring a "state of national emergency." On the other hand, this proclamation has completely unmasked the US-Marcos clique as a totally fascist criminal gang and a bunch of incorrigible liars. How many times did these scoundrels deny scheming to impose martial law? There is not only martial law now but also a full-blown fascist dictatorship to boot. The flimsy basis for what is now called a "state of national emergency" or "an actual state of war" is a series of twenty relatively minor incidents which, as now confirmed by the very promulgation of Proclamation No. 1081, have all along been the calculated doing of the US-Marcos clique to fabricate grounds for a fascist dictatorship all over the country.

The basis for the "state of national emergency" becomes even more flimsy and ludicrous when a textual examination is made of the "Regional Program of Action 1972," previously referred to variably as the "Tarinsing Papers," the "July-August Plan" or "September-October Plan" by the US-Marcos clique. It is incorporated in Proclamation No. 1081; now it can be publicly checked and scrutinized. This "regional program of action" is completely a piece of deception, a fabrication pure and simple. It is supposed to be a regional program of action and yet its scope is national and the name of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines is spuriously tacked on it. It was supposed to have been captured by Task Force "Saranay" in Barrio Tarinsing, Cordon, Isabela on June 18, 1972 and it lists down a number of specific bombing targets for September and October 1972 in the Manila-Rizal region. Despite the supposed advantage of being forewarned by several months, the reactionary armed forces did not thwart the bombing of the listed targets or capture any bomber. Then, consider how the "regional plan" is conceived, put into outline and written according to outline. It is completely childish. To write an instruction like "Create regional chaos and disorder..." is utterly counterrevolutionary and outside of revolutionary thinking and style. This is Marcosian gibberish, a sloppy attempt at forgery.

Before Proclamation No. 1081, there could not have been any "actual state of war" in the Manila-Rizal region. On the very day that Marcos was supposed to have signed this proclamation in utmost secrecy, people's marches from several assembly points in the Manila-Rizal region and a massive rally of several tens of thousands of people at Plaza Miranda were peacefully conducted under the auspices of the Movement of Concerned Citizens for Civil Liberties and with the participation of more than sixty democratic mass organizations. In the entire stretch of the day, the factories, offices, schools and business shops were in normal operation. Congress, the courts, various government offices, the constitutional convention, the restaurants, coffee shops and nightclubs were also in normal operation. The "actual state of war" in the Manila-Rizal region was nothing more than the fantasy of the madman Marcos, otherwise notoriously known as the mad bomber.

The wide-ranging "whereases" of Proclamation No. 1081 contradict each other and serve mainly to show how much of a fumbling liar the dictator Marcos is. He makes one claim that the strength of the New People's Army has rapidly increased, but also makes the opposite claim that it has suffered a disastrously increasing number of casualties and therefore, an increasing loss of arms, from year to year. Besides, he deflates the number of military actions launched against and the number of casualties inflicted on the reactionary armed forces by the New People's Army in the countryside. He makes one claim that the number of regular Red fighters has increased from 560 as of January 1, 1972 to 1,028 regular fighters as of July 31, 1972, but he also makes the opposite claim that the New People's Army got 3,500 M-14 rifles from the Karagatan during the month of July. Possession of 3,500 M-14 rifles should mean a great deal more of regular troop increase for the people's army. He makes one claim that some 3,000 high school and college students have dropped out to join fighting units of the New People's Army,

but makes the opposite claim that the same people's army has only 1,028 regular fighters and 1,500 combat support. The truth is that at least 90 percent of the regular mobile and guerrilla units of the people's army are peasants; this makes Marcos' claim regarding school dropouts an outright lie even as his own figures fail to tally with each other. Finally, it may be asked, why is it that Marcos is terrified by what he claims is a little over 1,000 Red fighters while at the same time he never fails to brag about the overbearing strength of his military personnel of 65,000? Has he not always been prating that he is "on top of the situation"?

Although in its very first "whereas" it makes the attempt to show that only the Communist Party is the "conspiracy" out to overthrow the present reactionary state, Proclamation No. 1081, together with its corresponding general orders and letters of instruction, ends up accusing a wide range of people of being in one and the same "conspiracy" that is supposed to be responsible for a "reign of terror" and "wanton acts of destruction on life and property" in both the rural and urban areas. The dictator Marcos arbitrarily changes the meaning of terms. Obviously, he has already extended his dictatorial power into the realm of the lexicon. Normally, conspiracy is defined as the act of a handful of persons secretly plotting to commit a crime according to a single plan. In the novel meaning now given by the dictator to the term, it is supposed to be the open and mass activity of the most diverse organizations and individuals acting "consciously" and "unconsciously" to oppose such a real conspiracy as that one which has brought about the present fascist dictatorship.

The US-Marcos dictatorship actually insists that the Communist Party of the Philippines is in "conspiracy" with the Lava revisionist renegades and crime syndicates. This is a vicious slander on the Party. But the fascist dictatorship unwittingly exposes its hopeless isolation by linking in word and deed the Communist Party of the Philippines with the democratic mass organizations (of workers, peasants, youth and others), the mass media, the Liberal Party, certain sections of the Nacionalista Party, certain members of the constitutional convention, the poor settlers, the national minorities and the Mindanao Independence Movement. It is utterly silly, however, for the fascist dictatorship to accuse the Communist Party, together with these, of crimes against the people. If that were the case, there would be no more need for the "extraordinary measures" of the US-Marcos dictatorship, for it would be us who would be isolated and not this despicable dictatorship.

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Proclamation No. 1081 takes great stock in citing a decision of the Supreme Court (on the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus last year) stating that there has been a state of rebellion since several decades ago and that the program of the Communist Party of the Philippines amounts to a declaration of war. On the basis of this

citation, the US-Marcos clique claims to have the right to declare martial law under any condition and anytime it pleases. It further argues that it has already resorted to the use of military task forces and subsequently the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus but that it has failed each time to suppress the armed revolutionary movement which has always succeeded in becoming even stronger despite these measures. So, it concludes that it has to declare martial law. It further concludes that it is entirely up to the president in his capacity as commander-in-chief of the armed forces to make anything out of martial law since the term “martial law” is supposedly not qualified in Article VII, Section 10, Paragraph 2 of the reactionary constitution. Thus, the commander-in-chief has finally decided to install himself as a fascist dictator under the cover of an “unlimited form of martial law.”

The term “martial law” appears in the context of a constitutional provision, which refers to certain other factors and elements and which even refers to degrees and alternatives. It is not true that the term is absolutely not qualified and that it can be interpreted by the president in any way he wants. The term “place under martial law” implies merely execution or implementation of a national policy determined and declared by Congress. The provision carrying the term appears in the context of the entire constitution which also carries Article VI, Section 26. In times of war or other national emergency, it is Congress that is vested with the authority to decide the national policy and that authorizes by law the president, for a limited period of time and subject to such restrictions as it may prescribe, to promulgate rules and regulations to carry out a declared national policy.

Notwithstanding the existence of a state of rebellion, the formal declaration of martial law was never resorted to in the Philippines or any part thereof in the time prior to the present by Marcos’ predecessors and Marcos himself. Yet the reasons given now by Marcos for the formal declaration of martial law have not only been in fact too blatantly contrived but have also been extremely questionable even among the reactionaries. The broad masses of the people easily see through the legal pretenses of the dictator Marcos. These are extremely flimsy embellishments on the new terrorist incidents plotted to bring about a “state of national emergency,” the fabrication of which rests on the US-Marcos dictatorship.

“New society” means nothing but the worsening of the old society

The US-Marcos dictatorship is not satisfied with pretending “to save the republic” in attacking the national and democratic rights of the sovereign people. It wants to remain in power for as long as it can through sheer armed force by pretending “to form a new society.” The “new society” means the perpetuation of the fascist dictatorship. It means nothing but the worsening of the old society. The old basic evils that are US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism shall continue to afflict semicolonial and semifeudal Philippines and shall aggravate the political and economic crisis of the ruling system and likewise the suffering of the broad masses of the people through the unmitigated puppetry, bankruptcy, brutality, corruption and mendacity of the Marcos fascist puppet dictatorship.

As confirmed by the statement of the US State Department soon after Proclamation No. 1081, the installment of the fascist dictatorship in the Philippines does not conflict with the interests of US imperialism. In fact, US imperialism is confidently behind the Marcos puppet dictatorship at the moment. The direct conspirators in the setting up of the fascist dictatorship have been the US “country team” (which includes the US ambassador, the CIA chief of station, the AID director, the USIA director and the JUSMAG chief) and the board of directors and other top members of the American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines on the master side and the “internal security council” composed of Marcos, Melchor, Enrile and Generals Espino and Ramos of the general staff of the reactionary armed forces and a few oth-

The US-Marcos dictatorship is the product of the vicious exploitation and oppression of the Filipino people by US imperialism and its local running dogs for the last seven decades. It is the result of the rapid process of militarization and fascization directed by US imperialism during the Marcos puppet regime to preserve and enlarge its political and economic interests in the country. By trying to draw more superprofits and make up for the losses that they have incurred elsewhere in the world, the US imperialist masters of the Marcos puppet gang have only exacerbated the suffering of the broad masses of the people and have thereby engendered popular resistance and a strong revolutionary mass movement. So powerful has the anti-imperialist and antipuppet movement become that such a desperate measure as the installment of a fascist dictatorship is resorted to. US imperialism has always had the illusion that such fascist dictatorships as those of the Thieu regime in south Vietnam, Lon Nol regime in Cambodia, Suharto regime in Indonesia, Chiang regime in Taiwan and Park regime in south Korea are more reliable and stable tools of imperialist rule.

The US-Marcos dictatorship falls in with the “Nixon doctrine” that the Philippines must be kept no matter at what cost as a stronghold of counterrevolution in the determined bid of US imperialism to remain a “Pacific power.” From such an imperialist viewpoint, the most despicable measures must be taken in order to keep this archipelago in the Pacific a vassal state. A fascist gang like that of Marcos would just be too willing to implement these measures in exchange for an indefinite tenure of power in order to pile up more loot for itself. The fascist dictatorship is basically a desperate effort of US imperialism to protect \$2.0 billion US investments (in anticipation of the end of “parity rights”) and to maintain the Philippines as a strategic post in Asia.

US imperialism is today extremely unsettled by the people’s outcry for the confiscation of US-owned lands including the improvements thereon (like buildings, factories, equipment and other installations) and also for the immediate dismantling of US military bases which occupy large tracts of public lands. Even in the realm of the legal anti-imperialist struggle, US imperialism has lately suffered so many big reverses that it has decided to resort to the use of extraordinary measures with the use of the Marcos fascist gang. Just before Proclamation No. 1081, it was very clear that the bombing incidents and the corresponding “psywar” campaign were being staged by the US-Marcos clique in order to distract public attention from the strong legal grounds for demanding the immediate end of US imperialist domination. It dawned upon the US imperialists that even in the realm of the legal anti-imperialist struggle they were being hopelessly isolated. They had to hurry making use of the Marcos fascist gang which prated about “fairness” and “justice” for them against the popular demands for national emancipation.

The puppetry of the Marcos fascist gang is well proven. This gang has adopted and implemented to the letter every “recommendation” made by US imperialism through such direct agents as the components of the US “country team” and such other agents as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, US monopoly firms, Ford Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation and the like. The dictates of US imperialism have always become the basic policies and projects of the Marcos fascist puppet regime. Some of the most notorious policies and projects are the “floating rate” or the unabated rapid devaluation of the peso in relation to the US dollar; sham negotiations on the unequal US-RP treaties to achieve mere “adjustments”; “national treatment”, “joint ventures” and “incentives” — special privileges for US investments (nonexpropriation, investment insurance, unlimited dollar remittances, tax exemptions, driving up local credit sources, etc.); heavy foreign borrowings from the US and “consortium” banks for nonproductive projects; increasing taxation to raise counterpart funds for foreign loans and to support a military buildup; fascist training of the reactionary troops and police; the five-year program for a “self-reliant defense posture”; special privileges for US oil firms in oil exploration and in price-hiking; the “car manufacturing” scheme; free trade zones; and the reorganization plan of the Presidential Committee for the Survey of Philippine Education (PCSPE) for the educational system.

Enjoying absolute powers vis-à-vis the Filipino people, the Marcos fascist gang knows no bounds for its puppetry. It will throw the door wider open for US imperialism and other imperialist powers, especially Japanese militarism and Soviet social-imperialism. The substance of old unequal treaties with the United States will stay either through retention, minor revision or drafting of new ones. The Philippines will continue to suffer violation of national sovereignty and territorial integrity and will remain a victim of superprofit remittances by the imperialist firms and banks. Because a civil war of a national scale is now on hand and the US-Marcos dictatorship will subsequently resort to the use of US aggressor troops, despite the hypocritical claim of the “Nixon doctrine” about supplying war materiel rather than US manpower, the colonial domination of the Philippines will become more direct and conspicuous in the years to come unless other drastically different conditions arise.

Because it has seized absolute power without so much pretenses about having the support of a broad range of political groups, the US-Marcos dictatorship is exceptionally isolated at the moment and has to rely completely on its fascist troops. This extreme reliance on a parasitic and nonproductive military is bound to deepen the bankruptcy of the reactionary government. The present number of military personnel and equipment is not enough to maintain the fascist dictatorship for very long. Only from 32,000 to 34,500 men or only about half of the present total of military personnel are combat effectives. Therefore, it is expected that it will increase military expenditures in order to increase the number of military personnel and equipment. The official 1972-73 military budget of P1.2 billion has already been superseded. Even at the present troop level, military expenditures have already increased tremendously since the US-Marcos dictatorship has started to bribe the military personnel, from the rank of private first class upwards, with salary increases and allowances. The fascist dictatorship will certainly create more inflation through huge military expenditures. It will also have to increase taxes and its foreign debts by leaps and

bounds.

To satisfy its greed and bloodthirstiness, the US-Marcos dictatorship will become even more rabid in suppressing the democratic rights of the people. The workers will not only be prevented from launching strikes and maintaining their unions to raise their depressed real incomes and to assure themselves of job security but they will also have to suffer the unjust accusation that they are the cause of spiraling prices. The peasant masses will continue to be subjected to the most brutal military operations ostensibly against the armed revolutionaries and will be forced to accept the dictates of the big landlord class of which fascist puppet chieftain Marcos is the outstanding representative. The students and their parents will be commanded to accept the rising cost of education and cost of living; student movements will continue to be the target of hysterical anticommunist propaganda, as in the case of trade unions and peasant associations. Teachers and other professionals will have to pay more taxes and will have to suffer more indignities in the hands of the military overlords who dictate on them what opinion to take on issues. Higher government taxes and special extortions from the military will bedevil all businessmen that are not in the good graces of the dictatorship. These are only some of the concrete evils that will plague the country as a result of Proclamation No. 1081.

With absolute power in the hands of the US-Marcos dictatorship and its military minions, unbridled corruption and brutality will go hand in hand to exacerbate the people's suffering. The dictator Marcos himself has long set the example of enriching himself in office more than any other puppet president and of exculpating his agents from the most heinous crimes, including massacres of workers, peasants, students, national minorities and even religious groups. With the suppression of democratic rights, every person and every group is now under blackmail by the fascist dictatorship and its agents. The dictatorship has not only seized every major legal channel of communications and suppressed democratic organizations but it has even outlawed the ordinary conversations of people regarding the present situation and has branded these as "rumormongering."

At present, the US-Marcos dictatorship and its military minions can simply accuse anyone of being a "subversive," "conspirator" or "rumormonger" and extort anything from him at gunpoint. Through sheer coercion, the dictator Marcos will be able to acquire more stockholdings and landholdings. At every level of the reactionary government, his fascist minions will continue to do their own grabbing with more impunity. In the streets, the fascist troops will exact tribute more than in the past to the great annoyance of the local police whose most crooked members exact much less. In the campaign to seek out those who oppose the dictatorship, the most brutal measures will be taken such as those which long made the US-Marcos clique notorious. Kidnapping, torture, murder, arson and massacre have long been the political style of the Marcos fascist puppet gang. These can be committed by the fascist troops with more impunity, in both cities and countryside under Proclamation No. 1081.

The propaganda of the US-Marcos dictatorship keeps on harping about the sudden "peace and order" and "elimination of crime" as a result of Proclamation No. 1081. The truth is that fascist dictatorship is the biggest crime and cause of disorder. In the present "new society," people are massacred or arrested and detained indefinitely on false charges and manufactured evidence. There is no more safety in one's own home. Anytime, the fascist troops can barge in anywhere to dispose of persons and property in any manner they wish for their criminal ends. These minions of the dictatorship, together with their criminal associates (gangsters, informers, BSDUs and "Monkees") arrogantly engage in extortion, robbery, torture, rape and other vicious crimes. And these do not get into the police blotter, simply because the victims do not want to become the accused before their abusers. By official record, there appears to be "peace and order" and "elimination of crime." But crime and disorder, products of an exploitative and oppressive society, do not cease to exist just because the fascist-controlled mass media do not wish to report them. Despite all attempts of the US-Marcos dictatorship to suppress the truth, the facts of fascist abuse are so widespread and so blatant. The fascist dictatorship will become even more hopelessly isolated by the stench of its lies. The broad masses of the people will only be further angered by mendacious propaganda prettifying the fascist dictatorship as having eliminated crime, lowered the prices of basic commodities, busted graft and corruption and rid the country of filth and pollution, whereas the contrary is the truth. Deceptions even among a few people do not last long. The "new society" of the US-Marcos dictatorship is nothing but a phrase that will go the way of all previous slogans of deception spewed out by the US-Marcos clique. So long as the basic sources of evil in Philippine society are not eliminated, the manifestations of evil will always crop up. Marcos is nothing but the general representative of the big bourgeoisie and the big landlord class. What makes him even more distinctively so is that he has chosen to become a fascist dictator, a vicious running dog of

US imperialism, under conditions when the political and economic crisis of the ruling system is getting more and more acute everyday. In the “new society,” the basic sources of evil that are US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism will persist but will increasingly be under powerful assaults by the broad masses of the people. With a target as easy to hit as the US-Marcos dictatorship, the Filipino people will rapidly become even aware of their revolutionary strength, use it to destroy their enemies one by one and aim for a new Philippines that is genuinely and completely independent, democratic, united, just and prosperous.

Tasks of the Communist Party of the Philippines in the new situation

The setting up of the US-Marcos dictatorship through the declaration of an “unlimited form of martial law” and under the fascist principle that “all power can be given to the military” has brought about a new situation. Through the crude employment of armed coercion, dictator Marcos as commander-in-chief has arrogated unto himself and concentrated in his hands all executive, legislative and judicial powers. All of these powers are used not only against the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People’s Army but also against the broad masses of the people and all opposition to the perpetuation of a fascist dictatorship. Upon the setting up of this fascist dictatorship, the objective conditions for a civil war of a national scale have arisen. The entire Filipino people vehemently condemn the US-Marcos dictatorship as antinational, antirepublican, antidemocratic and decadent and are more determined than ever before to struggle for national democracy and, therefore, for a genuine republic that belongs to them.

It has long been pointed out and stressed to the US-Marcos clique that people’s war is the answer to martial law. Now that martial law is here, large masses of revolutionary militants and allied leaders of various forces all over the country have gone underground or have gone to the countryside from cities and towns and are resolutely taking every possible and necessary step to overthrow the US-Marcos dictatorship. Many times more than the previous suspension of the writ of habeas corpus, the setting up of the fascist dictatorship has resulted in an increase of men and women eager and ready to do their share of fighting in the battlefield. With every national and democratic right suppressed, the broad masses of the people have more deeply realized the need to support or participate in people’s war. The revolutionary stand of the Communist Party of the Philippines that armed struggle is the principal form of struggle at the present national democratic stage of the Philippine revolution has never before been clearer than now.

In the new situation, there are three things that stand out. First, the Communist Party of the Philippines is the most prepared to lead the revolutionary struggle that calls for the armed overthrow of the fascist government. Second, the Party has the strongest and most experienced revolutionary army, the New People’s Army. Third, the ranks of the revolutionary movement have greatly expanded and fighting cadres as well as allies are all over the archipelago determined to conduct people’s war. These things would not have stood out as clearly as now were it not for the fascist viciousness of the US-Marcos dictatorship.

The Communist Party of the Philippines is the party most prepared to lead the revolutionary struggle because it is the most prepared to do so ideologically, politically and organizationally. By virtue of its adherence to and practice of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought, it can be relied upon to fight steadfastly in a protracted people’s war and to deal with the problems of the Philippine revolution in the most comprehensive and correct manner. By virtue of its revolutionary politics, it can be relied upon to serve the toiling masses of workers and peasants, respect the legitimate interests of the petty bourgeoisie and national bourgeoisie and mobilize the biggest mass force to overthrow the tyrannical regime. By virtue of its organizational strength, it has emerged practically unscathed from the vicious blows so far made by the enemy under Proclamation No. 1081.

In so many years, the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People’s Army have been the target of all kinds of enemy operations and task forces and yet they have not only managed to preserve themselves and destroy the enemy part by part but have become even stronger through revolutionary struggle. To ensure the growth and development of people’s war as a mass undertaking, the Party has indefatigably created Party branches and groups, organs of political power, mass organizations, people’s organizing committees and various forms of fighting units such as the militia, the local guerrillas and the regular mobile (or several guerrilla units concentrated at appropriate times for big operations or a campaign of several battles). In the countryside, the Party is at the core of the New People’s Army and is also in the localities and has gained wide support from the peasant masses and inhabitants of towns, provincial capitals and small cities. In the cities, the Party has carefully developed an underground for the worst of emergencies and has at the same time developed unbreakable links with the workers, the

urban petty bourgeois and others.

While we consider the present situation far more favorable to the revolutionary movement than ever before, we should not relax in the false belief that the objective conditions are enough to carry us forward. We have to build up the revolutionary forces courageously, not only by waging the principal form of struggle which is armed struggle in the countryside but also by employing effective underground methods in the cities and towns and by using every possible means, legal and otherwise, to facilitate coordination of efforts, propaganda work, intelligence and internal communications as well as communications with allies throughout the archipelago. We should avoid rashness in our actions because the fascist dictatorship carries with it the license to do the worst possible harm against the Party, people's army and the people. We should advance carefully and steadily.

The Communist Party of the Philippines is determined to join hands with all those who are opposed to the US-Marcos dictatorship. All those who are interested in achieving national freedom and democracy are welcome in joining with the Party in a broad national democratic front. Those who may participate in this united front are the democratic classes and strata, parties, groups and individuals. Independence and initiative are enjoyed by participants in this united front. But the single common objective of all is to overthrow the US-Marcos dictatorship and institute a truly national and democratic regime. The success of the national democratic front can pave the way for a national coalition government where the working class, peasantry, urban petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie are fairly and justly represented. The Party's Program for a People's Democratic Revolution and also the ten-point guide drafted by the Party in connection with the drawing up of the program of the National Democratic Front should be referred to as guide for forming a national alliance or local alliances of revolutionary forces.

In addition, we are hereby making a pledge to ourselves, to all our allies and to all our countrymen in the context of our program for a people's democratic revolution:

1. To join up with all forces that are opposed to the fascist dictatorship of the US-Marcos clique and conduct a firm revolutionary struggle to overthrow it;
2. To strengthen the New People's Army, boldly organize guerrilla units all over the archipelago and draw all possible cooperation from everyone opposed to the US-Marcos dictatorship;
3. To help reestablish the democratic rights of all antifascist forces including individuals, political parties, trade unions, mass organizations, mass media, religious organizations and all other people, and to take all steps towards a democratic coalition government;
4. To fight for the nullification of all acts of the fascist dictatorship that favor US imperialism and the Marcos fascist clique, and to make possible the abrogation of all unequal treaties and agreements with the United States, especially those pertaining to direct investments, military bases, military assistance, military aggression and cultural aggression;
5. To pave the way for the arrest, trial before a people's court and punishment of the dictator Marcos and his diehard accomplices for the setting up of a fascist dictatorship, bloody crimes against the people and enrichment in office, and make possible the confiscation of all ill-gotten wealth (capital holdings and landholdings) of the Marcos fascist clique and likewise those of all US imperialist firms and agencies collaborating with it; and
6. To welcome to the revolutionary ranks those officers and men of the reactionary armed forces who turn at any time against the US-Marcos dictatorship, provided they are not a mere faction of the military directed by US imperialism to groom another puppet dictator.

Hereunder are a number of guidelines for developing or dealing with the various forces opposed to the US-Marcos dictatorship:

1. The Party should vigorously fulfill its 1972 organizational and educational plan. Despite what appears to be the tightening of the situation due to the US-Marcos dictatorship, the fact is that the entire country has been made far more fertile than before for revolutionary seeding and growth. There is a great need for cadres and their nationwide deployment. So, the Central Committee is seeing to it that cadres are dispatched from certain regions to other regions. The correct relationship between expansion and consolidation and between the number of cadres in urban areas and that in the rural areas must be settled from time to time by regional Party committees in their respective territories. They must take more initiative in building the Party, the New People's Army and the united front. Stress must be laid on mass work. The gauge of achievement is the quantity and quality of Party branches and groups, fighting units of the New People's Army, organs of political power, people's organizing committees and mass organizations of workers, peasants, youth, women and cultural activists. Due to the emergence of the

US-Marcos dictatorship, special attention must be paid to improving underground methods, especially in cities and towns, and in maintaining links over extensive areas.

2. The Party should assign more cadres of worker as well as petty-bourgeois background to the New People's Army. Those who can no longer conduct legal work or underground work in cities and towns should be dispatched to the people's army as the Party's principal form of organization. Party branches should be established at the company or platoon level as the case may be and Party groups at the squad level and, in addition, Party branches should be established in localities. The main objective of the fascist dictatorship in the countryside today is the suppression of the Party, the New People's Army and the revolutionary masses. We should be good at preserving ourselves by destroying the enemy (fascist troops, spies, local tyrants and bad elements) on the wider scale of the countryside. The New People's Army is based mainly on the peasant masses, the majority class in Philippine society. Special attention should therefore be paid to realizing a genuine land reform program among them. Nothing will ever come out of the decree of the US-Marcos dictatorship proclaiming the implementation of the reactionary "land reform code" all over the country, except intensified feudal and semifeudal exploitation and oppression and, therefore, intensified resistance by the peasant masses. Whenever possible, land should be distributed free to the tillers who do not own land or who do not have enough. The nonpayment of land rent and other related measures can easily be effected when the peasant masses have been sufficiently aroused, organized and mobilized on a wide scale. This also the best way of creating stable base areas. Wherever the guerrilla units of the New People's Army are, the least that should be done for the welfare of the peasant masses is to reduce land rent, eliminate usury and initiate mutual aid and exchange of labor. Peasant associations, with poor and lower middle peasants prevailing, should be established. Local militia units and guerrilla units should also be raised from the peasant ranks so as to defend their democratic gains. From the ranks of the guerrilla units, we draw the Red fighters for the regular mobile forces of the New People's Army.

3. The Party should continue to build revolutionary trade unions and other suitable organizations (including open associations and secret workers' organizing committees) among the workers in workplaces and communities, despite the fascist ban on mass organizations and strikes. However, care must always be taken to prevent the enemy from identifying Party cadres. The more the fascist dictatorship madly goes after all kinds of workers' organizations, the more it will aggravate its already isolated position. The longer the workers' rights are suppressed, the more will the workers become fearless of the US-Marcos dictatorship. Their wages are buying less and less. They are also under greater threat of unemployment. The fascist dictatorship is mad enough to prevent the workers indefinitely from demanding through their unions and through strikes better working and living conditions. The violent suppression of workers' unions and strikes can only yield more determined fighters for the revolutionary cause, provided the Party does well its duty of arousing and mobilizing the workers. The Party should organize the workers in factories, mines, haciendas and other areas and raise their political consciousness in the light of the current political and economic crisis. Workers are quick in grasping the Marxist-Leninist ideology, provided this is properly communicated to them by Party cadres. The Party should accelerate its efforts to build Party branches in the workers' places of work and communities. Trade union work should always be combined with ideological and political work.

4. The Party should vigorously arouse and mobilize the student masses against the US-Marcos dictatorship. Although the democratic cultural revolution has already brought out a high degree of militance among them, the student masses should be further guided by the Party in the new situation so that they can link up with the broad masses of the people and deliver the most effective blows against the fascist dictatorship. If it were not for the fear of the US-Marcos dictatorship of the student masses, the schools should have been opened on the Monday following Proclamation No. 1081. But the closure of schools for sometime cannot stop the student masses from recognizing what is wrong and acting against it. The longer the schools are closed, the more ready are the student masses for mass actions. First, the probing mass actions and other propaganda activities; then increasingly bigger mass actions. Various forms of open student organizations and underground coordinating committees can be set up to defy the fascist ban on basic democratic rights. In the case of quite a number of student leaders and other youth leaders, who are blacklisted and who will only be immobilized upon arrest, it is the Party's policy to dispatch them to the countryside or the underground, so long as they are already Party members or are willing to become Red fighters even if they are not yet Party members or even candidate-members. Party groups which are in the midst of the student masses should systematically deploy groups of students to various provinces and towns

to condemn the fascist dictatorship and arouse the people.

5. The Party should encourage not only the student masses but also all other sections of the intelligentsia to assert their national and democratic rights and speak out their views against the US-Marcos dictatorship. It is anti-national to allow foreign-owned mass media like those owned by the Sorianos to make propaganda in support of the US-Marcos dictatorship and at the same time prevent the Filipino people from speaking out their minds. It is antidemocratic to have only those reports and views supporting a fascist dictatorship disseminated. Teachers at all levels should be persuaded to propagate the national and democratic line among their co-teachers, students and the people and not to make anticommunist propaganda which would only serve to prolong the life of fascist dictatorship in the country. Special efforts should be exerted to get the active support of public school teachers. All government civilian employees should resist attempts of the US-Marcos dictatorship to shift public funds to the military from their departments, disregard their civil service eligibilities or turn over their functions to military personnel. Like the teachers and ordinary government civilian employees, all professionals (doctors, nurses, engineers, journalists, lawyers and others) should be won over to the antifascist united front. If positive and progressive, their political influence on many other people is of great value to the revolution. Their direct services and material contribution to the revolution are much needed. The most progressive elements in the ranks of the intelligentsia can become Party members.

6. The Party should, aside from the intelligentsia, win over other sections of the petty bourgeoisie. In many various ways, they can extend practical support to the revolutionary cause. They can help spread the correct political line against the US-Marcos dictatorship and they can also extend material support to the revolutionary movement. They are hard-pressed by the political and economic crisis worsening under the fascist dictatorship. The Party should consider the entire petty bourgeoisie as a basic motive force in the national democratic revolution and win it over in order to tilt the balance securely in favor of the revolutionary side.

7. The Party should win over members of the national bourgeoisie, in the cities and in the countryside, to give political and material support to the revolutionary movement. Since they themselves cannot be expected to bear arms against the enemy, they can extend to the revolutionary movement support in cash or kind or allow use of their facilities. The Party should protect their legitimate interests against the wanton assaults of US imperialism and the puppet dictatorship. The national bourgeoisie can join the anti-imperialist and antifascist united front and it will be amply represented in the national coalition government to be set up in the future.

8. The Party should support the struggle for self-determination or autonomy and also for democracy among the national minorities, especially those of Mindanao who have taken up arms. The armed struggle of the Maguin-danaos, Maranaos, Tausugs and others is very significant. Efforts should be exerted in developing revolutionary forces in various parts of Mindanao, especially those outside of the "Muslim" areas; and unity between the national minorities and the poor settlers everywhere should be aimed for in accordance with the general line of the national democratic revolution. The armed struggle in Mindanao can be so coordinated with the revolutionary armed struggle in Luzon and the Visayas that the US-Marcos dictatorship would become exhausted from running to and fro, from far south to far north of the archipelago and vice versa. It should be the general policy of the Party all over the country to welcome all national minorities into the ranks of the revolutionary movement and to develop Party cadres and Red fighters among them.

9. The Party should seek and develop an antifascist united front at every possible level with the Liberal Party, with certain sections of the Nacionalista Party and various political groups and figures who are opposed to the US-Marcos dictatorship. The attempt of the Marcos fascist puppet clique to monopolize power in the country has seriously harmed or put a serious threat to the interests of other reactionaries. The violent split developing among the reactionaries has been obvious since the emergence of the "private armies" and especially since the second Plaza Miranda massacre. Although the US-Marcos dictatorship will try to create the myth of "bipartisan" support for the "Marcos party," the political and economic contradictions among the reactionaries cannot be erased. There are various ways of cooperating with other political groups and figures. Since the US-Marcos dictatorship is bent on disarming them at any cost, they might as well contribute or merely lend their arms to the New People's Army. They can also advise their following to cooperate with the people's army and they can give other kinds of material support. In return, such legitimate interests of theirs as those which do not harm the people can be protected. In cases where there are already armed groups fighting or determined to fight the fascist dictatorship, the New People's Army should be willing to reorganize them or integrate them into its ranks or simply coordinate with them as

the case may be.

10. The Party should seek and develop an anti-imperialist and antifascist united front with religious and semireligious groups that are opposed to the US-Marcos dictatorship. It is noteworthy that there are a considerable number of patriotic and progressive priests and ministers who have merited being in the fascist blacklist. It must be always borne in mind that there are religious people who do not agree with the Party's ideology but who readily and completely agree with the Party's political program and line.

11. The Party should draw all possible support from Filipinos abroad, especially the half a million Filipino immigrant workers, professionals and students in the United States. Together with their American and other foreign friends, they can form committees and associations, engage in mass actions and raise funds for their own propaganda activities all in support of the revolutionary struggle of the Filipino people against the US-Marcos dictatorship. Eventually, they will be able to channel their material support to the revolutionary forces in the Philippines. Revolutionary friends of the Filipino people all over the world should also be encouraged to initiate committees and associations in support of the Filipino revolutionary struggle. The Filipino people should get all possible international support in the same spirit and manner as other peoples have done for their own revolutionary struggles. The peoples of the world are profoundly interested in the victory of the Philippine revolution against US imperialism and its running dogs. The Party should be guided by the lofty principle of proletarian internationalism in this regard.

12. The Party should perseveringly conduct by various means revolutionary propaganda among the officers and troops of the reactionary armed forces. Quite a number of them are opposed to the US-Marcos dictatorship. As a matter of fact, there are three definite trends in the reactionary armed forces: the first one consists of those who support the US-Marcos dictatorship and who are gloating at the chance to abuse the people; the second one consists of those who oppose the Marcos fascist gang but who wish to have it replaced by coup d'etat with another reactionary regime which they consider "democratic"; and the third one consists of those who oppose the US-Marcos dictatorship and who agree with the principles of the Corpus-Tagamolila Movement. The second trend can be subdivided into two: one is biding its time for the near-collapse of the Marcos fascist clique and will move only with assurances from US imperialism; the other has various notions of anti-imperialism. Enemy officers and troops who are opposed to the US-Marcos dictatorship should be encouraged to take the people's side and take the anti-imperialist, antifeudal and antifascist line. They can bring over their arms and join the New People's Army or temporarily establish and lead guerrilla units until such time that they can establish relations with the people's army. The Party should also see to it that the policy of leniency is taken on captive enemy officers and men in order to disintegrate the reactionary armed forces. As the US-Marcos dictatorship conscripts more troops and the people's suffering becomes even more unbearable, there will be more enemy officers and men who will recognize what is right and what is wrong and will gladly turn their arms against the people's exploiters and oppressors. The Communist Party of the Philippines, together with the New People's Army which it leads, declares that conditions for revolutionary armed struggle in the countryside have been tremendously enhanced by the emergence of the US-Marcos dictatorship. Whereas before Proclamation No. 1081 only certain limited parts of the country were battlefields, these can now be boldly expanded throughout the archipelago. Furthermore, whereas before this proclamation it was not yet timely to launch certain limited forms of military operations in urban areas, these can now be done with due consideration given to the strategic line that the revolutionary forces will seize the cities from rural base areas. The broad masses of the people know how to deal with a mad bull like the US-Marcos dictatorship and they are determined to encircle it with the flames of people's war. The day will surely come when the US-Marcos dictatorship is turned into ashes and is finally consigned to the garbage heap of history. By that time, the comprehensive revolutionary movement against US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism shall have become a gigantic force capable of carrying the Philippine revolution through to the end.

—Central Committee Communist Party of the Philippines

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The fascist dictator Marcos will remain in Malacañang even after 1973, when he shall have completed eight years of the most brutal and most corrupt puppet rule ever experienced by the Filipino people. There will definitely be no presidential elections in November 1973. But sometime next year there will be a bogus plebiscite which will certainly result in the bogus ratification of the bogus constitution now being hurriedly drafted by the Marcos-dominated constitutional convention. The US-Marcos dictatorship is interested in using this bogus constitution as the fig leaf for both its usurpation and perpetuation of absolute power by naked armed force against the people's will.

As has been fixed up under conditions of martial rule, the bogus constitution provides for (the) incumbent president to remain in office from December 30, 1973 to June 30, 1976 and for him to act during the same period to as the "transition government" or "provisional government." Under the fascist dictatorship, the assembly will be composed exclusively of Marcos-leaning delegates in the constitutional convention and Marcos-leaning members of Congress. It will certainly exclude all those who are opposed to the Marcos fascist gang who have come either under camp detention, under house arrest or under such threats as detention, assassination, vilification and arbitrary dispossession.

The bogus constitution allows the fascist dictator to enjoy vast powers, including the continued operation of martial rule on the basis of his personal judgment. Thus, he will still be able to perpetuate himself in power from 1973 onwards by armed force. He will simply maintain martial rule on the flimsiest grounds and continuously suppress every kind of legal opposition. All members of the ad interim national assembly will continue to be under the duress of martial rule as well as subject to cajolery and manipulation by the fascist dictator, who will dangle to so many members of the ad interim national assembly so few a number of seats at stake in the May 1976 parliamentary elections. It is certain that he will have himself made the prime minister in 1976.

However, the fascist dictatorship will never succeed to deceive the people with the bogus constitution. The people know that this scrap of paper is nothing but the dictatorship. They know that as a result of fascist rule the reactionary constitutional convention has become more than ever a farce, a mere puppet show serving the extremely narrow and selfish interests of the US-Marcos dictatorship. Since the issuance of Proclamation No. 1081, all delegates opposed to the antinational and antidemocratic dictates of the US-Marcos clique have been purged out of the reactionary constitutional convention and have been either put under camp detention, under house arrest or under such threats a detention, assassination, vilification and arbitrary dispossession. In line with its evil purposes, the fascist dictatorship has completely deprived all delegates of the reactionary constitutional convention of their supposed right to parliamentary immunity.

The "plebiscite" slated for next year will be one more big swindling act of the US-Marcos dictatorship. The formulation of questions to be answered by yes or no will be made in a manner as to favor the fascist dictatorship. Then, no matter which way the voting will go, the fascist military will make sure that the counting of votes will go in favor of the US-Marcos dictatorship. Besides, the basic democratic rights, particularly the freedom of assembly and of association as well as the freedom of speech and of the press, shall continue to be suppressed. The Marcos manipulation of previous elections through the use of the reactionary armed forces will certainly become a far cry from the forthcoming "plebiscite."

In assuming that he can make use of the reactionary armed forces for every criminal purpose, the fascist dictator is cocksure about being able to remain in power for "two years or more." As immediately implied by his big pretense, which is not only "to save the republic" but also "to build a new society," Marcos is clearly hellbent on remaining in power and monopolizing it for a long time to come. Completely isolated from the broad masses of the people, he cannot be but the instrument of the most rapacious forces: US imperialism, the big comprador bourgeoisie and the big landlord class. And being a comprador-landlord-bureaucrat himself with an insatiable greed for power and wealth, he has set himself and his own clique of oligarchs into violent conflict with other

reactionaries. In truth, the US-Marcos dictatorship is aggravating the oppressiveness and exploitativeness of the old society and is hastening the collapse of the puppet republic. The entire ruling system is now violently split all over the country as the fascist dictator makes use of brute force to concentrate power and wealth in his filthy hands. The fascist dictatorship has only served to show in the most brazen manner that the reactionaries can no longer rule in the old way. The political and economic crisis of the ruling system is bound to become graver and more fatal under the fascist dictatorship. The political and economic crisis of US imperialism is the sure-fire guarantee for the worst of crisis for the reactionary puppets in the Philippines.

Because bestiality has become the open style of rule and the least semblance of democracy has been suppressed, the broad masses of the people have become more intensely aware than ever before of the fact that only an armed revolution can frustrate the armed counterrevolution in the long run. The ranks of the revolutionary movement have unprecedentedly expanded and a new level of revolutionary struggle has emerged. The armed revolutionary movement is bound to grow from small to big all over the country and will outlast and finally defeat the US-Marcos dictatorship. Upon their victory, the broad masses of the people will convene a genuine constitutional convention and create a constitution that will truly serve their national and democratic interests.

The Filipino proletariat and its revolutionary party, the Communist Party of the Philippines, are determined to complete the people's democratic revolution through a protracted people's war. The main content of this revolution and civil war is the fulfillment of the peasants' demand for land. The agrarian revolution will, therefore, be carried out more vigorously even as the US-Marcos dictatorship is dead-set on both intimidating the peasant masses with large-scale military operations and on deceiving them on the matter of land reform. Together in a basic alliance, the proletariat and the peasantry conjoin with the urban petty bourgeoisie and also with the national bourgeoisie to fight uncompromisingly for people's democracy against the US-Marcos dictatorship and all the rottenness that it stands for.

The “New Constitution” Is a License of the US-Marcos Dictatorship to Further Oppress and Exploit the Filipino People

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Taking full advantage of its martial rule, the US-Marcos dictatorship has been able by armed force, bribery and deceit to ram through the 1971-1972 reactionary constitutional convention a “new constitution” which endorses Proclamation No. 1081, allows the fascist dictator Marcos to remain in power for as long as he can beyond 1973 and perpetuates the vile interests of US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

Attention needs to be focused on Article XVII entitled “Transitory Provisions” and on Article XIV entitled “The National Economy and the Patrimony of the Nation” in order to expose and condemn the antinational and antidemocratic character of the “new constitution”. Let us annotate the most counterrevolutionary provisions under these articles.

On Article XVII. “Transitory Provisions”

Section 1. There shall be an interim National Assembly which shall exist immediately upon the ratification of this Constitution and shall continue until the members of the regular National Assembly shall have been elected and shall have assumed office following an election called for the purpose by the interim National Assembly. Except as otherwise provided in this constitution, the interim National Assembly shall have the same powers and its members shall have the same functions, responsibilities, rights, privileges and disqualifications as the regular National Assembly and the members thereof.

There is no definite time limit for the existence of this interim national assembly. It all depends on the pleasure of this interim national assembly or even more precisely on the fascist dictator Marcos as to when an election shall be called to elect the regular members of the national assembly.

It is self-serving enough for delegates of the big bourgeoisie and the landlord class in the Convention to include themselves as members of this interim national assembly. Together with the cohorts of the US-Marcos dictatorship, they shall always misinterpret their selfish interests as public interests and prolong their enjoyment of the powers and privileges of members of the regular national assembly. These scoundrels in the 1971-1972 reactionary constitutional convention have not made any kind of protest regarding the gross violations of their supposed parliamentary immunity, the forcible camp detention and house arrest of several convention delegates who have stood against the dictates of the US-Marcos clique. Instead, they have been bribed into approving the “new constitution” that is actually the handiwork of Malacañang. Among the privileges that each delegate stands to gain as member of the interim national assembly are annual salaries and allowances amounting to at least P200,000, aside from a still bigger income derivable from other nefarious activities related to “parliamentary work”. As a whole, the interim national assembly shall be an extremely expensive affair, with no less than 400 members drawing huge salaries and allowances. This shall be far more expensive than the outgoing Congress which has far less members and personnel.

Section 2. The members of the interim National Assembly shall be the incumbent President and Vice-President of the Philippines, those who served as President of the nineteen hundred and seventy-one Constitutional Convention, those members of the Senate and the House of Representatives who shall express in writing to the Commission on Elections within thirty days after the ratification of this constitution their option to serve therein, and those delegates to the nineteen hundred and seventy-one Constitutional Convention who have opted to serve therein by voting affirmatively for this article. They may take their oath of office before any officer authorized to administer oath and qualify thereto, after the ratification of this constitution.

This section seeks to cover up the illegality and unconstitutionality of General Order No. 1 and certain presidential decrees (like Presidential Decree No. 1 and the like) by which the fascist dictator has asserted his absolute authority over all branches of the government and usurped the legislative authority of the Senate and the House of Representatives. General Order No. 1 renders Congress inutile and even nonexistent, despite the elective status of these members. Presidential Decree No. 1 and similar decrees arrogantly declare certain bills still pending in Congress as “part of the law of the land”.

What is exceedingly callous about the section above is that only three persons, especially the person who

stands to gain most, the fascist dictator Marcos himself, are automatically members of the interim national assembly while all members of the Senate and the House of Representatives and all delegates of the reactionary constitutional convention are not automatically so. It is obvious that this section is intended to force and at the same time cajole the members of Congress and the convention delegates whom the fascist dictator Marcos has put under camp detention, house arrest and death threat. When the voting was held on the “transitory provisions” last October 26, convention delegates had to secure “safe-conduct passes” from the Marcos hatchetman Enrile in order to be allowed into the convention hall. By virtue of Section 3 (2) hereunder, several senators and congressmen opposed to the fascist dictatorship will not as a matter of principle be able to express in writing to the Commission on Elections their option to join the interim national assembly.

Section 3. (1) The incumbent President of the Philippines shall initially convene the interim National Assembly and shall preside over its sessions until the interim Speaker shall have been elected. He shall continue to exercise his powers and prerogatives under the 1935 constitution and the powers in the President and the Prime Minister under the constitution until he calls upon the interim National Assembly to elect the interim President and the interim Prime Minister who shall then exercise their respective powers vested by this constitution. (2) All proclamations, orders, decrees, instructions, and acts promulgated, issued, or done by the incumbent President shall be part of the law of the land, and shall remain valid, legal, binding, and effective even after the lifting of martial law or the ratification of this constitution, unless modified, revoked, or suspended by subsequent proclamations, orders, decrees, instructions or other acts of the incumbent President, or unless expressly and explicitly modified or repealed by the regular National Assembly.

This section with its two paragraphs, is the core of all the “transitory provisions” and even of the entire “new constitution”. The fascist dictator Marcos shall continue to concentrate all powers in his hands in his three and contradictory capacities as president under the 1935 constitution and as president and prime minister under the “new constitution”. He shall exercise the powers and prerogatives of the president under the 1935 constitution and yet shall not necessarily be bound by the obligation set by the same constitution that he shall have to step down from the presidency in 1973, after he shall have served eight consecutive years as president. His powers and prerogatives shall be absolute and unlimited as ever. Upon the “ratification” of the “new constitution”, all his proclamations, orders, decrees and instructions and acts shall be “part of the law of the land” (and the supreme part at that) and shall remain valid, legal, binding and effective even after the formal lifting of martial law. In other words, a fascist dictatorship shall exist.

The first paragraph shows that the fascist dictator Marcos does not have full trust in the interim national assembly though this assemblage shall surely at the beginning be composed of members who are prevalently his agents. Thus, it is not the interim national assembly but it is explicitly he alone who shall decide when the interim national assembly shall elect the interim national president and interim prime minister. Going by his selfinterest, Marcos shall be able to keep himself in power for as long as he can and shall prevent for as long as he can the election of the interim president and interim prime minister. Outside and inside the interim national assembly, he has the powers and prerogatives to suppress any demand for such an election within the interim national assembly. However, he shall also be able to call for such an election and assure himself of being elected interim prime minister. He may do so, especially in face of the fact that after 1973 he shall be vulnerable to questions involving the provision in the 1935 constitution that a president cannot retain his office for more than eight consecutive years.

The second paragraph makes the fascist dictator more powerful than the entire interim national assembly. While the interim national assembly is in office, he shall have the supreme power of enforcing his old proclamations, orders, decrees, instructions and acts and also promulgating new ones above and beyond the interim national assembly. Thus, this interim national assembly shall in principle and practice be inferior to one person and shall have mere decorative value for the fascist dictatorship. If only the incumbent president or the regular national assembly, but not the interim national assembly, shall have the power to modify, revoke or supersede the proclamations, orders, decrees, instructions and acts of the incumbent president, then what is the point in the aforementioned section (second sentence) stating that the interim national assembly shall have the same powers as the regular national assembly? Under the above Section 3 (1) and (2), the interim national assembly shall merely be the rubber stamp of the fascist dictator. In effect, the provisional or interim government shall not have the least shred of the parliamentary form. It shall have a super-presidential, dictatorial and fascist form reflective of what makes the present regime entirely anomalous.

Section 5. The interim National Assembly shall give priority measures for the orderly transition from the presidential to the parliamentary system, the reorganization of the Government, the eradication of graft and corruption, the effective maintenance of peace and order, the implementation of declared agrarian reforms, the standardization of compensation of government employees and such other measures as shall bridge the gap between the rich and the poor.

It is obvious by this section that the interim national assembly and the fascist dictator Marcos intend to keep themselves in office for as long as they can. Their declared intention is to perform not the functions of a transitional government that may last for one year or so but those of a long-term government that may last for several more years. The preposterous slogan of “save the republic and build a new society” expresses the US-Marcos dictatorship’s pipe dream of suppressing the people and reigning forever.

At any rate, the US-Marcos dictatorship talks of government reorganization and standardization of compensation of government employees only to tighten its control over all branches of the government by armed intimidation, build up and shift funds to the fascist military, lay off a great number of civilian government employees, disregard elective and civil service status of lesser officials, promote sycophants and increase their salaries at the expense of middle and low-ranking employees. It talks of eradicating graft and corruption but the fascist dictator Marcos and his cronies have been for so many years the biggest and blackest perpetrators of malfeasance in the reactionary government. Marcos himself is the most notoriously undesirable character in the reactionary government. He has enriched himself in office in a manner that would make all previous presidents petty thieves. He has had a big cut in every major government contract or major business deal where government permission or guarantees are required. His large stockholdings and landholdings mostly under the names of dummies (Benedicto, Montelibano, Cojuangco, Zobel, Menzi, Elizalde, Silverio and others) have been acquired through abuse of political authority.

The US-Marcos dictatorship talks of peace and order only to unleash the most vicious fascist crimes against the great masses of peasants, workers, students, teachers, professionals, women, small and medium businessmen, national minorities and even against the legal oppositionists in the Liberal Party and Nacionalista Party. Behind the drive to collect high-powered firearms is the scheme of the fascist dictatorship to monopolize firearms and suppress the people and all possible opposition. Wanting to impose a “peace and order” for the benefit of the exploiting classes, the fascist dictatorship has on its part intensified counterrevolutionary violence and made it necessary for the people on their part to intensify revolutionary violence. The Marcos mass media may monopolize all legal news channels and impose a news blackout on the people’s resistance but the fact is that revolutionary armed struggle has spread more rapidly from the northern end to the southern end of the Philippines since Proclamation No. 1081.

It is simply incongruous for the US-Marcos dictatorship to talk about bridging the gap between the rich and poor. The truth is that it has taken every step to aggravate the exploitation of the broad masses of the people. The “new constitution” revolves around the term “just compensation” to preserve the interests of the big bourgeoisie (foreign monopolies and big compradors) and the landlord class. Presidential Decree No. 27 has served only to artificially raise the price of the landlord’s land and taunt the tenant masses that they cannot really buy out the landlords. We shall further discuss the intensification of imperialist, big comprador, landlord and bureaucrat exploitation under the fascist dictatorship.

Section 9. All officials and employees in the existing Government of the Republic of the Philippines shall continue in office until otherwise provided by law or decreed by the incumbent President of the Philippines, but all officials whose appointments are by this Constitution vested in the Prime Minister shall vacate their respective offices upon the appointment and qualification of their successors.

Section 10. The incumbent members of the Judiciary may continue in office until they reach the age of seventy years, unless sooner replaced in accordance with the preceding section thereof.

It is clear by these two sections that those in the service of the reactionary government shall continue to be completely at the mercy of the fascist dictatorship as under General Order No. 11, General Order No. 3 and Presidential Decree No. 1. But what interests the fascist Marcos most in these two sections is that he can change the present composition of the Supreme Court as he pleases and also make all the courts consistent instruments of his antinational and *antidemocratic executive fiats*.

Under Section 4 of Article X entitled the “Judiciary”, which provides that the members of the Supreme Court and judges of inferior courts shall be appointed by the prime minister, and under Section 1 (1) of the same article,

which provides that the Supreme Court shall be composed of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and fourteen associate justices, the fascist dictator Marcos shall be able to continue threatening the present justices of the Supreme Court with replacement and shall also be able to simply add four more justices of his own choosing to the present eleven justices in order to make the Supreme Court a thoroughly rabid instrument of the fascist dictatorship.

The US-Marcos dictatorship hopes to ensure that the Supreme Court shall continue to act in favor of the dictatorship in all cases involving Proclamation No. 1081. Even now, the present Supreme Court composed mostly of Marcos appointees has allowed the cases of political detainees to be overtaken by the “new constitution”. It is this same court which previously swallowed hook, line and sinker the tale of the Marcos fascist gang about the “July-August Plan” in 1971. Like the “judicial” appendage of any antipopular dictatorship, it has been an accomplice in the commission of fascist crimes.

Section 11. The rights and privileges granted to citizens of the United States or to corporations or associations owned or controlled by such citizens under the Ordinance appended to the nineteen hundred and thirty-five Constitution shall automatically terminate on the third day of July nineteen hundred and seventy-four. Titles to private lands acquired by such persons before such date shall be valid as against other private persons only.

Section 12. All treaties, executive agreements, and contracts entered into by the Government or any subdivision, agency, or instrumentalities thereof, including government-owned or controlled operations, are hereby recognized as legal, valid and binding. When the national interest so requires, the incumbent President of the Republic or the interim Prime Minister may review all contracts, concessions, permits, or other forms of privileges for the exploration, development, exploitation, or utilization of natural resources entered into, granted, issued or acquired before the ratification of the Constitution.

The first sentence of Section 11 above appears to be progressive in the sense that it provides for the termination of the rights and privileges of US business entities under the Parity Amendment on July 3, 1974. But in fact the second sentence negates what the first sentence provides. The second sentence protects US entities and assures them of continued enjoyment of the lands (and improvement thereon) which they have unconstitutionally and illegally acquired. Elsewhere, the “new constitution” also requires “just compensation” for the takeover by the state of any private property. These constitute the complete negation or reversal of the recent Supreme Court decision on the Quasha case. The “new constitution” can be used to oppose the principle that US entities have no right to own private lands in the Philippines and that the lands and improvements thereon (including structures and other investments) which have been illegally required are subject either to retrieval by previous private owners or confiscation by the state.

In this regard, the fascist dictator Marcos has been most vociferous in calling on US business entities to create interlocking dummy corporations (where US entities may own as much as 40 percent of equity) to serve as “owners” of the lands and also in assuring them of “just compensation” with regard to the dim possibility that the state may decide and act to expropriate these lands for them. All these serve to keep US business entities in undiminished ownership and control of Philippine lands. They are all calculated to defeat the people’s clamor for confiscation of the illegal US landholdings, including the structures and investments thereon.

Section 12 throws away the provision under the 1935 constitution (Section 7, Article VII) that treaties entered into by the president need the concurrence or final ratification of the Philippine Senate in order to become binding and effective. Under the “new constitution” it shall suffice for the fascist dictator Marcos and his executive agents to enter into treaties, executive agreements and contracts with other countries and foreign entities and these shall immediately be recognized as legal, valid and binding. US imperialism is certainly anxious now to arrange with their chief Filipino puppet a “treaty of friendship, commerce and navigation” in order to carry over the worst features of the LaurelLangley Agreement that is to terminate soon. Also, the Japanese zaibatsus must be more hopeful now than before that the JapanPhilippine “treaty of amity, commerce and navigation” will be ratified by the fascist dictator; this will be far better for them than individual business licenses for “liaison offices” which Marcos used previously to circumvent the nonratification of the aforementioned draft treaty. As an autocratic head of state, the incumbent president Marcos also reviews all contracts, concessions, permits or other forms of privileges for the exploration, development, exploitation or utilization of natural resources entered into, granted, issued or acquired even before the ratification of the “new constitution”. This means to say that he shall have absolute power to deal with US imperialism and other foreign monopolies any way that he shall be in a position to amass wealth even

more viciously than when he was supposed to have enjoyed less power in the days before Proclamation No. 1081. It is absolutely clear that the fascist dictator Marcos has been propped up precisely to protect and step up the oppressive and exploitative interests of US imperialism and other related forces. In the succeeding discussions on certain provisions of Article XIV, we shall be able to see even more clearly that US imperialism together with its most rabid local running dogs, is behind the fascist dictatorship and the “new constitution”. The most extraordinary measures are taken by the most rabid local reactionaries whenever the interests of US imperialism are at stake and whenever the dominance of these need renewal and expansion. The forcible making of the fascist dictatorship and the “new constitution” is directly related to the termination of the Parity Amendment and the Laurel-Langley Agreement. It is an event exceedingly comparable to the forcible making of the fascistic Roxas regime and the adoption of the Parity Amendment and the Bell Trade Act.

On Article XIV. The National Economy and the Patrimony of the Nation

Section 1. The National Assembly shall establish a National Economic and Development Authority, to be headed by the Prime Minister, which shall recommend to the National Assembly, after consultation with the private sector, local government units, and other appropriate public agencies, continuing, coordinated, and fully integrated social and economic plans and programs.

Section 3. The National Assembly shall, upon recommendation of the National Economic and Development Authority, reserve to citizens of the Philippines or to corporations or associations wholly owned by such citizens, certain traditional areas of investments when the national interest so dictates.

The National Economic and Development Authority will be the cloak for the US-Marcos dictatorship in plundering the social wealth of the country. It will be no better than all or any such agencies as the National Economic Council, the Presidential Economic Staff, the Board of Investments and the like. It shall continue to extend foreign investors and big local compradors such special privileges and incentives as those carried by the Investment Incentive Act, Export Incentive Act and the like.

As the head of the National Economic and Development Authority, the fascist dictator Marcos shall be able to relay to the national assembly “recommendations” of US imperialism which are usually first passed on to him and his “technocrats” by the US imperialist agents in such agencies as the Agency for International Development (AID), the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and leading US corporations, banks and foundations. By having the most decisive say on treaties, loan agreements, franchises, concessions, licenses and business contracts, he shall be able to further enlarge upon his personal wealth which is now superior in position and magnitude even to that of the Ayala, Soriano and Zobel group. Indeed, bureaucrat capitalism has its rewards for Marcos and his cohorts??the top oligarchs in the country.

Like the 1935 constitution, the “new constitution” allows US and other foreign investors to own and control even to the extent of 100 percent of corporate equity in most areas of investments. More than 50 percent of the \$2 to \$3 billion of US investments are now in these unrestricted areas of investments. Even in such areas as the operation of public utilities and exploitation of land and natural resources, foreign investors can comply with the requirement of at least 60 percent Filipino equity but they can control Philippine corporations in various ways to an extent far beyond what their formal ownership of 40 percent equity or even less may seem to indicate. They can exercise this control through interlocking corporations and “service contracts”. This control allows them to draw superprofits as if there were no restrictions on the extent of the foreign equity.

It is very striking that Article XIV is now completely silent on what specifically are the “traditional areas of investments” that shall be reserved to citizens of the Philippines or to corporations wholly owned by such citizens. In previous drafts of the “new constitution”, there were references to retail, indent, import and wholesale as areas where 100 percent Filipino equity is required. But now even these secondary areas of the economy are open prey to “recommendations” of the fascist dictator. By its obvious silence, Section 3 tends to nullify even the Retail Trade Nationalization Act.

Section 5. No franchise, certificate, or any other form of authorization for the operation of a public utility shall be granted except to citizens of the Philippines or to corporations or associations organized under the laws of the Philippines at least sixty per centum of the capital of which is owned by such citizens, nor shall such franchise, certificate, or authorization be exclusive in character or for a longer period than fifty years. Neither shall any such franchise or right be granted except under the condition that it shall be subject to amendment, alteration, or repeal by the National Assembly when the public interest so requires. The State shall encourage equity participation in public utilities by the general

public. The participation of foreign investors in the governing body of any public utility enterprise shall be limited to their proportionate share in the capital thereof.

Section 9. The disposition, exploration, development, or utilization of any of the natural resources of the Philippines shall be limited to the citizens of the Philippines, or to corporations or associations at least sixty per centum of the capital of which is owned by such citizens. The National Assembly, in the national interest, may allow such citizens, corporations, or associations to enter into service contracts for financial, technical, management, or other forms of assistance with any foreign person or entity for the exploration, development, exploitation, or utilization of any of the natural resources. Existing valid and binding service contracts for financial, technical, management, or other forms of assistance are hereby recognized as such.

Section 5 above is quite similar to and as reactionary as Section 8 of Article XIV of the 1935 constitution by allowing the grant of a franchise, certificate or some other form of authorization for the operation for a period of fifty years of a public utility to the citizens of the Philippines and to Philippine corporations or associations in which foreign equity is not more than 40 percent. What makes this section utterly worse than its predecessor is that it explicitly allows participation of foreign investors in the governing body of a public utility, throws away the recent Supreme Court decision on the Lustevco case disallowing foreigners to be employed in local businesses and assures the foreign personnel of local US oil and transportation firms of continued privilege. This section also encourages the “general public” to buy stocks so that these could be manipulated by a few big capitalists who control a solid bloc of stocks. A solid bloc of stocks even if amounting only to 40 percent equity or even less can easily control the diffused stocks of the “general public” even if this amount to 60 percent equity or more in a corporation.

Section 9 is also similar to and as reactionary as Section 1 of Article XIII of the 1935 constitution by allowing the disposition, exploration, development, exploitation or utilization of all public lands and all natural resources by citizens of the Philippines and to Philippine corporations or associations in which foreign equity is not more than 40 percent. What is new in this section is that it approves one more method of circumventing the formal requirement of 40 percent foreign equity in Philippine corporations, ensuring foreign control of Philippine business entities and, of course, enlarging the profits normally earned by 40 percent equity in Philippine corporations. This method consists of allowing citizens of the Philippines and corporations and associations to enter into “service contracts” for financial, technical, management, or other forms of “assistance” with any foreign person or entity for the exploration, development, exploitation, or utilization of any of the natural resources and public lands. The arguments used by the US-Marcos dictatorship for the adoption of this method are standard colonial and puppet arguments like the Philippines and the Filipinos having no capital, technology and experience.

Even before the “ratification” of the “new constitution”, Marcos threw the country wide open for oil exploration by foreign oil firms, mostly American and Japanese, by virtue of Presidential Decree No. 8 making the pending Senate Bill No. 531 (entitled an Act to Promote the Discovery and Production of Indigenous Petroleum and Appropriating Funds Therefor) a “part of the law of the land”. Presidential Decree No. 8 sets the pattern for “service contracts”??a pattern for assuring foreign investors control over the public lands and natural resources, tax exemptions and high profits far beyond what 40 percent foreign equity would yield. This kind of decree is considered valid and binding by Section 9.

Section 11. The National Assembly, taking into account conservation, ecological, and development requirements of the natural resources, shall determine by law the size of lands of the public domain which may be developed, held or acquired by, or leased to, any qualified individual, corporation or association, and the conditions therefor. No private corporation or association may hold alienable lands of the public domain except by lease not to exceed one thousand hectares in area; nor may any citizen hold such purchase or homestead in excess of five hundred hectares or acquire by purchase or homestead in excess of twenty-four hectares. No private corporation or association may hold by lease, concession, license, or permit, timber or forest lands and other timber or forest resources in excess of one hundred thousand hectares; however, such area may be increased by the National Assembly upon the recommendation of the National Economic and Development Authority.

Though certain limits are set on the size of public lands to be disposed to individuals, corporations or associations, such limits are still extremely large and harmful to public interest and furthermore, will not stop the big bourgeoisie and the big landlords from holding unlimited areas of public lands under the various individual names and corporate names. Going by precedents, the reactionary government will certainly lease out individually

to private corporations' public lands far in excess of 1,000 hectares and also individually to private persons far in excess of 500 hectares. It will still allow private persons to acquire by purchase or "homestead" public lands far in excess of twenty-four hectares.

In fact, big landgrabbers in frontier areas have always insisted that vast tracts of cultivated lands are public lands only to proceed to holding these by lease, concession, license or permit and later on securing titles to these lands as their own private lands by claiming to have developed them. In the process, the landgrabbers dispossess the poor settlers and the national minorities through armed force and deceit with the active support of the reactionary government which has always encouraged the comprador-landlords to expand their landholdings by grabbing public lands and has repeatedly declared as part of its sham land reform program that they can get public lands in exchange for their lands that may be expropriated elsewhere.

Also, the reactionary government has encouraged US corporations, especially those in agriculture, mining and logging, to hold hundreds of thousands of hectares of public lands. Corporations of the reactionary government have been most instrumental in letting foreign plantation interests take hold of wide tracts of public lands in Mindanao and elsewhere under the cover of the "growers' agreements". And, of course, the entire "new constitution" is silent about the fact that US military bases and stations sit on about 200,000 hectares of public lands. This occupation of public lands by a foreign military power is properly prohibited by the definition of territory by a truly sovereign state.

The last two sentences of Section 11 above is utterly ridiculous. In one sentence, it is made to appear that no private corporation or association may hold by lease, concession, license or permit timber and forest lands and other timber or forest resources in excess of 100,000 hectares. In the subsequent sentence, it is provided that such area may be increased by the national assembly upon the recommendation of the National Economic and Development Authority. Indeed, bureaucrat capitalism can always cook up situations and reasons for disposing unlimited amounts of public lands.

Section 6. The State may, in the interest of national welfare or defense, establish and operate industries and means of transportation and communication, and, upon payment of just compensation, transfer to public ownership utilities and other private enterprises to be operated by the Government. Section 7. In times of national emergency when the public interest so requires, the State may temporarily take over or direct the operation of any privately owned public utility or business affected with public interest.

The property and interests of the big bourgeoisie, including the foreign monopolies and the local big compradors, are well sanctified by the "new constitution". Section 6 above, quite similar to and as reactionary as Section 6 of Article XIII of the 1935 constitution, categorically provides that public utilities and other private enterprises cannot be transferred to public ownership without "just compensation". The Investment Incentives Act goes even as far as to guarantee the right of non-expropriation to foreign investors. Consistent with this act, US imperialism has tied down the reactionary government to investment insurance schemes covering US investments so that the guarantees for the extraordinary privilege of non-expropriation shall not only be in word but also in fact.

The basic requirement of "just compensation" guarantees that the property and interests of the big bourgeoisie are not to be dismissed but are even to be enlarged. How can a financially bankrupt government, with small revenues and huge internal and external debts, offer "just compensation" to its foreign masters? Even before the termination of the Parity Amendment and the Laurel-Langley Agreement, the fascist dictator Marcos has made it clear that US investors should not worry too much about reducing their equities to forty in corporations engaged in the areas of public utilities, land and natural resources for as long as neither the reactionary government nor private Filipino businessmen can afford to buy them out. This is what Marcos calls "justice" and "fairness" to his imperialist masters. Furthermore, even if the US investors were to be bought out on their equity excesses, they are still free to shift their capital to so many other lucrative fields of investment in the country.

Without any mention of "just compensation", Section 7 above provides that in times of "national emergency" the state may temporarily take over or direct the operation of any privately owned public utility or business. This section is specifically intended to preempt claims for damages that may be made by business enterprises maliciously shut down or taken over by the fascist dictator Marcos for his political and economic gain. Under Proclamation No. 1081, there has been a real and selective but temporary takeover of such enterprises as the MERALCO, ABS-CBN, ABC, Manila Times, Manila Chronicle, Free Press, IISMI and so many others. It has never been in

accord with public interest for the fascist dictatorship to make such takeover. Such takeover is merely a part of the narrow scheme to suppress the opponents and critics of the US-Marcos dictatorship and also allow the private business interests of the fascist dictator to muscle in. The most conspicuous private business interests of Marcos that have been benefited by Proclamation No. 1081 are the Daily Express, KBSRPN, Liwayway Publications Group, PLDT and ELISCO. With regard to the long-term implications of either Section 6 or 7 we state that a reactionary state can never truly stand for national welfare, defense or public interest. Section 12. The State shall formulate and implement an agrarian reform program aimed at emancipating the tenant from the bondage of the soil and achieving the goals enunciated in this constitution. Section 13. The National Assembly may authorize, upon payment of just compensation, the expropriation of private lands to be subdivided into small lots and conveyed at cost to deserving citizens. Taken together, Sections 12 and 13 demonstrate the rank hypocrisy and demagoguery of the US-Marcos dictatorship. The first section repeating phrases from Marcos' Presidential Decree No. 27 provides that there shall be an agrarian reform program. On the other hand, the second section echoing Section 4, Article XIII of the 1935 constitution demands that "just compensation" be paid to the landlords in cases of expropriation. In effect, the tenants can be emancipated only if they themselves can afford the prohibitive redistribution price (plus interest and tax payments) demanded by the reactionary government. In other words, the "new constitution" actually sets a condition for preventing the poor peasants and lower-middle peasants from coming to own their share of land. It must be pointed out that there has never been any poor peasant, farm worker nor lower-middle peasant who has been emancipated by trying to pay the landlord's land under the "expropriation" program of the reactionary government. In the first place, the reactionary government is restricted by its own political character and financial limitations from expropriating even only one percent of the total landholdings of the landlord class. For instance, only 3,876 hectares were expropriated at the cost of P16,002,900 by the reactionary government during the entire life of the Agricultural Land Reform Code from 1963 to 1971. This area is equivalent only to a very small portion of the Marcos hacienda of 22,000 hectares in the Cagayan Valley.

Lately, the fascist dictator Marcos has made it even more obvious than ever before through Presidential Decree No. 27 that the poor peasants, farm workers and lower-middle peasants can never hope to give "just compensation" to the landlords or afford the redistribution price set by the reactionary government. The formula dictated by Presidential Decree No. 27 for determining the value of the landlord's land, i.e., the average annual crop (based on the three normal crop years) multiplied by two and one-half ($2\frac{1}{2}$) plus annual interest charges of six percent for fifteen years, has artificially increased the value of the landlord's land far beyond its "fair market value". Presidential Decree No. 27 is even more foolish than the Agricultural Land Reform Code of 1963 and its 1971 modified version, the Code of Agrarian Reforms. This decree has served only to expose further the counterrevolutionary character of the fascist dictatorship among the peasant masses and to stress the correct revolutionary program of distributing land to the poor peasants, farm workers and lowermiddle peasants at no cost. The fascist dictatorship is simply daydreaming when it claims that Presidential Decree No. 27 has effectively counteracted the agrarian revolution being waged by the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army and the peasant masses.

Our attitude and policy on the "new constitution"

There is no fundamental difference between the 1935 constitution and the "new constitution" in the sense that US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism continue to be given the license to ride roughshod over the broad masses of the people. The most striking difference that is in the "new constitution" is neither the adoption of the parliamentary form of government, the lowering of the age of suffrage nor any thing else of the sort, as some may superficially think, but it is the rabidly counterrevolutionary endorsement of a fascist dictatorship out to preserve the old society even while calling it a "new society" against the ever rising tide of the revolutionary mass movement. This "new constitution" is essentially and completely repugnant to the national sovereignty and democratic rights of the Filipino people.

Now that the final draft of the "new constitution" is out, it is absolutely clear that the very idea of holding the 1971-1972 constitutional convention, without any prior fundamental change of the social order, has been part of a long-nurtured scheme of the US-Marcos clique to keep itself in power even beyond 1973 through a vicious rightist counterrevolutionary coup and a fascist dictatorship. The 1970 elections for delegates were fashioned in such a way or in such a manner as to bring the reactionary constitutional convention the biggest possible number of big comprador, big landlord and big bureaucrat delegates beholden to the political machinery of the US-Marcos

clique.

Subsequently in the convention, the US-Marcos clique scandalously manipulated its minions against a broad range of progressive delegates determined to stop the obvious scheme to perpetuate Marcos in power. The Quintero expose showed up corrupt methods employed by this clique to keep its minions in tow. Then in one fell swoop upon the declaration of martial law, the full-fledged fascist dictatorship took every measure to suppress its opponents inside and outside the convention. Thus, it came to pass that the US-Marcos dictatorship succeeded in ramming through the convention the final draft of the “new constitution” now offered for “ratification” in one more farce—a sham plebiscite on January 15, 1973.

Only after the final signing of this “new constitution” by the farcical constitutional convention on November 30, 1972 has the fascist dictator Marcos decreed with the silly air of self-indulgence an order to his military minions to allow “free discussion and debate”. This he does while he continues to unleash the wildest and most futile kinds of onslaughts against the broad masses of workers, peasants, students, youth, women and the national minorities. This he does while he continues to suppress all open and legal organizations, mass media and other entities that are firmly opposed to his tyrannical rule. This he does while his spies continue to eavesdrop on the people’s ordinary conversations.

The fascist dictator Marcos now appears to believe that he has sufficiently intimidated the broad masses of the people and deceived them about his perverse record and ambitions. He has monopolized the use of armed force in urban areas and elsewhere, all instrumentalities of the reactionary government, the mass media, the schools and everything else which he can actually take over or threaten with armed force. He is going to boast that as some sort of military conqueror he is comparable to the infamous imperialist general Arthur MacArthur who as head of the US aggressor troops in the Philippines issued in 1902 General Order No. 68, declaring martial law. Even while this colonial military order was not lifted until sometime in the thirties, the US colonial government issued and put into effect “fundamental laws” governing the Philippines as a colony.

Though he has several times boasted of his Proclamation No. 1081 as a “new and outstanding contribution to international jurisprudence”, the fascist dictator actually traces the antecedence of this proclamation to the general order of a barbaric foreign aggressor, US imperialism, which he continues to serve. What the US-Marcos dictatorship calls “martial law Philippine style” is also nothing but a cheap imitation of the tricks of such contemporary fascist dictators as Thieu, Pak Jung Hi, Lon Nol, Suharto, Chiang, Thanom, Papadopoulos and the like, and also of such bygone fascist dictators as Hitler, Mussolini, Batista, Ngo Dinh Diem and the like. All of those have had their own constitutions permitting them to rule indefinitely.

The confidence of the fascist dictator Marcos in allowing “free discussion and debate” on the “new constitution” arises from several facts. The period before January 15 is extremely short. The most possible legal means of communications spout only his counterrevolutionary propaganda. The printing and handling of ballots are under the full control of his rabid agents in the Commission on Elections and in the reactionary armed forces. The constitutional convention delegates eager to take their share of the loot are bound to do a lot of campaigning all over the country. Local officials of the reactionary government irrespective of their political parties are under duress and are under strict orders to support the “new constitution” under the pretext of “nonpartisanship”. Furthermore, the counting of votes or, more precisely, the misreporting of votes to the public shall finally be made by his rabid agents even as the honest school teachers shall have made a fair counting of votes. The fascist dictator has always stressed that there is no more turning back from his mad lurch. He is terrified by the prospect of having to pay with his life the many grave crimes of fascism, puppetry and corruption that he has perpetrated on the people. His stakes are now far higher than in any previous election when he at any rate resorted to fraud and terrorism. Likewise, the stakes of his imperialist masters are high. Thus, he would resort to every possible measure in the forthcoming “plebiscite” in order to perpetuate himself in power and to give a semblance of the constitutionality and legality to his usurpation of absolute power. It is by the “ratification” of the “new constitution” that he hopes to be able to cling more tightly to US imperialism and rule indefinitely.

But the people will never respect a “constitution” that is the product and token of their enemy. Since the fascist dictator is fond of drawing parallelisms between the Philippines and south Vietnam, let us remind him that the late unlamented Ngo Dinh Diem was able to fabricate his own “constitution” against the people’s will while he boasted that he was preempting the revolution in south Vietnam. Such constitution and such boasting only damned Ngo and the Vietnamese revolution advanced even more vigorously. We are certain of two possibilities

for the fascist dictator Marcos: either he shall be outmaneuvered by his fellow reactionaries in a relatively short time or he shall stay in power long enough to hear the New People's Army approaching Malacañang. In any case, the people's wrath shall have something to do with his fate.

The Communist Party of the Philippines is determined to expose and condemn the "new constitution" as a license for keeping the US-Marcos dictatorship indefinitely and for aggravating the oppression and exploitation of the broad masses of the people by foreign monopolists, the big compradors and the big landlords. We are determined to focus attention on the pro-imperialist and antidemocratic provisions which make the "new constitution" essentially and completely counterrevolutionary. Together with all our allies, we are determined to arouse and mobilize the entire nation and people to reject this filthy scrap of paper made in Malacañang. It is apt to call this the Marcos constitution in order to unmask its despicable author.

The US-Marcos dictatorship may be able to frustrate and make a mockery of the people's will in a "plebiscite" that is under its control. But then in the end, will a filthy scrap of paper really save the fascist dictatorship from the wrath of the people? Mere hypocritical invocations of "constitutional rule" will not make the fascist dictatorship less than its abhorrent self. The longer the US-Marcos dictatorship reigns, the more determined are the broad masses of the Filipino people to overthrow it. They shall surely win under the leadership of the proletariat and the Communist Party of the Philippines.

Reject the Marcos Constitution!

Expose the Sham Plebiscite!

Down with the Martial Rule of the US-Marcos Dictatorship!

Fight for National Freedom and Democracy!

Carry Forward the Revolutionary Armed Struggle!

Long Live the Filipino People!

Long Live the Philippine Revolution!

Statement of the CPP on the Latest Fascist Proclamations and the “Citizens’ Assemblies”

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The Communist Party of the Philippines, in representation of the true national and democratic interests of the broad masses of the Filipino people, condemns Proclamations No. 1102, No. 1103 and No. 1104 highhandedly issued by the fascist dictator Marcos last January 17, 1973 to a two-hour “congress” flaunting the signboard “Kapulungan ng mga Barangay” (Assembly of Barangays). These proclamations are a flimsy embellishment of the US imperialist-instigated rightist coup d’etat on September 21, 1972 and a travesty of the people’s sovereignty.

The Party likewise condemns the false basis on which these proclamations have been issued. The “citizens’ assemblies” or “barangays” that are claimed by the fascist dictatorship to have voted on questions pertinent to these proclamations from January 10 to 15, 1973 were imaginary in most parts of the country and rigged up in the few places where they were actually held. The “results of voting” cited by the fascist dictator are sheer fabrication.

Three more fascist proclamations

1. Proclamation No. 1102 announces the “ratification” of the Marcos constitution. While recognizing the difference between the “citizens’ assemblies” and the plebiscite demanded by the 1935 constitution, this proclamation arbitrarily and self-contradictorily considers or interprets the two as equivalent to each other, with one being able to replace the other.

By the twist of a phrase, the fascist dictator has taken it upon himself to “ratify” a constitution whose most decisive and most abhorrent articles and provisions (Article XIV and Article XVII) promote the interests of US imperialism and a particular pack of its running dogs headed by himself.

This constitution licenses Marcos alone to remain in power indefinitely and to wield absolute authority over the entire reactionary government. All the unjust proclamations, general orders, decrees and instructions, including those which are still to be made and of which the people cannot as yet be aware, are approved by this constitution (specifically by its Section 3, Article XVII).

Acting according to his own proclamation, Marcos pronounce to the “Kapulungan ng mga Barangay” the effectivity of the “new constitution” and consequently the noneffectivity of the 1935 constitution as of 12 o’clock noon of January 17, 1973. All officials and employees of the reactionary government are now supposed to be able to remain in office only with the indulgence of the fascist dictator, irrespective of their claims to elective or civil service status. Both houses of Congress have been dissolved automatically and the Supreme Court is bound to become even more subservient to him who has the power to replace the incumbent justices and put in five new appointees.

Marcos seeks to tack the label of “constitutional authoritarianism” on the fascist counterrevolution which he has launched. Whichever way the fascist dictatorship calls itself, it cannot hide its ugly malicious face. The fascist dictator has been able to abuse the 1935 constitution; and, it is now far easier for him to manipulate a constitution expressly designed to allow the most wanton abuses against the people. But, let it be stated over and over that despotism gains no right to reign forever by simply waving a scrap of paper of its own making.

2. Proclamation No. 1103 declares that the “interim national assembly” provided for in Article XVII (Transitory Provisions) of the “new constitution” be not convened. This proclamation shows that the fascist dictator can manipulate at will any kind of constitution. While he claims that the “new constitution” has been “ratified,” he can whimsically decide to nullify any part of it which he thinks is liable to put his rule under question. By his twisted logic, the prior provision that the “interim national assembly” shall exist immediately upon the “ratification” of the “new constitution” (Section I, Article XVII). More precisely, he inverts a subsidiary provision to assail a prior provision. He is obviously afraid that in the “interim national assembly” there shall still be formidable groups and elements who shall stand up to expose and denounce his unjust rule though the “new constitution” clearly makes the “interim national assembly” nothing more than a rubber stamp for him.

It is starkly clear that the political upstarts and political has-beens in the 1971-1972 reactionary constitutional convention, who have obviously expected to share power and loot with the fascist dictator, do not count much in his despotic calculations. The fascist dictator himself has pretentiously pointed to the “interim national assembly” as the most objectionable part of the “new constitution” in an attempt to obscure the fact that what is most

objectionable is the very essence of the “entire new constitution,” which endorses a fascist dictatorship subservient to US imperialism.

The ambition of the fascist dictator is to remain in power indefinitely, at least seven years or even longer as indicated by the question raised before the “citizens’ assemblies” regarding the suspension of the 1973 elections. He has the megalomaniac illusions of a Thieu, Park, Suharto, Chiang and all the other despots for whom he has openly expressed admiration only lately after several years of masquerading as a “libertarian.” The freezing of the “interim national assembly” is one more hedge of the fascist dictator against the lesser reactionaries of the moment.

Among the senators, congressmen, and constitutional convention delegates, who have hoped to be in the “interim national assembly,” it should now be clear that the chicanery of Marcos can make comic victims of them only because he can flaunt the reactionary armed forces. The fascist counterrevolution is an armed undertaking by a few. It can be overthrown only through armed revolution by the masses.

3. Proclamation No. 1104 declares the continuation of martial law. This proclamation is superfluous to Proclamation No. 1102 and No. 1103 which in turn are superfluous to Proclamation No. 1081 but it is issued just the same by the fascist dictator obviously for the sake of emphasis. As early as January 7, 1973, the fascist dictator ordered the “restoration” of the full effects of martial law, after pretending to allow “free discussion and debate” in preparation for a “plebiscite.” What Marcos seeks to emphasize is his determination to remain in power by sheer armed force. It is idle to ever hope that “normalcy” would return by submitting to his arbitrary act.

The “citizens’ assemblies”—a farce

The “citizens’ assemblies” or “barangays” are a unilateral concoction of the fascist dictator, issuing decrees from above. These were “created” by Presidential Decree No. 86 dated December 31, 1972. The first public impression deliberately made about these by the Marcos press was that they were going to be an instrument for an “opinion survey,” not a “referendum” or “plebiscite” which the fascist dictator himself had explicitly announced would be either on February 19 or March 5, 1973. Questions from above were thrown to them through Presidential Decree No. 86-A dated January 5, 1973 (the first set of five questions) and then Presidential Decree No. 86-B dated January 7, 1973 (the second set of six questions).

The questions can be summed up in the following manner: Should not the “new constitution” be approved now, martial law continue, Congress be dissolved, the “interim national assembly” be not convened, and elections be postponed for seven years or more so that in effect the fascist dictator shall be the sole political entity who has a claim to being the first and final government authority for an indefinite period of time?

The governors, mayors, barrio captains and city ward leaders were under strict orders by the fascist dictatorship to go through the motions of holding meetings in a few places from January 10 to 15 and finally to submit on behalf of every barrio or the city district or ward within their jurisdiction a notarized “certificate of results,” falsely showing that an “assembly” had been held, attended by close to 100 percent of the people that are fifteen years and above and voting on every question in favor of the fascist dictatorship to the extent of 90 percent to 100 percent.

In most places in the country, there were actually no “citizens’ assemblies” held. In the few places where they were held, attendance was limited to a handful of persons as the masses knew that they would not be able to express their views, they would be interminably threatened and talked down to about the “new society” by the most reactionary political bosses and that their votes would not really be counted if these did not fit into the prefabricated “voting results.” The “citizens’ assemblies” were undeniably within the confines of a fascist fiat ordering the full enforcement of martial rule, and prohibiting the least shade of criticism against the fascist dictatorship.

The main issue that ran through all the questions thrown to the “citizens’ assemblies” is Marcos’ fascist usurpation of power in the service of US imperialism and the local exploiting classes. Yet to discuss this anywhere was to be guilty of being “ad hominem” and “divisive” and, worse, of being “rumormonger,” subject to harsh punishment in line with the Marcos speech of January 7, 1973 and Presidential Decree No. 90 (which is specifically against “rumormongering”).

Under the foregoing conditions, the “citizens’ assemblies” were certainly in the iron vise of the fascist dictatorship. In addition, the “final tabulation” of the “certificate of results” was in the charge of Malacañang alone. On the basis of such a “tabulation” that was not subjected to public scrutiny or verification by reliable entities, Marcos hurriedly announced before the “Kapulungan ng mga Barangay” that 31,298 out of 35,000 estimated “citizens’

assemblies” had been fully accounted for as early as midnight of January 16, 1973 and that they had voted to the extent of more than 95 percent in favor of the “new constitution” and all related wishes of the fascist dictatorship.

It is an incredible feat for the fascist dictatorship to have collected more than 30,000 “certificates of return” in the short span of six days (including the days that the “citizens’ assemblies” were supposed to be still meeting) and in a country with an extremely poor road system, not to speak of the small isolated islands and wide areas where revolutionary warfare is going on. It is an even more incredible feat for the fascist dictatorship to have in so short a time tabulated and assessed these “certificates” which corresponded to widely varied questionnaires, ranging from eleven or twelve questions to twenty-nine questions as Marcos himself would acknowledge, and which supposedly also contained freely-worded opinions. The Marcos lie is too obvious.

Marcos claims that the country is in a “state of actual war” and that martial rule is necessary because the “normal processes of the ruling system can no longer work. But in the same breath, he claims that “citizens’ assemblies” of more than 15 million people have been peacefully held in all 35,000 barrios, city districts and wards of the country. All these inconsistencies lead to one consistent fact: that the fascist dictatorship will use lies, together with armed force, to perpetuate itself in power. After so many solid proofs of the chicanery and treachery of the fascist dictator, it is sheer foolishness for anyone to keep on hoping that “normalcy” would come through capitulation.

The Communist Party of the Philippines, leading the broad masses of the Philippines, is certain and unequivocal about its course of action against the US-Marcos dictatorship. Once more we call upon all those who have been ruthlessly victimized by the US-Marcos dictatorship to review our statement issued on October 1, 1972 for points of general and specific agreement and common action. 2 We entreat all political leaders who are truly concerned about the destiny of the nation and welfare of the people to join a national united front with the Party against the common enemy. We consider our allies as most earnest in fighting for national freedom and democracy when they avail themselves of the following courses of action. One is extending direct, substantial and continuous support to the New People’s Army or the revolutionary mass organizations. Another is forming and fielding in any province anti-fascist guerrilla units which are independent of but cooperative with the New People’s Army. Still another is calling on friends and relatives in the reactionary armed forces to break away from the fascist dictatorship and join the revolutionary armed struggle. All these courses of action will lead to the breakup of the Marcos kingdom and further on to a democratic coalition government. The broad masses of the Filipino people are more than ever eager to unite and overthrow the US-Marcos dictatorship so that they will in the end enjoy national freedom and democracy. The emergence of full-fledged fascist dictatorship has served to hasten the armed revolution. Never has there been better conditions for the rapid advance of the Philippine revolution since the Japanese fascist occupation of the country. Since its reestablishment four years ago under the theoretical guidance of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought, the Communist Party of the Philippines has assiduously prepared itself for this development.

Appendix January 10, 1973

Editor’s Note: Below is a verbatim copy of the mimeographed sheet handed by Marcos hatchetmen to barrio captains and “barangay leaders” as their guide for handling the six principal questions in the “citizens’ assemblies.” For the Citizen’s Assembly QUESTIONNAIRE

(1) Question Do you approve of the Citizen’s Assembly as the base of popular government to decide issues affecting our people?

Answer Yes, in order to broaden the base of citizen’s participation in Government.

(2) Question Do you approve of the New Constitution?

Answer Yes, but we do not want the Ad Interim Assembly to be convoked. Or if it is to be convoked at all, it should not be done until after at least seven (7) years from the approval of the New Constitution by the Citizens’ Assemblies.

(3) Question Do you want a plebiscite to be called to ratify the New Constitution?

Answer No need. The vote of the Citizens’ Assemblies should already be considered the plebiscite on the New Constitution. If the Citizen’s Assemblies approve of the New Constitution, then the New Constitution should be deemed ratified.

(4) Question Do you want to hold elections in November 1973 as provided for under the 1935 Constitution?

Answer No. We are sick and tired of too frequent elections. We are fed up with politics, of the many debates

and so much expenses.

(5) Question If the election in 1973 will not be held, when do you want the next elections to be called?

Answer Probably a period of at least seven (7) years moratorium on elections will be enough for stability to be established in the country, for reform to take root and normalcy to return.

(6) Question Do you want Martial Law to continue?

Answer _ Yes. We want President Marcos to continue Martial Law. We want him to exercise his powers with more authority. We want him to be string and firm so that we can accomplish all his reform programs and establish normalcy in the country. If all other measures fail, we want along lines of the New Constitution without the Ad Interim Assembly.

The fascist dictator Marcos himself in his speech on January 7, 1973, summing up 100 days of the US-Marcos dictatorship and martial rule, has acknowledged that his “new society” is in peril.

Indeed, the US-Marcos dictatorship has served only to hasten the revolutionary flow. The broad masses of the people have come to understand more than ever the necessity of armed revolution and have rallied more than ever to the cause of the national-democratic revolution since the Marcos rightist coup on September 21, 1972.

Contrary to the flamboyant lies of the Marcos propagandists, the people clearly see the old evils of US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism continuing to afflict Philippine society in an ever more rapacious way. The criminal abuses and demagoguery of the fascist dictatorship have engendered powerful resistance.

The flames of revolutionary armed struggle are raging in the north, south and in between. Party cadres are spreading out and guerrilla units are springing up all over the countryside. The enemy has suffered unprecedentedly heavy losses in men and equipment in the hands of the New People's Army in Luzon, especially in Cagayan Valley, and also in the hands of the national minorities in Mindanao. Armed struggle is at their most intense in the provinces of Isabela, Quirino, Nueva Vizcaya, Cagayan, Pampanga, Tarlac, Quezon, Camarines Sur, Albay, Sorsogon, Cotabato, Lanao, Zamboanga, Sulu and Basilan.

With more and more of its troops having to be deployed in the provinces, the fascist dictatorship is becoming panicky lest the armed city partisans launch sudden punitive operations in the Manila-Rizal region. Even without these special operations happening yet to a significant extent, the enemy is terribly afraid of resistance propaganda and the vocal anti-fascist denunciations by the people in the urban areas.

In the malevolent spirit of reprisal, the fascist dictator has announced once more that the full force of martial law is to be applied, ending a brief pretense about “free discussion and debate” on the Marcos constitution. He has become so terrified by the mere rustling of leaves in the winds and so haunted by his own shadow that he has issued Presidential Decree No. 90 raising “rumormongering” to the level of a major political crime. At a time of unbridled white terror, “citizens’ assemblies” have been created mostly on paper by Presidential Decree No. 86 in order to give imaginary support to “tabulations of votes” prefabricated in Malacañang. These are calculated to “ratify” the “new constitution”; and endorse the continued reign of US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism, along with Marcos’ autocratic ambition to stay in power for seven years or more. The 100-day record of the fascist dictatorship shows that its “new society” is the old society gone ever more tyrannical, corrupt, bankrupt and deceptive. It is relevant to review the “seven areas of priority” of the fascist dictatorship.

1. On “peace and order”

The fascist dictatorship, an offspring of the “Nixon Doctrine,” has been the biggest political crime in the country and has wrought havoc on the lives of the Filipino people. It has come into existence through such brutal measures as the terroristic bombings, kidnappings, mass arrests, mass detention, zoning, forced fake surrenders, mass evacuations, massacres, abusive checkpoints and torture and harassment of people who resist or who are most likely to resist it by word or by deed. These are by no means the manifestations of the “humane and forgiving” character of “martial law Philippine style.” These are the standard tricks of fascist dictatorship.

Martial rule has spawned the most scandalous crimes for the purpose of keeping the fascist dictator in power and for enlarging his personal wealth. For instance, the press monopoly gained by Marcos through the closure at gunpoint of the mass media not owned by him is an unmitigated form of robbery. The fascist military has in this manner expanded his capital assets in a wide range of businesses. Taking the cue from their own masters, officers and men of the reactionary armed forces have taken advantage of martial rule to commit the most wanton crimes, including blackmail and extortion, robbery, murder, torture, rape and bribe-taking in connection with military clearances.

Crimes will keep on arising with ever greater virulence in a semicolonial and semifeudal society like that of the Philippines. As a matter of fact, fascist dictatorship is the most imposing of these crimes. The “peace and order” situation now is far worse than before. Multifarious crimes are being committed by the fascist officials in the reactionary government and the people are in so many ways constrained from complaining openly against them. The

victims are always liable to be denounced as “rumormongers.”

Under the present conditions, the people have no alternative but to join the resistance movement. Thus, the revolutionary armed struggle has spread and intensified throughout the archipelago. In his attempt to monopolize power, the fascist dictator has aggravated violent contradictions even within the ranks of the reactionaries. His rivals for political power within the ruling system have barely started to move against him in the most efficacious manner, such as developing rebel groups within the reactionary armed forces, fielding their own guerrilla units and drawing away local governments from the fascist dictatorship.

It is not true that private armies and crime syndicates have been broken up and that the unregistered firearms of both Marcos' friends and enemies have been surrendered. The yearend claim of the Philippine Constabulary that it has collected 482,284 firearms (sometimes claimed to be more than 700,000) and 1,300,000 rounds of ammunitions is evidently a careless lie when it is considered that every gun supposedly surrendered had only two to three bullets. Most of the firearms actually collected are registered ones of anti-Marcos corporations and individuals and stocks of commercial gun stores. However, even the homemade shotguns of the people in frontier areas have been confiscated, thus they have been deprived of the means to hunt and to ward off cattle rustlers and other bad elements. Anticipating the growth of armed resistance, the fascist dictatorship intends to use the arms collected to attack the people further.

2. On land reform

The “land reform program” of the fascist dictatorship is nothing more than a scheme to make fun of the tenant masses with the silly offer that they can own a piece of land if they pay for it at a price higher than its “current fair market value.” As dictated by Presidential Decree No. 27, this price is easily three times higher than the “current fair market value” of land. Poor and lower-middle peasants simply cannot save even one of fifteen yearly installments on the price. Even upper-middle peasants cannot be certain of keeping up with the yearly payments.

It is the obsession of the big landlord Marcos to protect the landlord class and to suppress the landless tillers who rise up to acquire their share of land free through the agrarian revolution. That is why the reactionary armed forces are deployed and concentrated in areas where the New People's Army has taken roots among the peasant masses. The fascist dictatorship is extremely afraid of the Party's Revolutionary Guide for Land Reform which is now leading the way for the oppressed tillers to acquire their share of land rent.

Wherever the peasant masses have not yet stirred, the fascist dictatorship does not even pretend to be concerned one way or the other about land reform. There they are left to continue suffering in the hands of the landlords, the landgrabbers, the merchant-usurers, the fake cooperatives, the bureaucrat-controlled farmers' associations and the bandits. Where there is already the Party and the New People's Army and the peasant masses have begun to stir, the fascist dictatorship unleashes its armed might against them, protects the landlord class and then cooks up a scheme to offer land for sale or puts up fake cooperatives that are under big landlord or big bureaucrat control.

3. On economic development

What economic development means to the fascist puppet dictatorship is the unbridled exploitation of the Filipino people by US imperialism is assured of retaining and enlarging its \$2.0 billion to \$3.0 billion assets in the country. The Marcos constitution approves its continued enjoyment of “parity rights,” privilege of nonexpropriation, unlimited profit remittances, tax exemptions, priorities and other old and new special privileges. The Philippines will continue to be a dumping ground of manufactures, a source of cheap raw materials and a field of investment for US imperialism, together with Japanese capitalism.

The reactionary government will continue to beg for onerous foreign loans and to raise taxes only to build the “infrastructures” essentially for foreign investors, the big compradors and the big landlords. At the moment, the foreign debts of the Philippines have reached the level of \$2.4 billion. The internal public debt has surpassed the level of ₱8.0 billion. Under the policy of continuous devaluation or “floating rate,” the peso has sunk to the level that one US dollar is equivalent to ₱7.40. On the eve of martial rule, one US dollar was equivalent to ₱6.80.

The economy has become utterly bankrupt. The imperialists remit superprofits without let-up and at an accelerated rate. Only the big compradors, big landlords and big bureaucrats are getting some share of the imperialist loot. Prices keep on rising at an unprecedented rate and causing untold suffering on the broad masses of the people. The income of the toiling masses is daily pressed down to lower and lower levels while the Marcos fascist gang becomes filthy rich in payment for its unmitigated subservience to foreign monopolies.

Unemployment remains unchecked. Those who are employed daily face the specter of mass layoffs and worsening wage conditions. Martial rule has deprived them of the most basic trade union rights. According to watered-down statistics of the Department of Labor, the fascist dictatorship has so far directly caused the disemployment of some 200,000 people in the government and outside. The fascist dictatorship prates about “manpower training centers” but there are no job opportunities. While he gets huge kickbacks from foreign contractors, he goes as far as to offer now the scheme of employing corvee labor and prison labor to push further his program of building “infrastructures” for his foreign and feudal masters.

4. On the development of moral values

The fascist dictator shamelessly puts himself up as a model of virtue, a righteous crusader, high above his corrupt and bumbling ilk. In fact, he stands unparalleled as the most vicious and greedy of the reactionary politicians that has ever surfaced in the present puppet republic. He is the biggest representative of what he himself calls the “sick society.” Unbridled brutality, corruption and mendacity unsurpassed by previous puppet regimes are the hallmark of his regime.

Massacres, assassinations, kidnappings and terror bombings have been masterminded by Marcos himself in his mad ambition to put up the fascist dictatorship. Through graft and corruption on a colossal scale, this oligarch has amassed wealth that may now exceed the holdings of the traditional big comprador families. As for his mendacity, there is no need to elaborate on it as one has only to go over his proclamations, general orders, decrees, instructions, and acts.

The fascist press daily churns out the most obvious lies that incense the people. The Marcos-owned press (the *Daily Express*, Kanlaon Broadcasting System, Radio Philippines Network, *Expressweek*, *Focus* and other operating media also under the names of Marcos dummies) constitutes in itself the expose of the most wanton kind of perversion. Its booming business to the tune of hundreds of millions of pesos, at the expense of those mass media closed by martial rule, is tantamount to largescale robbery. This signifies that the fascist dictator is interested not only in protecting but also in expanding even more rapidly through martial rule the wide range of property holdings he has amassed in seven years of unbridled graft and corruption.

The repetitious call to “discipline” that the fascist regime makes is nothing but a hypocritical call to submission to the worst evils that have afflicted Philippine society. A government of threats and reprisals for the benefit of US imperialism and the exploiting classes is being run by the fascist dictator. This will in the end be overthrown by the people. The revolutionary movement shall cleanse the country of all the filth and disease spawned by US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

5. On government reorganization

It is not really to purge the reactionary government of the “corrupt, incompetent and ignorant” that a “government reorganization” is being conducted by the fascist dictatorship. It is being conducted with the main purpose of removing all possible objectors to the Marcos dictatorship within the ranks of civilian officials and employees, saving funds for increasing the troops and equipment of the reactionary armed forces and increasing the scope of direct administration by the fascist military.

The fascist dictatorship is bent on effecting mass layoffs. So far, 140,000 government employees have been laid off with the stigma of being called “misfits” and certainly with no guarantee of being employed elsewhere. Within the executive branch, it is not only those in appointive positions who face the daily threat of dismissal but also those in elective positions. The fascist dictatorship has a plan to pursue the logic of detaining some local elective officials to replacing them and many more with military officers and others who are considered more loyal to the fascist dictator. It maintains as the first principle that the fascist military, an antediluvian oaf, is the prime agent of “modernization” and “government efficiency.”

The abolition of Congress and nonconvocation of the “interim national assembly” are now held necessary by the fascist dictatorship ostensibly to make government “less expensive” and “less divided.” As a result of these, tens of thousands of employees in the legislative branch will be thrown out of jobs. With regard to the judicial branch, the fascist dictator seems satisfied that the “new constitution” allows him to control it completely, from the Supreme Court down, and so he seems to relent in thoroughly implementing his previous orders threatening to replace all civilian courts with military courts.

6. On educational reforms

The basic principle in the “educational reforms” of the fascist dictatorship is the serviceability of the cream of

the youth to the interests of the US monopolies and the big comprador firms. Thus, the recommendations of the “Presidential Commission to Survey Philippine Education,” a body masterminded and financed by the World Bank and the Ford Foundation, are going to be implemented. The educational system will be increasingly tied down to projects requiring foreign loans from such US imperialist agencies as the World Bank and the International Development Association. Faculty and student training as well as the curricula and study materials shall be more thoroughly suited to the ideological and political dictates of US imperialism.

In schools all over the country, the ideas of national freedom and democracy are under strict censorship while the bankrupt ideas of puppet fascism and anticommunism are being stressed officially. The fascist dictatorship is doing everything it can to smash faculty unions and students associations that fight for their political as well as economic rights. Many of the political detainees are teachers, researchers and students; many others have to go underground to avoid incarceration. At the moment, the University of the Philippines and many schools all over the country are virtually concentration camps, sealed by military checkpoints and with enemy agents spying on teacher and student activities. Right on campuses are military offices where the fascist goons detain, interrogate and beat up teachers and students on mere suspicion of “rumormongering.”

7. On social services

A bankrupt regime that puts the utmost value on the fascist military cannot be concerned with using limited resources for social services. It is in a vicious circle of its own making. As it assaults the people and compels them to wage resistance, the fascist dictatorship has to go on wasting its resources on troops, material and military operations.

During the July-August floods, only trickles of relief goods reached a few of the millions of victims. Most of the relief goods fell into the hands of officers and men of the reactionary armed forces for the use of their own families and for black-marketing purposes. In Mindanao and the Cagayan Valley, in line with the proclamation of martial law, hundreds of thousands of people have been forced by the reactionary government to evacuate to the towns but they have not been provided with any kind of relief. They have had to sell their personal belongings, including their work animals, just to be able to eat and furthermore they have had to submit themselves to extortions by the fascist troops.

All over the country, unlicensed pedlars are being forced to give up their trade without any other alternative as a means of livelihood. In urban areas, the slum dwellers are also being forced out of their shanties and out of their means of livelihood nearby. Yet these urban poor are not adequately provided with resettlement areas, relief and alternative jobs. The fascist dictatorship is creating every condition for starving the people.

Those who are employed see that the GSIS and SS are bereft of funds for their own benefit. The savings of the workingmen have gone mostly to corporations owned by Marcos and his cronies. There can be nothing much more to expect from ill-funded relief agencies, which are also the milking cows of the bureaucrat capitalists.

In the light of the preceding statement of facts, the fascist dictatorship’s speech of January 7, 1973 is a pack of lies. The US-Marcos dictatorship is in peril precisely because of its evil antinational and antidemocratic nature. Its downfall is a foregone conclusion.

Under the leadership of the Communist Party of the Philippines, the broad masses of the Filipino people are rallying to the great red banner of the people’s democratic revolution with ever greater vigor and courage. The day is not far off that the US-Marcos dictatorship shall be cast away into the dustbin of history. The New People’s Army under the leadership of the Party is daily marching forward in a protracted people’s war that aims to rid the country of the scourge of US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. The US-Marcos dictatorship is nothing but a passing phase in the downward course of these evils.

Terrified by the revolutionary mass movement and the repeated upsurges of the national-democratic cultural revolution, the US-Marcos clique on September 22 seized control of the mass media in a vile attempt to wield these as instruments to deceive and intimidate the people. In so doing, it managed to achieve one of the most pernicious ambitions of the avaricious bureaucrat capitalist Marcos, that of putting up his own business monopoly in mass media.

It will be recalled that, having secretly signed the papers declaring martial law as early as September 17 (by his own admission on November 28 before the Philippine Historians Association), the fascist dictator Marcos ordered the padlocking of all newspaper offices, radio and television stations and telecommunications facilities except those he owns or controls. On the night of September 22, fascist troops overran not only the buildings housing these facilities but also the National Press Club and the homes of publishers, editors and other media men who had in the slightest manner criticized the fascist dictator Marcos. A week after, only a few names of press people arrested were announced to the public by the Marcos media. Up to this date thousands of people, including those from the press, remain in military prisons.

On the outrageous premise that mass media had “consciously or unconsciously taken part in the conspiracy to overthrow the Government,” the fascist dictator Marcos clamped down on them, and has issued a series of arbitrary orders, including Proclamation No. 1081, General Order No. 2, Letter of Instruction No. 1 and lately, Presidential Decree No. 36, all maliciously assailing the freedom of the press and harming the economic interests of thousands of workers in major metropolitan newspapers, television and radio stations.

Presidential Decree No. 36 is ostensibly a document intended mainly to cancel “franchises, permits and authorizations granted for the operation of radio, television and telecommunications facilities that have remained unused by their holders after a reasonable length of time, that they have violated the terms under which they were issued.”

This decree further legalizes what had already been accomplished by means of brute force five weeks before. The essence of Presidential Decree No. 36, however, lies in its creation of a mass media council designed to assure for the US-Marcos dictatorship continuing control of all mass media. This mass media council will decide upon applications for permission to operate any newspaper, magazine, periodical or publication of any kind, radio, television or telecommunications facility, station or network. The decree stipulates that this council should be “headed by the Secretary of Public Information as chairman, with the Secretary of National Defense as co-chairman, and one representative from the mass media to be appointed by the President as member, and with a secretariat to be headed by the chairman of the Radio Control Board....”

On November 25, it was announced that appointments to the Mass Media Council had been completed. However, the fascist dictator Marcos took more than three weeks after the promulgation of Presidential Decree No. 36 to designate a representative from the mass media. It is significant that, aside from the fact that all appointees without exception are loyal running dogs of the US-Marcos dictatorship, majority are either officially connected with the reactionary armed forces or have functions connected with it, such as defense secretary Enrile, home defense undersecretary Crisol who is the director of the Council, and their various underlings. Moreover, the Council is represented in the provinces by the PC provincial commanders and PC civil relations officers.

Having suppressed media owners by incarcerating them, robbing them of their facilities and taking steps to make sure that they are permanently silenced, the US-Marcos dictatorship is now applying the carrot-and-stick method on disemployed media men. On the one hand, it attempts to terrorize them by indefinitely detaining those it had seized right after the declaration of martial law, by continuing to arrest a wide range of critics, and by black-listing others from possible reemployment. On the other hand, the fascist dictatorship is rewarding willing hacks with employment and substantial salaries and trying to entice some of those who were thrown out of work because of martial law by expanding its own newspapers, magazines, radio and television networks and setting up a national and foreign news agency. Needless to say, the few who take such offers because they have to earn a living are subjected to the strictest censorship.

The number of media workers thrown out of their jobs by the fascist dictatorship runs into several tens of thousands, possibly 50,000. These include ordinary reporters, printing workers, technicians, agents, talents and a host of others. They have been left to their own devices. Yet they cannot take other jobs without being able to expunge their names from the fascist blacklist. The Marcos press monopoly boasts of “rationalizing” the mass media business and refuses to absorb the great mass of media workers arbitrarily removed from their jobs.

What has gained the fascist dictator Marcos enemies even among the reactionaries is the glaring fact that he has utilized his absolute power to corner the advertising market (estimated by the Far Eastern Economic Review at ₱250 million for the first year alone) and to turn the mass media into a business monopoly of his own. Such greed can be described in very clear terms by going into the history of the Daily Express, Kanlaon Broadcasting System (KBS) and Radio Philippines Network (RPN), media which the fascist dictator Marcos owns through dummies.

Compared with other Manila papers which were sold at 25 to 30 centavos per copy before they were forced out of the streets by martial law, the Daily Express started, for every 40-page copy, at a price of 10 centavos in Greater Manila and 15 centavos in the provinces. The printing cost per copy was 29 centavos, and at 10 centavos a copy, only five centavos went to the newspaper and the other five centavos to the newsdealer and newsboy. And though it was getting a few centavos more per copy in the provinces, the Daily Express was losing an estimated ₱38,000 a day by the time it reached its alleged premartial law circulation of ₱163,000. These losses would have reached ₱10 million for the year 1972 alone had the fascist dictator Marcos not declared martial law. It is obvious then that the setting up of the Daily Express had from the very start been part of the nefarious scheme to declare martial law and set up a fascist dictatorship.

Martial law has delivered as per script bonanza after bonanza for the fascist dictator. The Daily Express has increased the paper's advertising rate by 350 percent, from ₱17 to ₱58 per column inch. Moreover, internal revenue commissioner Misael Vera had been conscripted to act as “advertising manager” of both the Daily Express and KBS. The “penalty” for not advertising in the Marcos media, Vera always manages to imply to business firms, is a very real “tax evasion case” if not a string of cases.

Seventy-five percent of the pages of the Daily Express is devoted to commercial advertising. Of course, twenty-five percent gives the rag the appearance of a newspaper and dishes out the most vicious fascist propaganda. The Daily Express issues three daily editions, i.e., the morning and afternoon edition (Evening Express) and the Pilipino edition (Pilipino Express). The total number of these reached up to more than 1,500,000 before the setting up of other Marcos dummy newspapers. Now, the total number of copies appears to have steadied at close to 1,000,000 copies. Price per copy has been raised from ten centavos to fifteen centavos despite the sharp reduction of pages devoted to non-advertising materials.

Kanlaon Broadcasting System (KBS) and Radio Philippines Network (RPN) were set up as multi-million-peso concerns in an exceedingly shameless manner. According to the same sources who supplied the figures above, two of the five persons who “organized” them four years ago did not even have tax account numbers. While their total paid-up capitalization was only ₱500,000 in 1971, they were able to secure for RPN and KBS loans totaling \$17.5 million (at least ₱120 million at current rates) from the Philippine National Bank. These loans, backed up by Marubeni-Ida in London, payable in 10 years and with a grace period of four years, were presented to the board of directors of the PNB on July 9, 1971, approved July 11, and confirmed July 18. By July 21 of the same year, or in a matter of 12 days, all letters of credit had been opened. These transpired despite the fact that the two stations were incurring an average yearly loss of ₱1.25 million.

Today, with all competition wiped out, and Robert Stewart's Republic Broadcasting Corporation, the Soriano's Interisland Broadcasting Corporation and Radio Mindanao Network under tight government control and supervision, the fascist dictator has upped the advertising rates of the KBS tenfold as planned. Whereas before a 30-second commercial in his KBS TV station cost a mere ₱500 to ₱1,000, today the advertisers have no choice but to pay the outrageous price of ₱5,000, or even as much as ₱10,000 in the “name” of prime-time shows.

Not satisfied with the million he can now milk from advertisers, the fascist dictator is turning Radio Philippines Network into a “public corporation,” the better to manipulate the hard-earned savings of people they can hoodwink into buying shares.

Its appetite thus whetted by the certainty of enormous profits, the fascist dictatorship has gone on to publish other newspapers and magazines to monopolize the advertising market while multiplying the outlets for its lies

and making it appear that the situation has been “normalized” and the press has been allowed to operate under multifarious initiatives. Thus, aside from the *Daily Express*, *Evening Express-Pilipino Express*, *Government Report* and the *Liwayway-Bannawag-Hiligaynon*, the fascist dictator now has at his command the *Times Journal*, *Focus Philippines* and *Bulletin Today*. In addition to *Focus Philippines*, the fascist dictator has put out *Expressweek* in a crass effort to fill the vacuum in the magazine field.

By decree, the fascist dictator Marcos has ordered that any medium allowed to resume operations would have to do so under a new management and with a new name. The idea is to keep his favorite brand, the *Express*, on top of the heap. His business accomplices, in the meantime, have lost no time in buying out or leasing mass media facilities from their former owners, at prices arbitrarily fixed, for use in publishing new propaganda organs of the fascist dictatorship (e.g., *Times Journal* is now using the facilities of the *Manila Chronicle*).

The fascist dictatorship has taken over the National Press Club of the Philippines, in the last four years an effective channel of protest against imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism, by confiscating its building and transforming this into an arm of its bloated propaganda machine. Under conditions that only hacks of the fascist dictatorship are allowed to continue membership in the press club, Primitivo Mijares, who is editor of *Daily Express*, has been installed as president of the press club.

The fascist dictator Marcos is so avaricious and so abusive in suppressing the freedom of the press that even the reactionary Press Foundation of Asia (PFA) has been compelled to launch a worldwide campaign informing readers that he is truly an antidemocratic dictator in the footsteps of Thieu, Pak, Chiang and the like. Previously, the PFA has declared a 60-day moratorium on criticisms against the fascist dictatorship in the hope of letting Marcos comply with an agreement to put up a mass media council, allow longstanding mass media to resume operations and release detained mass media owners, publishers and journalists. After those sixty days set by the moratorium, Marcos continued to the disgust of his fellow reactionaries to suppress press freedom, maintain his press monopoly and detain mass media owners, publishers and journalists.

Not satisfied with his monopoly of huge printing presses and TV-radio stations, Marcos has gone as far as to issue Presidential Decree No. 90 banning what it calls “rumormongering,” including the circulation of mimeographed sheets critical of his regime. He also has gone as fast as to issue Presidential Decree No. 140 requiring the registration of copying machines like mimeographing, scanning and xerox machines. These are his desperate reactions to the continuous flow of mimeographed newspapers, bulletins and leaflets from the underground countering the lies of the mass media which he now monopolizes.

The Marcos press monopoly is blatant daily proof of the unjustness of the fascist dictatorship. It is something that has been set up by the armed forces—by outright robbery. On this ground, the mass media now controlled by Marcos and his clique shall someday be confiscated by the people, with no prejudice to small shareholders. In the meantime, these serve as the measure for the latest falsehoods being spread to cloak the rottenness and bankruptcy of the US-Marcos regime. The broad masses of the people are firmly determined to spread revolutionary propaganda among themselves even as the fascist dictatorship is doing everything it can not only to monopolize the large-scale media but also to suppress the mimeographing machine. The truth can never be obscured by lies. It emerges more sharply the more repressive and abusive are the sources of falsehood.

An Assessment of the Fascist Martial Rule After Three Years

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An assessment of the fascist martial rule of the US-Marcos clique after three years is called for. There are eight questions in this assessment. The first seven involve the “pledges” of the fascist dictatorship and span its entire national policy. The eighth involves its foreign policy.

Peace and order?

The Marcos rightist coup on September 23, 1972, laying itself out as a fascist counterrevolution in the service of US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism, stands as the biggest crime in the country today. In the simplest terms, this crime consists of high treason and tyranny, causing turmoil and disorder rather than peace and order.

Crime is not made any less criminal and violence any less violent when it is the US-Marcos clique that manipulates and employs the reactionary armed forces to perpetrate massacres, assassinations, forced evacuations, zonings, bombardments, arson, mass arrests, kidnappings, illegal detention, torture, rape, extortion and looting in order to repress the revolutionary mass movement and every other entity arbitrarily deemed opposed to the fascist regime.

The crimes of the fascists have wracked the entire country and are the seeds of discontent by which not only the present fascist dictatorship but also the entire ruling system and its imperialist overlord will reap a whirlwind. Far from “saving the republic”, the fascist dictatorship has merely deepened the people’s hatred for the entire ruling system and made the ground more fertile for revolution.

The “new society” is the same old semicolonial and semifeudal society, made worse by a fascist dictatorship that is so far the most brutal, corrupt, mendacious and puppet among local reactionary regimes beholden to US imperialism.

The fascist dictatorship cannot lessen its harshness by the catchphrase “constitutional authoritarianism”. In the first place, it does not go by any constitution. It used one provision of the 1935 constitution to negate the entirety of the same constitution. Then, at the point of a gun, it unlawfully seized from the constitutional convention the final drafting of what has come to be called the Marcos constitution, a scrap of paper that is invalid from the very start and that cannot be made any less invalid by repeated fake referendums.

It is idle for the fascist dictatorship to acclaim itself as a “crisis government” and argue that had it not been set up the ruling system would not have been able to tide itself over such crises as the armed struggles waged by the New People’s Army and the Bangsa Moro Army and the economic crisis which he points out as emanating solely from abroad. The fact is that armed resistance has broken out on an unprecedented scale and the economic crisis has been aggravated because of the fascist dictatorship.

Oftentimes, the fascist dictator and his henchmen comfort themselves by claiming that the people are acquiescent to their usurpation of power. They like to drum up this supposed acquiescence as “national discipline” ad nauseam. But they know that the armed resistance is ceaselessly gaining ground and that they are dealing with a revolutionary movement which does not believe in putsches but which perseveres in a protracted people’s war. The broad masses of the people have never been cowed: they have only become more prudent than before the fascist rule. They are steadily learning the ways of the revolutionary underground and the revolutionary armed struggle.

There can be no peace and order with the intensified oppression and exploitation of the broad masses of the people. Armed resistance is steadily growing. The most outstanding armed resistance is being waged today by the New People’s Army under the leadership of the Communist Party of the Philippines and by the Bangsa Moro Army under the direction of the Moro National Liberation Front.

The New People’s Army has not only preserved and tempered itself against the berserk attacks of the enemy but has also further strengthened itself. There are now more Red fighters than ever before. There are now more guerrilla bases and zones. These are in Northeast Luzon, Northwest Luzon, Central Luzon, Southern Tagalog, Eastern Visayas, Western Visayas and Mindanao. The people’s army has accounted for at least 1,500 enemy casualties since the declaration of the fascist martial rule.

Being better armed than the New People's Army and being able to launch larger and more frequent operations, the Bangsa Moro Army has accounted for more than 5,000 enemy casualties in Cotabato, Lanao, Sulu, Basilan and Zamboanga provinces. There have been instances of direct cooperation between the New People's Army and the Bangsa Moro Army, especially in Mainland Mindanao. But on the whole, the two armies help each other by fighting well within their respective areas.

The Bangsa Moro Army does a good service to the Philippine revolution as its antecedents did in fighting and tying down the bulk of the reactionary armed forces today. This allows the people in all other areas of the country to develop their armed resistance. We speak of a unified fascist reaction as a difficulty for the revolutionaries in Luzon, Visayas and the greater part of Mindanao, in the sense that the absence of an open war among the reactionaries allows the enemy to singlemindedly engage us in armed struggle with superior military strength in every province.

When revolutionaries recognize such a difficulty, they become determined to overcome it and do everything to grow from small to big and from weak to strong. There is a disadvantage when there is yet no open war among the reactionaries or serious splits within the reactionary armed forces. But there is an advantage too in being the only army regarded by the people as their own over about 90 percent of the country.

The fascist dictatorship flatters itself almost daily by reporting in its press the mass surrenders of antifascist armed units, organs of democratic political power and mass organizations. The enemy's trick in this regard is no different from that used in fake referendums. People are called to a meeting by the fascists, coerced or coaxed to raise both hands in seeming surrender or one hand in seeming oath of allegiance and photographed for purposes of fascist propaganda.

The illegal arrest and detention of more than 10,000 people, including workers, students, teachers, professionals, journalists, politicians, churchmen and so many others, in Manila-Rizal and other urban areas are serious crimes but, even as these are often attended by torture, murder, rape and looting of homes and offices, they pale in comparison to widescale terror unleashed by the fascist enemy in the countryside. The comparison needs no stressing, except to present the whole picture of fascist barbarism.

About the most barbaric act of the fascist dictatorship is the creation of what it calls "free-fire zones" and "targets of bombardment" through the forced mass evacuation and displacement of 1.7 million people in Mindanao and about 200 thousand people in Northeast Luzon and in separate places in Bicol, Samar and Panay, to mention only a few. The people have to leave their homes and unharvested fields and often cannot bring with them all their farm animals and personal belongings. Since the idea is to deprive the guerrillas of a mass base, the regular fascist military and their "home defense units" of various descriptions go on a rampage of killing, looting and burning. Airplanes hover to give support to them and are wont to strafing and using napalm bombs.

Under the cover of "base-denial operations", the regular fascist military and the "home defense units" have perpetrated massacres. In Mindanao, there could be at least 5,000 massacre victims. In Northeast Luzon, there are hundreds of these. These are conservative estimates. The massacre victims include defenseless children, women and aged people. The massacres are invariably attended by all sorts of unspeakable barbarities, finalized by removal of ears or by decapitation.

At the "evacuation centers", there are only a few token huts for the evacuees and certainly there are no supplies for them. At least 95 percent of the evacuees cannot be given any small lot on which to put their own huts. Not only are the evacuees cheated of the few rations made available by certain organizations but are also deprived of their meager belongings and farm animals by the fascist military who either extort these outrightly or make ridiculously low token payments. Thus, the evacuees eventually land on their relatives somewhere or dare to go back to the "free-fire zones" and fight back rather than starve and be subjected to further fascist abuses.

Even when the antifascist guerrillas have already shifted from an evacuated area, the fascist enemy refuse to let the people go back to their farms. Extensive areas evacuated by the poor settlers and national minorities are now being claimed for corporate farming and for the "palayang bayan" and "maisang bayan" by the fascist dictatorship.

All over the land, the fascist military officials are conspicuously taking after the fascist dictator in using their authority to extort from the people and amass wealth. Within and outside the areas of armed conflict, it is characteristic of the fascist military and their criminal cohorts to blackmail and extort from the people. They can at will pin the charge of "subversion" or some other charge on anyone and threaten him to pay or else be detained indefinitely. Thus, hundreds of thousands of people have spent at least a day of detention in military stockades.

Common criminality is on the upsurge because of the rapid deterioration of the economic situation. Crime incidence, especially that which involves property, is exceeding by far the level before the fascist martial rule. Crime syndicates have become tightly intertwined with the bosses in the fascist military. Ordinary people who have been deprived of their licensed firearms, including shotguns, are at the mercy of marauding robbers who are linked in one way or another with the fascists.

The budget for the parasitic fascist military is increasing by leaps and bounds and is an ingredient in the worsening of the economic crisis. From the start of the entire Marcos rule to the eve of the fascist martial rule, the budgetary appropriation for the military rose from P324 million to P800 million. On the first year of martial rule alone, actual military expenditure rose more than P2.0 billion. Now the budgetary appropriation for this year is P3.0 billion and is bound to be overshoot as was the case during the first year of martial rule. The fascist regime is determined to bring up the number of its troops to 275,000 and “integrate” all police forces in the country.

The increasing amounts for the military have been used for increasing the number of officers and increasing their salaries, allowances and other privileges; for acquiring more military equipment, for building military camps and facilities and increasing the number of regular troops and trainees. The regular troops receive extremely low salaries and are cheated of their mess allowances and rations. The situation is worse for the trainees who receive starvation allowances and are the ones thrown into the frontline before the regulars.

There are internal causes for the possible disintegration of the reactionary armed forces. The enlisted men and trainees come mainly from the peasantry and are being made to fight for an unjust and antipeasant regime. Factionalism among officers is also rife because of favoritism, nepotism and regionalism being used by the fascist dictator to maintain an officer clique servile to him. If other reactionaries opposing Marcos were to play on their own influence within the reactionary armed forces and also organize their own armed groups outside, it would prove easier for them to persuade the US policymakers that Marcos had better go. It is clearly possible that long before the all-round victory of the national democratic revolution the Marcos fascist gang shall have been deposed by its own imperialist masters and fellow reactionaries. By that time, the present fascist dictatorship shall have made the ground even more fertile than now for the armed revolution and shall have fully instituted a new style of in-fighting which puts the highest value on armed groupings among the reactionaries. By all indications, the fascist dictator is bent on staying in power at whatever cost and is depending on sheer armed force. All forces opposed to this tyrannical regime should realize more than ever that armed revolution is the answer to armed counterrevolution. Even the reactionaries opposed to Marcos should better realize that it takes more than peaceful pleadings to effect even only a coup d'etat.

Land reform?

It is not true that the fascist martial rule has “slowed down” land reform. It has in fact viciously opposed land reform, even only for the tenant on rice and corn lands; and has intensified feudal and semifeudal exploitation in the countryside. The “new society” does not have the “cornerstone” it claims to have. The “democratic revolution” it also claims to be carrying out has absolutely no basis.

Land reform is simply impossible when the tenants who are overwhelmingly poor peasants are required to pay land prices that they can never afford. The so-called land reform boasted of by the fascist regime might as well be called a realty business high above the heads of the peasant masses.

Presidential Decree No. 2 and No. 27 are no different from the Agricultural Land Reform Code of 1963 and the Agrarian Reform Code of 1971 in “abolishing” share tenancy by simply calling it by another name, “leasehold system”; in requiring the poor peasant masses to pay a fixed land rent to their landlords on the basis of bloated production figures; and in upholding the reactionary principle that the poor tenant can have his own piece of land only if he pays for it.

The “leaseholder” is still a tenant, one who must pay ground rent to his landlord. In fact, leaseholders under the leasehold system are required to pay a much higher rent than the tenants under the old share-tenancy system. Under the old share-tenancy system, the tenant was entitled to 70 percent of the current actual crop when he shouldered most of the production expenses. Under the leasehold system, the landlord is allowed to choose the three “normal” harvests, meaning to say the best harvests, from which to derive the average “normal” harvest. The leaseholder is obliged to shoulder all production expenses and to pay as a fixed land rent what is equivalent to 25 percent of the aforesaid average “normal” harvest, whatever is the actual harvest. He is not at all assured of his 75 percent share of the crop but failure to pay the high fixed rent means indebtedness or breach of contract and loss

of tenure, depending on the landlord's judgment.

The general experience of the tenant masses show that they do not make good harvests all the time and that they are not always free from such calamities as floods, drought, crop epidemics or serious illness in the family. One after the other, the strains of "miracle rice" being promoted usually fail after only one harvest and these require high expenditures for fertilizers, pesticides and irrigation. The dismal failure of the US-sponsored "green revolution" is best manifested by the grain shortages and importations throughout the Marcos rule.

Under the goading of Presidential Decree No. 27, which makes the false promise of making every leaseholder or tenant an "amortizing owner" through private transaction with his landlord, landlords have gone on a rampage compelling their tenants to sign documents stating false production figures that are excessively high. Invoking the high production claims of Masagana 99 program, many landlords go so far as to state that the per-hectare production of their lands is 99 cavans whereas the actual production averages in the country are in the range of 25 to 40 cavans per hectare.

The formula set by Presidential Decree No. 27 for determining land prices and the mode of payment is enough to make impossible land purchases by tenant even if the landlords were only to take into account the actual peaks of production on the lands. But the landlords do not miss their chance to set land prices that are even higher and demand a higher fixed rent on their lands by falsifying production figures. They have their way by simply invoking the policy of private transaction behind the fascist decree and by threatening their tenants or leaseholders with eviction on flimsy charges.

There is not a single tenant or leaseholder who has become an amortizing owner under Presidential Decree No. 27. At the very start, the fascist dictator showed that he was joking when in his decree he promised three hectares of irrigated land or five hectares of unirrigated land for every tenant and seven hectares of retainable land for every landlord and at the same time stated in his covering speech that there was a total of only 1,767,000 hectares available for 1,000,000 tenants and several thousands of landlords. (Soon after, the fascist regime spread the word that there were actually 1,078,817 tenants and 1,343,217 hectares of tenanted rice and corn lands.)

Only a month after the signing of Presidential Decree No. 27, the fascist dictator made a memorandum to the Secretary of the Department of Agrarian Reform ordering him to maintain the status quo of landlord-tenant relations until such time that he issues a set of rules and regulations. Until now, he has not issued this. The Agrarian Reform Code of 1971 is now undergoing further revision only to incorporate all the anti-peasant fiats of the fascist dictatorship.

The fascist dictator has raised the amount of land retainable by landlords from seven to twenty-four hectares and has already declared that there is not much land to offer for sale to tenants because more than 85 percent of tenanted rice and corn lands are owned by landlords who have holdings of only twenty-four hectares or less.

At any rate, in a massive act of deception, worthless sheets of paper called "land transfer certificates" are still being distributed under "Operation Land Transfer"; and barrio committees on land production are still aforming to engage in futile talks about production figures and land prices, notwithstanding the fact that Marcos has held from the very start that land sale contracts under Presidential Decree No. 27 are essentially a private transaction between landlord and tenant or leaseholder.

Although he still refers to other possible modes of land sale between landlord and tenant or leaseholder in which the Land Bank may be involved, Marcos has used his Presidential Decree No. 27 as an excuse and camouflage for rechanneling finances of the Land Bank into ventures other than purchases of land for redistribution to tenants. There are still a few negligible negotiations and transactions on land sale between the Land Bank and the landlords and as usual the former and the latter connive in overpricing the expropriated estate at the expense of the tenants who must suffer the high redistribution price which they will never be able to pay completely.

Should there be any tenant or leaseholder who is inveigled to become an amortizing owner, he is required not only to pay the ever rising land tax but also to join the "samahang nayon" which exacts from him a host of other levies in the form of membership fees and annual dues; penalties for misdemeanors ranging from tardiness in meetings to breaches of contracts with landlords; one cavan per hectare per harvest contribution to the barrio guarantee fund; payment to the barrio savings fund of 5 percent on every bank loan; and premiums to the cooperative insurance system. This is not to mention yet the various taxes exacted by the provincial and municipal governments and collections for all sorts of "barangay" activities.

The cost of living and farm production is fast rising because of the inflation and the general deterioration of

the economic situation. The poor peasants and the lower-middle peasants are always forced to sell their products cheap because they cannot bide their time for better prices. They are at the mercy of the merchant-usurers, aside from the landlords who may be usurers themselves. Agricultural credit from government and private banks are sucked up by the big comprador-landlords for their sugar and other plantations.

Under the pretext of raising food production, the fascist regime has undertaken the “supervised credit scheme” called Masagana 99 for rice production and Masaganang Maisan for corn production. But this has reached only a very small portion of the peasant masses and more importantly it has served to exact usurious rates in indirect ways.

Borrowers under Masagana 99 are required to join the samahang nayon and comply with onerous obligations and are not given cash loans but loans in kind such as seeds, fertilizers and pesticides which are overpriced and are wasteful when as is generally the case these are in excess of what is needed or unsuitable to the land. The borrowers are given their loans only after losing a great deal of working time and spending their loans of money in having their papers processed. The farm technicians have not been able to help them in production, much less to oversee the suitability of the chemicals to their land, because these government employees are tied down to processing loan papers in behalf of such a private Marcos-owned outfit as Planters Products, Inc. Then comes harvest time, the Masagana 99 borrowers are required to pay their loans in grain at the low price set by the National Grains Authority.

Masagana 99 has caused serious imbalance in the distribution of fertilizers and pesticides; oversupply in some areas and extreme scarcity in other areas. Landlords and the peasants of every strata have had to join the Masagana 99 scheme and therefore also the samahang nayon only to be able to get fertilizers. The maldistribution of agricultural chemicals has created a blackmarket victimizing the overwhelming majority of peasants.

Now that Masagana 99 is drying up, the few samahang nayon that came to be formed are also evaporating. The disintegration of the samahang nayons has been accelerated by its being held liable for the unpaid loans of some members but has its deep cause in the excessively heavy obligations required of members whose interests are far apart and conflicting. Moreover, the members realize that samahang nayon funds are being sucked up by higher levels of the bureaucracy. Thus, the association expected by Marcos to displace all peasant associations and small cooperatives outside of government control is fast fading away.

The fascist regime has boasted of building massive infrastructure projects for the benefit of the rural population. But the people are groaning under the weight of an increasing tax burden as a result of the large counterpart funds required, the onerous payments that have to be made to the foreign lenders and contractors and the big cuts that have been pocketed by the fascist dictator and his top subalterns on infrastructure contracts. Moreover, these ill-planned costly projects generate inflation.

The people pay for the overpriced and graft-ridden projects not only in the form of higher taxes and higher prices for the commodities that they buy but also in the form of higher fees. For instance, big irrigation projects have been undertaken but irrigation fees have increased from year to year and only this year have increased by 700 percent.

In the areas where the massive projects are undertaken, the fascist regime removes people from the land without satisfactory provisions for compensation and resettlement. Land in excess of project requirements is often taken over by the fascist regime only to be privately repossessed by fascist officials. The ranks of the landless peasants have been thereby increased.

If the pledge of land reform to tenants on rice and corn lands is empty, there is not even a false pledge to tenants on lands planted to other crops. The land policy of the fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique consists of opening the road wide for corporate farming. Talk of land reform by the fascists has been used only to divert attention from the emergence of rice and corn production that is based on wage-capital relations; the increase and expansion of pasture leases and plantations for such export crops as sugar, coconut, banana, pineapple, abaca, rubber and others; and the large-scale conversion of logged-over areas into plantations of all sorts. We are witness today to the most abusive grabbing of lands already cultivated by poor settlers and the national minorities; alienation of public lands to private corporations and the conversion of share-tenancy relations to capital-wage relations.

Under the Marcos constitution, the foreign agricorporations and the big landlords are allowed to hold vast tracts of land under various guises. Foreign fruit companies continue to enjoy “lease agreements” and “grower’s

agreements” on vast tracts of land with corporations of the reactionary government. Under General Order No. 47, big foreign and local capitalists are encouraged to engage in rice and corn production and in the process displace tenants in the old feudal areas and the poor settlers and national minorities in the frontier and logged-over areas. The complete exhaustion of the land frontier is being accelerated by the Marcos policy.

There is enough land to distribute among the landless peasants in all kinds of crops if only the tillable pasture lands, loggedover areas and parts of plantations are added to the lands under the share-tenancy or leasehold system in the range of distributable lands. But the interest of the fascist dictatorship lies in preserving the semi-colonial and semifeudal system and in opposing land reform.

The land question is involved in the struggle for national self-determination by the indigenous people of Mindanao. They can give way to the masses of poor settlers. But they can never tolerate the big corporations and big comprador-landlords grabbing vast tracts of land and forcing them out. It is a tragic event surely to be avenged that massive enemy operations are being undertaken to force out the poor settlers and national minorities from their lands.

In fighting the New People’s Army, the fascist regime is trying to stop the genuine land reform that we are carrying out. The fascist military has inflicted the most vicious onslaughts against the peasant masses who have organized themselves into peasant associations and are undertaking genuine land reform among themselves. The peasant masses are being forced to evacuate even in areas where there is yet no sizable antifascist armed resistance only to make way for the landgrabbers. In many cases, the “palayang bayan” and “maisang bayan” have been used as a preliminary pretext to make way for landgrabbing. The fascist dictatorship is thus merely arousing the millions of peasants to rise everywhere.

Though the fascist regime has shown itself not to be truly interested in land reform but in food production, it has also failed in this direction. In the years 1973 and 1974, it imported a total of 483,461 metric tons of rice. As of August this year, it imported anew 153,085 metric tons. And yet fascist propaganda keeps on blaring out that there is no need to import rice this year.

Economic development?

There has been no economic development but economic retrogression under the fascist martial rule. The fascist dictatorship has pushed back every gain made previously by the patriotic movement for economic independence and has more than ever before entrenched the semicolonial and semifeudal character of the economy. The country is laid prostrate by an unprecedented crisis resulting from the world crisis of capitalism and aggravated by the fascist dictatorship.

On top of the intensification of feudal and semifeudal exploitation, the fascist dictatorship has more than ever before made the Philippine economy subservient to the foreign monopolists, chiefly American. It is clear why the US imperialists have supported and promoted the fascist counterrevolution. It is to assure themselves of the continuance of their privileges and dominance over the Philippine economy in a period of rising anti-imperialist movement among the people.

The Marcos constitution retains all US privileges and interests established or gained under the 1935 constitution and the revised Bell Trade Act (Laurel-Langley Agreement). Worse, the “new constitution” does away with all previous restrictions (including those settled in Supreme Court decisions) on foreign ownership of Philippine lands (Quasha case), on foreign exploitation of local natural resources and on the employment of foreign personnel (Luzteveco case); and poses no hindrance to the investment laws fashioned under the Marcos regime even before the fascist martial rule to allow as much as 100 percent foreign ownership of local enterprises and provide a wide range of incentives for foreign investors. The business of mass media is the only area where foreign investors are excluded but is now under the fascist Marcos press monopoly.

The Laurel-Langley Agreement and the Parity Amendment have lapsed but far worse laws are now in operation in favor of US and other foreign investors. The Investment Incentives Act, the Export Incentives Act, the Export Processing Zone Act and Investment Registration Act have been amended to make them even more detrimental to national economic interests. Decrees have been issued enlarging the privileges of foreign direct investors in specific fields like banking, investment houses, trading, oil exploration, mineral extraction, semiprocessing, export processing zones, plantation projects, car assembly, repacking and reassembly in general, real estate business, shipping, fishing and many others.

Under the “open door” policy of the fascist regime, the foreign investors enjoy such privileges as decreased

limitations on extent of foreign ownership; guarantees and insurance against confiscation, expropriation and requisitioning; unhindered capital repatriation and profit remittances in the open way or through camouflaged ways like transfer pricing and excessive payments for loans, royalties, licensing, technical services, management contracts, foreign personnel and guarantees for private loans and in the use of local credit; tax deductions and tax credit of every imaginable kind; protection from government competition and Filipino competition; employment of foreign nationals; and even deduction of so-called labor training expenses.

Foreign investors are stridently called on to avail themselves of cheap Filipino labor. The fascist regime shamelessly boasts of having kept down local wage levels by using its coercive power against the Filipino workers and prohibiting them to strike and exercise fully their trade union and political rights. The minimum wage of P8.00 for industrial workers and P4.75 for farm workers has stagnated since 1970 despite the fact that from that same year, according to watered-down statistics of the reactionary government, the cost of living has risen by at least 160 percent.

The rates of exploitation and also the rates of profit have been higher than ever in foreign-owned and controlled enterprises. But the antilabor code and investment policy of the fascist regime make it a point to encourage these foreign companies to spend less for wages and salaries. They are encouraged not only to maintain the same old salary and wage structures of their regular employees but also to lessen the need for such regular employees by being allowed to take in “learners” and “apprentices” who can be given sub-minimum wages for the same work done by regular workers and on whose account deductions from taxable income can even be made.

More than ever, the foreign monopolies can take full advantage of the already low wage levels in the country and manipulate the gap between those who are already employed and the ever increasing ranks of the reserve army of labor. The rate of unemployment is running at more than 40 percent and not at four percent. Even the Ranis report has it at 25 percent. The overwhelming number of youth in the countryside and cities have always been unemployed or extremely underemployed. In a recession-ridden capitalist world, the fascist dictatorship in a semicolonial and semifeudal country cannot claim to maintain what is deemed a rate of full employment for capitalist countries in their periods of boom.

US multinational companies lead the pack of foreign investors grabbing local capital and even the foreign loans for which the Philippines is held liable. The Japanese companies run next to the US companies and they are now well-boosted by the Japan-Philippine treaty of amity, commerce and navigation ratified by Marcos alone. Under the signboard of joint venture, the big comprador-landlords are being pushed to join up with foreign investors; otherwise they simply expand their landed estates which are planted to export crops, engage in urban real estate speculation or simply wallow in their wealth through conspicuous consumption. Patriotic businessmen interested in nationalist industrialization find themselves squeezed and forced into either absorption by the foreign companies or bankruptcies. With their increased control of the banking system, the US multinational companies can use available funds as they please.

As in the past, the kind of direct investments made by the foreign monopolies in the Philippines throughout the period of Marcos rule, especially the last three years of martial rule, run counter to economic development and accentuate the semicolonial and semifeudal character of the economy. Companies owned or controlled by foreign investors have gone only into areas where they can invest a relatively small amount of capital only to draw superprofits within so short a time. These areas are mineral extraction, new export crops, semiprocessing, repacking-reassembly and, of course, trading.

The main line of the Marcos economic policy has always been the promotion of “export industries”. While the big comprador-landlords are encouraged to expand production of traditional export crops (sugar and coconut), the foreign investors are encouraged to go further into mineral extraction and new export crops (banana and pineapple). The infrastructure projects and financial policies of the US-Marcos clique have been essentially oriented towards promoting a raw-material exporting economy. Resources have always been diverted from the development of a self-reliant economic base.

Philippine subsidiaries of the multinational companies create the illusion of investing heavily in the country, gain substantial tax deductions and other benefits and conceal the superprofits that they are remitting by overpricing the materials (some capital equipment and other merchandise) and services (management and technical, for instance) from mother and sister companies abroad. Excessive payments are also made for royalties, licensing and loans to camouflage the remittance of profits. On the other hand, the Philippine subsidiaries underprice the

goods that they export or reexport to their mother and sister companies abroad. It is, therefore, futile to measure the amount of profit remittances by foreign companies by merely taking Central Bank data at their face value.

US direct investments in the Philippines constitutes about 85 percent of all foreign investments and could easily amount to far more than P4.0 billion if the actual market value of assets is taken fully into account, especially as a result of the current rapid rate of inflation and continuous devaluation of the peso. During the last four years, new foreign direct investments amounting to \$398 million were made in the country. Forty-eight percent of this is US. There should be a higher percentage of US direct investments if we take into account that US multinational companies take cover under various nationalities other than US.

Considering the large accumulated capital base of the US imperialists in the Philippines, the amount of profits being extracted from the country by them every year should be far more than the paltry sums running into a few tens of millions of dollars which are formally carried on Central Bank records. The actual profit remittance should run into hundreds of millions even if we assume that the US companies make only a very low profit rate of 10 percent and therefore disregard the far larger rate admitted by the US embassy a few years ago that these companies make \$4 of every one dollar that they invest in the country.

As the crisis of world capitalism is intensifying, the US imperialists make it a point to shift the crisis to countries like the Philippines that they can dictate on and therefore extract a higher rate of profit in order to make up for losses elsewhere, such as those incurred in the Indochinese war, the ongoing recession in the United States and competition with other capitalist countries. The US imperialists have had their way in churning a crisis several times worse in the country than in the United States because of the servility and puppetry of the Marcos ruling clique.

Foreign capital, chiefly US, that exploits the country and people does not consist only of direct investments but also loan capital. Such loan capital is extended in accordance with imperialist policies and yet the Philippines as debtor must pay it at high rates of interest. At the beginning of Marcos rule in 1966, the foreign debt of the country was only \$599.5 million and Marcos pretended to be mad about this at his inaugural address. But from year to year the foreign debt went up and in 1972 it was already \$2.2 billion. At the end of September of 1975, it was already \$4.0 billion, excluding the SDR credits from the International Monetary Fund already availed of and also credits which are either past due or payable on demand but do not have definite maturity dates. The foreign debt should now be very much ahead of \$4.2 billion.

The rate at which the Philippines is incurring foreign debt is conspicuously much faster under the fascist rule than before. The fascist dictator is unrestricted in having the government and private sectors incur foreign debts. As a matter of fact, he considers indebtedness to foreign creditors a measure of his regime's success. The Paris group of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund keep on pouring onerous loans into the Philippines.

High-level corruption is linked with foreign debts incurred by the government and private sectors. The Marcos ruling clique gets large cuts in the disposition of foreign loans procured by the government, especially in contracts for infrastructure projects, purchase orders and relending funds to private enterprises. There is always a large amount of money paid to the fascist clique under the table in return for guarantees for private foreign loans. There is also a wide range of Marcos-controlled companies which are used to milk the reactionary government of funds raised from abroad and internally.

Foreign loans have been used to buttress the international reserves and cover up deficits in the balance of payments. The technique is to always get new loans and keep these larger than the amortizations that have to be made. However, amortizations that have to be made keep on rising. Debt repayments in 1974 expanded to \$1.131 billion, then more than one-third of an undiminished total debt of \$3.2 billion. In the current year, larger debt repayments have to be made and a huge deficit has to be recovered. The merchandise trade deficit in the first three quarters was \$758 million and is estimated to exceed the level of \$1.0 billion before the end of this year. Balance of payments deficit rose to \$370 million.

The capitalist world crisis is wreaking havoc on our raw-material exporting and manufactures importing economy. The direct manifestation is the growing foreign trade deficit. Recession has depressed the market in the capitalist world for such principal exports of the Philippines as logs and lumber, copper concentrates, sugar and coconut products. While the prices for these exports have steeply gone down, the prices of manufactures imported from the capitalist countries have steeply gone up, apart from the accelerated transfer pricing perpetrated by the

foreign companies. The rate of inflation on the imported manufactures is in fact higher than that on petroleum products on which the US oil monopolies are profiting heavily as a result of the six oil price increases approved in quick succession by the fascist regime.

The rapid depletion of foreign exchange is eroding the value of the peso vis-a-vis the US dollar at a rate faster than ever before. In 1972, the US dollar was equivalent to P6.78. Now the current blackmarket rate is going strong at P8.60. It is quite obvious that the fascist regime cannot long hold the official rate at P7.60. This is quite a long way from P3.90 which was the exchange rate at the beginning of Marcos rule.

The fascist dictator and his cohorts comfort themselves by making it appear that the economic crisis comes solely from abroad and that were it not for the fascist martial rule of the "crisis government" the Philippines would not have been able to tide itself over such a crisis. The fact is that the Philippine economic crisis, which is ever going from bad to worse, has been generated by both the fascist dictatorship and the world crisis of capitalism.

The main responsibility for the economic crisis afflicting the country belongs to the fascist dictatorship. It is the responsibility of this regime for being servile to the dictates of US imperialism; for unfolding the most unbridled corruption ever experienced in the entire history of the country; for enlarging the expenditures for the unproductive and parasitic fascist military; and for undertaking massive infrastructure projects in rapid succession, with no thought about the inflation these generate but certainly with the thought of making an "impact" and concentrating resources for the retention of the semicolonial and semifeudal character of the economy.

The budget of the reactionary government has risen from a level of P2.7 billion in 1965 to P18.2 billion in 1975. The budget in 1972 was P5.5 billion. But within the first year of fascist rule, the budget skyrocketed to more than P10 billion. The fascist regime has been unbridled in passing on government funds to Marcos and his clique, in undertaking projects aggrandizing them, in beefing up the fascist military, in creating large secret funds for intelligence, and in doing expensive propaganda gimmicks in the country and abroad.

The tax burden has increased by leaps and bounds. In 1965, the tax collection was P1.6 billion. In 1972, it went up to P6.6 billion and further on to P14.3 billion in 1974. The fascist regime is straining to further increase its tax collection by increasing old taxes and making new ones in order to cope with the current enormous budget. The old pretext of soaking the rich has been worn thin as the taxes on the wealthy have been blatantly passed on to the broad masses and direct taxes have been increasingly exacted from the lowliest of the people.

Going alongside the rapidly increasing tax burden and foreign debt is the rapidly increasing internal public debt. In 1965, the internal public debt was only P3.1 billion. In 1972, it reached P9.7 billion. At the end of 1974, it leaped up to P17.3 billion in so short a time of fascist rule. It is bound to rise at a more rapid rate this year.

Never has the country known a more spendthrift regime. The fascist regime cannot escape responsibility for the inflation raging in the country today. The suffering of the broad masses of the people is intolerable. It is to rub salt into the wound for the fascist regime to claim that it has brought down the rate of inflation to 7 or 8 percent from last year's rate of 39.8 percent which at one time peaked at 46 percent. The current inflation rate is still very much above 35 percent.

It is acknowledged by economic agencies of the reactionary government that the purchasing power of the Philippine peso has gone down to only 33 centavos, with 1965 as the base year. Because of the runaway inflation, especially during the last three years, the purchasing power of one peso should be far lower. Even as it is admitted that the peso has been depreciated by 67 percent within 1965-75 the minimum wage levels for industrial and nonindustrial workers have increased by only 33 percent within the same period. There has been no increase in the minimum wage levels since 1970, but there has been a depreciation of the peso by 41 centavos from the 1970 level of 74 centavos.

According to watered-down statistics of the reactionary government, the nominal incomes of employees have fallen far behind the cost of living. With 1965 as the base year, the cost of living went up by 73.4 percent while salaries and wages went up by only 41.6 percent and 56.9 percent, respectively, in 1972. At the end of 1974, the cost of living went up by 191.1 percent while salaries and wages went up only by 71.8 percent and 98.6 percent, respectively. The disparity between the nominal incomes of employees and the cost of living continues to widen at an accelerated rate this year. All talk of "socialized pricing" by the fascist regime has consistently meant runaway inflation robbing the people of their real incomes.

It is estimated by a number of agencies of the reactionary government on the basis of early 1974 prices that a day's supply of nutritious food (proteins, fats, energy foods, fruit and vegetables) cost P18.16. Millions upon

millions of people do not have the income to afford this. Of all the basic necessities, food has registered the highest rate of inflation. With 1965 as the base year, food prices went up by 89.1 percent in 1972 and then 227.7 percent at the end of 1974. Food prices continue to soar. Starvation is the lot of millions upon millions of people under the fascist dictatorship. They are also deprived of decent clothing and shelter and the simple amenities of life.

Despite the rapid deterioration of the economy, the fascist regime claims such growth rates for the Philippines as 9.9 percent in 1973 and 5.8 percent in 1974 and increases in per capita income. These are based on the growth of the “gross national product”. There can be nothing more deceptive than this. Many figures that go into the GNP can be fabricated. When the figures are relatively true, they can well represent actual transactions that are extremely unproductive and counterproductive. Transactions involving the government are characterized by overpricing due to corruption. Then the inflation rate may also not be fully taken into account, as the fascist dictatorship is given to outright lying and juggling contradictory nonfacts.

The fascist regime is very active in carrying out in the country the worldwide campaign of US imperialism to blame the “population explosion”, the people themselves, for the ills of exploitative societies, especially in the developing countries. But the economic crisis in the capitalist countries and in every colonial and semicolonial country is exposing the fundamental causes of such ills. There cannot be enough for the people, wherever the imperialists and the exploiting classes accumulate for themselves what is socially produced by the people.

Other internal questions

Development of moral values? This can never be part of the policy of a treasonous, brutal, mendacious and free-spending fascist regime. The fascist dictator and his cohorts are bogged down in the cesspool of moral degeneration and seek to degrade the entire nation and people by the detrimental effects of their rule as well as by negative example.

Like every autocratic tyrant of old, the fascist dictator rules with absolutely no moral authority. It is an incontrovertible fact of history that when the farce of a constitutional convention would not suffice to retain him in power he made preparations for his rightist coup and fascist counterrevolution by such dastardly methods as massacres, violent disruptions of mass actions, fake assassination plots and bomb panics.

That was not all in the background of the fascist dictatorship. Marcos was at the helm of the reactionary government for close to seven years before his fascist martial rule. During all that time, he did not take a single step to reverse the processes harmful to the nation and people. On the other hand, he systematically aggravated these for his own benefit and the benefit of his foreign and feudal masters. More than anybody else in the country, he has been responsible for the worst crisis that has ever afflicted the puppet republic.

Though trying to pass himself off as one opposed to the Left and the Right, he has always acted as an extreme rightist, serving the US imperialists and the most reactionary interests, relying on counterrevolutionary force and lies to achieve his ends and asserting his privilege to rule indefinitely in the most backward manner of an absolute monarch. He facetiously describes the political and economic crisis as one of “modernization” and nothing more, as if one inane word were enough to obscure his counterrevolutionary role and responsibility.

The fascist dictator is himself the arch oligarch demagogically orating against the oligarchy. By corruption and extortion, he has amassed wealth in land and capital on a scale never known before among reactionary officials in the entire history of the Philippines. Because of his unbridled power, he has amassed far more wealth under fascist rule than before when he was more restrained by legal exposure from his political rivals and of course from the people. Making himself the unquestionable arch oligarch is what he actually means by “democratization of wealth”.

To size up the ill-gotten wealth of the fascist dictator, one has only to perceive the fast-expanding land and capital holdings under the names of the Marcoses and Romualdezes. One does not even have to count in those Marcos holdings under the names of such dummies as the Benedictos, Pobladores, Silverios, Cuencas and so many others. One does not even have to count in the least visible Marcos wealth that is in the form of secret bank accounts abroad, securities in foreign-based companies, and piles of jewelry in vaults.

The fascist dictator derives his wealth not only through the graft and corruption attendant to the allocation of privileges from the reactionary government but also through extortion pure and simple. Filipino enterprises, including those not necessarily against the fascist regime at the start, have become victims of outright extortion, with no privileges in return. The confiscation of the Lopez enterprises for the personal aggrandizement of the fascist dictator is not an isolated case.

It is the scheme of the fascist dictator and his top henchmen to monopolize the practice of corruption and extortion and thus increase their take and limit conspicuousness of malfeasance. But still the practice of corruption and extortion at every level of the reactionary government is widespread. The tax collectors and permit-issuers are having a grand time with graft while the fascist military excel in the use of extortion. The petty fascists prosper on the sale of curfew passes, traffic violations and the like.

The lowest type of immoral business is flourishing under the chieftainship or protection of fascist military officials. Prostitution houses, nightclubs, sauna baths and gambling joints are often under the ownership of fascist military and police officials. These officials enjoy being called promoters of tourism. Vice has been made a considerable part of the gross national product under the item of services. In the international propaganda of the fascists, it is not only Filipino labor that is offered cheap but also Filipino women.

Crackdowns on criminality are made now and then but these prove only to be shakedowns to show to criminals and criminal syndicates who their real lords are and to whom they must pay tribute. The fascist military and police officials have become notorious in both urban and rural areas as the crime lords.

Government reorganization? The fascist dictatorship has enlarged and sharpened the reactionary state as an instrument of coercion against the people and has accentuated the corruption and ineptness that prevail in the ranks of civilian and military officials. There has been no “backsliding” because the fascist regime has remained corrupt and inept and has kept on careening from bad to worse.

All the hubbub about government reorganization for better and cheaper service to the people has been a thin veil for the Marcos conspiracy to make good his coup against the legislature and the courts and place everyone retained in the executive and judicial branches of the reactionary government under his mercy. Contrary to the illusion created at the start of the fascist martial rule, there has been no trimming down of what was described as excess personnel and there has been no removal of the corrupt and the inept. All government personnel were simply intimidated to submit letters of resignation so that they would owe their retention in office to the fascist dictator.

The reactionary government has become an even more expensive and parasitic monster. There has been an increase in the number of government departments and offices. Several old departments have been split into two. With the increase of departments and offices, more personnel have had to be taken in for unproductive employment that is characteristic of the reactionary government. Of course, the increase of troops, spies and employees under the department of national defense constitutes the biggest personnel increase.

Expenditures of the reactionary government have increased by leaps and bounds. These have gone for the bloated salaries of the officials of the so many departments and offices and for a horde of additional lower personnel whose salaries, however, are kept so low in relation to the salaries, allowances and privileges of the officials. The purchase of unnecessary equipment and the overpricing of said equipment, especially office equipment and motor vehicles, constitutes a big drain on the treasury.

The departments of national defense, public highways and public works have gobbled up the biggest share from the overall budget of the reactionary government for reasons already explained. What is most revolting is that while the share for the department of national defense has increased by leaps and bounds, the share of the departments of education and culture, public health and social welfare have plummeted down.

When the fascist regime speaks of having increased government capital investments it means the overpriced military equipment, camps and other facilities, office equipment, buildings and motor vehicles of all government offices; and construction equipment used in infrastructure projects. Considering the overpricing and corruption involved in transactions involving these, plus the increasing government payroll, no one is surprised at how the fascist regime bloats the gross national product from year to year to show the growth rate in a period of unprecedented economic crisis. That is aside from simply fabricating figures for services.

Corrupt practices are so rampant at every level of his government that the fascist dictator lately has had to go after a few civilian officials outside of his most reliable clique. The point is for him to stress that he and his top henchmen enjoy the monopoly and no one else should dare dig into the field and make the digging too obvious by widespread petty malfeasance. Besides, such old Marcos tricks as changing the names of discredited offices, juggling discredited officials from one office to another or forming investigative committees whose sole end is to kill an issue do not suffice all the time.

Wanting to secure a full and rigid control over the people at the grassroots level, the fascist dictator is using the old barrio councils, merely renamed “barangays”, to carry out all his counterrevolutionary orders like faking

ballot reports in “referendums”, surveillance on barrio residents, etc.; form military units; and suppress all the people’s organizations that are not instruments of the fascist regime. He wants all peasant associations and small cooperatives to be dissolved and replaced by the samahang nasyon and kilusang bayan, just as he wants all trade unions that manage to exist to come under fascist control under the pretext of promoting “one union, one industry”. He wants all youth associations eliminated and replaced by the “kabataang barangay”.

Educational reform? The orientation, curricula and style of the Philippine educational system remain reactionary as before, proimperialist and at the same time feudalistic. Worse, the schools have been placed under rigid fascist control and have been turned into channels of fascist dictates and anticommunist bias.

At every level of the educational system, both private and public, study courses based on or using fascist texts have been imposed on the students and teachers. Such filthy notions as that the fascist counterrevolution is democratic revolution, that foreign investments are good for the nation and people, that the landless peasants can have land if they can pay the landlords’ prohibitive prices and so on and so forth are being promoted. Students and teachers are always under the threat of being arrested, thrown out of school and detained should they criticize fascist policies even if only in the course of classroom discussions. The fascist regime has rammed through the recommendations of the Presidential Committee to Study Philippine Education. These recommendations are designed according to objectives set by US imperialist agents in the World Bank and US foundations. The state universities and colleges have been reorganized to accord with US financing schemes and intensify promotion of the antinational idea that the educational system must serve the technical requirements of the US multinational corporations and graduates of schools must compete with each other for a few jobs from these foreign companies. The proimperialist curricula of the state schools have been made even more proimperialist. The position of the most reactionary school authorities has been reinforced.

The fascist regime has pounced hardest on those universities, colleges and high schools where the national democratic movement has been strong. Thousands of progressive students and teachers have been arrested and detained for varied durations on no charges at all. Many of them have been permanently thrown out of school. Hundreds of them still languish in military stockades. There is no end to both the overt and covert presence of military personnel and spies on the campus. The fascist regime has unceasingly developed the atmosphere of intimidation that it started with the closure of all schools upon the declaration of martial rule.

Throughout the country, student governments and publications are banned; where there are exceptions to the ban, they are in an emasculated form and under strict censorship. Like their students, the teachers also find their political rights curtailed; they do not find any civil liberties within or outside the schools or the faculty associations. They are restricted by the terms of their employment and they are prohibited from acting concertedly to assure themselves of tenure or improved teaching and salary conditions.

The public school teachers at the grade and high school levels are among the most politically resentful of and opposed to the fascist regime, although they appear to be the most acquiescent. They resent being ordered about to participate in such farces as the last three “referendums” and in sweating it out and spending together with their students for various show-off projects of the fascist regime. Their salaries have stagnated and they have been made to pay for larger extracurricular fees, despite the inflation. The number of teachers and classrooms have declined considerably in relation to the increasing number of school children.

The budget for the department of education and culture has fallen far behind that for the department of national defense. While the already watered-down 1975 budget for the military is P2.85 billion, that for education is P1.5 billion comprising only 8.63 percent of the national budget and falling behind the budget for the military which is larger by 180 percent.

Before the fascist martial rule, the budget for education always had a share in the national budget that was substantial and far larger than that for the military. In 1965, the budget for education was 29.08 percent of the entire budget and was larger than the budget for the military by 202 percent. On the eve of the fascist martial rule, the budget for education was 25.12 percent of the entire budget and was larger than the budget for the military by 159 percent. But now, the fascists consider guns more important than books or anything else.

Education at every level has become extremely expensive due to the economic crisis and yet the fascist regime would rather use scarce resources for the military. The rapidly rising matriculation fees, prices of books and other study materials and cost of living have kept more youth out of school than ever before. The vocational schools of “manpower training centers” of the reactionary government for out-of-school youth are negligible token entities

and also require high fees. And then finally jobs are too few for too many people with some education or skills.

All print and electronic media are lorded over by the Marcos press monopoly. Fascist censorship is thoroughly imposed on them. The abolition of the media advisory council makes no difference; the Philippine print media council and the DND office of civil relations continue to perform its functions. Above everything else, all the principal newspapers, magazines and TV-radio stations are owned by the Marcos-Romualdez kinsmen and proteges. They set the themes and patterns of fascist propaganda serving foreign and feudal interests. They pollute the atmosphere with the grossest of lies which cannot fool the people and which only raises the people's wrath against the fascists.

Social development? The answer to this question is already found in the answers to the previous questions. At this point, it is apt to stress the outstanding characteristic of the social situation.

Never in the semicolonial and semifeudal society of the Philippines has there been a polarization of social forces as now. Class contradictions have sharpened at an exceedingly rapid rate. The toiling masses of workers and peasants, the urban petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie are in that order daily being pushed to the extremist plight by the fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique. Official terrorism is inflicting deep wounds that cry for redress. The very gimmicks concocted and invoked by the terrorist regime to solve the people's sufferings are measures to exacerbate it. The people's consciousness and actions are clearly developing in accordance with the law that only armed revolution can overthrow armed counterrevolution. The revolutionary armed struggle is moving forward at a steady pace, and the revolutionary underground is flourishing all over the country.

The political and economic crisis has led to splits among the reactionaries that are far more serious than before Proclamation No. 1081. Joining the ranks of those reactionaries directly offended by the Marcos fascist gang since the start of the fascist martial rule are those reactionaries now finding themselves taken advantage of in the attempt of the fascist regime to raise foreign exchange by increasing controls and exactions on the trading of the country's primary exports. Only Marcos' own small group of reactionaries is being assured of flourishing on the spoils of the fascist rule.

The ruling system is abursting; all its limits are being exceeded. While the fascist dictatorship is the result of a political and economic crisis that could no longer be handled in the old way, it has become the cause for the worsening of the same crisis. We are living in a period of one social upheaval after another within the ruling system. We are on the eve of a revolutionary upheaval that will finally bring forth social emancipation and national liberation.

Self-reliance? Independent foreign policy?

The fascist regime is in fact and by policy dependent on and servile to US imperialism internally and externally. Contrary to its lip service to self-reliance, it has outbid other reactionary cliques in serving US monopoly capitalists and has depended mainly on US direct investments and loans and on US military support and protection. Even without any new treaty replacing the lapsed Laurel-Langley Agreement, the US imperialists have gotten more than what they want from the prefascist Marcos investment laws, the Marcos constitution and other fascist acts.

In calling for "negotiations" on the military treaties between the United States and the Philippines, the fascist dictatorship is careful to affirm as a constant policy the role of US imperialism in providing the Philippines with a "nuclear umbrella" and in "protecting" the sea lanes and air routes in the country and its vicinity. We must recognize too that calling for negotiations on said military treaties is an old trick of the reactionaries in beating down the growing demand of the people for independence from US imperialism.

The fascist regime has actually put specific limits on its supposed attempt to seek better terms in its military relations with the United States. There will be no subtraction from US extraterritorial rights; US troops on duty inside and outside the US bases will still be outside Philippine jurisdiction. What is demanded is merely the turnover of parts of the US military bases for real estate speculation by the fascist clique. The demand for rent can be laid to rest if the fascist clique is assured of continuous financial support by the United States. Also the demand that the Philippines be not inhibited by the military assistance pact from purchasing armaments from countries other than the United States can be laid to rest if the United States assures the fascist clique of abundant military supplies at low prices or through loans or grants.

The demand for an "automatic retaliation" clause in the mutual defense treaty only goes to show that Marcos the puppet wants even to outpope the pope. All that he does after all is to play on leverages within the limits of

puppetry to US imperialism. His single purpose is to assure himself of abundant US financial and military assistance so that he can better retain himself in power.

The rapid expansion of Japanese direct investments in and trade with the Philippines during the period of Marcos rule has created the illusion that the economic dominance of the United States over the Philippines has been eroded to some considerable extent. This illusion is far from reality. There is a considerable part of Japanese investments tied up with and under the control of US multinational companies. Trade figures showing that Japan is getting ahead of the United States are misleading. US multinational companies or US-Japanese firms dominate Philippine-Japanese trade. Moreover, the world crisis of capitalism is intensifying contradictions among capitalist countries and US-based companies are now pushing hard on their foreign trade to beat down companies that lie outside of their control.

While Japan does not yet go beyond her defensive posture and does not take an aggressive course, Soviet socialism poses itself as a bigger threat to the Philippines and to the Philippine revolution. This superpower has a vast military and economic apparatus for imperialist expansion and aggression. It has already started to make a foothold in the country. In the whole of Southeast Asia, we are witness to the cunning bear trying to swagger in while the preying eagle seems to be flying away although the Philippines is still very much in its shadow.

What is actually creating most the illusion that the Philippines is taking an independent course in its foreign policy is the grave local economic and political crisis and the crisis of the world capitalist system, the defeats of US imperialism and the intensified contention between the two superpowers for world hegemony. Under the stress of these, the fascist regime was first compelled to take a friendly posture towards the Arabs and Palestinians. Then, it had to establish diplomatic and trade relations with the People's Republic of China. Also, since the defeat of US imperialism and its puppet regime in Indochina, it has been anxious about having good relations with the Indochinese countries.

The irreversible and irresistible trend of history has compelled the Philippines to take the stance of being one among the third world countries. There is not much choice because US imperialism itself is isolated inside and outside the United Nations and more importantly cannot provide for everything to the Philippines and to the fascist regime. Moreover, US imperialism itself wants the Philippines to serve as its infiltrating agent in the ranks of the third world countries.

At the time of the October war in the Middle East, the fascist regime started to place the Philippines on the side of the Arabs and Palestinians because not to do so was to place the country in the oil embargo list and deprive itself of room for maneuver in dealing with the Moro National Liberation Front. US imperialism was more than willing to let the fascist regime make the Philippines a lead in the oil embargo. In fact, there was no end to US military bases getting oil from the Middle East because of the Philippine leak. The US oil companies went so far as to play along with the fascist regime in the establishment of the Philippine National Oil Company.

The fascist regime has kept a double face in relations with the Arab countries. It keeps on echoing the US propaganda that the inflation is the result of oil price increases and Arab profligacy and obscuring the fact that the oil price increases have been merely the result of the inflation generated by US imperialism and the world capitalist system. It also obscures the fact that the US oil cartels are the ones unduly raising oil prices vis-a-vis the Philippines.

In establishing diplomatic and trade relations with the People's Republic of China, the fascist regime has been most concerned about the shrunken market and depressed prices of traditional Philippine exports in the world capitalist market and also about having an additional source of oil, food and other commodities which are not too expensive elsewhere.

The fascist regime has become so desperate as to go ahead of the United States in casting away the Chiang clique and go so far as to agree to the anti-hegemony clause against the two superpowers in the Peking communique. The Philippine crisis and the crisis of the world capitalist system has become so deep and turbulent that dependent countries like the Philippines have to scramble on their own.

Even before the fascist martial rule, it was already clear to all the reactionary parties that Philippine foreign policy must become broader in the face of the worsening crisis and that China was one country with which the Philippines could have relations of equality and mutual benefit. The fault of the fascist regime is that it delayed these relations.

It is idle for the fascist regime to spread the intrigue that the Philippine revolution led by the Communist Party of the Philippines has been adversely affected by the establishment of Sino-Philippine relations. We have always held that country-to-country relations is one thing and that party-to-party relations is another and that the Philippine revolution has no other way of developing except on the basis of internal conditions.

The resounding victories of the Vietnamese, Cambodian and Laotian peoples in their revolutionary armed struggle against US imperialism and its running dogs have had a tremendous impact on the whole of Southeast Asia, not to speak of the entire world. US imperialism is on the wane and it will no longer do for any country to always tag along with it as in the old days.

The Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) has proven to be completely useless to the reactionaries and to US imperialism. Even the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), originally designed to promote a regional “free trade” zone in the service of US multinational companies and a reserve force behind the SEATO, has been profoundly affected by the world crisis of capitalism and the defeats of US imperialism.

The ASEAN members are now being compelled by the depression in their traditional exports to look up to and act according to the example set by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries in defending itself against inflation and recession.

The catchphrases of “peace and neutrality” is turning out objectively to mean opposition to the warmongering of the two superpowers and detachment from both superpowers.

The struggle for hegemony over Southeast Asia is intensifying between the two superpowers, as the world crisis of capitalism is worsening. But the Southeast Asian countries are increasingly finding affinity and common interest as developing countries against the two superpowers. The long-standing scheme of US imperialism, highlighted by the “Nixon doctrine”, is to let Japan play the role of fugleman in Asia in behalf of US interests. In exchange, she is supposed to be well accommodated in Southeast Asia. But as events are turning out, she has to look out for herself as US imperialism, like the other superpower, is compelled by crisis to become less accommodating to her and become more rapacious.

Within and outside the United Nations, the unity and militance of the third world countries are intensifying against the two superpowers. Standing firmly against the world capitalist crisis and the hegemonism and arms race of the two superpowers, the developing countries have united on a wide range of issues in defense of their state sovereignty and national independence and have only recently deepened their unity by adopting the comprehensive anti-imperialist resolution on development and international economic cooperation aimed at establishing a new international economic order. The United Nations, once monopolized by US imperialism and then by the two superpowers, has changed drastically upon the increased membership of developing countries which must find their common as well as independent ways in coping with the oppressive and exploitative schemes of the two superpowers and the increasing deterioration of the capitalist world.

Though everywhere in the world the two superpowers cast their shadow on every issue, Europe is inexorably the central cauldron of their contention. It is here where their clashing military and economic interests are concentrated. Even as the “final act” of the conference on European security and cooperation (CESC) has just been signed, the two superpowers’ contention for hegemony over Europe has become even more intense and vicious. “Detente” is mere cover-up for this contention and is calculated to lull the people. But to no avail. The people of the world have seen too much hypocrisy in such artifices as the nuclear test ban and nonproliferation treaties and the strategic arms limitations talks to know better.

As the two superpowers become increasingly engrossed with Europe, and are effectively shunted off the third world, especially Asia, the Filipino people like the people of the rest of Southeast Asia enjoy better conditions for waging revolution. Should the two superpowers start a world war, it can only turn out to be the worst for both of them. The best possible preparation against war that the Filipino people can make is to persevere in armed revolution under the Marxist-Leninist leadership of a proletarian party, with a short-range and long-range view of things.

Heighten the revolutionary struggle!

After three years of fascist martial rule, we must be even more resolved to unite and to fight the fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique. We must heighten the antifascist, antifeudal and antiimperialist struggle. The national democratic revolution must be carried out more militantly than ever before. The broad masses of the people demand so.

The objective conditions within the country and in the world are more favorable than ever before for pushing the Philippine revolution forward. The subjective forces of the revolution, with the Communist Party of the Philippines at the helm, must be strengthened and enlarged in order to take full advantage of such conditions. The correct ideological and political line must be carried out with ever increasing force and effectiveness.

The Communist Party of the Philippines must raise the level of its ideological, political and organizational strength. The New People's Army must intensify the revolutionary armed struggle and carry out the appropriate steps towards agrarian revolution more vigorously than ever before. The broad united front must forge ahead upon the growth of the organs of political power and mass organizations in the guerrilla bases and the various underground organizations in the guerrilla zones and the completely white areas.

Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought is absolutely correct as the theoretical foundation of our Party. And we must do well to apply it to the concrete conditions of the Philippine revolution. Under the general line of the national democratic revolution, we must do intensive social investigation among the masses, draw from them their needs and demands and then arouse and mobilize them.

Even while doing our work well but especially when we do not do it well, we must do self-criticism and seek the criticism of others. We can always improve our work even when we are doing it well. We owe it to the people to rectify our errors and shortcomings when we do not do our work well. We must learn to pose problems and arrive at solutions whenever we sum up our work.

So long as we do our political and organizational work well within the New People's Army and in the localities, in the countryside and in the cities, we can increase the membership of the Party by drawing in the ever emerging advanced elements and by following reasonable standards. We must always develop a Party core in every unit of the revolutionary mass movement.

There is now a Party organization in every region of the country. The Party cadres and members here should raise their own personnel and resources without let-up, achieve self-reliance and be able to find their own bearing even when subjected to the most vicious enemy onslaughts. Every regional Party organization outside of Manila-Rizal should concentrate on and be deeply involved in the revolutionary armed struggle and therefore in work among the peasant masses.

The Central Committee is responsible for central leadership, ideological and political; for concentration of personnel and resources at the most strategic points in the country; for coordination of all regional forces and for seeing to it that the nationwide revolutionary struggle rises from one level to another.

The Manila-Rizal Party organization and the urban Party organizations in the other regions should do well their work among the urban poor, the workers, the urban petty bourgeoisie and other positive forces and should continuously be able to make available personnel and resources for various lines of work in the countryside.

Everywhere in the country, we must be able to distinguish and combine the legal, semilegal and illegal forms of struggle in defending the people and promoting the armed struggle. While stressing work in the countryside, we must be able to coordinate it with work in the towns and cities. One inspires the other; one helps the other.

Armed struggle is the main form of our revolutionary struggle. Thus, the New People's Army is the main form of organization under the leadership of the Party. The fascist reign of terror has stressed to us the principle that armed revolution is our central task and that it is the best possible answer to armed counterrevolution. We must persevere in people's war.

Our main strategy is to encircle the cities from the countryside. We are at present strategically on the defensive but we can launch tactical offensives that we are sure of winning. The main form of our warfare throughout the country is guerrilla warfare. We must have a flexible strategy and maintain the initiative by skillful employment of such operational principles as concentration, dispersal and shifting.

We must give priority to developing guerrilla bases on well inhabited mountainous and hilly terrain. This is suitable to our kind of warfare. Here we can give full play to the principle of luring the enemy in deep and to the use of such weapons as bolos, spears, crossbows, traps, grenades, landmines and shotguns. The essential point is to make up for our inferior weapons with the superior number of people fighting on favorable terrain to defeat enemy units armed with superior weapons.

We must follow the principle of advancing in waves. A guerrilla zone must have its anchor in a guerrilla base. Our expansion work should be based on our consolidation work. The former should not be too far ahead. We should aim to have one consolidated barrio for every one, two or three barrios that are newly under our influence.

So much is accomplished by relying on the masses, by entrusting them with tasks responsive to their needs and aspirations and by developing cadres in their midst.

Whenever a barrio organizing committee is formed, groups of local activists must be called forth to form mass organizations for peasants, youth, women and children, and whenever there is a basis, for workers and fishermen. As soon as possible, the barrio militia and committees for organization, education, economy, defense and health may be formed.

The cadres from the outside should give full play to the initiative of the local non-Party activists. Within a period of six months, a local Party branch should be established at the core of these local activists. When it is time to inaugurate the barrio revolutionary committee, the barrio people should be able to say that in the main they are the ones who have achieved it.

Because the main content of our revolution at the present stage is the struggle for land, we should give the highest priority among the mass organizations to the peasant association. The peasant masses are eager to have their own association, especially as a result of the antipeasant activities under the bogus land reform of the fascist regime.

In the frontier areas, inhabited by the poor settlers and original inhabitants who have their own individual lots or communal lands, the peasant association can stand to defend the people against landgrabbers, get fair terms from lenders of money and grain and from merchants, and promote savings, exchange of labor and mutual aid.

To broaden the support of the people in the antifascist struggle and make a widely accepted beginning even among the tenants, we may allow 20 percent rent of the current actual crop to the small landlords and our rent reduction campaign would still be far superior to any terms of rent under the old tenancy system and the so-called leasehold system of the reactionary government.

To give way to the lending of money and grain and at the same time achieve the elimination of usury, we may allow interest rates between one-half to two percent per month, a far cry from the usurious rates of 50 to 200 percent per season (a period of only three-four months). Especially in guerrilla zones, which are much affected by inflation, we must have a flexible credit policy that eliminates usury but at the same time encourages those who have surplus cash or grain to lend at fair terms what they can to those in need.

To lessen the money costs of production and promote production, we should encourage such methods of labor exchange as the *suyuan*, *damayan*, *bayanihan*, *turnuhan*, *bataris* and the like. While eliminating usurious practices, we should promote savings by the peasant family for their own subsistence and production budgets and also cooperative projects of the peasant association. The peasant masses firmly support us whenever under our leadership they improve their livelihood. We should also seek the improvement of the workers' lot even as we draw taxes from their employers. We must develop allies who can give us a wide range of support. To guarantee that our armed units will not starve or unduly increase the people's burden under the most adverse conditions, the people's army must engage in production and keep grain stocks of its own.

To get the broadest mass support, we must develop the national united front. By building the organs of democratic political power in the countryside, the Party links the proletariat with the peasantry and thereby lays down the most reliable basis for the national united front. Such organs of political power must also be in line with the antifeudal united front, whereby the Party relies mainly on the poor peasants and farm workers, wins over the middle peasants and neutralizes the rich peasants.

The Preparatory Commission of the National United Front is working for the broadest possible national united front participated in by the working class, the peasantry, the urban petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie. Significant groups and personages representing these classes and strata are already developing an extensive revolutionary underground under the aegis of this commission.

Progressive sections of religious organizations have become active in the struggle against the fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique. We must also work towards the disintegration of the reactionary armed forces. We should not leave them only to the reactionary cliques. Especially as there is yet no open war among these reactionary cliques in Luzon, Visayas and the greater part of Mindanao, we must pay attention to sending revolutionary propaganda into the midst of the enlisted men, trainees, lower officers and those about to be conscripted.

Abroad, there is a wide range of Filipino organizations in support of our revolutionary struggle. They should expand their following among overseas Filipinos and amplify cooperation with foreign friends in the spirit of

fighting US imperialism and its running dogs in the Philippines.

World opinion in favor of the Philippine revolution must be enhanced. The demand for nonintervention by the imperialists, respect for democratic rights, the cessation of fascist barbarities and the release of political prisoners in the Philippines must be consistently raised before the people of the world. We shun dependence on foreign aid. But we welcome such concrete assistance as would supplement our revolutionary war effort and relieve the victims of fascist depredations.

The fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique has been isolated from the very start and is unceasingly being further isolated. It will not last very long. The fascist dictator has brought the people's wrath not only on his own head but also on the entire ruling system and the imperialist overlords. The Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army and the national united front are developing steadily to make sure that the crisis and disorder of the ruling system is turned into a revolutionary upheaval in the end.

Unite to overthrow the fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique!

Long live the Communist Party of the Philippines!

Long live the New People's Army!

Long live the national united front!

Carry on the Philippine revolution!

Marcos Hypocrisy Exposed during IMF-WB Meeting

First published in *Ang Bayan*, Special Issue, October 20, 1976

In his keynote speech before the 31st joint annual meeting of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, the fascist dictator Marcos harped on the theme of poverty and the “global rebellion of the poor.” He said, “Unless we conquer poverty in our time, we shall forever continue to move from problems caused by poverty to problems that cause more poverty.”

His words were clearly demagogic and hypocritical in view of the financial resources his fascist regime wasted on the preparations for the five-day conference. These cost the Filipino people the whopping sum of ₱3.5 billion, exceeding the 1976 budget of any department of the reactionary government, except the department of national defense.

The construction of 14 new hotels cost ₱2.5 billion and the Philippine International Convention Center, ₱1.0 billion. More than \$440 borrowed abroad were poured into these nonproductive, inflationary constructions, almost twice the \$268 million lent by the World Bank to the Philippines in fiscal year 1976. And yet millions upon millions of the people are jobless and have no decent dwellings. The new hotels are owned by the Marcoses, Romualdezes and their cronies.

The construction contracts, including that on the convention center, went to a host of US-Marcos corporations headed by the Construction Development Corporation of the Philippines. Knowledgeable sources say that the building projects actually cost less than half the officially declared cost. In brief, these have been used as quick devices of the fascist dictatorship for robbing the people. The construction projects show in the most glaring way the essence of “aid” that the Philippines is getting under the auspices of the IMF and the World Bank. There is no scarcity of loans from the imperialists so long as these are drawn at onerous terms and used to divert resources from genuine development, thereby laying the country prostrate to imperialist plunder generation after generation.

In preparation for the conference, the fascist dictator Marcos ordered the ejection of some 10,000 urban poor families. Entire communities were razed without prior notice while Metrocom troops and police stood guard. Many displaced families were dumped at garbage sites and far-flung areas while others were left to fend for themselves. This clean-up operation was supervised by the National Housing Authority which now specializes in demolishing communities to clear the way for imperialist-sponsored projects and Marcos’ real estate speculation.

Wanting to push further his scheme to use the IMF-World Bank meeting as a change to grab favorable publicity, Marcos called the foreign press correspondents gathered in Manila to a televised press conference last October 7. Instead of being able to make a flurry of boasts, he was cut down to size and roasted by pointed questions on his autocracy and profligacy by a number of correspondents.

Repeatedly giving their official guides the slip, the foreign correspondents were also able to witness the October 3 and 10 mass protest actions against the “referendum-plebiscite” and against the Marcos fascist dictatorship. Both mass actions demonstrated the people’s growing open resistance to fascist tyranny and the Marcos fascist regime’s utter hypocrisy in calling for “free and open discussions” while resorting to all sorts of tricks and threats to suppress the people’s protests.

Inflationary and Counterproductive Budget for 1977 Announced

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The annual budget of the Marcos fascist dictatorship continues to zoom up. A ₱27.4 billion budget for 1977 was unfolded by the fascist dictator himself before his clique, the “*batasang bayan*,” which promptly applauded and rubber-stamped it last September 22.

The project budget is a far cry from the ₱7.9 billion for the fiscal year 1972-73, the last budget approved by Congress. Since then, the budget has increased by leaps and bounds.

Budget for the current year is supposed to be ₱23.2 billion and is being overshot. Without any check on him within the reactionary government, the fascist dictator is bound to overshoot the budget projected for 1977.

Revenues are expected to fall below expenditures by ₱3.5 billion next year despite new tax measures designed to yield ₱1.0 billion. The fascist dictator announced that the deficit would be covered by borrowings. In the same breath, he described in self-contradiction that his budget is one of “self-reliance.”

The tax burden rose from ₱6.6 billion in 1972 to ₱20.2 billion in 1976 and is estimated to reach ₱23.9 billion in 1977. The fascist dictator now is so hard put at increasing the tax burden that he intends to further increase local and foreign borrowings.

The local public debt now stands at ₱40 billion, a long way from ₱9.7 billion in 1972. The foreign public debt now stands at more than \$5.0 billion, also a long way from \$2.1 billion in 1972.

Debt amortization and interest payments on long-term loans this current year is already beyond the level of \$500 million. Next year it will rise further, what with the rapid borrowing from the Euro-dollar market. But the appropriation for debt service in the 1977 budget is only ₱1.9 billion. This obvious understatement of one item alone proves beforehand that the projected 1977 budget will be overshot.

In handling its budget, the Marcos fascist dictatorship is carrying out a policy of bankruptcy, inflationary spending and selling the country down the river to the international loan sharks headed by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

The reactionary government under the fascist dictatorship is an unbridled parasitic machine wasting the financial resources of the country. It gives the highest priority to and allots the biggest funds for military build-up, support of Marcos’ private business scheme and his infrastructure program.

The 1977 appropriation for the military and police is ₱5.0 billion, with the former gobbling up ₱4.7 billion. This is the biggest single item in the fascist budget. And yet this does not include the separate intelligence fund directly handled by the fascist dictator, which was ₱1.0 billion in 1975, and the construction of military installations and military roads which could be concealed in the appropriations for public works and public highways.

The last budgetary appropriation made by congress for the military before the fascist martial rule was ₱1.2 billion. The quadrupling of military expenditures is due to an accelerated build-up of military personnel, equipment and installations and the increases in salary and allowances for military officers. This is indicative of the increasing resistance of the people to the fascist regime.

To obscure the extremely large appropriation for the department of national defense, the fascist dictator claims that ₱11.0 billion of the 1977 budget is allotted for “economic development.” This includes the following items: ₱3.5 billion comprising the “corporate equity investment fund” ₱3.3 billion for the department of public works, transportation and communications ₱2.7 billion for the department of public highways.

The “corporate equity investment fund,” excluding service payments on past foreign debts incurred by government banks, is largely for supporting Marcos’ private business schemes like the Manila Bay reclamation project, the Tondo Foreshore and Dagat-dagatan urban development project, Mariveles free trade zone, PHIVIDEC industrial estate and the Morong nuclear plant, to mention a few. Marcos also uses public funds to muscle his way into lucrative private enterprises of long standing.

The large outlays for the department of public works, transportation and communications and department of public highways do not result in economic development. Roads, bridges, airports, harbors, dams, irrigation works and electric lines are so laid out as to enhance the semifeudal pattern of the economy, foreign investments and the colonial pattern of trade. Construction projects are grossly overpriced and are designed to overload the

country with onerous foreign loans that quickly go back to the foreign contractors and suppliers.

Aside from overburdening the people with mounting obligations to imperialist banks, local public borrowing is accelerated to raise counterpart peso funds. Infrastructure projects are being undertaken so fast and in so many places, without genuine economic planning and correlation to genuine development. Resources are squandered and inflation is also generated.

Some of the big projects slated for 1977 are the construction of national government buildings in Quezon City, in the Manila Bay reclamation area and in some regional capitals; energy development projects, including infrastructure support for the nuclear power plant, geothermal units and oil exploration; electrification and waterworks projects; and communications and transportation facilities in the Visayas and Mindanao.

The Marcos fascist dictator jacks up the budgetary appropriations for public constructions in the belief of building monuments and making propaganda for himself and, of course, with the practical purpose of drawing large kickbacks from these projects, aggrandizing corporations owned or controlled by him and enhancing his land speculation schemes.

The Construction Development Corporation of the Philippines, which is the largest firm of its kind in the Philippines, has a monopoly of the biggest construction projects funded by the imperialist banks. It is owned and controlled by the fascist dictator through dummies and has strong links with US and Japanese contractors and suppliers of construction equipment and materials.

While the department of national defense gets at least 18 percent of the 1977 budget, the department of education and culture gets only about seven percent of ₱2.0 billion; the department of health, 3.6 percent or ₱990 million; the department of agrarian reform, not even one percent or ₱203 million; and the department of social services and development, not even one-third of one percent or ₱79.3 million.

These comparisons further show the perverse sense of priority of the Marcos fascist dictatorship. The facilities and personnel for elementary education are no longer being expanded at a rate sufficient to accommodate the yearly increase of school children; and the fair demands of the public school teachers for better salaries are being refused. Public health is utterly neglected especially in the rural areas, where the expensive “medicare program” is out of the question.

The fascist dictatorship gives low rating to “agrarian reform” even only as a propaganda gimmick and prefers to spend more for things like the Miss Universe contest, the Ali-Frazier fight, Imelda’s heart center, overseas publicity, the foreign trips of Marcos and his wife, international conferences and the Philippine International Conference Center which together cost the reactionary government several billions of pesos.

The measly yearly amount extended to the department of social services and development show the fascist dictatorship’s absolutely antagonistic attitude towards the great numbers of people who are its victims in large-scale forced evacuations during its military operations in the countryside, in the evictions of the national minorities and poor settlers from areas of land speculation and in slum clearance operations in cities again to allow the Marcos fascist gang to grab land.

The government reorganization announced by the fascist dictator as soon as he made his coup, has not resulted in any “rationalization” of government organization and operations. Names of departments have been merely changed. The bureaucracy is still bloated with desk-bound people with no productive work.

There is gross disparity between the high salaries, allowances and privileges of the high bureaucrats and technocrats on the one hand and the low depressed income of the mass of lowly employees on the other. Purchases of vehicles and office equipment, on which Marcos and his close subalterns monopolize the kickbacks, have been accelerated.

Under the title of “lump-sum funds” in the 1977 budget, there is a number of queer items subject to the most arbitrary handling by the fascist dictator. The queerest of all is the “national priorities support” for which the huge amount of ₱1.4 billion is appropriated. This is obviously the personal allowance of the fascist dictator for just about anything, including unaccounted intelligence funds.

Another queer item is the “international commitment fund” of ₱48.9 million. This is apart from the ₱93.4 million for the department of foreign affairs. This could be for the joint and separate international affairs of the dictatorial couple and for propaganda gimmicks abroad.

Also subject to arbitrary handling are the “calamity fund” of ₱553 million; “social pricing adjustments” of ₱827.1 million; “personnel benefits fund” of ₱430 million; “general adjustments funds” of ₱100 million; and

the miscellaneous funds of ₱30 million. The fascist dictator can actually pocket public funds as much as he pleases under the flimsiest pretext.

The 1977 budget is in line with all previous budgets of the fascist dictator. Government expenditures are kept high for payroll, office and transport facilities, nonproductive and blatantly counterproductive projects and the like so as to produce figures that enlarge the basis for an artificial annual growth rate of the economy. The rate of “growth” in “gross national product” from 1976 to 1977 is targeted at seven percent.

Central Bank Acknowledges Foreign Debt of \$5.6 Billion; Heavier Burdens Ahead for Filipino Masses

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The Central Bank acknowledged at the end of March that the foreign debt of the Philippines had reached \$5.613 billion from the end-1976 level of \$5.517 billion.

During the first three months of 1977, the fascist dictatorship borrowed a total of \$745 million from abroad but had to make debt service payments amounting to \$676 million.

The measly \$96 million difference between new debts and service on old debts clearly shows that the Philippines is now incurring new debts only to pay old debts.

At the rate the fascist dictatorship is incurring foreign debts, it will soon reach the 20 percent ceiling on the debt-service ratio to foreign exchange receipts. Reaching this ceiling would result in difficulties in borrowing and new impositions by the International Monetary Fund favorable to the foreign monopoly capitalists.

The debt-service ratio is now running 17 percent as a result of heavy borrowings from foreign private commercial banks which issue shortterm loans and demand high interest rates, aside from other onerous terms amounting to dictation on the use of the loans.

Earnings on all major exports of the Philippines have decreased. Trade deficits alone demand bigger foreign borrowings.

Estimates show that every one of the 43 million Filipinos is now indebted to the international usurers (IMF, World Bank, ADB and foreign monopoly banks) by \$130 or ₱962 at the official rate.

The average debt of every Filipino could even be higher. The absolute size of the Philippine foreign debt could in fact be already beyond \$6.0 billion.

The fascist authorities always manipulate the books of accounts to show a large international reserve fund and understate the balance of payments deficit from period to period.

The international reserves now stand at \$1.4 billion. These are composed mainly of loans deposited in foreign banks and in the process of being rapidly spent but replenished by new and bigger loans.

The props of the Philippine peso are completely artificial. Though this stands officially at ₱7.4 to the US dollar, it is only a matter of time that an abrupt fall in the value of the peso will occur.

Despite the critical level of foreign borrowings, some agents of US imperialism continue to assure the Philippines that it could easily borrow \$1.0 billion more without making any major adjustment in the external value of the peso.

This is a paradox if we recall 1970 when the Philippine foreign debt was only \$900 million and was already considered critical by the IMF.

It turned out that the Philippines could borrow even bigger amounts after adopting the “floating rate” and other policies calculated to create “a more favorable climate” for foreign investors and allowing them to bring out foreign exchange as fast as it is credited to the country.

While the US and other foreign monopoly capitalists accelerate their remittance of superprofits on trade and direct investments, the Philippines is further weighed down by foreign debt obligations which also yield superprofits.

In the practice of international usury, the foreign monopoly capitalists gain a mortgage on the human and natural resources of a dependent country in this generation and in succeeding ones.

Addressing a recent Central Bank-sponsored seminar on access to international capital markets, US Ambassador William H. Sullivan demanded that the Philippines conform with American business procedures and methods, and gloated over the fact that the IMF would soon raise the alarm signal as the Philippines hits the 20 percent ceiling in debt-service ratio.

In an obvious maneuver to gain more investment privileges for US imperialism, Sullivan complained of “restrictions” on foreign investments and warned that the Philippines’ financial sources abroad could be “drying up.”

He cited the newly drawn up Central Bank rules which limit the borrowings of multinationals (mainly US-controlled firms) from local banks. He also referred to the Board of Investments’ decision which allows a Filipino

firm to compete with a British-American combine manufacturing cigarette filters.

Sullivan asserted that foreign direct investments should be further attracted since the Philippines would encounter increasing difficulties in borrowing from international financial institutions, floating bonds and issuing shares of stocks in the world capitalist market, and borrowing from foreign private banks.

The foreign monopoly companies, especially US, have not been satisfied with making foreign loans revert to them through purchase, management, technical and service contracts.

They borrow funds in local banks for their local operations. Even without bringing a single cent into the country, US companies simply rely on their big names and make the biggest local borrowings at the expense of Filipino businessmen.

The Marcos fascist dictatorship is so bogged down in foreign indebtedness that its agencies cannot even make a minor adjustment in rules and regulations that are already extremely anti-national and favorable to foreign investors.

The Marcos fascist dictatorship is so dependent on US imperialism, its main creditor, that it can be so easily pushed around and cannot make even a sham posture of looking after national interests.

The foreign debt of the Philippines was \$500 million at the beginning of the Marcos term in 1966. In six years this reached the level of \$1.1 billion. In only four years and a half of fascist martial rule, the foreign debt skyrocketed by more than 400 percent to \$5.6 billion at the end of March 1977.

The infrastructure projects and military buildup of the Marcos fascist dictatorship continue without letup. All these are inflationary and graft-ridden. Like an opium addict, the Philippine reactionary government keeps on begging for foreign loans to tide itself over from one moment of euphoria to another only to increasingly undermine and destroy its body.

The broad masses of the people are bound to suffer more under the fascist regime. In his riposte to Sullivan, NEDA director-general Gerardo Sicat announced that the regime would dip deeper into local sources of financing even as it would continue to kowtow to foreign creditors.

The broad masses of the people would be forced to carry an increasing tax burden despite depressed incomes. Local public borrowing would accelerate to cover the huge deficit spending of the reactionary government. The Philippine peso is indeed becoming more and more worthless.

The excesses of the fascist regime coincide with the crisis of the world capitalist system. Under these circumstances, US imperialism is shifting the burden of its crisis to the Philippines and, like a drug pusher, is mercilessly extracting profits from its victims and undermining the very ruling system it wants to keep as a dependent.

MNLF Snubs Marcos' Offer, Boycotts April 17 'Referendum-Plebiscite'

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Confronted by the threat of renewed full-scale hostilities, the fascist dictator Marcos has been forced to make concessions to the Moro National Liberation Front on the proposed Moro autonomous region in Mindanao.

But because these concessions are far short of the Moro people's just demand for self-determination, and because the fascist dictator continues to pursue a policy of deception, leaders of the MNLF seem wary about falling into a trap.

Evident in Marcos' every action is his characteristic duplicity. He makes a concession to the MNLF with one hand only to take it back with the other. He is bent on undermining the MNLF. At press time, he was orchestrating a hate campaign against MNLF Chairman Nur Misuari, alleging a "rift" in MNLF ranks, and provoking tribal antagonism among the Moro people.

It is completely understandable, therefore, that Misuari and his comrades in the Front's leadership have not been taken in by Marcos' seemingly conciliatory stance.

Misuari has so far snubbed Marcos' offer to appoint him chairman of a so-called preparatory committee and later of a "provisional government" in the "autonomous region." Misuari and his comrades have also decided to boycott Marcos' "referendum-plebiscite" scheduled for April 17.

It was in early April that Marcos offered the position to Misuari, giving the MNLF leader until April 9 to accept. The day came and went without a reply from Misuari, who was last reported to have left Jamahiriyah (formerly Libya) for Kuwait and is now in Saudi Arabia.

Marcos' offer to Misuari was the latest in a series of developments over the past month that saw the dictator retreat from his previously unbending position.

In the Tripoli agreement of December 23, 1976, between the MNLF and the Marcos martial law regime, Marcos had bound himself to proclaim 13 provinces in Mindanao as the Moro autonomous region.

Marcos' Navotas Fishport Project Triggers Mass Protests by Metro Manila Masses

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The fascist dictator Marcos may have pleased his US and Japanese imperialist masters when he set up the Philippine Fisheries Port in Navotas, Rizal which was inaugurated on April 3.

But he has fanned the anger of tens of thousands of fishport workers and urban poor who are being deprived of their homes and livelihood by the creation of this haven for imperialist investments.

In numerous mass actions over the last two years, the affected masses have been undergoing tempering in the furnace of struggle with the fascist dictatorship. Patiently, they have been strengthening their unity and gathering the support of fellow workers and urban poor as well as students, members of the religious and small and medium businessmen in the Manila-Rizal region.

In fact, it was because of militant protests of the organized masses in the area that the military regime was forced to delay the inauguration of the ₱88.7-million project seven times in the last few months.

To push through the port's opening, the regime kept the inauguration date secret, fenced in the entire 67-hectare complex and unleashed hundreds of Metrocom troopers, policemen and informers in an effort to harass and intimidate the batilyos, or fish handlers, and their supporters in nearby communities.

The Navotas fishport, as the regime explains it, is part of the Tondo Foreshore Urban Renewal Program. The truth is that this "development program" is to make Manila-Rizal an even more attractive and lucrative area for monopoly capital. Under the program, some 200,000 people in metropolitan Manila and adjacent areas stand to be ejected and thrown out of work.

As pointed out by *Taliba ng Bayan* (People's Vanguard), *Liberation*, *Intercom* and other revolutionary and progressive publications, the Navotas fishport projects paves the way for the domination of the local fishing industry by Japanese monopoly capitalists.

The Navotas fish landing port is being transformed into a "modern mechanized fishport designed to service large Japanese fishing vessels which have been rapaciously exploiting the country's marine resources.

The importance of the fishport not only to the batilyos but also to their countrymen can readily be seen when we consider that 40 to 60 percent of the total catch of the country's commercial fishing passes through there.

With Japanese monopoly capitalists tightening their hold on this facility, they will be freer than ever to plunder Philippine marine resources and haul these to Japan and the United States. Even today, fish products are among the top 10 exports of the Marcos regime to Japan.

The construction of the Navotas fishport completes the sellout of the country's fish resources to Japanese imperialism which Marcos allowed under the misnamed "RP-Japan Treaty of Amity, Commerce and Navigation."

The treaty was shelved for more than 10 years by the Philippine Senate because it one-sidedly favored Japanese monopoly capitalists. Marcos unilaterally approved it upon his abolition of the legislature. The treaty gives Japanese fishing fleets complete freedom to fish in Philippine waters, among other concessions.

Fresh talks being held in Manila between the Moro National Liberation Front and the Marcos martial law regime have bogged down completely and full-scale warfare may be resumed soon in Mindanao.

This was gathered by *Ang Bayan* from reliable sources who said both the MNLF and the peace-seeking Quadripartite Ministerial Commission rejected the “referendum-plebiscite” stage-managed by the Marcos regime in Mindanao last April 17.

The commission was reported to have told the Marcos negotiating panel that unless the regime abandons its policy of treachery against the MNLF and the Moro masses, it would have to recourse but to discontinue the talks altogether.

The urgency of the situation was such that Marcos had to cut short his state visit to Japan and return to Manila to take a direct hand in saving the imperiled negotiations.

At last report, the fascist chieftain was in consultations with his cabinet and the National Security Council to seek a way out of the impasse. But he was said to be intent upon depriving the Moro masses of genuine autonomy

This being so, he would have nobody to blame but himself if the talks resumed in Manila are totally ruptured and the war in Mindanao resumed.

The Quadripartite Ministerial Commission is a special body created by the 42-nation Islamic Conference to act as mediator in the struggle between the MNLF and the Marcos government.

The commission, headed by Islamic Conference Secretary General Ahmed Karim Gai and Jamahiriya (Libya) Foreign Minister Ali Abdussalam Treki, arrived in Manila April 20, three days after Marcos’ “referendum-plebiscite.

An MNLF negotiating panel headed by Abdul Rahman Amin also arrived on that day. On his arrival, Amin said Marcos “simply is not sincere.”

“He wants to give us a house with nothing inside it,” the MNLF leader added, referring to the way Marcos had manipulated the “referendum plebiscite” virtually negating the MNLF’s role in the proposed Moro autonomous region in Mindanao.

Amin warned that “sooner or later, (Marcos) is going to realize that there is a major problem in the south.”

Treki likewise assailed the Marcos regime for the character assassination campaign it launched in the captive media against the MNLF and its chairman, Nur Misuari, in the day preceding the April 17 “referendum-plebiscite.”

The Amin delegation and the Quadripartite Ministerial Commission then sat down with the Marcos panel to discuss the proposed autonomous region in Mindanao and how it could be administered.

A stalemate developed when the Marcos negotiating team insisted upon pseudo-autonomy in Mindanao, with the MNLF playing a minor role in its affairs. The Gai-Treki group will report on this development to the Islamic Conference which is meeting May 16 in Tripoli, capital of Jamahiriya.

Earlier, Misuari, Amin and MNLF Central Committee members Thambayapha Manjoorsa and Farouk Hussin had served notice that the Front’s patience was coming to an end and that it was prepared to attain by armed struggle the autonomy that Marcos denies the Moro masses through negotiation.

Speaking from Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, on the very day of the Marcos “referendum-plebiscite,” Misuari said it was “illegal.” Amin echoed this denunciation and added, “We reject the referendum because it is not in the spirit and letter of the Tripoli agreement and is not in conformity with the Marcos-Khaddafi agreement.”

Manjoorsa, who has been in Mindanao representing the MNLF in the ceasefire commission, said the Front and its armed force, the Bangsa Moro Army, were all set to “go back to the jungle” if Marcos persists in being treacherous to the MNLF and the Moro people.

Manjoorsa assailed systematic provocations by the reactionary Armed Forces of the Philippines against the BMA, adding that of the score of ceasefire violations by the AFP, only a few had been acted upon by Rear Admiral Romulo Espaldon.

For his part, MNLF spokesman Hussin said that if the negotiations collapsed, “I am sure there will be a much

bigger war.”

Interviewed by foreign journalists before the April 17 sham referendum, Hussin had said: “This is very firm. We will never be party to this. This is not part of the agreement. We will not recognize the plebiscite.... What they are doing is to create obstacles.”

Minister Treki, too, had questioned the April 17 proceedings, cabling Marcos to request postponement and a change in the referendum questions.

Marcos ignored the request and went through with it. As expected, the pseudo-referendum “overwhelmingly endorsed” the martial law regime and “repudiated” the MNLF, in the words of such followers of Marcos as Commission on Elections Chairman Leonardo Perez and Local Governments Secretary Jose Roño.

Actually, for all the fascist dictatorship’s manipulations, the “referendum-plebiscite” was a dismal failure. No more than 50 percent of the people participated in it, and of those who actually cast their votes, many abstained.

This was directly attributable to the people’s hatred for the fascist regime, the MNLF’s boycott, and the boycott movements launched by the Preparatory Commission of the National Democratic Front and by democratic church elements.

For a time before April 17, the Marcos-controlled mass media uniformly reported that Misuari was due in the Philippines, a supposed indication that the MNLF approved of the “referendum-plebiscite” and would abide by its results.

When the truth could no longer be concealed that the MNLF was rejecting it, the Marcos government launched a hate campaign against the MNLF, and in particular against Misuari.

The regime even sought to resurrect such a thoroughly discredited warlord and bureaucrat capitalist as Ali Dimaporo in an effort to sow discord among the different Moro tribes. Worse, it played with fire by seeking to revive anti-Moro prejudices among the other Filipino people.

In an effort to give some semblance of legitimacy to his “referendum-plebiscite” which should have been conducted by a provisional government with MNLF participation.

Nonetheless, what Marcos and Khaddafi agreed upon bound only the two of them since the MNLF declined the Jamahiriyah president’s efforts to get them to accept it.

According to Amin, “we had nothing to do with it and it is not binding on us.”

Meanwhile, as the Manila talks moved inexorably towards a stalemate, the Bangsa Moro Army was on full alert. And in the Middle East, MNLF Chairman Misuari set out on a tour of Muslim countries to enlist international support for the MNLF and the Moro people.

The victory of the Moro struggle will be a victory won principally by the Moros themselves, in a broad alliance with the rest of the Filipino people and freedom-loving peoples all over the world.

Evidence is surfacing that the alleged assassination plots against the fascist chieftain Marcos in pre-martial law days were nothing but fabrications intended to help provide him with an excuse to impose and maintain martial law.

For instance, Malacañang made a grand production last February out of the “conviction” of four men who supposedly had pleaded guilty to having participated in the alleged assassination conspiracy. The four, so the captive mass media reported, were sentenced to six years’ imprisonment—at hard labor.

It now turns out that one of those “convicted,” an American by the name of August McCormick Lehman Jr., is not a prisoner at all but is free to come and go as he pleases.

At Lehman’s recent wedding to the daughter of a retired member of the Presidential Guard, he had for his godfather no less than Maj. Gen. Fabian Ver, chief of the Presidential Security Agency and of the National Intelligence and Security Authority.

The wedding took place at the Malacañang chapel, and after the ceremony, who should call on the phone to congratulate Lehman and his bride but Marcos himself!

The ninong, Gen. Ver, was thoughtful enough to move out of his villa to make it available for the couple’s honeymoon. They now live at a renovated former AFP officers’ clubhouse.

The martial law regime has shown compassion to the Lehmans in other ways. It is helping the couple set up a corporation to sell government-imported automotive supplies.

Nor have they been the only recipients of the Marcos government’s generosity. Eduardo Figueras, one-time candidate for mayor of Manila, also has been blessed by the regime after having been “convicted” for his “participation” in the “assassination plots.” His son was awarded a ₱4-million contract by the National Power Corporation for the family-owned Liberty Shipping to haul generators from Bicol to Cebu.

In the alleged assassination plots, Lehman and Figueras implicated many others, among them former Liberal Party presidential candidate Sergio Osmeña Jr., his son Sergio III, and millionaire industrialist Eugenio Lopez Jr.

Others supposed to have been in on the “plots,” all of whom are now under military detention, are Antonio Arevalo, Manuel Crisologo, Antonio A. Nepomuceno, Alejandro C. Arevalo, Manuel F. Daez, Marcelo C. Ferrer, Marcelo V. Gallarin, Romualdo B. Inductivo, Rodolfo C. Macasalabang, Policarpio A. Rosales, Faustino V. Samonte and Juanito C. Samson.

It appears that last February 10, on the eve of the “trial,” Figueras, Lehman, Arevalo and Crisologo met in Malacañang with Gen. Zafra, president of Military Commission No. 5.

It was at this meeting that the scenario for the following day’s proceeding was finalized. The four were to plead guilty, appeal for leniency, and be sentenced to six years’ imprisonment. Four years were to be considered to have been served and the remaining two “subject to amnesty.”

The “trial” went without a hitch, or so it was dutifully reported by the captive mass media. The “accused” were said to have been so “contrite” that they would give evidence against all the others arrested in connection with the “conspiracy.”

This notwithstanding, the Osmeñas, Lopez and the 10 other accused continue to profess their innocence.

From the United States, where he now lives in exile, Sergio Osmeña Jr. has described the regime’s accusation as a “malicious canard.” Similar denunciations have come from Sergio Osmeña III and Lopez, both of whom are maximum-security prisoners of the fascist dictatorship.

The 10 others were offered a “deal” whereby they would plead guilty and be given nominal sentences. They refused. Instead, they filed suit before the Supreme Court questioning their arrest and continued detention. They said they had been subjected to different forms of torture and that most of them are ailing.

Meantime, a source in the US embassy in Manila said the “convict” Lehman is actually free to leave the Philippines for business purposes if he wants to.

But for the moment, Lehman has no intention of leaving Manila. “I guess you can call my arrangement (with the martial law regime) a mutual defense pact,” he told an interviewer.

May 1: Workers Lead Oppressed in Biggest Rally against US-Marcos Dictatorship

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In solidarity with other workers throughout the world, Filipino workers observed May Day by turning out in record numbers in Manila to call for the downfall of the oppressive and corrupt US-Marcos dictatorship.

The workers were joined by urban poor, students and other intellectuals, and church people and other oppressed people in staging the biggest demonstration since the imposition of martial law.

They defied fascist repression as they courageously asserted their democratic rights to assemble and speak out against exploitation and oppression which have been intensified by the US-Marcos dictatorship over the last four years and a half.

Elsewhere, workers commemorated May Day in massive demonstrations. They celebrated the victories of their class and upheld their leading role in the struggle against imperialism, social-imperialism and all reaction as well as in socialist revolution and construction transitory to communism.

In the People's Republic of China, iron bastion of socialism, the Communist Party, vanguard of the working class, took the lead in the day-long commemorations. The Party's Central Committee, under the chairmanship of Comrade Hua Guofeng, rallied the entire Party, the People's Liberation Army and the masses of all nationalities of China to carry proletarian internationalism forward.

In this connection, the Central Committee called upon the masses of China to diligently study and apply the teachings of the great socialist teachers—Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Chairman Mao Zedong.

Manila-Rizal was the center of May Day observance in the Philippines. Fascist repression failed to stop the working class from demonstrating its growing ability to unite more sectors of society in militantly exposing the evils of the US-Marcos dictatorship.

In the afternoon of that day, 15,000 to 20,000 workers and their allies grouped and regrouped over a wide area encompassing the Luneta Park and surrounding streets, as fascist troops repeatedly attacked their formations and arrested hundreds of rallyists.

Courageously upholding the people's right to speak, three workers addressed a few thousands gathered near the Rizal monument.

They appealed for the people's united opposition to the oppressive martial law regime which has increased oil prices, demolished urban poor communities, depressed workers' real wages and aggravated unemployment.

Before this, at about 5 p.m., a very large group gathered at the Agrifina Circle bearing a streamer and placards reading "Down with Martial Law!," "Marcos, Hitler, diktador, tuta!," "Stop demolition!," "Long live the workers!," "Down with the US-Marcos dictatorship!" and "Long live the New People's Army!"

Immediately, the demonstrators were surrounded by fascist troops whose ranks were bolstered by goons paid to make trouble. As the rallyists chanted "Marcos, Hitler, diktador, tuta!" fire trucks sprayed powerful jets of water against them, and many were beaten up and arrested.

Following this, more than 100 demonstrators gathered before a restaurant at the park to chant revolutionary slogans.

Even strollers and bystanders were beaten up and molested by the fascists. Buildings in the area were occupied by military agents.

More than 1,000 people were arrested and detained. Eight persons were confirmed injured.

In the face of fascist brutality, the demonstrators defiantly shouted "Babalik kami! Babalik kami!" (We will return! We will return!). They pledged even bigger mass actions in the coming days.

The rally was sponsored by Bukluran ng Manggagawang Pilipino (Alliance of Filipino Workers) as the workers' protest against oppression and exploitation under the US-Marcos dictatorship.

Fearing the growing strength of the workers, the regime began arresting mass activists among the workers and urban poor communities in the two weeks preceding May Day.

However, this did not stop big delegations from showing up at the designated assembly points on May 1, according to BMP.

Raids were conducted on workers' communities in Baryo Boulevard, Navotas, Rizal; Baryo Escopa, Quezon

City; and Tatalon, Quezon City, where 23 women belonging to the mothers' association were arrested and detained at Camp Aguinaldo.

In addition, arrests were made at the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City. A total of 88 persons were confirmed arrested.

Meanwhile, workers on their second month of strike at Engineering Equipment Industries in Mandaluyong, Rizal, continued to receive fraternal support from workers in nearby factories.

The strikers have acknowledged gifts of rice and foodstuff, as well as tremendous moral support, from fellow workers showing class love and solidarity.

On the other hand, the big bourgeois owners of EEI continue to withhold ₱36,000 in union funds and refuse to pay the wages of hundreds of workers.

The resolute struggle of the EEI workers has encouraged their class brothers to dare to struggle, dare to win.

Philippines Faces Another Severe Rice, Corn Shortage

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The Filipino people are confronted by another severe shortage in rice and corn this year, contrary to claims of the Marcos fascist dictatorship that the country has attained self-sufficiency in these staples.

A critical analysis of the reactionary's government's own data indicates that the rice shortage this year may be as much as 800,000 metric tons. This is being covered up by importations.

As for corn, the fascist regime has quietly abandoned its claims of sufficiency and now admits that it is importing 120,000 metric tons worth ₱100 million from the United States and Thailand.

The regime's desperate efforts at projecting an image of advancement in agricultural production would have been funny were it not for the fact that the subject of its lies is the very livelihood of the people. Foremost of the regime's "comedians" is Agriculture Secretary Arturo Tanco Jr.

In 1974, Tanco said the regime's "Masagana 99" program was so successful that the rice production was enough to feed the people. In May last year, he went as far as to say that the Philippines had enough reserves to allow it to export some "surplus."

All the while, though, the regime was importing rice in large quantities. Tanco admitted in a statement last May 13 that the Philippines imported ₱2.2 billion worth of rice from 1971 to 1975.

Characteristically, the agriculture secretary coupled this admission with another grand claim that the rice production for the crop year 1976-77 reached 4 million metric tons, supposedly exceeding the country's needs by 100,000 metric tons. Another "surplus"!

An examination of the reactionary government's own statistics and data from other sources shows that Tanco will have to eat his words again.

Rice production in the Philippines is among the lowest in the world, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization, an agency of the United Nations.

An FAO world production survey in 1973 showed that the Philippines, with a national average of only 31 cavans of palay per hectare, ranked 69th in a list of 70 rice-producing countries. In 1975, after three years of "Masagana 99," the national average stayed at 32 cavans per hectare, according to official estimates.

Considering Tanco's own admission that "Masagana 99" has been a gigantic flop, his new claim that the country produced 4 million metric tons of milled rice in crop year 1976-77 is ridiculous.

To produce this much rice, the national average production per hectare would have had to jump in one year from 32 cavans to 41 cavans.

Party cadres and Red fighters in various parts of the country report that 20 to 30 cavans per hectare are common. In unirrigated areas in southeastern Pampanga, it is not uncommon for a farmer to reap only 20 cavans from a three-hectare riceland.

But even taking 32 cavans per hectare as the national average, the total production in 3.6 million hectares of ricelands in the Philippines would be only 3.1 million tons of rice, around 800,000 tons short of the country's needs as estimated by Tanco himself.

Whatever "reserves" the regime speaks of at this time are likely to be leftovers of large importations contracted in 1971-72 whose delivery was delayed.

Just as absurd as Tanco's claims of "self-sufficiency" in rice are similar claims for corn. First he spoke of sufficiency in corn "solely from domestic production." Two weeks later, he admitted that the regime's "Masaganang Maisan" project was a failure, like "Masagana 99."

"All actual accomplishments are way below target levels," he said, admitting that 120,000 metric tons of the cereal have to be imported at the cost of ₱100 million to fill the country's requirements.

True to form, he again coupled this admission with a projection that the country would be self-sufficient in corn in three years.

This means doubling the corn production per hectare, an impossible target considering the FAO's finding that the Philippines was 96th out of 100 corn-producing countries in the world, and the admitted failure of "Masaganang Maisan."

The perennial problem of low productivity and big shortages in rice and corn despite the Philippines' rich natural resources expose more than just the fascist regime's incompetence in managing the country's food production. It speaks of the semicolonial and semifeudal conditions in Philippine agriculture.

400,000 Sugar Workers Laid Off; Regime Worried about 'Security'

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As many as 400,000 sugar farm and mill workers will be thrown out of work by the end of the milling season this month because of the severe crisis plaguing the Philippine sugar industry. More than ever before, at least 2 million people—the workers and their immediate dependents—will sink deeper into poverty, hunger and disease.

The world sugar market remains depressed and the Marcos fascist regime has been unable to sell huge stockpiles of the commodity. As a result, less sugarcane are being planted and the workers are losing their jobs.

Ironically, while the warehouses are fairly bursting with unsold sugar, the Marcos government has decreed an increase in domestic sugar prices, burdening further the broad masses of the people. The retail price of refined sugar was raised by 25 centavos per kilo, while those of brown and unwashed sugar went up by 20 centavos.

The displaced workers make up over 80 percent of the sugar industry's estimated labor force of around half a million. This will further increase the number of unemployed and underemployed in the country which, at last count, totaled no less than 7 million people.

Even as the problem reached crisis proportions, the reactionary government has done nothing but undertake publicity stunts disguised as "relief programs" and alert the fascist military against what it fears will be an upsurge in revolutionary activity in the countryside.

Marcos' fears are not unfounded. The *sacadas* (migratory seasonal workers) and regular farm workers are stepping up their militant protest against the fascist dictatorship and despotic sugar barons. The Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army are now well-rooted in many sugar-producing areas and are in a position to rapidly arouse, organize and mobilize the sugar workers.

Responsibility for the crisis rests squarely with US imperialism and its puppet Marcos regime. The imperialists manipulated the world sugar market to force down prices and tighten their hold on the local sugar industry. On the other hand, the Marcos regime monopolized the export of Philippine sugar to grab its share of the loot.

Only three years ago, the country's sugar industry enjoyed an export boom. There was a temporary shortage in the world sugar market and prices shot up to as high as 65 US cents a pound. At the peak of the boom in 1974, the Philippines exported as much as \$785 million worth of sugar.

This turned out to be the bait that lured the local sugar industry deeper into the clutches of US imperialism. Eager to rake in fortunes, local big compradors went into a frenzy of building sugar centrals, financed mainly with government-tended foreign loans, and converted more croplands into sugar plantations.

They were led by Marcos himself who put up at least three new sugar centrals through his dummy Roberto Benedicto. These are the Northern Cotabato Sugar Industries, United Planters Sugar Milling and Bukidnon Sugar Milling.

Within two years, the temporary shortage in the world market gave way to a huge surplus. Prices fell and Philippine exports dropped sharply. In 1976, sugar exports reached only \$427 million while prices were down to 7 to 8 US cents a pound.

By this time, the sugar industry had borrowed heavily from the Philippine National Bank. Today it remains in debt up to ₱5.2 billion. Some 15 sugar mills financed by PNB have outstanding loans of about ₱600 million.

With so much more in public funds and the country's resources sunk in the sugar industry and the world market depressed, the Philippines has become even more dependent on the United States as a market. But even this traditional market has become insecure since the Philippines lost its privileged position with the expiration of the US Sugar Quota Act in 1974.

The situation has been aggravated by the Marcos regime's takeover of the country's sugar trade. Since 1973, the trading of sugar has been completely in the hands of the Philippine Exchange (Philex), a subsidiary of the PNB. PNB sets a yearly price which it pays to planters for their milled sugar.

The government takeover has funneled billions of pesos into the regime's coffers as well as into that of the fascist dictator and his cronies at the expense of the sugar planters. In 1974, when world sugar prices hit 65 US cents a pound or ₱678 a picul, PNB was paying planters a measly ₱134 a picul. The fascist dictator and his cronies were free to do as they pleased with PNB's fat profits.

The sugar planters, in turn, took this out on the sugar workers. As early as mid-1976, not a few of them refused to pay the workers even their meager wages.

In a bid to push up prices higher, he withheld sugar exports in late 1974. Prices did go up—for a while—but later quickly skidded down. By the time Marcos began selling again in 1975, prices dropped further and losses were heavy. Huge stockpiles had been built up and the 1974-75 crop could not be sold until 1976.

Since then, Marcos has been trying desperately to sell the huge stockpiles. US monopoly capitalist groups quickly moved in and got two five-year contracts to buy the sugar at rock-bottom prices.

Despite the regime's all-out sales campaign, the country will still have about 1.5 million tons of sugar in excess of its exports and domestic needs by the end of the crop year in August.

With world prices expected to stay at 10 to 15 US cents a pound for the next few years, sugar planters are cutting down production drastically. For hundreds of thousands of sugar workers, this means prolonged unemployment and slow starvation for them and their families.

The fascist regime has admitted that in the top sugar-producing province of Negros Occidental alone, no less than 75,000 out of the 135,000 workers will be laid off. The real number is certainly bigger. In any case, the government's "emergency employment programs" provide a total of only 357 job openings for all those thrown out of work.

In protest, farm and mill workers marched around Bacolod City and the surrounding towns last May 1, gathering enthusiastic support from big crowds along the way. In April, tens of thousands gathered in Bacolod to take part in Good Friday rites that exposed the intolerable living and working conditions of the workers. These mass actions point to the militant mood sweeping the country's 39,000 sugar farms and 43 mills.

Meantime, Marcos has also antagonized the majority of sugar planters and millers whose interests have been jeopardized by his takeover of the sugar trade. Not a few of them privately urge a coup d'état to topple the fascist dictator even as they publicly press him to restore their privileges.

But while Marcos tries to dupe the sugar barons with concessions, he can find nothing at all to offer the masses of sugar workers. The army of displaced workers that he and his imperialist masters have created will, in time, help dig their graves.

Herdis Business Empire Shows How Marcos and Friends Are Growing Rich

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Before martial law, Herminio Disini was unknown except for the fact that he was married to a cousin of Imelda Marcos. Today, as a crony and dummy of the Marcoses and of key officials of the reactionary Armed Forces of the Philippines, he presides over one of the country's biggest manufacturing, marketing and financing empires.

The story of Disini, and of the Herdis Group of Companies which he heads, clearly illustrates the greed and corruption of the fascist dictator Marcos, his wife and their cohorts in the AFP and elsewhere.

It is the story of wholesale landgrabbing, of ruthless swallowing up of one company after another, of huge kickbacks, of unqualified financial and even military backing of the fascist martial law regime.

To be sure, Disini is not the only dummy of the Marcoses and the top AFP officials. There are several more like him, spread out in almost every big moneymaking venture in the country. But he does give an idea how the Marcoses and their friends are continually growing rich while the rest of the Filipino people struggle with poverty and hunger.

Just last month, a newspaper reported that the Herdis Group had acquired the branches in the Philippines of a giant American firm. US Industries, based in the New York City. These are USIPhil, Koppel, Inc., Equipment Credit Corporation, and USI Pacific Apparel Corporation. These transactions involved hundreds of millions of pesos.

The newspaper also reported that all indications pointed to Herdis' acquisition of the USI Asia Pacific, plus another firm, the General Bank and Trust Company (Genbank) which was to be renamed Allied Banking Corporation. (The Allied Banking Corporation was opened early this month. It has 24 branches throughout the country and is capitalized at ₱100 million.)

The acquisition by Marcos, the AFP officials and Herdis of the branches here of US Industries happened this way: Westinghouse, a giant US multinational, wanted to sell the Marcos regime a \$1 billion (almost ₱8 billion) nuclear power plant. The fascist dictator agreed, provided he got a big kickback.

Another condition was that he be allowed to take over the branches here of US Industries, in which Westinghouse Electric has considerable interests. Westinghouse agreed, and on Marcos' instructions, the Herdis Group of Companies proceeded to take over these firm

Before its recent acquisitions, Herdis already had 24 companies, among them Investment and Industries Corporation of the Philippines, Philippine Tobacco Filters Corporation, Herditex Mills, Technosphere Manufacturing and Recyclers, Inc., and Relcom Development Corporation. It also has controlling interests in the Fortune Tobacco Corporation.

The latest report is that Herdis is about to go into the mass media business, starting with a newspaper.

For its transactions, Herdis has had free access to government financing institutions. Just last year, it borrowed more than ₱1 billion from a consortium of banks in Europe, with the full guarantee of the Marcos regime.

Among Herdis' business associates today are American, Japanese and European monopoly capitalists and big compradors.

Two Landgrabbing Herdis Firms Arouse Ire of Northern Luzon Masses

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Cellophil Resources Corporation and Cellulose Processing Corporation are just two of the numerous firms in the clutches of the Herdis Group of Companies owned by Marcos and his wife, their puppets who lead the reactionary Armed Forces of the Philippines, and their dummy Herminio Disini

The two corporations are not too big when compared to other ventures that the Herdis Group even now is planning. But they give an idea of the grasping nature and the unscrupulous and oppressive methods for which Marcos and his friends are notorious

The story of these corporations also shows how the masses of the country suffer whenever Marcos decides, as he often doesn't to be generous to himself and to his friends.

For a start, the fascist dictator granted these paper and pulp firms a logging concession of 200,000 hectares spanning five Northern Luzon provinces—Abra, Bontoc, Kalinga-Apayao, Ilocos Norte and Ilocos Sur.

From the forest in these provinces, the Herdis Group intends to produce paper, cardboard, boxes, plastic bags and other wood products. Four big Japanese corporations are heavy investors in the venture and so are several big European capitalists.

The Japanese firms are Mitsubishi Rayon, Ltd., Marubeni Corporation, Dainippon and Daicel Co., Ltd.

The forest concession covers most of Abra's 27 municipalities—the upland towns of Luba, Tubo, Bolinoy, Manabo, Sallabadan, Bucloo, Baguio-man, Bangilo, Maliboong, Mataragan, Licuan, Baay, Lacub and Tinog, and the lowland towns of Lagangilang, Dolores, San Juan, Danglas, Lagayan, Langidan and La Paz.

Marcos and the other owners of the Herdis Group initially decided on barrio Mudiit in Dolores as the site of the two corporations' offices and main processing plant. This was later changed to barrio Gaddani, Tayum, with Mudiit as site of the nursery and mechanic shop.

It did not matter to Marcos that the concession consists of the hunting and fishing grounds of the Tinggians, the national minority tribe of Abra, and farmlands of Ilocano poor and middle peasants. It did not matter either that the forests would be ravaged, causing erosion, landslides, and floods and drought, and that the rivers would be polluted all the way to the provinces in the lowlands.

As for the lands in Mudiit and Gaddani, the Herdis Group proceeded to grab the people's lands with the use of the regime's now-familiar dual tactics.

Through Carmelo Z. Barbero, the notorious Abra warlord whom Marcos later made his defense undersecretary for civilian affairs, they deceived some of the people into selling their small tracts of land at the measly sum of ₱1.30 per square meter by promising them jobs in the two corporations.

For the many who resisted, Barbero talked tough. Accompanied by men of the Presidential Guard Battalion, he told the small landowners flatly that Marcos had instructions to get their lands—by force, if necessary.

According to *Dangadang* (Armed Struggle), revolutionary newspaper in Northwestern Luzon (Ilocos-Montañosa-Pangasinan), many resisted the regime's cajolery and threats. They told Barbero that the price offered by him—₱1 per square meter—was “just the equivalent of two eggs, at current prices.”

This was in late 1975 and early 1976. Today the resistance is still spreading, according to another militant publication, *Intercom*.

In a report from Abra in its May 5 issue, *Intercom* reported that for those who steadfastly refused to sell to Cellophil, “the company fenced off company land, thereby denying ‘uncooperative farmers’ access to their parcels.”

Intercom added: “An estimated 60 hectares bought were immediately bulldozed and levelled for the construction of the main office and factory. Mountains of earth were piled on unsold parcels, cutting off water supply and killing all the crops. Company guards also brought added pressure ... on the farmers (to sell their lands) by burning crops in unsold lands.

“Foresters and helicopters, charged with keeping the concession off limits to grazing animals and natives gathering firewood, patrol the area.”

If Disini and his master Marcos think they are cowing the people into submission, they are mistaken.

Intercom said militant opposition is gaining ground. In Bolinay, for instance, the people have refused entry to

Cellophil personnel. In Malibcong, the sangguniang bayan spearheaded a boycott of a “seminar” scheduled by Cellophil at Camp Bulac. And in Tubo, the masses dispatched to Marcos a strongly worded resolution opposing Cellophil and vowing “never to accept any condition offered.”

At the same time, the newspaper said, practically all the municipalities involved have sent resolutions to Marcos, through the Abra Cultural Minorities Association, demanding that the whole province be declared ancestral lands.

“At present,” Intercom said, “there are indications that the opposition may progress beyond just resolutions. Cellophil has lit the fuse of a powder keg; only time will tell when it will blow up in the faces of Herdis investors, their foreign cronies and backers in high places.”

The recent departure of American servicemen facing criminal and civil suits in Philippine courts prove once again the puppetry of the Marcos fascist regime to US imperialism.

These also confirm that the supposedly nationalistic utterings of the fascist chieftain Marcos regarding the US military bases here are just so much air.

In most cases, US military authorities ignored the Philippine courts by issuing “duty certificates” to their offending men and then reassigning them outside the Philippines.

In at least one case, collusion on the part of the Marcos regime was clear in that it did not even bother to take the necessary steps to acquire jurisdiction over an accused American military officer.

Among the accused Americans who were allowed to leave the Philippines recently are:

1. Lt. Col. Robert Moore, chief of the Guam-Philippines Regional Exchange, who left June 21. Along with three others, Moore is accused in a criminal complaint for libel and one of 10 respondents in a ₱2.6-million damage suit pending before the Angeles City court of first instance. A spokesman of Clark Air Force Base said Moore was allowed to leave because the Marcos government failed to seek “consultations” with the US government as provided for in the US-RP Military Bases Agreement.

2. Col. Boyd Hensely, CAFB commander, who is reported to have left either late June or early this month. Hensely was respondent in a charge filed by Paz Evarlo of Balibago, Angeles, whose house was unlawfully searched by US soldiers on July 22 last year. The search and seizure order was signed by Hensely.

3. Commander Ronald A. Verplaetse, exchange officer of the Subic Bay Naval Base, who left for the United States June 29. Verplaetse was facing a ₱1-million damage suit and a criminal charge for unjust vexation in connection with the indecent search conducted on 25 Filipino salesgirls in March last year.

4. Sgt. Mark A. Guest, member of CAFB’s Office of Special Investigation, who left last April. He was accused in a criminal complaint filed by Teresita Cayabyab, a sales clerk at the Thailand-Philippines Regional Exchange at Clark.

One other case that has attracted wide attention is that of Sgt. Joseph I. Gaines, CAFB security guard, who commanded his trained police dog to assault Fernando Nuguid, of Magalang, Pampanga, while he was gathering scrap metal at the base garbage dump last May 16.

Nuguid has testified before the Angeles City fiscal’s office that he already had his hands up when challenged by Gaines, but the sergeant commanded his dog to bite him in the genitals. Also on Gaine’s command, the dog bit Nuguid three more times in both legs even as he was being led away.

Clark Field authorities have since sought to evade Gaines’ trial by Philippine courts by simply certifying that he was performing an official duty at the time of the incident.

They have also disallowed Gaines from attending the preliminary investigation of the case supposedly because the US government still has to define its position.

In all these cases, the Filipino complainants and even the fiscals and judges denounced the flaunting of Philippine laws by the US military authorities.

Marcos is playing deaf. He is more interested in military assistance from his US imperialist masters to prop up his fascist regime than in fighting for Philippine sovereignty and independence.

Militant Student Protest Movement Forces Marcos to Take a Step Backward

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Student masses in Metro Manila scored a victory in their struggle against the reactionary Marcos government with the recent suspension of all applications by private school owners to increase tuition fees this semester. By the end of July, almost 200,000 students in 13 universities and colleges had walked out of their classes in a massive boycott movement that won the support of parents and teachers.

The students' militancy and unity, and the broad support they received from the people, proved to the martial law regime that the masses are determined to resist oppression and to fight for their rights.

Effective organizing methods mobilized students at the University of the Philippines, University of the East, University of Santo Tomas, Philippine College of Commerce, Adamson University, Trinity College, Araneta University Foundation, Feati University, Philippine College of Criminology, Lyceum of the Philippines, Arellano University, Philippine Women's University and Manuel L. Quezon University.

At the University of Santo Tomas, 30,000 students boycotted their classes in the last week of July, and some 20,000 joined a march that went from building to building around the campus.

At the University of the East, reactionary school authorities and military intelligence agents were caught by surprise each time the students walked out of their classes, thousands at a time. Plans for every mass action were carried out by student committees.

At the Feati University, at the end of July, marches and a total boycott of classes mobilized 45,000 students. A big rally was held July 29, at which the issues were explained and the students repeated their demands for a rollback in tuition fees and for better school facilities.

Faculty members at this university expressed their support for the boycotting students in an open letter that said:

We, the faculty members of Feati University, join you in the struggle for the rollback of tuition fees and for the implementation of basic changes or improvements in the university.

We believe that the 15 percent increase in tuition fees is unjustified and too heavy a load for Feati students. It is unjustified because no improvements in essential facilities such as library, laboratory equipment, comfort rooms, classrooms, chairs, electric fans, canteen, etc., are being initiated. There is therefore no reason for the 15 percent increase precisely because there are no added operating or maintenance expenditures. (Incidentally, there is no increase in the salaries of instructors, contrary to rumors being circulated by the administration.) Obviously, the 15 percent increase in tuition fees merely enlarges the amount of net income and profits of our beloved university.

Moreover, the tuition fee increase is unjustified because of the higher cost of living now prevailing throughout the country.

The alarming number of Feati University dropouts attests to this fact. And we, your instructors, would hate to see another number added to the high percentage of students who stopped studying for reasons of poverty.

Uniting under the banner of the Alyansa Laban sa Pagtaas ng Tuition Fee, the students raised the following common demands: Roll back tuition fees! Restore our student councils, organizations and newspapers which assure our voice in the making of decisions in the university! Stop the harassment, arbitrary arrest and expulsion of our student leaders! Resist the increasing military intervention in campus affairs!

In the face of their unity and determination, Marcos suspended the increase of tuition fees until after the Department of Education and Culture has gone through the motions of investigating how private schools are using the additional profits they get from higher fees.

The dictator was hoping to slow down the momentum of the student protest movement by putting up bureaucratic obstacles in its path. At the same time, he continued to ignore the demands to restore student councils, organizations and newspapers, and to stop the militarization of the campuses.

On the contrary, colleges and universities today are packed with informers posing as students, teachers and

employees. Student leaders are accused of subversion, detained, suspended, expelled, threatened and harassed. One telephone call from the school administration brings the Metrocom running.

But increased repression only brings about increased resistance. Through persistent and painstaking political work among the masses of students, teachers, parents, university workers and others, the student movement will continually strengthen itself and win new victories in the months to come.

'Kulay Lahi' in Metro Manila Seeks to Conceal People's Miseries

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Once more the US-Marcos dictatorship is concocting a new beauty trick for Metro Manila through the Kulay Lahi.

Kulay Lahi is an outdoor art project. It appropriates huge blank walls which are highly visible from busy streets and intersections of the city and transforms them into giant canvasses for the works of a few painters.

Subjects and styles, which can be as numerous as the number of "modern" Filipino artists selected to participate in the project, range from a cubist rendition of slit-eyed fishermen, through a pop art city street scene accented by comic-strip characters, to a jigsaw color abstraction of the "Green Revolution."

On the surface, this outdoor art project seems to derive inspiration from mural art which has become a landmark in several communities abroad, most notably in the black ghettos of Chicago. The source of this art, as exemplified by those powerful works in the Chicago slums, is the abounding energy and decisive will of an oppressed people to fight back.

No such compelling energy and will propel the artists on the payroll of Kulay Lahi.

Their works, which are familiar stuff in hotel galleries, museums and rich men's mansions, are stretched hundreds of times from the narrow but expensive confines of a picture frame to cover the cracks and grime of the dictatorship.

The impending riot of colors, styles and contents engineered by Kulay Lahi has nothing to do with the earth-bound realities faced by the masses of the people in Metro Manila and everywhere else in the country under the rule of the dictatorship.

Like its cultural predecessors, such as Bagong Anyo, Kasaysayan ng Lahi, Miss Universe Contest, Ugnayan and other scandals, Kulay Lahi is not meant to speak for the people's interests. In truth, Kulay Lahi is just a less brazen method of whitewashing walls, giving its selected painters right of space for their trade while denying the same right to the artists of the people whose creativity is nurtured by the conditions, problems, struggles and aspirations of the people rather than the tastes and checkbooks of the ruling class.

Denied this right, the people's artists continue to wage struggle to liberate spaces for the people's images and words of discontent and united action against the dictatorship. However quickly they may be scraped off by fascist agents, anti-dictatorship posters and slogans—and in high time, the defiant and powerful mural art of the people—can stir hundreds of thousands of the masses because they crystallize their own struggle for liberation and democracy.

Kulay Lahi may brush on the thickest of paints, but the images and words of mass struggles will certainly prevail.

In his August 23 speech before an international lawyers' conference, financed by the CIA and by himself, the fascist Marcos declared that the Philippines was "moving irretrievably towards normalcy" and announced four measures that were supposed to be in this direction.

These measures are: (1) the holding of local elections not later than next year and the suspension of the effects of martial law during the election period; (2) the lifting of the ban on international travel by Filipinos with no valid reason for leaving the country; (3) the lifting of curfew, from 1:00 am to 4:00 am in Manila and from midnight or earlier to 4:00 am in the provinces; and (4) a decree offering amnesty to those who may have violated the Antisubversion Law and those who have committed crimes against public order under the Revised Penal Code.

Undoubtedly, all these measures are mere embellishments on the continuance of the fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique. These are calculated to entrench further a tyrannical regime that has from the outset usurped its authority.

1. Regarding the holding of local elections, we cannot but expect another farce in the style of the four pseudo referendum held from 1973 to 1976 under the terms of the fascist martial rule. A single party, the Marcos party, will certainly dominate the elections and monopolize the result in the same manner that the pseudo referendums were rigged.

The main point is to expose the forthcoming local elections as a farce and use it as an occasion to condemn the fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique among the masses and take advantage of splits among the reactionaries and even among some Marcos henchmen.

2. Regarding the lifting of the ban on international travel, we can only see it as a pretext to raise the travel tax on the tens of thousands of Filipino workers and professionals going in and out of the country every year in connection with overseas employment.

3. Regarding the lifting of curfew, we notice immediately that the fascist dictatorship and its military officials have not at all lifted curfew over wide areas in the country. Moreover, curfew can be imposed on any part of the country at anytime by local military officials of the enemy.

4. Regarding the decree offering amnesty, we see through it as no different from all previous amnesty decrees which seek to humiliate people by extorting admissions of guilt and oaths of allegiance to the tyrannical regime and its constitution. This decree seeks to split the ranks of revolutionaries by offering amnesty to "followers" while excluding its "leaders."

US imperialism wants to ride high with its trumpeting on "human rights" in its contention with the other superpower. This catchphrase, with its exclusivistic attention to personal rights, glosses over the oppression and exploitation of the people by US imperialism and the local reactionary classes.

It has not been too difficult for Marcos to get into the act with Carter in paying lip service to "human rights." A CIA-subsidized organization like the World Peace Through Law Conference harps on the "international protection of human rights" but lionizes the Marcos fascist dictatorship and regales the fascist dictator with a "nation-builder" award.

The line of "moving irretrievably towards normalcy" is a sinister line agreed on by the Marcos fascist gang and its foreign master, US imperialism. US imperialism is willing to retain the Marcos fascist gang in power for so long as it can entrench and widen the gains made by US monopoly capital in the Philippines under fascist martial rule.

As US imperialism and the Marcos fascist gang can only make pretenses regarding the fundamental questions of national independence and democracy, the revolutionary movement is steadily forging ahead and the broad masses of the people are placing their hopes on the growth of the armed revolution.

Military operatives of the Marcos fascist regime recently tortured a number of political prisoners, murdered them in cold blood and then announced that they were killed in an “encounter” between the PC and the New People’s Army in Quezon province.

In fact, the victims were arrested in Manila, Makati and other areas of Metro Manila in the last week of July. The encounter fabricated by the fascist military was supposed to have taken place on August 14, in barrio Cagsiay I, Mauban, Quezon.

Reports reaching *Ang Bayan* said the regime’s military operatives arrested 12 young men and women in Metro Manila during the last few days of July. Of the 12, the fascist military itself has confirmed the death of seven. The five others are still unaccounted for.

The latest barbarity of the Marcos regime gives undeniable proof that it has launched a massacre policy in a desperate effort to stem the tide of the revolutionary movement. It also belies the regime’s hypocritical claims to respect for human rights.

The 12 victims are identified in the reports as Reynaldo Cruz, Modesto Sison, Gerardo Faustino, Eduardo Diones, Virgilio Silva, Salvador Panganiban, Jessica Sales, Cristina Catalla, Ordiana Villabor, Rizalina Ilagan, Ramon Jasul and Erwin de la Torre.

Ascertained dead are Cruz, Sison, Faustino, Diones, Silva and Panganiban. The seventh victim in the Mauban massacre could not be identified immediately.

Still unknown is the fate of Sales, Catalla, Villabor, Ilagan, Jasul and de la Torre. Relatives and friends have not been able to find them at any of the regime’s various military detention centers.

The cold-blooded murder of the seven political prisoners first came to light last August 17 when *Bulletin Today* carried a news item entitled, “Troops kill 7 NPAs in Quezon.” The report quoted the PC as saying the seven were slain in a “dawn encounter” in the Mauban barrio three days before, on August 14.

Bulletin Today carried partial identifications for some of the dead, gave aliases for some of them, and said two were “unidentified.” It has since been ascertained that the four political prisoners for whom the fascist military had distorted or invented identification were Cruz, Sison, Faustino and Diones.

The bodies of two others—Silva and Panganiban—were later found by a roadside in Tagaytay City. They died of numerous injuries, as certified by a PC medical officer named Diola. They presumably are the “unidentified” ones in the Quezon “encounter.”

At the time of his arrest, Silva was employed at the Engineering Department of City Hall in Quezon City. He could not have been part of an NPA team “clashing” with the fascist military in far-off Mauban, Quezon.

The reports confirmed that the victims were rounded up with the help of a military agent named Danny Hermandos, who had once posed as an activist. This agent even called up the parents of Panganiban to tell them that their son had been “kidnapped by the NPA.”

The *Bulletin Today* news item of August 17 unwittingly pinpointed the fascist military unit that participated in the torture and murder of the political prisoners.

It mentioned troops of Task Force Banahaw under Brig. Gen. Andres Ramos, the Quezon PC command under Lt. Col. Wilfredo Villanueva, and the special weapons and tactics team from the Second PC Zone headquarters in Camp Vicente Lim, Canlubang, Laguna.

A fabricated report on the “encounter” was sent to PC headquarters by Brig. Gen. Alfredo Montoya, zone command officer.

The viciousness with which Montoya’s men dealt with the political prisoners might be explained partly by the frustrated PC attempt to encircle an NPA armed propaganda unit in Tagkawayan, Quezon last July. Eleven of the enemy troops were killed.

But even before this, Montoya and his killers in the Second PC Zone had proved to be among the most rabid and bloodthirsty in carrying out the Marcos regime’s massacre policy.

They have adopted as their standard operation procedure (COP) the arrest, torture and massacre of political

activists, and the dissemination of false propaganda that these had been killed in “encounters” with the NPA.

Among the most notorious units under Montoya are the 323rd PC Co. under Capt. Rogelio Valentin, the 242nd PC Co. under Martin Reynon and later under Col. Evaristo Ranot, and the Second Military Intelligence Group (II MIG) under Col. Galido.

From December 11, 1973 to October 24, 1975 the Southern Tagalog Regional Party Committee recorded 14 mass murders by these units in Quezon province and Camarines Norte. Their usual execution sites are certain sitios and barrios of Tagkawayan, Guinayangan and Calauag, all in Quezon, and Labo in Camarines Norte.

Like Marcos’ imposition of martial law in 1972, the regime’s massacre policy is a sign not of strength but of weakness. It shows that the regime is getting more desperate as the revolutionary masses rise up throughout the land to smash Marcos and his mercenary troops.

"It's a lot of noise!" This is how the peasant masses describe the promise of land reform made by the fascist dictator Marcos at the beginning of his antidemocratic counterrevolution in 1972.

Five years of Marcos' bogus land reform has not only failed to improve the lot of poor and lower-middle peasants who comprise the vast majority of the country's peasantry. It has aggravated their plight.

There is no known case of a poor or lower-middle peasant acquiring land under the regime's "land reform" for the simple reason that he cannot afford the price dictated by Marcos and his fellow landlords.

In fact, the peasants who were deceived into accepting the scrap of paper that the fascist dictatorship calls a "land transfer certificate" (LTC) find themselves sinking ever deeper in debt, with no hope of eventually owning the land they are tilling.

A recent seminar of the University of the Philippines focused on a "land reform" barrio in Calumpit, Bulacan. Based on the data made available to the researchers, it would seem that production costs have risen by 30 percent, mainly because of the high cost of fertilizers, pesticides, irrigation services, taxes, etc. In contrast, the palay production increased by a mere 2.6 percent.

In the average farm in the barrio studied, an equivalent of 53 cavans was spent on production. Since the yield totaled only 64.71 cavans, the peasant was left with just a little over 11 cavans, or less than P600.

Clearly, with prices of all prime commodities skyrocketing, the peasant and his family could not live on that amount, much less meet amortization payments on the land.

Field reports by Party cadres show that actual production costs have risen many times more than 30 percent. On the other hand, palay production has been so unreliable and requires so much expense that many peasants are giving up the so-called "high yielding" varieties.

In Calumpit barrio, pesticides for which the peasants are required to pay prohibitive prices under the regime's "Masagana 99" program were found to be dangerous to the peasant's health and to the environment. The pesticide Folidol was banned in Japan years ago while another brand, Gustathion A, was never allowed for farming. Both brands have been killing off fish, frogs and snails that provide supplementary food for the peasants.

Confronted with this, the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) pointed to the Bureau of Plant Industry as the government agency responsible. On another occasion, the DAR had tried to shift the blame to the Bureau of Lands for the failure of "land reform".

Indeed, this bureaucratic trick of buck-passing has characterized the entire implementation of Marcos' bogus land reform.

The program has been such a dismal flop that even the fascist dictatorship has lessened the volume of its propaganda on what it had pointed to as its "cornerstone". Fascist propaganda now tends to evade or obscure the issue of land reform.

On the question of land ownership

What makes the Marcos "land reform" a sham from the beginning is the bourgeois reactionary idea that if the tenant masses in rice and corn lands want to own land they must buy it at the price dictated by their landlords. Presidential Decree No. 27 stresses the point that land sale contracts must be essentially a private transaction between the landlords and tenants and even discourages the Land Bank from acting as the financial intermediary.

At any rate, whether the land sale contract be directly between the landlord and the tenant, or the Land Bank first purchases the land and then resells it to the tenant, PD No. 27 dictates a mode of land valuation and a mode of payment that put the poor and lower-middle peasants in default of their obligations as "amortizing owners".

The value of the land is arrived at by getting the average gross crop out of three "normal" crop years and then multiplying it by two-and-a-half times. To jack up the value of his land, the landlord picks out the "best" crop years or arbitrarily insists on outrightly false high production figures.

In raising the figure for the average gross crop, the landlord is not really interested in selling his land. But it is useful for him for demanding a high fixed rent (25 percent of the average gross crop) in accordance with the "leasehold" system.

In proclaiming the whole country a “land reform” area, the Agrarian Reform Code of 1971 and then Presidential Decree No. 2 pushed many tenants to opt for the “leasehold” system on pain of losing their tenancy rights for failure to do so.

Even before PD No. 27, many landlords had already compelled their tenants to sign “leasehold” contracts wherein high averages of gross crops were invented for the purpose of raising the land rent. That is what Marcos calls “emancipation” of the tenants in his PD No. 2.

Tenants who make the mistake of entering into land sale contracts under PD No. 27 are required to make 15 yearly equal payments. These payments would cover not only the basic price of the land but also interest at the rate of six percent a year.

Tenants who have become “amortizing owners” are also required to pay the land tax, now rapidly rising as a result of World Bank dictation. When the Land Bank acts as the financial intermediary, the “amortizing owners” are also required to pay administrative costs, not to mention the overpricing of the land as arranged by the landlord and the Land Bank officials.

PD No. 27 also requires the “amortizing owners” to become members of the “samahang nayon” (village association). This association is supposed to be their guarantor. Again they are subject to heavy financial obligations in this Marcos-imposed association.

Under PD No. 27, the poor peasants and even all middle peasants who are tenants have absolutely no chance to be able to meet all the expenses required each year in connection with the land sale contract.

The poor and lower-middle peasants are pinned down by an accumulation of debts and always end the year in debt. They have to sell their labor power to supplement their income from their plots.

Certainly, they cannot gain anything from entering into any land sale contract. There is yet no known case of a poor or lowermiddle peasant daring to enter into any direct land sale contract with his landlord under PD No. 27.

It is only in an extremely small number of cases, where the Land Bank acts as the financial intermediary, that poor and lowermiddle peasants are trapped together with the rich peasants in land sale contracts under the terms of PD No. 27.

The records of the Land Bank show that the poor and lowermiddle peasants are always in default of their payments. Failure to pay means the piling up of interests upon interest.

Even without having to pay for obligations under PD No. 27, the peasant masses are already pinned down by the rising costs of production and subsistence and are liable to be pinned down harder by illness in the family, natural calamities and the unreliability of the so-called “high yielding” varieties of seed.

Marcos’ “land reform” does not only amount to zero but worsens the lot of the poor and lower-middle peasants. It is too much to say, like some officials of the US Agency for International Development (AID), that this bogus land reform is “not even one percent fulfilled”. It is also gratuitous to say that it is “moving slowly” as if there were still some hope in it.

What is land reform if it is not for the masses of poor and lower-middle peasants? They are the tillers who need to own their plots but cannot afford to buy them.

Data from the DAR covering the period 1972-1976 show up the big lie that Marcos has dished out to the peasant masses.

Under the pompous signboard of “Operation Land Transfer”, the DAR distributed 321,700 LTCs, covering 398,458 hectares, to 229,341 tenants out of an acknowledged number of more than one million tenants on rice and corn lands.

These LTCs are mere scraps of paper informing the tenants that they can buy land from their landlords in accordance with PD No. 27 by either entering into a direct land sale contract with their landlords or having the Land Bank act as the financial intermediary.

Also under the deceptive catchphrase of “Operation Land Transfer”, the DAR is supposed to organize barrio committees on land production (BCLPs) to determine land prices on the basis of production figures, in line with the formula set by PD No. 27. According to the DAR, only 9,698 BCLPs were organized from 1972-1976.

The cards are stacked against tenants in transactions within the BCLP, whose composition is dominated by landlords and bureaucrats. In most cases, the landlords use the BCLP to falsify production figures upwards not only to set a prohibitive price on the land but also to demand higher rent. In other cases, the landlords simply boycott the BCLP after one token meeting.

Of the 5,671 BCLPs which submitted land valuations, the DAR cared to respond to only 3,271 with a mark of approval. But valuation of the land mainly by landlords is one thing and the tenants' ability to pay for the land is another.

There are land sales through the Land Bank where the tenants belong to various peasant strata. The DAR claims that for the period 1972 to 1976 it effected land sale contracts involving 1,449 landlords; 30,109 tenants; 57,459 hectares; and a total land value of P403,159,322.54.

These figures actually include land sale negotiations and contracts made even before the fascist martial rule. Premartial law figures are included obviously to bloat the number of tenants and the hectareage and also to lessen the price per hectare involved in Land Bank-undertaken land sale contracts during the fascist regime.

The picture is ugly, notwithstanding the attempts to prettify it. It is no achievement to subject 30,109 tenants on only 57,459 hectares to an average price of P7,016 per hectare, excluding payments for interest, administrative costs and land tax.

The average farm size for the tenants is 1.87 hectares. Basic price is P13,120. By one reckoning, interest payments come up to P11,808, at the annual rate of six percent for 15 years. Thus, basic price plus interest charges add up to P24,928 for only 1.87 hectares.

Based on the government's figures, the average gross crop from this average lot is valued at P5,248. This is incredible. Actually the yield is only about P3,000. The overpricing through connivance between the landlords and the Land Bank officials is very obvious.

The average "amortizing owner" has to pay annually P1,661.81 for a period of 15 years for the basic land price and interest charges. In addition, it has to pay for administrative costs and land taxes which come to another large amount.

What about obligations to the "samahang nayon"? What about production expenses and living expenses, at a time when the crisis generated by US imperialism and the Marcos fascist regime is daily worsening? And what about such unexpected events as illness in the family or crop failure (ordinarily once every three years)?

In the period 1972-1976, the DAR issued a grand total of 983 "emancipation patents" to 576 tenants on 562 hectares. The recipients of these "patents" had started to pay the Land Bank for the land a long, long time before the fascist martial rule and even before the entire Marcos regime.

They are actually rich peasants or even up-and-coming small landlords or peasants and nonpeasants who draw income not only from the purchased land but also from other sources. They are the small number of people who could pay their way through previous land sale contracts arranged by the Land Bank.

The basic orientation on PD No. 27 is to keep the tenants at the mercy of the landlord class. In the main, the mode of valuation dictated by this decree has been used by the landlord class to impose higher land rent and intensify feudal and semifeudal exploitation.

Though greatly increased, the financial resources of the Land Bank are geared to supporting the more profitable agricultural and nonagricultural ventures of the comprador big bourgeoisie and the landlord class. Land-grabbing by the big bourgeoisie (including foreign firms), big landlords and big bureaucrats and the establishment of "corporate farms" are rampant. The "land reform" propaganda of the Marcos fascist regime has always tried to obscure these acts.

An increasing number of peasants and even poor settlers and national minorities are being displaced or dispossessed either under the Marcos program of encouraging modern plantations for export crops or under General Order No. 47 which pushes the big foreign and domestic corporations to engage in modern rice and corn production and organize "compact farms".

Moreover, military campaigns and infrastructure projects displace and dispossess so many peasants, including poor settlers and national minorities.

The Marcos fascist regime is antagonistic to the peasant masses who engage in self-organization and who demand merely the reduction of land rent and the elimination of usury.

In most areas of the country, the old feudal sharecropping arrangements are still in operation, despite the redundant proclamation in the Code of Agrarian Reform of 1971 and PD No. 2 that these be abandoned in favor of the "leasehold" system throughout the country.

Under the "leasehold" system, the tenants now called "leaseholders" are obliged to pay an exorbitant fixed land rent to the landlord.

The “leaseholders” shoulder all production expenses. They are obliged to pay the fixed rent whatever is the outcome of the crop. Oftentimes, this system of land rent is even worse than the traditional sharecropping arrangement where the landlord shares in production expenses and gets his crop share from actual production.

“Samahang nayon”, “Masagana 99” and other projects

“Samahang nayon”, “Masagana 99” and other projects are integral parts of the entire deception program of the fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique on the land question.

Tenants who wish to become “amortizing owners” under the terms of PD No. 27 or those, including non-tenants, who wish to get loans under the “Masagana 99” program are obliged to join the “samahang nayon”.

Right from the start, the “samahang nayon” was projected as a precooperative association leading to a fulfilled cooperative and was pointed to as a guarantor for land sale contracts between landlords and tenants.

“Samahang nayon” has actually been an anticooperative association. It has been used as a pretext for the dissolution of privately initiated cooperatives and the repression of legitimate peasant associations.

It could not even pretend to take care of the marketing problems of the peasant masses. The National Grains Authority always sets the prices of grain at a level far below the price spiral of nonagricultural commodities needed by the peasants.

It is largely in connection with “Masagana 99” that peasants of all strata and nonpeasants, including landlords, have had to join the “samahang nayon”. Hundreds of thousands became members in a few tens of thousands of “samahang nayon” in 1973 to 1974 so as to acquire seeds, fertilizers and pesticides under the “Masagana 99” program.

The superfluity of “samahang nayon” as a possible “credit cooperative” became obvious when the rural banks turned them into mere guarantors for loans taken by people of all sorts.

At the peak of “Masagana 99” lending, the “samahang nayon” was a mix-up of landlords, rich peasants, middle peasants, poor peasants and even “ghost peasants” invented by the bureaucrats to be able to pocket funds for themselves.

“Samahang nayon” started to collapse, especially in 1975, when fertilizers and pesticides became available outside of the “Masagana 99” program and when “Masagana 99” borrowers refused to pay their debts and resented having to pay for all sorts of obligations in the “samahang nayon”.

“Samahang nayon” has always been regarded by the peasants as nothing more than a fund-collecting agency for the Department of Local Governments and Community Development. There is no benefit in return for the funds collected. The funds simply go up the bureaucratic ladder for misappropriation.

The peasant masses are resentful that for nothing in return, they have to pay to the “samahang nayon” entrance and annual membership dues, five percent of every loan that they get from government lending institutions for a so-called barrio “savings” fund, one cavan per hectare for a so-called barrio “guarantee” fund, fines for nonattendance or tardiness in meetings and so many others that may be arbitrarily decided by running dogs of the fascist regime.

The tenant masses are aware that should any of them commit the mistake of entering into any land sale contract under PD No. 27 or through the Land Bank and they are in default of payments, it is the “samahang nayon” that takes over the land and further imposes financial obligations on them.

“Masagana 99” is camouflaged usury. It is far worse even than the usury undertaken by private moneylenders. The peasant masses would not have gotten into it, were it not for the exclusive channeling of agricultural chemicals into this program.

The acknowledged interest rate on “Masagana 99” loans is 12 percent. But agricultural chemicals and seeds distributed to borrowers by the rural banks are greatly overpriced and are usually in excess and unsuitable to their lands.

Fertilizer is not only overpriced. In many cases it is substandard. “Bad order” or spoiled fertilizer is mixed with new stocks and sold to the peasants. At this writing, spoiled fertilizer is flooding Nueva Ecija and is certain to cut down rice production in that province.

Moreover, the borrowers are obliged to form or join the “samahang nayon”. As already pointed out, obligations under the “samahang nayon” come to a huge amount.

To be in good standing with the “barangay” or simply its captain who must endorse the loan application, a borrower also has to contribute to the “barangay fund” and pay some other fees concocted by the “barangay”.

There are also the work hours lost and the food and travel expenses in going to town repeatedly to follow up the loan application. And of course, there is the allotment for bribing the farm technicians who process the loans.

The peasants are also subjected to outright swindling, as in one recent case in Mindoro Oriental where they were victimized by a syndicate of rural bank officials and government farm technicians. The syndicate made off with at least P200,000.

The peasants were made to appear to have borrowed P4,500 to P5,000 each, but were given only P200 to P500.

The obligations are so heavy that at least 70 percent of "Masagana 99" borrowers have not been able to pay their loans. These are mostly poor and lower-middle peasants.

In the Calumpit barrio cited earlier in this article, the "samahang nayon's" membership of 143 decreased to only 57. Uncollected "Masagana 99" loans totaled P130,000. The record of "samahang nayon" and "Masagana 99" was even worse in the neighboring villages in eastern Bulacan.

Only the rich peasants and landlords seem to be able to pay up. But many even among them refuse to pay. Like the poor and middle peasants, they say that for one to pay would be to make a fool of oneself.

The poor and lower-middle peasants are refusing to pay any part of their "Masagana 99" loans, especially in areas where the New People's Army and the peasant associations are campaigning for nonpayment. Token payments are made only to get new loans. In refusing to pay unjust debts which were forced on them in the first place, they are also denying revenue to the reactionary government. "Anyway, that money will be used against us," the peasants say.

The Marcos fascist regime has failed to make the peasant masses pay up even as it has repeatedly threatened them with mass arrest and imprisonment. They know that there are not enough jails to keep them and not enough funds to feed them should they be taken away from their farms. Besides, indebtedness is no legal ground for imprisonment.

"If they jail all of us peasants," the barrio people also say, "who will grow palay for the rest of the country? Surely not Marcos or the rich people with him." And the women add: "If they imprison our men, we and our children will insist upon being jailed with them."

The loans made available for rice and corn production under "Masagana 99" are small compared to loans for such export crops as sugar, coconut and bananas. In the case of export crops, the big bourgeoisie (including foreign firms) and the landlord class monopolize the loans.

Though a great number of peasants of various strata were able to get small loans under "Masagana 99", the lion's share of the loans went to the landlord class and farming corporations.

"Masagana 99" has been supported mainly by the AID-instituted Agricultural Loan Guarantee Fund in line with the US imperialist policy of promoting the "green revolution", selling agricultural chemicals and equipment from US firms and, of course, fake land reform like that of the fascist dictatorship.

On his own, the fascist dictator Marcos devised "Masagana 99" so that his Planters Products, a corporation acting as agent of its US principals, could make a killing. This corporation has monopolized the market for agricultural chemicals and jacked up the prices of these chemicals through "Masagana 99".

Upon their inability to fulfill their financial obligations under "Masagana 99" and the "samahang nayon", the poor and lowermiddle peasants cannot enter into any land sale contract directly with their landlords or through the Land Bank.

The Marcos fascist regime keeps on getting huge foreign loans for infrastructure projects among other purposes. Roads and bridges and irrigation facilities are pointed to as a support to agricultural production and the peasant masses.

The fact is that it is the imperialist banks and contractors, the fascist dictator and his henchmen and the big bourgeoisie and landlord class that are benefited. They amass profits on the projects and engage in land speculation.

The people are made answerable for the huge foreign loans in so many ways. One way is taxation. The World Bank is pushing hard for increasing the tax burden. It is unthinkable how the general run of "amortizing owners" can assume responsibility for land taxes.

The peasant masses are already groaning under the weight of rising irrigation fees. Irrigation facilities have been turned by the Marcos fascist dictatorship into facilities for further blood-sucking on the peasant masses.

In areas irrigated by the Upper Pampanga River Development Project (Pantabangan dam), for instance, the peasant masses have to suffer rapidly increasing irrigation fees. In the first year of operation of this irrigation system in 1975, irrigation fees were raised by 700 percent.

Irrigation pumps bought through loans from the Development Bank of the Philippines are overpriced. Wherever these pumps are owned and controlled by private individuals or organizations controlled by landlords or rich peasants, they are used to squeeze the peasant masses dry.

At this time of unrelenting economic crisis, generated both by the world capitalist system and the fascist dictatorship, the peasant masses are suffering even more.

Taking advantage of the plight of the peasant masses, the Marcos fascist dictatorship has been trying to inveigle them into “compact farms” and “corporate farming” contracts with large foreign and domestic corporations.

Those inveigled to agree to these “compact farms” and corporate farms have had a very sad experience. They are displaced from the farm. Only some are employed and paid low wages. Most tenants are simply driven away and even owner-cultivators do not get their share as the capitalists manipulate the accounts.

“Palayang Bayan” and “Maisang Bayan”, which are rice and corn-planting projects of the fascist dictatorship on so-called public lands, have been used to drive away poor settlers and national minorities. These projects collapsed as soon as the people resisted by harvesting the crop for themselves. Rice and corn fields are the most difficult to guard after all.

Under the conditions and terms of the bogus land reform of the Marcos fascist dictatorship, the masses of poor and middle peasants can only suffer further oppression and exploitation if they do not take matters into their own hands on the line of the national democratic revolution set by a proletarian leadership.

The Party's current antifeudal policy

The Communist Party of the Philippines calls for agrarian revolution as the main content of the national democratic revolution. The ultimate goal of this revolution is the confiscation of land from the landlords and the free distribution of this to the landless tillers. On the basis of the growth of the revolutionary forces, the current policy being carried out is to reduce land rent, eliminate usury and increase production.

The Party's minimum program of land reform is being firmly carried out where the people's army is operating and the peasant masses are aroused, organized and mobilized. Usually, land rent and interest rates are cut down by 50 percent at the earliest possible time under the program. Exchange of labor, mutual aid and some cooperatives are promoted.

Farm workers who are but an extension of the poor and lower-middle peasantry are also aroused, organized and mobilized. Better wages for them are arranged through the peasant associations of which they are members. Where they have their trade unions, especially in haciendas, they demand better working and living conditions and struggle against landlord and capitalist exploitation.

More and more small and medium landlords are accepting that they cannot and should not resist the Party's minimum program of land reform, especially in the guerrilla zones. Those who follow the policies of the Party may be categorized as enlightened landlords. This is particularly true of small and medium landlords who have also become members of the national bourgeoisie or upper petty bourgeoisie, and on the basis of their class stand support the Party's anti-imperialist and antifascist line. In varying degrees, they recognize that they must make common cause with the peasant masses and the broad revolutionary movement against the US-Marcos dictatorship.

The landlords who oppose the policies of the Party, the people's army and the peasant movement and act to sabotage them or bring harm to the revolutionary forces are counterrevolutionary despots who are subject to punishment. Their running dogs are also liable to be punished if they do not change their ways.

In a certain sense, the peasant masses in demanding the reduction of land rent have an advantage over the urban workers in demanding higher wages. The former have immediate access to the crop while the latter do not have immediate access to the funds held by their employers in bank accounts.

As the peasant masses struggle against the bogus land reform of the fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique throughout the country, the Party, the people's army and the mass organizations and all the revolutionary forces can advance vigorously. The peasant movement is developing rapidly as the main force of the revolutionary movement.

As the fascist dictator Marcos showered praise on himself at the end of five years of martial law, the dictatorship's economic agencies were tying themselves into knots trying to present a bright picture of the Philippine economy.

But facts can be doctored only up to a certain point. What could not be concealed is the dismal performance of Marcos in his almost 12 years in Malacañang, and the fact that the country's economic problems have reached crisis proportions in the last five years.

After much tampering, the Central Bank recently released statistics that admitted the following:

1. Under martial rule, prices of all consumer commodities rose by 99 percent. The peso today can buy only half of the goods that could be bought for ₱1 in 1972.
2. Prices of food rose by 94.6 percent; clothing, 114.2; housing and repair, 99.5; fuel, light and water, 101.7; services, 97.9; and others, 123.1.
3. Prices of food doubled in the first six months alone of 1977.

In sharp contrast, wages have increased by only 25 percent and even less. In Greater Manila, the minimum wage was increased by only ₱2 in 1976, from ₱8 to ₱10 a day. Outside Greater Manila, the increase was a mere ₱1, from ₱8 to ₱9, or 12.5 percent.

Even this tiny sum is often not paid to the workers because the capitalists, in connivance with the regime's Department of Labor, refuse to comply with Marcos' decree. Moreover, Marcos' laws provide loopholes that enable them to cheat the workers on the basic wage and on allowances.

In fact, long before the minimum wage was increased to ₱8 in 1970 and ₱10 or less in 1976, these were already considerably eroded.

In releasing its latest statistics, the CB made computations on the basis of 1972 prices, in an unsuccessful attempt to hide the terrible state of the economy.

If the CB had continued to use 1965 prices as the basis for comparison as it used to, the resulting picture would have provided a more outrageous contrast to Marcos' claim of success for martial law.

Actually, from CB figures based on 1965 prices, it can be seen that:

1. Prices of consumer products rose by 239.4 percent since 1965, when US-Marcos rule began. What could be bought for ₱1 at the time Marcos took power must now be paid for with ₱3.39.
2. Prices rose even faster with the imposition of martial rule. During the last five years, the total increase was 99 percent in contrast to 73.4 percent from 1965 to 1972.
3. If computed from 1965, the rate of inflation comes to 33.2 percent as compared to "only" 20 percent if computed from 1972.

Of course, all these statistics merely present a "prettified" version of what the masses of the people have known for the last five years: that martial law means higher prices, shortages of commodities, fewer jobs, lower real wages—and repression.

They need no statistics from the CB to tell them, for instance, that whatever income they earn must be spent almost entirely on food. The laborer must work for almost an hour to be able to buy four small tomatoes. The Negrito spends several days gathering rattan and honey to exchange for a bottle of kerosene and some salt. After paying all his debts after the harvest, the average peasant is left with just one or two month's supply of rice for his family.

The figures on the unabated rise in the cost of living and the depressed wages are graphic enough. But they represent just the symptoms, not the disease itself. Like fever, they indicate the presence of an infection.

The infection, in the case of the Philippine economy, springs from semicolonial and semifeudal conditions that gave rise, in 1972, to the US-Marcos dictatorship. These conditions pervade all aspects of life and impose hardships on the broad masses of the people.

The workers are intensely exploited under martial law. They are also repressed. The brute force of the fascist

dictatorship is always poised to carry out the anti-strike ban and prevent them from demanding the minimum wage as well as related increases at wage levels higher than the minimum.

The repression of trade union rights is intended to press down wages and to maximize the superprofits drawn by US imperialism and the local reactionary classes.

The peasant masses are also undergoing intolerable suffering. They can hardly be assured of subsistence as land rent and expenses for agricultural production rise rapidly and employment in haciendas for export crops go down.

The bogus land reform of the Marcos fascist regime has only served to jack up the land rent demanded by the landlord class. "Masagana 99" has pushed the peasant masses into deeper indebtedness.

US imperialism is reaping superprofits by pushing the "high-yielding varieties" of seed grain which require heavy doses of fertilizer and pesticides, and irrigation. US-owned and controlled banks are making hay on loans for large irrigation projects.

The decline of extractive industries and agriculture production for export has resulted in the lay off of a great number of workers and the stagnation of the wages of those who remain on the job. This decline is the result of the crisis of the world capitalist system.

US imperialism and the Marcos puppet clique are jointly responsible for the inflation running rampant in the country today.

In the first place, under semicolonial and semifeudal conditions, the country is obliged to basically produce and export raw materials and import finished products from the United States and other capitalist countries co-sharing it as a territory for exploitation.

US imperialism has always pressed down the prices of raw materials exported by the Philippines and inflated the prices of finished products imported. Under conditions of the world capitalist crisis and the rule of a fascist puppet dictatorship in the Philippines, US imperialism has even more rapaciously exploited the Filipino people by further inflating the prices of commodities it supplies them.

Commodities imported from the United States and other capitalist countries range from consumer products (including food, household appliances and cars) to equipment and other materials for the uneconomic and unproductive projects of the Marcos fascist regime.

In comparing prices, various developing countries discovered that the commodities sold by US imperialism have always soared too high above those of commodities produced in developing countries, including oil.

At any rate, in the Philippines, the oil business is dominated by US imperialism notwithstanding the appearance on foreign trade accounts that oil comes from countries other than the United States. Oil and other commodities supplied by US imperialism are the strategic factors of imported inflation in the Philippines today.

Even when certain Philippine export commodities (like sugar in 1973) enjoy relatively good prices in the world capitalist market, the broad masses of the people must suffer higher prices as a result of a real or artificial shortage in the local market. The exploiting classes would rather sell these abroad for foreign exchange.

When export commodities cannot be disposed of in the world capitalist market, the fascist regime always adopts a policy of subsidizing the big bourgeoisie and the landlord class by raising domestic prices just the same. This is true not only in the case of sugar but in coffee, construction materials, etc. There is no end, too, to the private unproductive spending on luxury goods and services by the big comprador-landlords.

Because of the unequal exchange of values between the Philippines and the capitalist countries, especially the United States, the peso is under the constant pressure of depreciation in relation to the US dollar, the main currency in the world capitalist market.

In appearance at certain times, foreign loans tide the Philippines over trade deficits and restrain the drop in the value of the peso. But in fact, these always aggravate the balance of payments and undermine the value of the peso. The peso then suffers gradual and abrupt drops in value.

Under the direction of US imperialism, especially through the AID, the IMF, the World Bank, the ADB and the US-trained Filipino "technocrats," the Marcos regime has always gone into heavy deficit spending and has channeled financial resources into nonproductive and uneconomic projects.

These include massive infrastructure projects, military buildup, government purchases of office equipment and vehicles and sheer propaganda undertakings. As a result of these, a lot of money without corresponding increases in production circulate and thus become a big inflationary factor.

The graft-ridden inflationary projects of the Marcos fascist regime account for a large gross national product every year. Indeed, this is a silly measure of economic growth or basis for computing per capita income.

The tax burden has certainly increased rapidly. But tax collections fall far short of Marcos' profligate spending. As two-thirds of total taxes collected are in the form of sales and production taxes, these are passed on to the people in the form of higher prices of commodities.

To cover the wide gap between government revenues and expenditures, the Marcos clique has to resort to local and foreign borrowings.

Through the Central Bank, the reactionary government borrows from the local commercial banking system. The commercial banks in turn are allowed to re-lend to private businessmen the public debts in the form of bonds that they hold and thus expand the money in circulation by leaps and bounds.

By borrowing from the imperialist banks, especially under the sponsorship of the IMF and World Bank, the reactionary government is obliged to make heavy importations not only of certain equipment but also of consumer goods from the US and other capitalist countries. All these commodities are inflation-ridden.

Thus, inflation is imported faster than ever under the stimulation of foreign loans. Funds are spent as fast as they are borrowed. The loans being loaded onto the Philippines are the type that make the Marcos clique go begging for more loans at harder terms all the time.

The broad masses of the Filipino people, especially the toiling masses of workers and peasants, are subjected to unprecedented exploitation under the fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique.

But they are steadily rising up to defend themselves, overthrow the fascist dictatorship and make way for the eventual victory of the national democratic revolution that will usher in the new era of socialist revolution and construction.

July 15, 1981

In world history, there has been a fundamental progressive shift from the principle of autocracy in feudal times to the principle of republicanism in modern times. This is the result of the political defeat of the feudalists or their reduction to a subordinate position by the bourgeoisie. The absolute monarchy is finished, except as a ceremonial vestige of the past or as a camouflaged revival by the most reactionary section of the bourgeoisie.

In any definition of the modern republic, bourgeois-liberal or Marxist, there are certain essential elements such as that the people are sovereign and enjoy national independence; they are the source of political authority and officials are merely their representatives and servants; an elected representative assembly rather than a single individual makes the laws according to the sovereign will of the people; and this popular will is determined through suffrage and other democratic means.

Both the bourgeois-liberal and the Marxist agree that armed revolution is the sovereign right of the people and is justified and necessary in order to establish, defend or reestablish the modern republic against tyranny and its armed counterrevolution. The modern republic could not have arisen without the people fighting battles against monarchies and colonial tyrannies. The Marcos idea in his *Today's Revolution: Democracy* that the Philippine revolution of 1896 was Jacobin and therefore antiliberal because it was violent is complete nonsense. The Katipunan and its armed successors were like the Jacobins of the French revolution in taking the decisive step for an armed revolution against tyranny and for the liberal-democratic cause.

The bourgeois-liberal and the Marxist differ basically in class standpoint, in their order of appearance on the stage of world history and in their historic missions. But both affirm the democratic principle of people's sovereignty and the representative form of government. Both ideological and political trends are categorically and uncompromisingly against autocracy, of whatever label—"constitutional authoritarianism," "enlightened/benevolent despotism," etc.

The Philippine republic and pseudorepublics

In Philippine history, a Philippine republic has been proclaimed five times; namely, in 1897, 1899, 1943, 1946 and 1981. The first proclamation was done at Biak-na-Bato during the armed revolution against Spanish colonialism. The second was done in Malolos after the defeat of Spanish colonialism and on the eve of the revolutionary war against US imperialism. The third was done under the sponsorship of the Japanese fascists. The fourth was also done under the sponsorship of a foreign power, the US. And so, the proclamation of the so-called fourth republic is actually the fifth one.

In all instances, the proclamation makes an avowal of adherence to both the principles of national sovereignty and people's sovereignty. Because of the background of the Philippines as a colony or its current circumstance as a semicolony, anyone who makes a proclamation of the Philippine republic is obliged to assert the aforesaid principles. A genuine republic cannot be formed without the people being integrally sovereign and without them being free from colonial or imperialist domination. But it is one thing to make a proclamation and another thing to mean the existence of the republic.

There is no doubt that in the 1897 proclamation of the Philippine republic the revolutionary government was truly assertive of national independence in word and in deed. Notwithstanding the weaknesses of the Aguinaldo leadership, the proclamation summed up the national and democratic aspirations of the people who were up in arms against Spanish colonialism and were calling for separation. At its best moments, the revolutionary government tried to have as representative a form as was possible and sponsored the framing of a constitution along the lines of a bourgeois-democratic republic (this constitution though was almost a verbatim copy of the Cuban constitution of Jimaguayu). The capitulationist pact of Biak-na-Bato put an end to the republic.

The 1899 proclamation marked the inauguration of a Philippine republic that had a fuller and wider existence than the prior Biak-na-Bato republic of 1897. Many historians have accorded this republic proclaimed at Malolos the dignity of being the first Philippine republic. It can also be considered as the only genuine republic so far in Philippine history if the Biak-na-Bato republic is discounted as a mere prototype.

At the proclamation of the Philippine republic at Malolos, the revolutionary government had established a

nationwide system of political power, taking over control and administration from the Spanish colonialists, except in a few places. It succeeded in putting together a constituent assembly which framed a constitution once more along the lines of a bourgeois-democratic republic before the outbreak of the Filipino-American war. It was able to put up a formidable organized resistance against US aggression. But the military superiority of the US aggressors and the internal weaknesses of the Aguinaldo leadership, especially the capitulationism of the most reactionary sections of the bourgeoisie, led to the end of the republic and the onset of direct US colonial rule.

The 1943 proclamation marked the inauguration of what is sometimes called the second Philippine republic. This was in fact the first of the pseudorepublics or puppet republics in Philippine history. The Japanese fascist invaders pretended to grant independence to the Philippines and sponsored the proclamation. The “republic” proclaimed was patently puppet because Japan could not disguise its colonial and military presence and could entrust the sham only to a narrow clique of big comprador-landlord politicians in the face of widespread patriotic resistance and wartime difficulties. The pseudorepublic disintegrated upon the retreat of the Japanese occupation forces from Manila.

In 1946 the US granted nominal independence to the Philippines and sponsored the proclamation and establishment of the so-called third republic of the Philippines. Serious encumbrances and limitations were placed on Philippine sovereignty so that the country remained semicolonial. To secure this status for the country, the 1935 constitution was amended to accommodate the Parity Amendment and various unequal treaties were imposed. However, the full range of Philippine reactionary classes accepted the puppet republic, and popular resistance led by the Communist Party was suppressed. A Filipino government with three coequal and coordinate branches—executive, legislative and judicial—developed. The tokens of representative government and the formal processes of bourgeois democracy subservient to US imperialism operated.

Until 1972, the “third republic” or rather the second pseudorepublic seemed to create successfully the illusion of a representative form of government and a people enjoying basic democratic rights under a liberal-democratic but pro-imperialist constitution. The people were always limited to a range of choices determined by the ruling reactionary classes that controlled the government, the two major political parties, the mass media and so on. But sometimes and to some extent, the needs and demands of the people could be ventilated due to rivalries within the ruling system and the growth of democratic movements.

The Marcos coup and autocracy

Thanks to Mr. Marcos, the incumbent president nearly on his way out of office, the “third republic” was destroyed under the pretext of saving it. Marcos carried out a counterrevolutionary coup d’etat starting on September 21, 1972 on the flimsy grounds of some explosions of his own making and fabrications against the revolutionary movement. And he grabbed all the powers of government, suppressed all real and potential opposition, and foisted upon the people an undisguised autocracy as he declared martial law, chiefly against the Communist Party of the Philippines and the revolutionary movement.

In issuing Proclamation 1081, general orders and decrees to formalize his assumption of absolute powers and repression of the people, Marcos overstretched and abused the commander-in-chief or martial law provision (section 10, paragraph 2 of Article VII) of the 1935 constitution to the point of violating the most fundamental principle, that of a republican state, in the same constitution. He substituted the retrogressive and counterrevolutionary principle of autocracy for the principle of republicanism. He practically declared, “L’etat c’est moi” (I am the state).

All executive powers were arrogated by the single person of Mr. Marcos. All government officials in and out of the executive branch, including those elected and those with constitutionally guaranteed tenures, were required to file letters of resignation and could stay in office only at his pleasure. Congress, the elected representative assembly, was dissolved and all its powers taken over by a one-man legislature. Moreover, this autocratic legislator could legislate far beyond the powers of the legislature he had disbanded and even beyond the limits of the 1935 constitution.

The Supreme Court and all lower courts became captive entities and were castrated of authority with regard to cases pertaining to the powers and repressive issuances of the autocracy. They were obliged to obey the autocracy or else suffer such consequences as disbandment, reconstitution or further reduction of authority. At its first occasion to make a ruling on questions involving acts of the autocracy, the Supreme Court would admit that these were political and therefore nonjusticiable questions and that even as the Marcos constitution was not validly

ratified there could be no judicial obstacle to its enforcement.

Indeed, in the final analysis, the state as the coercive instrument of the ruling class has the courts and the legislature as components that are inferior to the army and police. The Marcos appointees and agents in the Supreme Court can be derided as cowards and ignoramuses who cannot recognize autocracy when they see one. But they can as well be thanked for unwittingly reminding the people that it is not litigation but revolution that can deal properly with a coup d'état and an autocracy. Lest too much writ is attributed to these robed placemen and acolytes of Marcos, the people should also remember that the Supreme Court had stupidly encouraged Marcos to violate the constitution when the same court opined previously in 1971 that Marcos could suspend the writ of habeas corpus any time on the basis of his mere say-so.

While padlocking and disbanding Congress which by the way had also its own prerogative to inquire into and decide on questions of national emergency and war under the 1935 constitution, Marcos directed the constitutional convention at gunpoint to put out a constitution favorable to the autocracy and the imperialist and antidemocratic interests behind it. Then contrary to his own claims of widespread disorder, requiring martial law, Marcos would also claim that his constitution of 1973 was freely ratified by "citizens' assemblies."

Marcos had two reasons for putting out his own constitution at the cost of self-contradiction. First, he wanted to assure the US imperialists that they could retain and enlarge their commanding interests and privileges in the country so long as they supported his autocratic interests. Second, Marcos himself was aware that the commander-in-chief provision of the 1935 constitution did not legally allow him to assume autocratic powers and so aside from carrying over into the "new constitution" the commander-in-chief provision, he introduced into its transitory provisions the provision, specifically section 3, paragraph 2, which explicitly allows his one-man legislation both retroactively and prospectively.

This provision outrightly blessing the unlimited legislative power of his autocracy once more completely negates and reduces to a mere embellishment the principle of republicanism which the Marcos constitution avows above all in its basic statement of principles. This contradiction in that constitution spells its hypocrisy. Another scandalous and shameless provision is that one in its bill of rights allowing arbitrary arrests and searches without any judicial warrant. This provision jibes with the entire phenomenon of despotism and fascism.

Further entrenchment of the Marcos autocracy

As the Marcos constitution provides, an interim national assembly was supposed to exist immediately upon ratification in 1973. But Marcos was never interested in convening this assembly because he was insecure about its composition which would include the vice-president, the members of Congress and the Constitutional Convention. The prospect of convening the assembly was merely a plan to induce the members of the constitutional convention to sign the draft constitution prepared by Malacañang. They never got their promised reward. Marcos never convened the assembly but instead in 1976 he introduced amendments to his constitution, among which involved the replacement of the interim national assembly by the so-called interim *batasang pambansa* to be formed completely on his own autocratic terms.

Still not satisfied with section 3, paragraph 2 of the transitory provisions, he also introduced in 1976 an amendment to the "new constitution" allowing him to make laws whenever he thinks that there is a "grave emergency or imminent danger thereof" and whenever he wishes to disregard the interim *batasang pambansa* or regular national assembly, whatever are the reasons. This is the infamous Amendment 6, which places his autocratic legislative power over and above the representative assembly without any time limit. It is clear that the interim *batasang pambansa* or the prospective regular national assembly is nothing but an embellishment on the autocracy. In journalistic terms, it is the rubberstamp of one-man rule.

It is appropriate at this point to stress that modern constitutionalism, whether bourgeois-liberal or socialist, condemns the principle of oneman legislation. To adopt this reactionary principle is to cast away all that has been learned from the historic struggles of the Filipino people for their sovereignty and freedom against foreign and local tyranny. As it was conscious of the evils of autocracy, that of the Spanish king or the colonial governor-general, the Malolos constitution (Article 4 of Title II) made an explicit injunction against entrusting legislative power to a single individual. This was part of clarifying the meaning of the republican state.

The Marcos autocracy is not merely a violation of the republican tradition of the US or the West but a vicious betrayal of a sacred legacy of the Philippine revolution which subsequent Philippine constitutions have not disregarded even if only as a glittering generality. Even among the fascist regimes, the Marcos regime is unique for

holding itself up as an undisguised autocracy for so long. Marcos would drag his feet towards holding sham elections and putting up a rubberstamp parliament. Such is a measure of his greed and contempt for the sovereign people.

The arrogations of Marcos in law are clear. So are their material manifestations and effects. These include the Marcos monopoly of the civil and military instruments of power, ownership and/or control of all major mass media, unrestricted accumulation of private wealth through political power, unceasing persecution and dispossession of his rivals within the ruling system and, worst of all, violation of the people's basic democratic rights and acts of terrorism such as massacres, arbitrary arrests and searches, mass evacuations, indefinite detention, torture, extortion and so on.

Because of the persistence of the autocracy and its abusive and terrorist acts, the so-called elections of the interim *batasang pambansa* in 1978, of the local officials in 1980 and of the president in 1981 cannot be considered as genuine steps towards a representative form of government. These are all rigged exercises and farces through and through. These are all travesties of democracy and its processes. These are as false as the so-called plebiscites and referenda from 1973 to 1981.

The electoral laws and the Commission on Elections are all stacked in favor of the fascist party, the *Kilusang Bagong Lipunan*, and against the legal opposition parties. The latter have been given only token and marginal concessions even while they are expected to help whitewash the continuing fascist dictatorship. Not only are the legal oppositionists deprived of facilities to express their views freely but their most effective candidates are banned and harassed. Worst of all, the figures for voter turnout and vote count are prefabricated.

The sham election of Marcos in 1981 is the most absurd. With the major legal opposition parties refusing to be made fools of anymore and deciding to boycott the election, Marcos was compelled to handpick his own opponent from the ranks of his subordinates. As in all previous voting exercises staged by the autocracy, the prefabricated results included an unbelievable voter turnout and number of votes for the autocrat, notwithstanding his notoriety and the evident success of the boycott movement.

The supposed repeal of Proclamation 1081 or lifting of martial law prior to the fake presidential elections is basically a farce. While their proclamation is formally repealed, all its important concrete contents and effects are actually perpetuated in the exceptions of repeal Proclamation 2045, in the Marcos constitution and in other laws. Without critical analysis and exposure, the fake repeal of Proclamation 1081 or lifting of martial law is even more dangerous than the fascist martial law without disguise.

The basic democratic rights, including free assembly, speech, press and so on, remain curtailed in so many ways. The autocratic provisions of the Marcos constitution remain undiminished. Arbitrary arrests and detentions without judicial warrant are still allowed by the same constitution. The suspension of the writ of habeas corpus continues against those apprehended on charges of subversion, rebellion and other political offenses. Military commissions are still in operation.

The Anti-Subversion Law continues as a catch-all, loot-all and repress-all weapon. Proofs for incrimination have been made easier and penalties have been made heavier for political offenses. All the repressive decrees have been perpetuated in the form of the National Security Code and the Public Safety Act. Military campaigns by the Armed Forces of the Philippines have been stepped up against the people and the revolutionary movement.

Just as Marcos had pressured the Supreme Court in 1971 to rule in favor of his power to suspend the writ of habeas corpus solely on the basis of his own claims in exchange for the lifting of his suspension order, he once more pressured the same court to rule in his favor on pending cases regarding the authority of the military to try civilians, in exchange for the fake lifting of martial law. The next time Marcos formally declares martial law, he will be free to put the military commissions on a rampage against civilians.

By the 1981 fake plebiscite, Marcos has also introduced an amendment into his constitution giving immunity to himself and his subordinates against the long-established principle of public accountability of government officials. He knows that his immunity is as good for him and his fascist ilk as they are in power. This is assurance for themselves that they can commit acts of fascist terror and plunder with impunity so long as they are in power.

Under a so-called process of normalization, Marcos pretends to make a few small or false concessions. But in fact he entrenches further the abnormality that is the fascist dictatorship and tries to whitewash its monstrous crimes. In law and in fact, he can backtrack anytime and erase in one fell swoop all the small and false concessions he has made.

Real character of the “fourth republic”

The real character of the Marcos proclamation of a “fourth republic” in conjunction with his inauguration as its first president is utterly clear. It is a piece of falsity misrepresenting a continuing autocracy, a fascist dictatorship as a republic. The ceremonial lip service made to national liberation is also nothing but a flimsy attempt to conceal the utter subservience of the autocracy to US imperialism.

As soon as the proclamation ceremonies were over, Marcos was shamelessly declaring allegiance and loyalty to the US and boasting of US support for his fascist regime. On his part, the US representative Vice President Bush made reassurances of US support. After all, the events that led to the proclamation of the “new republic” and inauguration of the first president had been arranged by Mrs. Marcos with Reagan aides last December.

The proclamation of the Marcos “new republic” is diametrically opposed in character to that of the Philippine republic either in 1897 or 1899. The first Philippine republic, including its prototype, was the fruit of the Philippine revolution against colonial domination and for national independence and democracy. But the “fourth republic” is the bitter fruit of a fascist puppet counterrevolution.

The proclamation of the “fourth republic” is actually the third of its kind, after such puppet republics as those sponsored by Japan in 1943 and by the US in 1946. It is also the second fascist republic after the pseudorepublic sponsored by the Japanese fascists in 1943. Moreover, it is the first “republic” of a homegrown autocracy and fascist clique. In this respect, it is definitely new.

The “fourth republic” stands for a Philippine government that is so far the most subservient to US interests and is run by the most brutal and most rapacious clique of big comprador-landlord bureaucrats headed by an autocrat. One important point that should not be missed about the proclamation of the “fourth republic” is that it is an open confession of Marcos that he destroyed rather than saved the “third republic.” In the latter puppet republic, there was yet no full-blown autocracy and fascism in complete control of the state and there was far more leeway for the people to express themselves legally.

The great Lenin teaches us in his study of state and revolution that we must not be confused by the political form that a reactionary government claims to have. The point is to examine the concrete historical conditions and make class analysis in order to determine the real character of that government. A fascist dictatorship like that of Marcos is a bourgeois autocracy and an open rule of terror in the service of imperialist, bureaucrat capitalist and feudal interests in a semifeudal and semicolonial setting.

On the basis of the going reality, it is idle to expect that Marcos will ever voluntarily give up his fascist dictatorship. This tyranny drives itself to persist and accumulate more power and loot not only for the self satisfaction of the tyrant but also out of fear of the people who are being abused and who are determined to settle accounts. The end of such tyranny is brought about by its own greed and by the rise of the revolutionary masses.

The despotism of Marcos will eventually prove to be its own undoing and be a blessing in disguise. The people are driven to fight for a new democratic republic. The revolutionary struggle of the broad antifascist united front of progressive and patriotic classes, organizations and personages is steadily developing and is bound to result someday in a democratic coalition government or a provisional revolutionary government. This government will pave the way for the proclamation of a new democratic republic.

By its constitution and practice, this new democratic republic will accomplish the struggle for national independence and democracy and raise it to a new and higher level of development under the leadership of the proletariat and on the foundation of the worker-peasant alliance embracing the overwhelming majority of the people. The republic will not only uphold the republican character of the state and make explicit safeguards against autocracy and the abuse of martial law but will also make sure that the workers, peasants, urban petty bourgeoisie and national bourgeoisie are properly and significantly represented in the government. The basic democratic rights of the people shall be amply protected and promoted.

President Marcos Should Drop Anti-China Cases

Circa November 1981

Communication sent to Atty. Juan T. David and proposed as a tack for handling the subversion cases being tried by the military commissions.

Since 1975, Sino-Philippine diplomatic and trade relations have developed fairly well. Mutual benefit has been gained in the course of friendly political, economic, cultural, scientific and technological cooperation. China is an expanding market for traditional Philippine exports like sugar, coconut oil, copper concentrates, wood and so on. China is at the same time a major source of crude oil and, in time of critical local shortage, even of rice.

China can provide equipment, spare parts and raw materials in exchange of the traditional exports. It is possible to arrive at friendly reasonable terms of exchange.

However, despite the established friendly relations between China and the Philippines and the bright prospect for further development of these relations, the Philippine government or specifically the Marcos regime continues to regard China as a hostile foreign power in a number of cases pending before some courts called military commissions.

We refer to the subversion cases against Luzvimindo David, et al. and Jose Ma. Sison, et al. pending before Military Commission Nos. 6 and 25, respectively as well as to the rebellion case otherwise known as the Karagatan-An-drea case before Special Military Commission No. 1-1.

The Charge Sheet in the rebellion case explicitly points to China as the supplier of military hardware to the accused.

In the two subversion cases, which involve Republic Act 1700 as amended by Presidential Decree 885, China is also attacked as the hostile foreign power which is supposed to be behind the accused and to whom the same accused would want to deliver the country or any part thereof.

All these cases may be called anti-China cases. These are not only inconsistent with the friendly relations between the Philippines and China but they also run counter to it. It is perplexing to many observers why these cases have been filed at all long after the establishment of diplomatic relations with China in June 1975.

The Philippines has every right to file charges against its citizens and even certain foreign entities within its territory. But it does not have the right to implicate an entire foreign country as a "hostile foreign power" without formally calling its attention.

The current assumption of the military prosecutors that China is a hostile power and the likely conviction of the accused as agents of China are damaging to what are in fact the friendly relations between the Philippines and China.

These cases are anachronistic and the consistent thing for President Marcos to do is to have them dropped.

President Marcos should also consider that the people accused in these cases have already suffered long years of imprisonment and have undergone various forms of torture. It is sheer cruelty for the government to continue keeping them in prison on charges that have been erroneously formulated by the military prosecutors. There have been so many instances of President Marcos ordering the dropping of cases because of erroneous formulation of charges and lack of evidence.

In view of the rapidly deteriorating economic conditions which he himself has acknowledged, Mr. Marcos should realize that the Philippines would stand to gain more by rectifying what has been a false accusation against China and further improving diplomatic and trade relations with that country.

Interview with Far Eastern Economic Review correspondent Sheilah Ocampo and published in the November 6, 1981

How do Sino-Philippine diplomatic relations affect the CPP? Do you think the CPP will align itself with current Sino-Philippine relations by making peace with President Ferdinand Marcos?

Sino-Philippine diplomatic relations are a matter distinct from party-to-party relations and even more so from the standpoint of revolutionary integrity and development of the CPP. I suppose that this party will always integrate the universal theory of Marxism-Leninism with the concrete conditions of the Philippines.

The question of the adverse or favorable effect of diplomatic relations on the CPP is secondary or even peripheral to the independent decisions and achievements of the CPP within the country. But I will venture to say that under certain conditions it is desirable to achieve some *modus vivendi* between the CPP and the Philippine Government—not necessarily the Marcos government—that will in a sense be parallel to Sino-Philippine diplomatic relations.

Making peace with Marcos or not depends on the resolution of questions internal to the Philippines. For instance, to what extent is the Marcos government willing to cooperate in promoting national independence and democracy? Will it allow the CPP and related organizations to exist and operate legally and so on? There are so many questions. But let me make it clear that I do not pretend to speak for the CPP. I am simply a political observer.

How do you size up the present leadership and strength of the CPP, the New People's Army (NPA) and other related organizations? Are you in touch with any of them?

I am under maximum security detention, so I am not in touch with the CPP or similar organizations. But I can to some extent gauge the leadership and strength of the CPP and the like on the basis of critical reading of news reports that I am allowed to read. I believe that the CPP leadership is competent and effective. It has excellently advanced the revolutionary movement from the level of accumulated experience and knowledge since 1977. The basic units and leading organs of the CPP, NPA and mass organizations are now in the overwhelming majority of the provinces of the country. The nationwide tactical offensives launched so far this year by the NPA are a clear measure of the rapid growth of the CPP and all related organizations. The subjective force of the revolution is excellent and the objective conditions are exceedingly favorable.

What are the chances of the CPP or a united front dislodging Marcos from power? What is the possible role of Aquino?

The CPP alone cannot dislodge Marcos from power now. But a united front for armed struggle can, within the near future, not exceeding a decade. For maximum effect, the united front can include the direct components and associates of the National Democratic Front, the Moro National Liberation Front [MNLF] and the conservative opposition and middle forces in general, with or without their own armed organizations. Even some pro-American groups with an honest liberal democratic orientation can join such a united front.

Aquino and the like have been talking about developing their muscle. I suppose that they can make themselves a major factor in the united front by taking a more nationalist stand and by doing three things: forming their own armed organizations among the people at the grassroots; coordinating with the CPP and the MNLF; and influencing some sections of the reactionary armed forces. In the present Philippine situation, a political leader cannot be of significance without armed support.

Do you think that the support from US President Ronald Reagan for Marcos guarantees his stay in power at least until 1984? How do you regard this support?

Assuming that Marcos does not change his line and politics and a broad front for armed struggle builds up against him, I estimate that he will most likely still be on his throne in 1984. But the throne will already be shaking a lot. Even Reagan will start to think of junking him in favor of another puppet. Reagan can always say that the Philippines and not a certain man called Marcos is the ally of the US.

Marcos has been the No. 1 Filipino agent of the US since 1966. Reagan's basic attitude towards him is no different to that of former US president Carter. There has been only a change of style. Reagan talks aloud about

giving political and military support to puppets, whereas Carter talked about human rights without really doing anything effective to cut down the fascist dictatorship.

There is no doubt about Reagan's open protestations of political and military support for Marcos. But objectively the US has adopted certain economic policies that put a tighter squeeze on the Philippines, regardless of the domestic political consequences to Marcos.

Right now elements of American big business who are close to Reagan are blaming Marcos for economic mismanagement, overregulation, overreaching and corruption, even as he has in the main followed US dictates. He can be cut down to size any time by some significant delay or reduction of loans. But, of course, Marcos will manage to borrow time by giving in to US economic pressures, unless there is a rapid growth of the armed opposition to make him a hot potato even to the US. No native puppet is indispensable to the US.

What do you think about Marcos' call for national unity and reconciliation? Is it also pitched to the CPP? In your opinion, will the CPP respond to it?

On the basis of past and current events, it can be easily said that that call is for capitulation to the Marcos monopoly of power in the Philippines. I suppose that Marcos has to prove otherwise. He should give ample proof in advance that he truly wants to promote national independence and democracy before any of the self-respecting opposition forces can believe the call.

Some persons tell me that the call is also meant for the CPP. But Marcos himself continues to declare publicly that the CPP is the No. 1 threat to his regime in the short run and in the long run. As a matter of fact, it appears that he intends to keep Reagan's support by harping on anti-communism. Under these conditions, I would presume that it is impossible or difficult for the CPP to respond in any positive way to the call.

To persuade the CPP to respond, Marcos has to do a few things, like asserting national sovereignty in the major aspects of Philippine society; amending the autocratic and anti-democratic provisions of the Constitution; repealing the fascist laws like the Anti-Subversion Law, National Security Code and Public Order Act; releasing all political prisoners by general amnesty; demilitarizing the so-called dissident areas; and so on.

The CPP is obviously aware of its importance as the linchpin of the nationwide armed opposition. Before agreeing to a dialogue with Marcos, the CPP should therefore seek guarantees not only against every military trap but also against any political trick meant only to sow confusion within the ranks of the CPP and the anti-fascist united front. Marcos should therefore adopt approaches acceptable not only to the CPP specifically, but also to all worthy opposition forces.

Have you been offered amnesty?

No. Even if I were offered amnesty, I would not accept it if it required the renunciation of my principles. Such an amnesty would be humiliating and unacceptable.

Of course, I hope to be out of prison some day. There are several possibilities for this, unless Marcos proceeds with indecent haste to kill me. I put my trust in the growing national democratic movement first of all. Revolutionaries have got out of prison as a result of domestic and world opinion, some truce agreement between the opposing sides or the overthrow of the tyrannical government.

Views on the Manotoc Affair

February 11, 1982

Publication Note: *This is the full text of a letter to Atty. Juan T. David, the legal counsel of the author, dated February 11, 1982. Here Sison explains why the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army had nothing to do with the Manotoc kidnapping not only in terms of CPP and NPA principles and policies but even more extensively on the basis of the publicly known facts about the Manotoc kidnapping and subsequent controversial "rescue."*

This letter of Sison could not be published earlier because of his circumstances as a political detainee under maximum security detention. Despite the fact that military authorities and the controlled mass media were implicating Sison explicitly and implicitly in the Manotoc affair, they did not give him a chance to make a timely reply before they decided to put a news clampdown on the entire affair four days after the so-called rescue.

According to Sison, the highest authorities of the establishment obviously wanted to let their lies about the Manotoc case prevail and be unchallenged by timely replies from the victim of slanders. The delay in the publication of Sison letter therefore makes it even more interesting and fresh. After all, it is never too late to clarify the truth, especially in view of so many questions that continue to jolt and puzzle people. Sison brings on many new points never before presented to the public concerning the Manotoc case.

Despite the lapse of several weeks since the so-called rescue of Manotoc, no single kidnapper has yet been hailed to court. What happen to the reported encounters between the AFP and the kidnappers in the backyard of the Philippine Army's Second Infantry Brigade? This question alone keeps the Manotoc affair alive. People are not satisfied with the premature closing of the case.

In view of the blatant misrepresentations made by Tommy Manotoc's kidnappers and the raging military propaganda based on such lies against the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army and four leading detainees, including me, I deem it necessary to formally express to you my position and views regarding the Manotoc kidnapping case and to ask you to help me ventilate the content of this letter.

I believe that Tommy Manotoc was kidnapped and maltreated by men pretending to be members of the NPA. As I told you in our conversation during your visit last January 9, the NPA does not on principle kidnap anyone for any kind of ransom and in fact has never done so. I challenge the fascist dictator to contradict this statement by citing a single case in the whole period of thirteen years before the manipulation of the Manotoc kidnapping and release.

Led by a correct party, the NPA does not kidnap or snatch individuals without appropriate charges. It arrests only the enemies of the people and other public wrongdoers in accordance with revolutionary law and justice. Moreover, there is a firm policy that the NPA should avoid making arrests in the Manila-Rizal region before reaching the stage of strategic offensives in the people's war. That stage is still relatively far away because the NPA now is in the stage of strategic defensive, the protracted stage, and will still have to traverse the stage of the strategic stalemate.

Manotoc is not an enemy of the people or a public wrongdoer by any stretch of the imagination. That he was kidnapped in the Manila-Rizal region and even severely maltreated subsequently is the surest sign that his kidnappers do not belong to the NPA but are imposters out to discredit the NPA and related entities and cover up the real author of the kidnapping and his motives.

There is the unmistakable element of personal spite in the brutal treatment of Manotoc. Even common kidnappers avoid maltreating their captives when they can do so. I believe that Manotoc could have been killed were it not for the prompt exposure of his disappearance by his own family and his uncle the oppositionist Raul Manglapus who had to seek the aid of the press abroad.

Whether any member of the Marcos family was responsible for the kidnapping or not, the finger of suspicion pointed so much to Mr. and Mrs. Marcos themselves that they were compelled to produce Manotoc with apparently the same extent of power as he had been kidnapped. If I were Manotoc, I would be most deeply grateful to my own family and my uncle Raul for their prompt exposure of the kidnapping rather than to Mr. Marcos for a cheap imitation and dubious parallel of the Dozier rescue.

Let me cite a number of facts, circumstances and considerations which continue to strongly indicate or prove

that Manotoc was kidnapped and released by the agents of a powerful entity who had been harassed by a family problem of no mean proportions and who has had the bad habit of trying to make the CPP and NPA scapegoats whenever he is in a terrible fix.

1. The “mountainous area” of the Rizal-Laguna boundary where Manotoc was reportedly kept for so long a time is not an NPA area and is far from any reliable area of the NPA. On the other hand, it is actually of the training grounds of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, especially the Second Infantry Brigade of the Philippine Army, based in Tanay, Rizal. Manotoc was kept for 31 days in what is practically the backyard of the Second Infantry Brigade.

Said area consists of foothills of the Sierra Madre. It is sparsely covered by small trees and bushes in some parts and is cogonal in other parts. It is cut off from the heights and jungles of the Sierra Madre by several parallel and intersecting roads ideal for AFP control. The people living closest to his area include quite a number of AFP soldier families doing kaingin work and agents of landgrabbers who are in power. This is an extremely unsuitable and exposed area for any purpose of the NPA at the present state of its development.

2. There was obviously cooperation between the so-called MIG teams and the Manotoc kidnapers. According to Manotoc himself, some ten minutes after he was conveniently placed in a grassy area by his kidnapers, the so-called firefight occurred and he was “rescued.” It is very revealing that where the vehicle carrying Manotoc and his guards developed engine trouble the MIG teams were already practically lying in wait. It took them a ludicrously short period of time to approach and fight the armed “enemy” and reach the kidnap victim despite the uncertainties due to darkness, foliage and open space.

According to Manotoc, he did not see the “firefight.” He merely heard the firings. There could have been only a mock fight, with the men on both sides firing in the air. Despite the supposed precision, well-preparedness and overwhelming size of the MIG teams, they claim to have bagged and killed only one of the kidnapers. The full identify and background of this supposed casualty are not available for public scrutiny and verification. He is supposed to be unidentifiable. His face in a published photo is deliberately messed up and partly concealed. It could as well be the photo of anyone killed elsewhere or someone made up.

3. If the kidnapers were not cooperators of the MIG teams, there can be no explanation for the former’s repeated use of a motor vehicle or motor vehicles in an area where these could be the only ones at night and could be easily spotted and blocked at any time. Three nights previous to the “rescue” on the night of February 8, the kidnapers also used a vehicle and had a “firefight” with the MIG teams (on February 5). Strangely, the kidnapers were never discouraged with using a vehicle again on the night of the “rescue.” Obviously, they were all friends of the MIG teams. The suggestions that there was an intelligence asset among the kidnapers is pure hogwash. There is yet no live kidnapper caught whose voice might be identified by Manotoc who says that he never saw the kidnapers because he was often blindfolded.

If it were not for some lousy zarzuela script to be followed for the benefit of Manotoc’s ears and the controlled mass media, the five kidnapers would have been taken together with their victim even much earlier than February 8 because of the February 5 incident and the character of the area. At least one live kidnapper would have been captured. As pointed out in the foregoing No. 1, the area is so easy for the AFP to seal off and saturate subtly or overtly because it is an old reliable training ground of the AFP with sparse cover and with roads for cutting-off and cutting-up purposes.

What is most absurd is that the fascist authorities continue to this day (three days after “rescue”) to issue press releases about “heavy fighting” and about “heroics” of the AFP jungle fighters in this area against four remaining kidnapers and ambiguously against a phantom horde of the NPA. In this backyard of the Second Infantry Brigade, a few stragglers or even a whole company can be easily trapped and apprehended by the AFP within hours. But entities concerned with civil liberties and human rights should be allowed to examine and verify the full identity and background of any “enemy casualty” since February 8. The AFP should be willing to prove that there is no fakery like transfers and frame-ups of dead bodies.

4. The very terms of the January 2 ransom note, which was extracted from Manotoc under coercion, indicate that they emanated from a person who is politically imaginative but who, in a state of tension or even panic as a result of a full-blown scandal, unwittingly showed his contempt for the CPP, NPA and for the four detainees in his formulation.

The terms of said ransom note are so preposterous and are calculated more to discredit the CPP, NPA and

four detainees than anything else and to cover up some stink of his own. A politically naive victim would not be able to see through the falsity and self-derision of the terms, especially if he was beaten up or threatened when he was forced to write them by the brutish impostors.

First, the kidnappers were asking for amnesty for their group or themselves when in fact they were scot-free, unidentified and probably gloating over their successful operation. Second, they placed so much value on Manotoc as to ask for “unleashing” (pakawalan) the four detainees; they did not even use a better term like palayain (free). It is ridiculous that my release was demanded but not the release of my wife Julieta de Lima. Because of this, among other facts, I have always told my visitors including you that the ransom note came from impostors who were unwittingly revealing their antagonism towards me. But above all, by what miracle did the kidnappers come to the idea that Manotoc could be so precious to Marcos. Third, they were asking for ₱20 million, despite the well-publicized liquidity problems of the Manotoc family.

5. That Manotoc became a son-in-law of Marcos on December 4 at Arlington, Virginia was a secret known only to the Marcos and Manotoc families before the public exposure of the kidnapping. The NPA could not have had any access to such a secret. It had absolutely no ground to speculate that Manotoc had any value that could serve as leverage on Marcos.

If the NPA were clairvoyant as to know the secret marriage of Manotoc and Imee, it could have also known that Manotoc was an unwanted son-in-law and was actually a poor leverage on Marcos for anything. It was absolutely impossible for any entity outside of the Marcos family to make any estimate of Manotoc’s value, go through the process of decisionmaking and planning and make the elaborate and costly preparations for the kidnapping between December 15 (reported date of his return from the US and December 29 (date of his kidnapping).

6. The precision by which Manotoc was kidnapped was as astounding as the precision by which he was “rescued.” The NPA could not have had the foreknowledge of his date with Imee on December 29 and had the ready personnel and facilities to monitor and trail him from a point (Las Conchas) where Imee’s security men were at work before the interception of his car.

If they were not cooperative with Manotoc’s kidnappers, all or some of Imee’s security men (especially the look-out perimeter men) were not only incompetent but literally blind. Certainly, it was necessary for the kidnappers to monitor Manotoc all the time at Las Conchas to achieve precision. It still remains interesting question as to who told Manotoc to show up along at Las Conchas during or after the Saigon Pearl date the previous night. This question becomes important if someone told Manotoc to show up alone. Sometimes, even powerful persons are so segurista that they would rather handle Manotoc alone than him and his driver together.

7. If the kidnappers of Manotoc did not have any cloak of power or authority, they would have been foolish in dropping the January 2 ransom note in the mailbox of the Manotoc residence and could have been trailed and sooner apprehended. As early as December 30, the day following the kidnapping, the Manotoc family was already alarmed by Manotoc’s disappearance and the telephone calls of Imee and Marcos.

Before the delivery of the January 2 ransom note, Marcos had already told the Manotoc family not to talk about the disappearance of Tommy to other people and that he and his most trusted military agents were in charge of the case. But still the kidnappers could freely deliver the January 2 ransom note to the very gate of the Manotoc house.

8. The use of the name “Commander Ulopong” is a clear sign that Manotoc’s kidnappers were impostors ignorant and contemptuous of the NPA. However, a politically naive person who has a conception of the NPA drawn only from the reactionary newspapers would think that there could be such a name in the NPA and that it is an indication of authenticity.

In the NPA, one has to be at least a company commander to be formally called a commander. But even a real NPA commander is normally called Ka or Kasama by his men and shies away from being called a commander because it is taboo and considered pretentious to have any title brandished around. It is the MND, AFP and other reactionary entities which have the habit of referring to mere squad or platoon leaders or even suspected ordinary members of the NPA as “commanders,” especially in the course of boasting about some anti-NPA achievement in their press releases.

Also, it is unbelievable to one who really knows the ways of the NPA that an NPA commander or even an ordinary NPA fighter would be so self-abusive, self-depreciating or lacking in self-respect as to allow himself to be called “Commander Ulopong” because the word “ulopong” in Tagalog is an extremely pejorative term which

suggests treacherousness and cowardice. Obviously, an anti-NPA person in authority had scripted the kidnapping scenario and invented the name “Commander Ulopong.” The name “Commander Ulopong” is something apparently impressive to Manotoc but to the knowledgeable it is a sure mark of falsity and misrepresentation.

9. Another thing that might have been very impressive to Manotoc was that he was given lectures or reading materials on “the teachings of communism and Mao Zedong.” He should be aware of the fact that the military establishment of Marcos has plenty of counterintelligence agents who can pretend to be CPP or NPA members by some shallow phrasemongering and displaying reading materials captured from real revolutionaries in order to deceive the politically naive.

It violates the principle and style of the CPP and NPA to maltreat a captive and then make and allow him to read communist reading materials. There can be no more effective way to turn a person into a rabid anti-communist and an enemy of the NPA. It would be worthwhile for Tommy Manotoc to consult a fairly knowledgeable person who is not a communist but who has a fair understanding of the theory and practice of the CPP and the NPA. I am sure that he will understand how the impostors actually caricatured NPA members in their actions and language. AFP counterintelligence agents are easily detected by the NPA because their actual hatred of the NPA is easily seen through the disguise.

In view of Manotoc’s level of political understanding and experience, real NPA members would have discussed intelligently with him the democratic and antifascist movement and the positive roles of his two uncles Raul Manglapus and Eugenio Lopez, Jr. in the united front. They would have talked to him in a down-to-earth manner. They would not bamboozle him about “communism and Mao Zedong.” To start with, Manotoc is a political innocent, not a communist and not even a mass activist.

10. Manotoc also appears to be impressed about his kidnappers explaining to him that he was kidnapped because of the supposed need for the NPA for funds and the release of four leading detainees. A politically naive person would certainly be impressed if he were not aware that it is incorrect, impolitic and immoral ab initio from the viewpoint of the CPP and NPA to kidnap and maltreat anyone.

The CPP, the NPA and all related organizations have taken deep roots among the people on a nationwide scale. The limitless source of voluntary support in every form comes from the people. Just consider how much and how sufficient for the NPA is the support it gets from the peasant masses in the course of revolutionary land reform and production campaigns. The NPA is composed completely of volunteers and is not on any salary system, unlike the AFP. It gets its arms basically through ambushes and raids against enemy units and thus increase its fighting capability in every region in the country.

As regards the detainees like me whom Marcos will likely never set free, they will be liberated through the steady growth of the revolutionary mass movement. A united front victory in a few year’s time is possible. Even before that political negotiations for the exchange of prisoners of war among other things are possible. When revolutionary victory is won, it will be the people’s army arresting, jailing and punishing the people’s enemies according to revolutionary law and justice. There is absolutely no need for kidnapping innocent civilians at any time for ransom.

11. Manotoc appears not to have been given by his kidnappers any CPP or NPA document to read which states that kidnapping and maltreatment of captives are severely punishable. There are such documents. It is understandable why the devilish impostors did not give him these. They would have been exposing their falsity.

In the most basic documents of the CPP and NPA, it is stated as a major point of discipline not to maltreat captives even if these are enemy military officers and men or individuals still subject to trial by the people’s court. A battle is a battle but when it is finished a victorious NPA unit is obliged to deal decently with the defeated enemy officers and men, treating the wounded, feeding the captives with food no different from that of the NPA fighters, explaining the cause in down-to-earth terms, giving them a choice between leaving or staying with the people’s army, etc. The brutality inflicted on Manotoc who is a completely innocent civilian can only be done by impostors. The beatings, shackling, blindfolding and bad food are abominable. I have experienced these myself in the hands of the fascist.

There is a great ocean of difference between fascist terrorists, small anarchist groups and common criminals on the one hand and a truly revolutionary party of the proletariat and people’s army on the other hand. Marcos should stop trying to confuse his fascist terrorism (wholesale attack on democratic rights, massacres, forced mass evacuations, kidnapping, tortures, etc. with the just struggles and accurate offensives of the revolutionary

movement that is deeply rooted among the toiling masses and is waging a protracted people's war for the cause of national freedom and democracy.

Going far beyond the proper limits of his peculiar problems about Manotoc, Marcos seeks to use the kidnapping, the pseudo-rescue and the blatant misrepresentations of Manotoc kidnappers as pretext for destroying the names and persons of detainees like me who are already under brutal conditions of detention and for launching more massive campaign of fascist abuse and terrorism against the people in both cities and countryside. Already the controlled mass media are being used to spread as gospel truth the still unfounded claims of the fascist military and the disinformation systematically given to Manotoc by his kidnappers. I would like to appeal through you to all organizations and persons concerned with civil liberties and human rights to do the following:

1. Take up the kidnapping and maltreatment of Manotoc as a case involving the violation of his rights, demand that the real kidnappers be brought to light on the basis of solid evidence and scrutinize and verify the evidence, especially the identity and background of dead bodies and living persons who might be unjustly implicated due to flagrant attempts to cover up the real kidnappers;
2. Send representatives to Manotoc and convince him to hold a series of conversations with responsible and competent private persons who can analyze his experience and assess with him who could have been his real kidnappers even if only in general and why or convince him at least not to lend himself to any baseless propaganda that can only help disguise and conceal the identify of the real kidnappers.
3. Demand that the fascist authorities and the controlled mass media desist from making propaganda against any entity before the presentation of any solid evidence and also from manipulating Manotoc's objective narration of the misrepresentations of his kidnappers.

In conclusion, I wish to express my elation over Tommy Manotoc's release from his kidnappers and abusers whom I condemn absolutely. I also give him my best wishes in his athletic and worthwhile endeavors. He happens to be my favorite among young basketball coaches although he comes from La Salle and I spent time at the rival school Ateneo.

I have a piece of friendly advice for him. Even as he is known to be indifferent to political matters, he should never underestimate the facts that he is the nephew of two (Manglapus and Lopez) of the most determined and formidable enemies of his parents-in-law. What are really the strongest objections to him as son-in-law are that (1) he could be an avenging penetrator, a serious breach on the physical security of the most guarded family; and (2) he would be in a position to know the intricate web of property holdings and secrets of this family.

In the course of his captivity, Malacañang press releases pictured him as a conspirator in "emotional terrorism" and an unreliable worldlywise man who had deceived Imee, when the secret marriage could no longer be denied. In no uncertain terms, he was being condemned as a political agent of his uncles. He and Imee therefore are not simply faced with the moral and legal questions posed by conventional parents. He should learn well from the bitter lesson from his harrowing and almost fatal experience. I believe that he and Imee are sincerely in love with each other and I sympathize with them in that respect. But they must know what they need to surmount for their romance and marriage to succeed.

Please give Manotoc a copy of this letter so that he can thoroughly study it. He owes it to himself and others who continue to be the most maligned about his disappearance to study further his experience. Incidentally, Mr. Marcos was never maligned by the local controlled mass media but he used them as he continues to do so against his enemies. Otherwise, the people would not have known anything about the kidnapping.

With my highest regard and best wishes.

Letter to Atty. Juan T. David on the Manotoc Kidnapping

February 22, 1982

Dear Sir: In my long letter to you dated February 11, I expressed deep sympathy for Tommy Manotoc over his harrowing and almost fatal experience. I did so to the extent of giving him the benefit of a doubt that his real kidnapers and transparently fake rescuers had been able to consistently play tricks on him although I could surmise that he had agreed to play-act according to a prepared script the moment that he was offered his release.

I am happy to know lately that certain publications have been able to tap sources close to Manotoc himself for the information that he has been play-acting according to a script and that he was maltreated by his kidnapers categorically for "messing around with the President's daughter."

I still believe that Manotoc is a tragic character played upon by a powerful force and he deserves some continuing commiseration. But he who is a victim should cease to be the instrument for victimizing others by continuing to be quoted as saying that communists and the NPA were responsible for his kidnapping. He seems not to realize that his statements are being used to further persecute and harm those four detainees who were supposed to stand to gain from his kidnapping. General Ver no less is already accusing them of continuing to be active CPP leaders and is therefore implying that they have something to do with events outside of prison (see Bulletin Today, February 21).

By helping to disguise and cover up his real kidnapers, Manotoc is actually continuing to victimize himself. He continues to place himself at the mercy of his real kidnapers. Who will stop them from killing him and claiming again that the NPA is responsible for it? The latest synchronization of press releases for him and his supposed rescuers repeating the misrepresentations of his kidnapers draw public scorn to himself which he does not deserve.

To turn a bad thing into a good thing, I suggest to Manotoc to proceed with his libel suit against the publications he wants to charge but he should use it as an occasion to put on public record his complete and detailed experience. After making a truthful statement, he should be allowed to leave the country by the Marcos government. I am confident that his testimony will completely expose his real kidnapers and deter them from further victimizing him. In the first place, he was saved by the prompt public exposure of his kidnapping.

As regards the supposed rescuers of Manotoc, I suppose that their best course of action is not to threaten filing a libel suit against anyone or any publication but to bring out at least one credible live kidnapper, instead of keeping the Manotoc kidnapping case closed and suppressing further inquiries into it. I believe that if the kidnapers were not in cahoots with the "rescuers" at least some of them would have been trapped alive in what is literally the backyard of the Second Infantry Brigade of the Philippine Army,

What really happened in those "fierce firefights" on February 5th and 8th and even up to February 11th? The military authorities were issuing a lot of press releases about their combat and intelligence prowess and claiming all the time without verifiable proof that the kidnapers were NPA members. The news reporters could have watched the AFP jungle fighters fight against their own shadows from the vantage point of the Second Infantry Brigade headquarters, the Foremost Farms or any of the helicopters that frequently hover above the hilly and sparsely covered area.

In view of the continuing attacks against the integrity and honor of the four detainees, including me, what recourse do we have? Does the law under the present state allow any person to libel or slander us with impunity? Can we not file charges against those (including Manotoc) who unjustly offend us? Are we not being tried by publicity? Is not a climate being prepared for the railroading of our cases before the military commissions? Are not Marcos and his military minions preparing to do away with us soon?

I will appreciate very much your answers to these foregoing questions. Should we not also consult Messrs. Buscayno, Ocampo and Agcaoili on what course of action to take?

With my highest regard and best wishes.

Prospects of the Revolution in the Philippines

March 22, 1982

The prospects of the revolution in the Philippines can be outlined only after an understanding of the status of the revolutionary forces and the essential characteristics of the objective conditions. To speak of said prospects is to speak of trends that can be seen through accomplished and current events. We base ourselves on the facts; otherwise, there would only be wishful thinking.

The revolution in progress

The interrupted Philippine revolution has been once more resumed since 13 years ago on a comprehensive basis: political, military, economic and cultural. It is in progress at a far more accelerated rate in the present decade than in the previous one. The revolutionary forces have overcome the difficulties of starting from scratch and have advanced in the face of a full-blown fascist counterrevolution. Having accumulated experiences and victories, the revolutionary forces are taking full advantage of the political and economic crisis of the ruling system which is worsening at a far more accelerated rate.

The ongoing revolution has a national and democratic character of the new type. It carries forward toward full realization the Filipino people's aspirations for national independence and democracy in the era of modern imperialism and socialist revolutions. It is led by the proletariat through its revolutionary party, the Communist Party of the Philippines, rather than by the liberal bourgeoisie as in the old democratic revolution through the Katipunan and then through the Aguinaldo government. The broad masses of the people are ranged today against the forces of US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism which are concentrated in the fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique.

The organized revolutionary forces are now at their strongest from the time that the Philippine revolution was defeated by US imperialism at the beginning of the century. The achievements of the reestablished Communist Party of the Philippines are far greater in an all-round way than those of the old merger party of the Communist and Socialist parties. To use one telling point of reference, the New People's Army has already accumulated on a nationwide scale more than thrice the number of rifles (automatic and single-shot) than the old people's army (Hukbong Mapagpalaya ng Bayan-HMB) had in a far smaller area at its peak in 1950. The NPA guerrilla fighters continue to increase at an accelerating rate.

The Communist Party of the Philippines has steadily strengthened itself ideologically, politically and organizationally. It integrates the universal theory of the proletariat, Marxism-Leninism, with the concrete practice of the Philippine revolution. It has successfully rectified the errors of the Lava revisionists and their unremolded successors and has remained alert to erroneous tendencies of the Right and "Left" varieties. It is a party that militantly arouses, organizes and mobilizes the broad masses of the people around itself and the people's army along the line of an antifascist, anti-imperialist and antifeudal united front. Party cadres and members are drawn from the most advanced elements of the revolutionary mass movements.

From only a few scores in 1968 and 1969 and only 2,000 in 1972, there are now so many thousands of communist cadres and members who come from the ranks of the workers, peasants and urban petty bourgeoisie. They are capable of leading the millions of people and performing a wide range of work in the revolution. There are a few thousands of Party branches and groups in rural and urban localities, in units of the people's army and in mass organizations. These are competent and tested cadres working effectively at various levels of leadership: group, branch, section, guerrilla zone, guerrilla front, district, provincial, regional and central committee. The Party is in all provinces, except a handful of small island and Moro provinces. It is far more widespread than the people's army whose way it often prepares.

The New People's Army is in every region and in the overwhelming majority of provinces. In several dozens of guerrilla fronts, there are hundreds of well-developed and less-developed guerrilla zones, each of which comprises several municipalities. The NPA has acquired great depth and breadth in terms of popular support and terrain. The membership of the full-fledged guerrilla fighting units run into some thousands, armed with automatic rifles. The armed propaganda units have even a far larger membership (about thrice) armed with a combination of automatic and singleshoot rifles and handguns. These figures are a far cry from the initial armed strength of 35 guns (9

automatic rifles and 26 inferior arms) in a few guerrilla zones in 1969. In 1972, there were only about 250 automatic rifles. The claim of the reactionary armed forces that there were 10,000 to 12,000 NPA “regulars” on the eve of martial law is a complete fabrication to justify the martial law proclamation.

The guerrilla fighters are applying the correct strategy and tactics of people’s war. They are still at the stage of strategic defensive but are relentlessly launching tactical offensives. They muster superior strength and use the element of surprise to overwhelm small enemy units they can wipe out or simply disarm. Close to 100 percent of NPA arms have been seized from the CHDF, police, army and other AFP units through ambushes, raids and arrests. The NPA can now launch nationwide, interregional and intraregional coordinated attacks according to the principle of centralized leadership and decentralized operations. It can lure in the enemy in so many deep ways. It can attack an enemy element or unit only to bait and crush the reinforcing or investigating enemy unit or attack an enemy unit elsewhere. The wiping out or disarming of an oversized enemy squad or platoon is now commonplace.

The militia units supporting the full-fledged guerrilla units and armed propaganda units have a membership running into some hundreds of thousands. These include all able-bodied members of mass organizations with varying degrees of training in local self-defense. They are armed with bolos, spears and homemade guns. They do essential police work and detect the covert and overt actions of the enemy. They are the largest reserve force of the people’s army and are eager to be armed with better weapons. In organizing CHDF units and dispersing small regular detachments, the enemy is practically delivering arms to the NPA.

Even while the reactionary state still exists, the people’s democratic government has steadily grown in the countryside. Local organs of democratic political power have been established, even while the facade of barangay councils and the like is retained or allowed to exist. The barrio organizing committees and the barrio revolutionary committees are flourishing. These have such special committees as those for organization, economy, defense, justice, health and so on. Supporting the people’s government are the basic organizations for workers, or farm workers, peasant, women, children and cultural enthusiasts. Each type of mass organization performs general functions linking it with the other types as well as special functions specifically suitable to its members.

The people under organs of political power and mass organizations constitute the mass base of the revolution. Today, this mass base runs into millions, mostly in the countryside. This number is a far cry from the initial mass base of 50,000 people in the second district of Tarlac province and 15,000 in Manila-Rizal in 1969; and some 350,000 in Northern, Central and Southern Luzon and 100,000 in Manila-Rizal and other urban areas in 1972. The progressive trade unions are schools for revolution. The workers comprehend that their struggles are part of the revolution. An increasing number of them, especially in the extensive areas where production for export is depressed, have joined the armed revolution.

Where they reside, the workers have played an important role in forming community organizations and linking up with other urban poor. They protect and promote the interests and welfare of the entire community. Like the peasants, they try to put under their control or influence the local organizations of the reactionary government. Where they cannot, because the fascists pay special attention to the area, the struggle become more bitter against the fascist officials and thugs. Among the most notorious case of fascist oppression are those involving the mass eviction of the slumdweller on the pretext of relocation and urban renewal.

The urban petty bourgeoisie is not exempted from the ravages of the economic crisis and the fascist acts of oppression. The masses of students, teachers and other professionals and small businessmen are increasingly involving themselves in the democratic movement. The masses of students and teachers have so far been the most militant in carrying out mass actions to express their protests and demands regarding their immediate plight of fast rising tuition fees and depressed wages of school employees as well as regarding the worsening national situation.

The national democratic cultural revolution, which started in the anti-CAFA demonstration in 1961, steadily grew during the entire 1960s and assumed gigantic proportions during the early 1970s, is vigorously resurging openly. It is carrying forward a national, scientific and mass culture at the core of which is Marxism-Leninism. It runs against the decadent fascist, pro-imperialist and feudal culture. As before, the democratic movement of the intelligentsia is linked with the struggle of workers and peasants. Many revolutionary intellectuals continue to participate directly in the actual struggle of the toiling masses.

Among the entire people, the revolutionaries are promoting the line of economic independence as the

substance of genuine political independence and national industrialization as the necessary complement of agrarian revolution. In accordance with their own legitimate interests, the national bourgeoisie and its spokesmen are being encouraged to take a patriotic and democratic stand against the political and economic subservience of the fascist dictatorship to foreign transnational corporations, chiefly US and Japanese. The national bourgeoisie has long been suppressed in favor of the foreign monopoly capitalists who have been getting all kinds of extraordinary privileges and gobbling up businesses through loans, direct investments and trade privileges designed to prevent national industrialization and an independent economy.

The organized revolutionary forces under the direct and effective leadership of the CPP so far come to only a few million people. But through a united front under the National Democratic Front and beyond and also through effective revolutionary propaganda, the influence of these revolutionary forces extend to the entire Filipino people in their tens of millions. Outside the guerrilla fronts, the communists and their allies are promoting the general line of the national democratic revolution and preparing for the advance of the armed struggle. Party cadres and members are at the core of so many kinds of organization of varying scope in the areas outside of the guerrilla fronts of the NPA.

The Moro people's struggle for national self-determination and democracy is revolutionary and just. So far, the strongest armed ally of the CPP and NPA is the Moro National Liberation Front and the Bangsa Moro Army. The NPA has owed a lot to the BMA for tying down at least one-third of the combat effectives of the AFP, especially from 1973 to 1978. Now that the NPA is far stronger than it was in the past, it can reciprocate in a large way the favor done by the BMA. The BMA can intensify its armed struggle as the NPA in their respective areas can eat up the strength of the AFP piece by piece in a protracted people's war.

Allies who are not yet armed or whose armed force is still small always have the important role of expanding and condemning the pro-imperialist puppetry, barbarism, bankruptcy and corruption of the fascist dictatorship. But more than ever, conditions for these allies to undertake their own armed struggle improve as the CPP and MNLF win greater political and military victories through their respective armies. Ideological, political, religious, ethnic and other differences are subordinated to the single task of uniting to overthrow the fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique.

Deteriorating fascist position

The fascist dictatorship of the US-Marcos clique is the desperate outcome of the insoluble and worsening crisis of the semicolonial and semifeudal society. Instead of saving a republic, the Marcos coup d'état of 1972 has destroyed all tokens of it and put up a blatant autocracy that is justly hated by the sovereign people. Instead of forming a new society, the despotism has worsened and made far more intolerable the evils of the continuing old society. The old ruling system is moving toward its destruction even as the fascist dictator is overweening with his ill-gotten power and wealth.

The open rule of fascist terror has incurred heavy debts from the people in terms of life, limb and property. Instead of being cowed into submission, the broad masses of the people have fought back. Abuses inflicted on them have only served to make the ground for armed revolution more fertile. On the eve of martial law, the NPA was very small and weak militarily in a few areas in the country; it had only about 250 rifles. But now it has thousands of these rifles. In his martial law proclamation, Marcos was completely ignorant of the MNLF and BMA. But as a result of martial law, these mass organizations arose with several thousands of well-armed fighters.

The fascist acts of terror and the rapidly worsening economic crisis goad the broad masses of the people to wage armed struggle. But this has to advance step by step against the fascist dictatorship's headstart of 250,000 troops. It is gratifying to see that the average number of arms seized by the NPA from the enemy within one year during 1970s can now be seized in only a few weeks. The rate of arms seizures by the revolutionaries is ever increasing.

By the most conservative estimates, the fascist dictatorship is one of the bloodiest regimes in Philippine history. In the ten years of civil war unleashed by the fascist, there have been at least 150,000 casualties. Death casualties reach up to some 70,000. Most of those killed and injured are civilians because of the blind actions by the enemy such as the round up and massacres of entire barrios and neighborhoods, the torture and murder of suspects and indiscriminate bombings and shootings during military campaigns. On their part, the guerrillas of the NPA and BMA know their targets well and are precise in their military operations.

In central and southwestern Mindanao, there have been some 60,000 killed and some 50,000 injured. Most

of these are civilians. Among the combatants, the AFP has lost some 20,000 killed and some 10,000 injured and the BMA some 5,000 killed and another 5,000 injured. In the NPA areas all over the country, some 18,000 have been killed and some 16,000 have been injured. Again most of these are civilians victimized by the enemy. Among the combatants, the AFP lost some 8,000 killed and some 5,000 injured and the NPA some 2,000 killed and some 1,000 injured. It is the consistent pattern of the enemy to try to even up the score in military casualties by taking out their defeats on the innocent civilians.

The NPA has already gained enough strength and experience to prevent its armed propaganda units from being put into defensive tactical position by the AFP search and destroy operations. The MNLF has also cast away the old tendency to hold and defend fixed positions even against a superior enemy force. Thus the ratio of military casualties against the AFP is rising even as these do not stop to torture and kill captives and abuse civilians in trying to root out the guerrillas.

About three million people in the countryside have been displaced and dispossessed of their homes, farms and livestock or made refugees by forced mass evacuations and reconcentration or regrouping of entire populations by the AFP in the course of protracted campaigns of encirclement and suppression, lasting from one to four years per campaign. Some 2.2 million of victims come from central and southwestern Mindanao including Moros and non-Moros. As early as 1976, these victims were estimated at 1.8 million by agencies of the reactionary government. In NPA areas (Isabela, Sorsogon, Aurora, Samar, Quezon, Camarines Norte, Cagayan, Davao provinces and Agusan—in chronological order), there have been some 800,000 people forced to evacuate or regroup. Large numbers of the refugees have spontaneously moved from their homes to other areas and spread the message of the revolution rather than be humiliated and starve in enemy evacuation centers and regrouping camps. However, 300,000 Moros have taken refuge in Sabah and are aided by the Islamic countries, especially Saudi Arabia and Malaysia, while Mr. and Mrs. Marcos make a lot of propaganda for themselves about the far lesser number of Vietnamese refugees in the country.

Great numbers of people in the Moro and NPA areas have gone through the process of being herded against their will for fake surrender ceremonies before AFP authorities in so-called peace rallies. About 100,000 people have been arrested, maltreated in fascist jails for at least one day on suspicion of supporting the armed revolutionaries; about 25,000 people have been detained and maltreated in fascist jails for at least one month without charges being filed. These have ranged from masses of workers, peasants, youth and women to prominent individuals, like leaders of political parties, journalists, publishers, businessmen, religious leaders, educators, writers and leaders of labor, peasant, youth, women and other organizations. So many cases of barbaric tortures have been documented by civil libertarian and human rights associations. But these are only a small fraction of the total number of cases.

The ruling system is now far more incapable of ruling in the old way than before Marcos grabbed all governmental powers in 1972. He is more than ever compelled by his colossal crimes to continue repressing the entire range of organized political opposition and the broad masses of the people. He keeps on threatening to unleash more bloody acts of fascist terror. The so-called lifting of martial law and normalization consist only of negligible tokens and shallow gimmicks calculated to institutionalize and whitewash the continuing fascist dictatorship. In one more contradiction of terms, the autocracy is dished out as a new republic.

The autocratic and antidemocratic provisions of the Marcos constitution remain intact. The suspension of the writ of habeas corpus continue to operate against all political opponents of the fascist regime. The fascist decrees have remained in force and are perpetuated in the National Security Code, Public Order Act and the like. The Anti-Subversion Law and other laws against political offenses have been made more arbitrary and harsher. The electoral laws are stacked up against every party outside of the fascist party, the Kilusang Bagong Lipunan. Elections since 1978 have been no different from the fake plebiscites and referenda as mockeries of the people's sovereignty.

The interim batasang pambansa is a mere rubber stamp of the fascist dictatorship and is subordinate to the lawmaking powers of the one-man legislator. The courts are completely under the power of this fascist dictator. The Supreme Court no less has consistently proven itself a willing tool and accomplice of the fascist dictatorship. The schools have been used as instruments of fascist and imperialist propaganda. All major media of information are either owned or controlled by the fascists, and are used for their propaganda.

In making calls for national unity and reconciliation, Marcos simply means to tell the people and all his

political opponents to surrender to his monopoly of political power. More vicious campaigns of fascist terror are being carried out throughout the country, especially in the countryside. But even in the urban areas, massacres have been occurring against peaceful demonstrations. Despite their attempts to remain legal, organizations and individuals critical of the regime are continuously threatened with punitive action, which often occurs. So, more than over the broad masses of the people are waging revolutionary struggles. A broad united front for armed struggle is rapidly developing as fascist abuses and economic crisis mount. These are excellent conditions for a broad antifascist, anti-imperialist and antifeudal struggle.

Shorn of all its embellishments, the fascist dictatorship is clearly kept in power by brute force against the people. But the AFP has fatal weaknesses. First of all, it is a vicious antinational and antidemocratic instrument of the fascist dictatorship which knows no end in oppressing and exploiting the people. Acts of fascist terror have only served to multiply the number of people determined to fight and defeat it through a protracted people's war.

Despite the worsening economic crisis, it was possible for Marcos to beef up the AFP from 65,000 to 250,000 troops during the 1970s because of heavy foreign and local borrowings that puffed up unproductive business activities. Large amounts of taxes could be collected from this kind of activities and large appropriations could therefore be made for the military. It was the gargantuan foreign loans far more than the increasing direct US military assistance (grants and credit sales) that allowed Marcos a wide path for beefing up the military and supporting its futile operations. But foreign borrowing is becoming more and more difficult and onerous. New loans can no longer cover even only the debt service and trade deficit.

The AFP is a parasitic and nonproductive entity which has grown too large. It is a major cause of inflation. And the inflation recoils upon it. Funds for its maintenance and operations are inadequate. Mass discontent among enlisted men is increasing because of inadequate pay and because of rampant corruption among the officers. Steadily the grave discontent among the people is already finding its way in among the troops because they come mostly from worker and peasant families. Increasingly the troops have begun to recognize that their abusive military operations are victimizing their own relatives and friends.

It is only a matter of time before the men and officers of the AFP become receptive to revolutionary propaganda to a significant extent. Their families beyond their camps and formations are not exempt from the facts of the people's sufferings. They are bound to be demoralized by the fact that they are facing more combat risks now in the service of an oppressive and exploitative system and yet they are not adequately compensated. Because it is run as a private army of the fascist dictator, the AFP is wracked by internal jealousies and dissensions, especially among officers. Favoritism, nepotism and regionalism are rampant.

At any rate, there are not too many combat effectives against the armed revolutionaries. Only about one-third of AFP personnel are readily deployable for counter guerrilla action. A large number are tied down to offices, garrisons, presidential security and urban trunklines. The navy and air force are largely unfit for direct ground action. There are units that are unavoidably dispersed and vulnerable to guerrilla actions. These are the CHDF, police, PC and even some Philippine Army units. The guerrillas can seize plenty of arms from them long before any large military operation or campaign can be launched by the enemy.

The guerrilla fronts of the people's army are already so many all over the country and so wide and deep individually that the reactionary armed forces can never hope to swoop down on all of them at the same time or destroy them one by one. Any superior armed force on a short-term "search and destroy" mission can only punch the air and waste effort and resources. Any protracted enemy campaign eventually yields plenty of opportunities for guerrilla actions in the area. Even when the bulk of guerrilla forces in a certain area are obliged to shift temporarily, they leave enough units to keep the enemy tied down. By getting tied down in a certain area, the enemy unwittingly allows the guerrilla forces in many other areas to grow.

The fascist dictatorship has deepened the bankruptcy of the Philippine economy and caused inflation to spiral through rapid and excessive expenditures for nonindustrial and unproductive programs and projects. The infrastructure and energy projects are financed with foreign loans from the imperialist banks willing to provide loans because these result in the sale of steel materials, construction and motorized equipment, engineering services, etc. from the transnational corporations but are consumption-oriented and at best merely serve to reinforce the colonial pattern of production and export of raw materials and import of finished products. The fascists like these projects because they are supposed to have strong propaganda impact and are easy source of graft. The hierarchy of corruption is so greedy that all these construction projects are overpriced and have serious structural defects.

Completely unproductive are the huge expenditures for bloating the bureaucracy and the reactionary armed forces and the acquisition of office vehicles and equipment for them. So are the luxury constructions along Manila Bay (reclamation, convention center, cultural center, folk arts center, film center) and government-financed private construction of five-star hotels, high rise condominiums and the like. The funds poured into these luxury constructions alone would have been enough to set up several complexes of metal, chemical, instruments and consumer industries based on the comprehensive natural resource base of the country.

Excess capacities have been created in the production and slight processing of raw materials for export (coconut oil, raw sugar, copper concentrates and the like). Beyond these only reassembly and repackaging industries or “gypsy industries” (garments, electronics, car manufacturing, etc.) have been put up by the US and Japanese transnational corporations and their local partners merely for purposes of local and regional market penetration and utilization of cheap local labor. As the capitalist countries have gone into deep recession, the raw material exports of the country as well as the reassembly and repackaging industries have become depressed, resulting in massive unemployment and social unrest in both cities and countryside. The unemployment rate is now at least 15 percent beyond the chronic rate of 25 percent characteristic of a semifeudal economy such as that of the Philippines.

Due to the fascist dictatorship’s economic subservience to the transnational corporations and imperialist banks, the Philippines is reeling from the aggravatingly lopsided character of the economy, locally generated inflation, shifted recession and inflation from the capitalist countries and the increasing burden of foreign debts. While the prices of Philippine exports are being pressed down, the prices of imported finished products are inflated and imports are being pushed hard into the country under a one-sided trade liberalization policy in favor of the capitalist countries. The imperialists are gobbling up superprofits through the process of direct profit remittances, transfer-pricing and loans interest. However, after surpassing the \$15 billion level of foreign debt, the Philippines has reached the point of not being able to get enough foreign loans even at far higher interest rates to cover debt service and trade deficits.

Completely proven false are the expectations of the local revisionists that the US is truly interested in using Marcos to restructure and industrialize the Philippines. More than ever the Philippine economy remains agrarian and semifeudal, a producer and exporter of raw materials and importer of finished and semifinished products. There has been no significant industrialization, whether this be owned by Filipinos or by foreigners. The fascist regime has always adhered to the imperialist concept of development for subservient developing countries, which is the prevention of industrial development.

The so-called 11 major industrial projects are a belated lip service to industrialization. These plans are dependent on the wishes and purposes of transnational corporations which are far more interested than before in discouraging industrialization in a semicolony because of recession afflicting industries in the capitalist countries. The imperialist banks have been telling Marcos through his own technocrats that there is no funding for industrialization and that there is some only for infrastructure, energy projects, agriculture and forestry, education and re-equipment of some local industries.

Contrary to the hopes of the local revisionists that the US would use Marcos to break feudalism, the Marcos land reform program limited to rice and corn lands has essentially been a hoax. Hundreds of thousands of land transfer certificates have been distributed to tenants only for propaganda effect. Only a few token expropriations of landed estates have been undertaken and offered for sale to tenants at a price they cannot afford. The prevalent fact is that old style landlords have been goaded to charge a higher fixed land rent under the so-called leasehold system when they cannot evict their tenants by using any of the many loopholes in the reactionary land reform law.

The token expropriation of landed estates for the supposed benefit of rice and corn tenants are negligible in comparison to the massive transfer of land ownership or control from the old landlords to the new ones (especially the fascists and the local and foreign agrocorporations), the land dispossession of poor settlers and homesteaders under the cover of pasture leases, corporate farming and agro-industrial development. Not all lands grabbed are developed. A sizeable portion are held for speculation because of their proximity to infrastructure projects. The former owner-cultivators are often forced to submit to the oldstyle tenancy system.

The “miracle rice” and Masagana 99 programs have not facilitated but on the contrary have been obstacles to land reform. Fertilizers, pesticides, irrigation facilities, agricultural equipment and petrofuel from the transnational

corporations have spelled ever rising agricultural production costs. The peasants have been forced to become dependent on landlords and merchant usurers. The fascists have become the biggest agents of the transnational corporations and have used the rural banks to inflict a camouflaged form of usury on the people through price manipulation of inputs, official service charges and bribes and obligations such as those under the samahang nayon. While the costs of production and subsistence for the peasants have risen rapidly, the prices of their produce have been pressed down.

The so-called KKK livelihood program is a new signboard for small industries and sideline occupations. It has been conceived of so as to deflect attention from the monopolization of colossal loans from the industrial financing fund by corporations owned and controlled by Marcos and his cronies. Rather than promote economic progress, this program dissipates resources through salaries and allowances for superfluous bureaucrats, expenses for propaganda campaigns and dole outs for local leaders of the KBL in time for the barangay elections. The fascists are far more greedy than the general run of merchants as middlemen for both products and loans.

The new oligarchy of big bureaucrat-comprador-landlords is today on top of the heap of reactionaries serving the foreign monopoly capitalists. It is so greedy in manipulating and cutting into loans, construction and purchase contracts and business privileges and in grabbing lands and other properties that it is hated by the rest of the big comprador and big landlord classes. The contradictions within these exploiting classes have become sharp as a result of the dwindling of foreign exchange for debt service and import payments and the tendency of the new oligarchs to grab the available financial resources and the earnings from exports. Some political rivals of Marcos are drawing considerable support from the disgruntled big comprador-landlords.

The workers are vigorously asserting their democratic rights and pressing their long pent-up demands for higher wages and other benefits due them in the face of the soaring prices of basic commodities and widening unemployment. The strike movement today is on an unprecedented scale. The consistent attempts of the fascist dictatorship to curtail the political and economic rights of the workers through violent means are driving the workers to raise higher the level of their class consciousness and organized resistance. Workers laid off from their jobs are finding their way into the ranks of the armed revolutionaries.

The peasant masses are disgusted with the false promise of land reform by the fascist dictatorship, the increased feudal and semifeudal exploitation, the soaring costs of agricultural production and of subsistence, the military campaigns being carried out by the reactionary armed forces and the flagrant acts of landgrabbing by the fascists and the agrocorporations. Everywhere the peasant masses are receptive to the armed revolution and form the main mass support for it. Most NPA fighters are peasants.

Under the leadership of the Communist Party of the Philippines, the masses of workers and peasants are allied and serve as the basic foundation of the national democratic revolution. Further on, the toiling masses are allied with the increasingly militant urban petty bourgeoisie which is also oppressed and exploited. And still further on, they are allied with the national bourgeoisie which is pressed down by the fascists and imperialists. There is no way out for the broad masses of the people but to unite in order to overthrow the fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique.

Revolutionary prospects within the decade

The objective conditions for waging armed revolution in the Philippines will become even more excellent within the decade. The economic and political crisis of the domestic ruling system as well as that of the world capitalist system will continue to deepen and worsen. The local reactionaries cannot expect any lasting and significant respite from the general crisis and decline of the US and the world capitalist system. The crisis of the ruling system during the 1980s will be far worse than that during the 1970s.

The persistence of the fascist puppet dictatorship will increasingly move the broad masses of the people to resist it and participate in the armed revolution. Such basic forces of the revolution as the workers, peasants and urban petty bourgeoisie will undergo far more intolerable conditions of political oppression and economic exploitation and will be drawn further into armed resistance. Marcos' fixation on a continued monopoly of power issues from his fear that were he to relax his grip on it, he would surely be called to account for his fascist reign of terror and greed. The violent split between his clique and other reactionary cliques will certainly intensify.

The Philippine reactionary government will further come under the control of the US government and its imperialist interests. These will manipulate the Marcos fascist dictatorship for as long as possible. The acute need of this dictatorship for a greater amount of loans will be used by the US as a lever for extracting wide-ranging

privileges before it considers the replacement of Marcos. The US will continue to prop Marcos up politically, militarily and financially for as long as the revolutionary struggle has not reached the point that he shall have become more of a liability than an asset to US interests.

The Philippine revolution will definitely make great strides. The Communist Party of the Philippines will further grow in strength ideologically, politically and organizationally. Under the firm leadership of this party, the NPA will expand and consolidate its armed strength and organized mass base. The guerrilla fronts will multiply at an accelerated rate. Within the first half of the decade, platoon-size operations of the people's army will become widespread and frequent all over the country; and within the second half, company-size operations will also become so. Three levels of cooperation will develop: intraregional, interregional and national.

The stage of the strategic defensive will mature on a nationwide scale before the end of the decade. Stalemate will also emerge in many extensive areas. It is even possible that before the end of the decade the stage of strategic stalemate will mature and lead to the general offensive that will overthrow the fascist dictatorship. The advance of the armed revolutionaries will be very rapid by the time that they shall have accumulated a number of automatic weapons equivalent to even only one-tenth of the AFP's 250,000 troops. In view of the present strength of the NPA, it is no longer difficult to accumulate 25,000 automatic rifles within the present decade. In the course of acquiring this strength, the NPA will severely bleed the enemy through guerrilla operations and campaigns of annihilation and attrition.

The Bangsa Moro Army under the leadership of the MNLF will increasingly find that it can deal fiercer and more effective blows against the fascist enemy as the NPA wins more victories in its own areas of operation. Likewise, the NPA will increasingly find that the victories of the BMA are beneficial to it. Thus, there will be a heightening of unity, cooperation and coordination between these two revolutionary forces. The MNLF will very likely give more and more attention to both the national and democratic aspirations of the Moro people and will train more revolutionary cadres from the toiling masses. As a result of the successes of the MNLF and BMA against the AFP, even the present Moro collaborators of the fascist regime will tend to become independent and dissatisfied with the Manila government and many of them will support or join the armed struggle.

The principal opponents of Marcos within the ruling system like Aquino, Manglapus, Lopez, Osmeña and others will continue to be obliged to prove their political worth in the field of armed resistance. They will amount to nothing either to Marcos or the US if they are unable to relate themselves properly to the armed revolutionaries by cooperating with and extending logistical support to them, organizing their own armed groups and developing influence within the reactionary armed forces. They are liable to completely lose whatever is left of their following if they do not make any significant contribution to the armed struggle.

Within the decade, an antifascist united front for armed struggle can be sure of toppling Marcos. This can include any armed organization of whatever ideological, political or religious persuasion so long as it is antifascist. The single unifying element is the determination to overthrow the Marcos fascist dictatorship. Any attempt to imitate the Marcos concept of unity, which is monopoly of political power by a single person, clique or party, is anathema to the antifascist or democratic cause. Those who learn to unite in the antifascist movement will easily agree to belong together in a democratic coalition government. Democratic power shall be shared according to the basic interests of the people and the relative strengths of the participating parties and groups.

Other than the armies led by the CPP and MNLF, there are already several armed organizations at various stages of preparing for or waging armed struggle. They can fight according to their best lights. The important thing is to direct the fire against the enemy. At best, all antifascist armed organizations will eventually coordinate their efforts. The conditions for armed struggle are so excellent that even the pro-Soviet Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas are already claiming to have disengaged from their collaboration with the fascist regime (from "critical support" to "constructive opposition") and to be making preparations for armed struggle, notwithstanding their old discredited theory that they would conduct a general military offensive only after other entities have done for them the prior stages of the people's war.

The legal opposition parties tend at the moment to concentrate on the question of elections and to demand concessions from the fascist regime in that regard. But they will continue to play a more serious role in exposing and condemning the antinational and antidemocratic character of the fascist regime when they develop their cadres and members through political training courses, publications and various types of meetings without having to wait for the electoral campaign period. The most important task of the legal opposition parties is not to

unify as a single party but to coalesce and have as many organized initiative as possible to oppose everyday the reign of terror and greed. As far as the electoral laws stand, the fascist dictatorship will continue to control the process and outcome of elections in 1984, 1986 and 1987. Marcos will not be budged an inch from his arrogant position without the growth of the legal democratic movement and, more importantly, the armed revolutionary movement.

Together the legal organizations of workers, peasants and the urban petty bourgeoisie, especially the students and teachers are showing the way to wage a comprehensive legal democratic movement. The trade union and strike movement will intensify on a wide scale. A series of general strikes is possible within the decade. The peasant movement will increasingly carry out concerted mass actions in connection with both the democratic movement in the cities and with the armed struggle in the countryside. The youth and the student movement will be increasingly linked with the workers and peasants and will carry out mass actions dwarfing the mass actions during the early 1970s.

As the legal parties, mass organizations and publications against the fascist dictatorship become stronger, they will be repeatedly subjected to threats and actual punitive actions. The fascist dictatorship will continue to be a naked fact, with or without another formal declaration of martial law. By his threats and punitive actions, Marcos will compel an ever increasing number of activists from the legal democratic movement to join the ranks of the armed revolutionaries.

As the armed struggle and the legal democratic movement progress, the regime will become more and more ferocious. But the point shall be reached when the US will have to seriously consider withdrawing support from Marcos in favor of another figure, when it shall have been proven by the armed struggle that he is already bringing US interests down with him. Only at that point will the US be willing to ease him out. Among the effective measures that the US will use to pressure him will be delays in the approval of loans and threats to reduce these drastically. Marcos will try to cope with these pressures by amending the electoral laws and giving concessions to his political rivals. From his viewpoint, he will at the worst offer to step down in 1987 in favor of someone he will choose.

But the big question is whether it will still be possible for the US and Marcos to simply mollify or even satisfy his political rivals who will derive direct or indirect support from an armed antifascist united front. Even at the moment, Aquino and other such opponents of Marcos find it necessary to affirm publicly the important and decisive role of the CPP, MNLF and other revolutionary forces in the settlement of the most crucial issues in the country. It is possible that by the time the US is willing to replace Marcos, his political opponents shall have come to a position of demanding nothing less than the punishment of Marcos and even the US shall have become impotent in the face of the armed antifascist united front.

Recognizing his own vulnerability as a US puppet in economic distress and anticipating the ultimate dangers pose by the development of the antifascist united front for armed struggle, Marcos has been making some signals that he is willing to accommodate the progressive forces and widen the path for cooperation with some third world and socialist countries which can give substantial assistance to his regime. But at the same time, he is still confident that he is Washington's favorite boy, especially under the Reagan administration and that he has plenty of time both for giving in to US demands in exchange for his retention of power and for making a wider area of maneuver in additional directions.

Marcos even entertains the illusion that in the meantime in combination with his mailed fist policy against the revolutionary movement he can play tricks at the least to confuse and split the revolutionary ranks and the antifascist united front and at the most literally disarm the people's army before the slaughterhouse. Indeed, if he succeeds in this regard by some significant degree, he will delay his downfall for a long time. But unfortunately for him, the CPP knows his game well enough. If the CPP were to merely agree having a dialogue with him, this would have a strong divisive impact on the ranks of the revolutionaries and the united front.

Marcos will have to show sufficient proofs in advance that he is willing to shift toward an anti-imperialist and democratic position before a truce becomes negotiable. But even then the CPP will not even consider the idea of talking to him without prior consultations with its good allies and without consideration of their interests. He cannot succeed in simply trying to split the antifascist united front by talking to its participants one by one. At any rate, if he has some good intention no progressive force will stop him from adopting anti-imperialist and democratic measures before any dialogue with him. There are more than enough conditions and reasons for him to veer

away from his position as the chief Filipino puppet of the US and save himself from the most severe verdict of history, a verdict reserved only for the Spanish colonizers, the US imperialists and the Japanese fascists.

Marcos has declared that the CPP can become a legal party but on the condition that it renounces armed struggle. No genuine self-respecting revolutionary party will ever renounce the people's right to wage an armed revolution against tyranny. This right is held sacred by both liberal democrats and Marxists. Under certain conditions, truce can become negotiable but surrender, never. The CPP will never surrender and humiliate itself as the pro-Soviet revisionists did in 1974 and some Moros who betray the cause of the Moro people. Moreover, the CPP has become strong through armed struggle and the conditions for armed revolution are increasingly excellent.

Because US imperialism props up the fascist dictatorship with colossal amounts of direct and indirect military assistance, it is just and appropriate for any antifascist force to secure arms from any friendly source abroad or simply purchase these from the international open market. After all, such arms will but be a tiny fraction of the massive military supplies provided by the US to the fascist regime. Whatever is the amount of arms that they can secure from abroad, the antifascist forces will maintain independence and remain self-reliant as they will continue to seize more than 90 percent of their total arms from the fascist enemy.

More than any other entity, it is the political rivals of Marcos within the ruling system who need to secure rifles from abroad in order to arm their following and try to do best their share in the antifascist armed struggle. They need to catch up with the revolutionary tide. Even their own followers complain of being impotent before the fascist enemy. Within any month, they can be armed by the tens. Within six months, they can be armed by the hundreds. Within a year, they can be armed by a few thousands. At every level of armed strength, more arms can be seized from the enemy. By not arming their own followers and possibly their allies, Marcos' political rivals are allowing him to prolong his rule.

As far as the CPP and MNLF are concerned, their respective armies have sufficient arms to be able to advance steadily and cumulatively. But they want their allies to be armed in order to hasten the process of overthrowing the fascist dictatorship. More blows from more directions will certainly accelerate the process. The revolutionary forces will feel the more compelled to seek military supplies from friendly sources abroad the more that the US intervene in support of the fascist dictatorship.

The US can no longer be as powerful as it used to be. There is nothing awesome about its support for the fascist dictatorship. The revolutionary movement has already made great strides. The US and its puppet Marcos will get their just deserts. What is good about the fascist dictatorship is that it has created the conditions for the Philippine revolution—frustrated by US imperialism at the beginning of this century—to surge forward again at a time that world conditions favor its success.

Within the decade, the US will further decline as a world power. Its internal and external economic and political crisis will worsen. The attempt of US President Reagan to stimulate the US economy through intensified high-technology military production will further weaken the US and create social unrest among the American people. The US will be bogged down in the arms race and confrontations with its first world rival, the Soviet Union. Europe and Middle East will continue to preoccupy the two superpowers. At the same time, US competition with the second world of lesser capitalist countries will sharpen and further constrict the profitable areas for US investments and market for US civilian and military products.

In the third world, the independent countries will become even more assertive of their anti-imperialism and anti-imperialist revolutionary movements will surge forward as never before seen in the unliberated countries. Even reactionary governments will find themselves increasingly at odds with the US because of the growing virulence of the world capitalist economic crisis and the excessive US demands for debt payments and extraordinary privileges. Even now, it has difficulties attending to so many trouble spots. After its great debacle in its war of aggression in Indochina, it has been impotent before the revolutionary upheavals in Africa, Iran and Central America.

Certainly, within the latter part of the decade, the US will have great difficulties in propping a strictly pro-US puppet regime in the Philippines because of the strong revolutionary movement of the Filipino people and because of many other turbulence elsewhere. Escalation of US intervention in the Philippines will not only be futile but will possibly mean a total elimination of its imperialist interests here.

The American people have learned unforgettable lessons from the US war of aggression in Vietnam. They will oppose every act of US intervention in the Philippines and extend greater political and moral support for the Filipino people. The considerable number of Filipinos in the US and elsewhere abroad will play an important role in

gathering international support for the revolutionary movement in the motherland.

There have been no conditions domestically and internationally better than now for the advance of the Philippine revolution since its defeat by US imperialism at the beginning of this century. The sovereign Filipino people will continuously win greater revolutionary victories against fascism, imperialism and feudalism within this decade. The correct leadership of the CPP over the NPA and other revolutionary forces is the guarantee for great victories to be won.

Intrigues against Democratic Forces

Circa December 1982

There is today an absurd notion being systematically spread that any entity that dares to fight the Marcos dictatorship is actually a tool of Marcos and that the harder one fights, the more one is its witting or unwitting tool.

Let us cite examples of this absurdity (more precisely, a string of intrigues) that denies the determination and free will of democratic forces—the forces opposing one-man rule—as well as their leaders.

1. The Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army are accused as mere tools of the Marcos dictatorship even while they are waging a life-and-death struggle against it. They supposedly give Marcos the excuse to perpetuate a reign of terror.

2. Whenever the detained Jose Ma. Sison, alleged former CPP chairman, attacks the shenanigans of his powerful persecutors, he is maliciously pictured by some elements as being allowed or being used by the regime in order to prove that there is democracy or freedom of speech or to draw attention away from things more damning to Marcos.

3. The democratic mass organizations and their mounting mass actions are slandered as supposedly helping Marcos give substance to his claim of maximum tolerance and of democracy in his domain.

4. The current boycott movement against a rigged election for a sham parliament is denounced as a big help for Marcos for supposedly splitting the opposition ranks.

5. The existence of independent publications like *Malaya* and others is regarded as incontrovertible evidence of the freedom of the press and the democratic character of the present regime.

Shall the entire democratic movement and all its leaders now fall silent and fold their arms to avoid the ignominy of being called tools of their enemy or should not shallow intriguers be exposed for what they are?

The witting and unwitting sources of intrigues such as the above can be identified:

1. The chief witting sources are propagandists and psywar experts of the regime. They want to sow confusion in the ranks of the organized democratic forces and the people.

2. Another witting source are pseudorevolutionaries who are in cahoots with the regime and who specialize in spreading intrigue in professional circles in order to prettify their collaboration with the regime and their isolation from the democratic mass movement.

3. Some Marcos oppositionists participating in the sham electoral process who want to rationalize their position are also witting and unwitting sources.

4. Another source finally are well-meaning people who unwittingly pick up and spread the absurd notion from the above three witting and unwitting sources.

Those who do not have a grasp of the law of contradiction and the dialectical process can be easily misled. A narrow, one-sided view of things for example is bound to misinterpret that the very struggle against tyranny is the tyrannical regime's reason for being.

The truth can be drawn only by an analysis of the facts, including the objective and the subjective factors, in an all-sided way. And the development of things firm up the truth against outright lies.

For instance, how can it be said that the CPP and NPA are tools of the regime when these organizations are resolutely fighting it at no little sacrifice in order to strengthen the revolutionary movement and lay the basis for a people's democratic system of government?

Again, how can it be said that Jose Ma. Sison is being used by the regime for its vile purposes when in fact he is subjected to cruel and unusual punishment through solitary confinement in an attempt to silence him and he is constantly maligned in the controlled media and in fly-by-night publications churned out by the regime's psywar experts propagandists? The positive occasional exposure he gets comes from the independent media through independent-minded media people who dare assert their freedom to speak out the truth at great risk to themselves.

How can it be said that democratic mass organizations are tools of the present regime when in fact the gains of the democratic mass movement have been won at the cost of incalculable sacrifices, difficulties and risks?

How can it be said that *Malaya* and other independent publications substantiate the claims of the Marcos

regime to press freedom and democracy when in fact these publications are being subjected to all sorts of assaults, restrictions and harassments, including the sequestration of We-Forum and the arrest and detention of its editor and writers?

Intriguers and plain cynics cannot just credit the achievements of the democratic forces to the Marcos regime. These achievements have been won through struggle and sacrifices.

Democracy will triumph only through the advance of all democratic forces waging all forms of struggle and mobilizing the entire people. We cannot achieve a democratic form of government by simply folding our arms and watching the present tyranny rot through its sheer bankruptcy.

Mr. Marcos is not some Manichean god who can place himself on all sides—that of his regime and that of those opposing his regime—and claim all credit for his everlasting life and glory. He is categorically on the side of tyranny. Every word or deed against this tyranny contributes to the inevitable victory of democracy.

The political and economic crisis of the ruling system is not something that will blow over after a short while. It continues to weaken the system to the core.

The so-called economic recovery program and the intensified campaign of fascist terrorism merely serve to aggravate the crisis, cause further social unrest and incite more people to take up arms.

On the Current Philippine Situation

Interview by the Free Jose Maria Sison Committee

Circa February 1983

What is your perception of the current Philippine situation?

The economy is in extreme crisis and there is going to be no letup. Massive unemployment and soaring inflation are wreaking havoc on the lives of the broad masses of the people. Colossal deficits in government budget, foreign trade and the balance of payments are laid bare by the increasing difficulties of the regime to get new foreign loans. Marcos himself has announced austerity measures, except for the military. The peso is also being daily devalued due to the increasing scarcity of foreign exchange.

All the major export sectors of the economy (coconut, sugar, mining, logging, etc.) are far more depressed than ever. The reassembly and repackaging industries for the domestic market are hardpressed by the tariff reduction on imports. The much-favored enterprises for reexport, like garment and electronic, are also in dire straits and of course bring in very low net export earnings as usual. Even local food production is now assailed by the rising costs of farm inputs and depressed market.

Marcos in anticipating the intensification of social unrest has obviously chosen to preempt and stop it by sheer force of arms. Thus, he has practically run amuck. He has cracked down on workers, peasants, students, journalists, religious, intellectuals and others who dare to criticize his policies and make democratic demands.

The worst forms of fascist attacks are being carried out in the countryside, mainly against peasants and farm workers. The attacks include massacres, summary executions, tortures, forced mass evacuations, reconcentration of entire villages, fake surrenders, arbitrary mass arrests and detention, bombing, rape, looting and arson.

It seems fashionable nowadays in some Manila intellectual circles to speak of a post-Marcos era as having begun. What do you think of this view?

Definitely, Marcos is already on his way down if his situation in the 1980s were compared with that in the 1970s. But there is still a lot of hard struggles ahead for the people before he is finished either by outright overthrow or by inducing the US to change horses. Even if the US decided now to ease Marcos out, the process could extend to Marcos' retirement in 1987. Four years is still a lot of time.

The US will not go out of its way to replace Marcos if the antifascist forces, especially the armed revolutionary movement, do not show enough strength to really worry the US. At the moment, the political agents of Marcos are spreading the rumor that he and Reagan had made a secret agreement to "modernize" or further beef up the military and to seek the destruction of the revolutionary movement before accommodation can be given to the legal opposition.

Lately, however, the US State Department and US embassy officials in Manila are quite busy in inviting prominent figures in the legal opposition and cultivating friendships. Maybe the US wants to start washing its hands or simply pick the brains of the oppositionists for limited purposes. The larger fact today is that Reagan makes a lot of anti-Soviet noise against Poland but keeps quiet and does nothing about the far graver human rights violation in the Philippines.

Marcos is still serving US interests very well. There is yet no reason for the US to yank him out of power immediately. Marcos' economic difficulties are more the result of his own subservient economic policies and the worsening crisis of the world capitalist system.

Will polarization continue? How will it proceed?

So long as Marcos gets enough support from the US, he will continue to get tough and will not give away a single inch of his autocratic powers. The people have no choice but to resist intensified exploitation and oppression. And so polarization continues.

The legal opposition is severely persecuted and is always on the brink of being illegalized. The main current among the people is therefore to support the revolutionary armed movement against the fascist dictatorship. The CPP, NPA, NDF and other antifascist forces are gaining strength as fascist terror and the economic crisis continue to assail the people.

What do you think of Marcos' offer of dialogue to the opposition forces?

As far as I know, the Moro National Liberation Front has long been disgusted with the outcome of the Tripoli Agreement and is determined to wage armed struggle for the Moro people's right to self-determination. Now that the NPA has drawn the bulk of AFP contingents, the Moro areas are relieved and the Moro people can better intensify their armed struggle.

After his return from the US, it was obvious that Marcos made an offer of compromise to the legal opposition. But when UNIDO and other parties made their proposals, which were quite reasonable, these were dismissed as mere fantasies by Marcos. It will really take some further deterioration of the ruling system and the growth of the revolutionary movement before the US decides to require Marcos to come to terms with the legal opposition.

I can make only an educated guess about the Communist Party of the Philippines. It can easily see through the Marcos offer of dialogue as a divisive ploy complementary to all-out military attacks by the AFP against the NPA. This is proven by the use of fake mass surrenders as the psywar supplement to vicious military campaigns and atrocities.

I suppose that the CPP is very confident that the legal opposition cannot be inveigled into capitulation or any anti-communist compromise. Without the armed resistance of the CPP/NPA, Marcos will become more arrogant in persecuting and destroying the legal opposition. The legal opposition cannot enter into any agreement with Marcos even under the auspices of the US without taking into consideration the views and interests of the CPP, NPA, NDF and other national democratic forces. To do so would be to undermine their own interests.

How should national reconciliation proceed if polarization is to be avoided or reduced?

Marcos should give up the notion that it suffices for him to make occasional calls for national reconciliation and that he can borrow time by dangling offers to the various opposition forces and then playing off one against the other.

All the opposition forces know what it takes to make the US drop Marcos like a hot potato. At best, they are determined to fight for national independence and democracy. They know that they need each other and that their unity against the enemy reflects the national unity of the oppressed and exploited people.

For a start, Marcos should be ready to give up his autocracy and comply with the basic democratic demands of the UNIDO. 1983 is the year for Marcos to take significant steps away from tyranny and the monopoly of political power if he does not want the economic crisis and the armed resistance to consign him irrevocably to unmitigated historical damnation. Even the US seems to want credible elections in 1984.

Do you have any idea of CPP and NPA strength at the moment? How are they coping with the all-out military campaigns against them?

According to the most serious estimates made by the Ministry of National Defense and AFP officials, the CPP has so many thousands of members and the NPA so many thousands of rifles. My own estimate based on newspaper reports is that the NPA riflemen are now a number of times more than the hardcore riflemen of the Bangsa Moro Army of the MNLF.

The all-out AFP campaigns against the NPA are obviously futile. Even the controlled press gives reports that the NPA is making successful raids and ambushes where they seize as many as ten to twenty rifles per operation. These are occurring so frequently almost all over the country.

The highest AFP officials are now worried about the armed resistance reaching a critical mass soon. Maybe, if the NPA accumulates even only 10 percent of the AFP riflemen, the beginning of the end for the US-Marcos regime or even the entire ruling system would occur.

The organized mass base of the CPP and NPA can easily run into millions of people under organs of democratic power and in mass organizations. And of course, revolutionary propaganda reaches the entire Filipino people.

To what extent do you think does the US still support Marcos?

I think that Marcos has been emboldened to become more tyrannical by what his agents claim to be a secret agreement between him and US President Reagan for the Armed Forces of the Philippines to be modernized (that is, further beefed up) with substantial US aid, of course; and for Marcos to effectively crush the Left before real normalization (from the abnormalcy of autocracy and fascism) and accommodation to the legal opposition can be made.

As a result of some secret Marcos-CIA consultations during Marcos' US state visit, "Operation Katatagan" will be carried out, as has been announced lately, in 1983—of course with US logistical support. This operation has

obviously been designed by the CIA and is patterned after the infamous “Operation Phoenix” in the Vietnam war. Appropriations for the AFP have been increased despite the austerity measures for all other government departments.

In exchange for US support for the military, Marcos will continue to intensify anticommunist hysteria and attacks against democratic forces in 1983 in order to divert the people’s attention from his responsibility for the deepening economic crisis and in order to weaken or destroy the legal opposition. In so many words, Marcos has been boasting that he does not need the UNIDO as opposition in 1984 because he can always have Roy’s Nacionalista Party as the “opposition.”

The broadest range of opposition must unite even more effectively. The traditional oppositionists in the US have the special function of weakening US support for Marcos and taking advantage of the rapid decline of Reagan’s political stocks. The opposition in the US should continue exposing to the American people principally and to the US Congress US administration support and responsibility for the fascist autocracy in the Philippines.

How do you expect to be released from prison under the Marcos regime?

As a prisoner of conscience, whose constitutional and human rights have been grossly violated through torture and other abuses, I should be released immediately if the regime had any correct sense of law or moral conscience.

But frankly speaking, I do not expect to be released from prison under the Marcos regime. How can I expect to be released when Marcos himself refuses even only to transfer me from solitary confinement to a regular detention center where I can have social life with fellow political detainees? Even after five years of detention, I am still being subjected to solitary confinement which is psychological torture essentially and constitutes cruel and unusual punishment.

I think that the intention of the fascists is to undermine my physical and mental health and then subject me to cumulative poisoning or infection in order to kill me. You know that where I am detained, the Military Security Unit compound, quite a number of political prisoners—including former Senators Benigno Aquino and Eva Estrada Kalaw—have suffered heart attacks.

I do not mean to discourage the Free Jose Ma. Sison Committee and other human rights organizations seeking my release. All efforts to obtain my freedom help to effect improvements on my conditions and forestall dangers to my person.

On the Supreme Court Decision Upholding the Validity of the Presidential Commitment Order

April 25, 1983

Under tyrannical regimes, the courts are conspicuously a coercive apparatus against the people. The Supreme Court under the present dispensation has a standing no better than that under the Japanese occupation government during the last world war.

On so-called political questions involving the autocracy that has usurped power in this country, the Supreme Court has consistently failed to uphold the basic democratic rights of the people.

If victims of fascist terrorism sometimes make petitions to the Supreme Court, it is not really so much in recognition of its authority or ability to dispense justice as to expose further to the people the unjust character of the fascist dictatorship and its instrumentalities.

The decision of the Supreme Court upholding the validity of the Presidential Commitment Order and the power of the President to suspend the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus comes as no surprise. As in previous decisions on political cases, the people are reminded by implication that justice is best sought outside of the captive courts of the fascists.

The arbitrariness of the fascist regime in seizing and detaining persons without judicial warrant and therefore without due process has been upheld and endorsed on the absolutely foolish ground that the state must act criminally to be able to go after persons it presumes to be against it.

The decision hurls invectives against so-called rebels and subversives and insists that even those merely suspected of being such suffer the violation of their rights. Little does the Supreme Court realize that it has placed the fascist dictatorship on the level of its own misconception of what it calls the rebel forces.

The brutal logic of the decision is that the fascist dictatorship cannot assume even a pretension of political or moral superiority over its real and suspected enemies. By making claims against the revolutionary movement without any proof regarding the dispensation of revolutionary justice, the Supreme Court in a decision obviously engineered by Malacañang, demeans itself into becoming an organ of fascist propaganda and an accomplice of official terrorism.

The revolutionary movement may not have its paid personnel, facilities, funds and other means that the regime has. But it has a just cause and the support and respect of the people. In the eyes of the people it is indeed a force morally superior to the fascist regime. To say the least, it has a policy of leniency towards captives and the people's courts dispense justice in accordance with due process.

The Supreme Court decision endorses official terrorism and encourages acts of anarchy by military personnel and even members of kidnap syndicates who can misrepresent themselves as military personnel armed with some telegram of a PCO or even only claiming to have a PCO for its intended victim. Not even the justices are safe from their own decision.

The modus operandi of the military can as well be that of kidnapping syndicates. The captive is simply told that he is under PCO and is immediately held incommunicado without being given the chance even only to verify whether his captors are duly authorized to hold him captive. He becomes prey to torture and murder.

When those in power do not follow due process, their criminality make the people suffer extremely. They oppress and exploit the people so much so that armed revolution can ultimately be their only way to freedom.

Indeed, fascism breeds anarchy more than it can enforce law and order for the benefit of the exploiting classes, including its imperialist masters. However, the people are moved to wage armed resistance in order to uphold democracy and defend their rights.

In more than twelve years of despotism, Marcos has only succeeded in fanning the flames of armed revolution. In 1972, the New People's Army had only a few hundreds of riflemen in a few provinces and the Armed Forces of the Philippines had a hundred thousand troops to go after them. Now the NPA has several thousands of riflemen all over the country, despite 25,000 AFP troops and huge government military spending to wipe them out. Can there be a more telling proof of Marcos' impotence as a political leader?

Marcos ought to be taken to task for his failure and incompetence by his imperialist masters and his fellow

reactionaries rather than be encouraged to pursue and intensify his brutal and ineffective ways. Fascist tyranny is clearly self-defeating.

Marcos claims in his letter to the editor of *Bulletin Today* that he must prove himself strong and powerful by being more brutal and ruthless to his political enemies and the people; and that he will risk political isolation standing by his dubious principles against the people whom he denigrates as the mob. But it is precisely brutality and official terrorism coupled with the economic disaster into which he has steered the country that have isolated him politically and made him impotent.

Magnanimity is not impotence. The ability to recognize and rectify one's errors is not impotence. Respect for democratic and civil rights is not impotence. Impotence is craven puppetry to US imperialism and the resort to brutality and terrorism against the broad masses of the people whose support is what makes a leader potent.

By making the people suffer injustices and driving them to fight back, the dictatorship finds and extends indefinitely its very reason for existence. But it also digs its own grave. A point will be reached when the growing strength of the people in armed revolution will put an end to fascist dictatorship.

Here is a challenge! If Marcos wants a just peace, he should end his puppetry to US imperialism and respect the basic democratic rights of the people. The rebels and subversives are not the ones responsible for the constitutionalization and institutionalization of fascist autocracy; the wanton violation of the national and democratic rights of the people; and the extreme exploitation of the people by the new oligarchy and its foreign masters. These very iniquities justify the people's armed revolution.

Some Points for Reflection on the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant

August 6, 1983

The campaign to oppose and stop the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant (BNPP) has been worthwhile and is of far-reaching significance even if the US government, Westinghouse and the Marcos regime continue to have their way.

Every effort to arouse, organize and mobilize the people against the viciousness and the machinations of US imperialism and the fascist regime bring closer the day of reckoning for these twin forces of evil in the country.

The Tañada panel and the Nuclear Free Philippines Coalition have succeeded in educating us about the BNPP—the most expensive, dangerous and uneconomic project of its kind in the entire country and in the whole world and a monument to the avarice and irresponsibility of the Marcos regime.

We offer here some points for reflection to help deepen our understanding of the controversial plant and link the campaign against it to the entire national democratic movement.

1. US Imperialism and the safety question

Had it not been for the well-informed and militant work of the Tañada panel, the Puno Commission would never have been formed and obliged to confirm some major unsafe features of the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant and the Philippine Atomic Energy Commission would never have been allowed to come up with 146 safety requirements, costing some \$700 million on top of the \$1.2 billion for the plant.

But even then, the design and built-in features of the BNPP continue to be defective and dangerous to millions of Filipinos. The problem of waste disposal remains unsolved. The entire plant sits on an earthquake fault and is in the shadow of four volcanoes. Experts in all pertinent sciences decry the serious defects and problems that justify the scrapping of the entire project.

The BNPP has been rammed through simply because “there is no law requiring the US government to assess the environmental impact of a foreign nuclear project before approving the sale of reactor equipment by an American company.” Thus, the US National Regulatory Commission has been prevented from reviewing and examining the BNPP.

At this juncture, we point out the fact of US imperialism. The US government is a tool of monopoly capitalism. It gives way to a business deal of a monopoly firm like Westinghouse even if by US standards and regulations the product being sold to a third world country like the Philippines is extremely defective and harmful to the people. The welfare of the people in the third world is of little or of no consideration so long as the US monopoly firms make superprofits. Thus, harmful products ranging from poisonous fertilizers and drugs to defective nuclear plants have been dumped on the third world. The Reagan administration is notorious for disregarding health and safety requirements, especially if the prospective victims are not its own citizens.

2. The US monopoly and local big comprador collusion

Despite the exposure of the grossly unsafe and uneconomic character of the BNPP, including the iniquitous and onerous stipulations of the contract with Westinghouse, the Marcos regime has not rescinded the contract but has done everything within its fascist power to ram the project through after the sham investigation made by the Puno Commission.

In its usual perverse fashion, the Marcos regime hired American lawyers to invoke Philippine sovereignty and dignity in preventing the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission from reviewing and examining BNPP. A patriotic Filipino leadership would have asked the US NRC as well as an independent body of scientists to inquire into the project because the lives and health of millions of Filipinos are involved.

What then is more important than the interests of the Filipino people? Why has the Marcos regime and Westinghouse made a contract whose terms are kept secret from the Filipino people? Why?

The answer is obvious. The initial Westinghouse price quotation for two nuclear plants was \$500 million. This was already an overprice when compared with the price of comparable nuclear power plants put up elsewhere. The price is now \$1.9 billion and it is still rising for just one nuclear plant. What was quoted at \$250 million before is now costing the Filipino people at least eight times more.

The scandalously gross overpricing allows large amounts for payoffs, brokers' fees and other commissions for

the big bureaucrat compradors. It is a crony corporation, specifically one operated by Disini, which is the go-between of Westinghouse and the National Power Corporation.

Making a killing for the fascist compradors does not end with the purchase contract on the plant. Crony corporations also handle the loan syndication, construction, construction equipment and supplies, acquisition of the land site, etc.

A case study should be made on how a US multinational corporation like Westinghouse colludes with the big bureaucrat compradors. Together with US imperialism, the big compradors of the fascist elite must be exposed, especially because they are the most rapacious and the most insatiable of the local reactionaries.

3. *The uneconomic character of the BNPP*

The cost of putting up the plant is already staggering. Higher costs will be incurred due to operational breakdowns, maintenance and waste disposal. The cost of decommissioning the plant after its life span of a mere 30-40 years is far larger than the cost of putting it up.

If we consider alone the cost of establishing and maintaining the plant, the National Power Corporation will have to charge the consumers fees that are higher than those charged for petro-generated or hydro-generated power. The actual cost of nuclear energy has become so prohibitive that most of those previously wanting to put up nuclear power plants have backed out of their contracts or withdrawn from negotiating contracts.

As it has already done, Westinghouse can and will raise the cost of nuclear energy. It keeps complete control of the technology, the uranium fuel supply, the spare parts, etc. From the beginning, it was absolutely foolhardy for the Marcos regime to imagine that uranium could be more plentiful and cheaper than petroleum.

The acquisition of the nuclear plant falls into line with the priorities dictated by US imperialism through the World Bank which it controls.

Afflicted with the crisis of overproduction, the US has abused the device of extending loans for nonindustrial projects in order to promote the sale of its manufactures to developing countries.

The Marcos regime has thus gone into rapid inflationary spending for costly and substandard infrastructure, energy and other so-called capital construction projects. These are in fact sheer consumption and wastage of savings as well as borrowed resources so long as there is the absence of heavy and basic industries serving as the engine of genuine development.

The entire scheme of the US-Marcos regime is one of pseudodevelopment and anti-industrialization. The country is more backward, agrarian and semifeudal than ever. More than ever, it is dependent on the export of raw materials and the import of manufactures. One American scholar correctly refers to the US-Marcos scheme as a process of refeudalization.

There is no neocolonial industrialization but neocolonial anti-industrialization. As a result of the mounting foreign debt, the US imperialists are now obliging the Marcos regime to be ruthless to Filipino-owned light manufacturing, even if import dependent due to the lack of heavy and basic industries. The Marcos regime is openly under orders to concentrate on rural development and to hurry up with more privileges for natural-resource and trade-oriented multinational corporations, import liberalization, devaluation, increased local taxation, etc.

4. *The US military bases and the BNPP*

The US military bases are to be the principal consumers of the energy to be generated by the BNPP. The export processing zone of the "gypsy industries" of US and other foreign multinationals are cited as another major customer.

The BNPP is bound to be cited by Filipino puppet officials as one more reason for perpetuating the US military bases. They will say that the Philippines cannot afford to lose the biggest energy consumer because the cost of the plant is enormous.

Another reason that will be cited for the retention of the US military bases is that they provide protection to the nuclear plant, the spent fuel rods and the transport of nuclear materials. The US can also suspend the operation of the plant or the delivery of materials for the plant to counteract the strong popular demands for the dismantling of the US military bases.

Definitely, the BNPP is one more lever in the hands of US imperialism to compel the Filipino puppet officials to do its bidding. But it is actually no lever if the viewpoint of the Filipino people and not that of fascist puppet charlatans prevails.

Because of its linkage to the US military bases, the BNPP is one more magnet for nuclear attack. The other

nuclear superpower rival of the US is not so foolish as to neglect the targeting of this plant. But even if only the nearby US military installations would be attacked, the disaster would extend to the BNPP and thereby compound the disaster to the millions of people.

The nuclear arsenal and delivery system of the Soviet Union are so large and effective that they can destroy all known sites of nuclear silos like Subic and Clark; covert nuclear silos like those of Del Monte in Bukidnon and Pasuquin in Ilocos Norte; all US communications and radar facilities that serve the land, air and sea nuclear attack capability of the US.

US propaganda itself has been drumming up the Soviet nuclear threat to the Asia-Pacific region to justify US military bases in the Philippines. But the way out for the Philippines and the Filipino people is not to have US military bases but to adopt an independent, nonaligned and neutral policy vis-à-vis the two superpowers; and support the movement to make Southeast Asia a nuclear-free region and ensure that the whole Asia-Pacific region becomes truly a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality.

The Soviet Union would have no interest in attacking the Philippines with nuclear weapons if there were no US military bases and nuclear weapons here. And if the Filipino people succeed in liberating themselves from US imperialism and its fascist puppets, they shall have armed themselves sufficiently to cope with any conventional attack by any aggressor.

The Japanese fascists could easily invade the Philippines in World War II because the US imperialists in the first place refused to distribute arms to the people and then concentrated their US and puppet troops in Bataan in one strategic act of folly.

It is high time for the Filipino people to put a stop to the imperialist trick of gaining the prerogative of holding a whole nation captive by simply making it fear another monster. If we can do away with the incumbent monster, we can face up to any other monster.

Conclusion

The problem that is the BNPP should be a concrete starting point for a consistent and sustained attack against US imperialism and the fascist puppet regime. The continuing campaign to oppose the BNPP should be pursued to accomplish the following objectives:

1. Condemn the overall political collusion between US imperialism and the Marcos fascist clique.
2. Oppose the entire US-Marcos pseudodevelopment scheme and the plunder of Philippine resources by the US multinational firms and the fascist bureaucrat compradors.
3. Prepare public opinion for the nationalization of the economy and cancellation of all contracts and loan agreements entered into by the fascist regime with the imperialists when these are injurious to the economy and the whole nation.
4. Develop further the people's firm stand that the BNPP be stopped, dismantled or decommissioned (as the case may be) at the soonest possible time and with the cost for doing so shouldered by Westinghouse or the US government or else face a boycott of US products.
5. Intensify the peace movement and demand abrogation of the US-RP Military Bases Agreement and the dismantling of US military bases, including overt and covert bases and communications and radar facilities.

The five objectives above are of utmost relevance and are spelled out for emphasis. The campaign to oppose the BNPP should be related to the comprehensive national democratic program.

August 11, 1983

The abolition of the presidential commitment order is being trumpeted. But Presidential Decree 1877 supposedly doing away with it clearly states that the President may order the further detention of suspects for insurrection or rebellion, subversion and the like beyond and possibly even several times beyond the one-year maximum limit of “preventive detention action.” The decree also affirms the continued suspension of the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus.

Even if the one-year limit of the preventive detention action (PDA) were to be followed in certain cases, the ground for military abuses and atrocities is wide as ever. It takes far less than a year for the fascists to perpetrate and remove the trace of torture and murder of captives; and to frustrate the attempts of their relatives, lawyers and friends to determine their whereabouts or seek remedies. It takes no more than three weeks for the physical wounds of torture victims to heal. When water or electrodes are used for torture, traces of torture on the victim disappear in even lesser time.

The PDA is the same abomination as the PCO. At the root of the problem is the autocratic power of Marcos to order or authorize the arbitrary arrest and detention of people without judicial process and without respect for the right to have prompt access to legal counsel. There can be no end to decrees changing the name of the same dog so long as the autocratic executive, legislative and judicial powers of the despot Marcos remain in his kind of constitution and so long as the people are still in the process of building up their strength to remove this despotism.

The decrees supposedly repealing the Public Order Act and the National Security Code are no more than mere propaganda tricks. The content of these fascist laws are already incorporated in the Code of Crimes which is about to be rubber-stamped by the Batasang Pambansa. Marcos is therefore not giving away anything to anyone.

PD Nos. 1875, 1876 and 1877 all belong to the same category as Proclamation 2045. The latter issuance pretends to repeal Proclamation 1081 and lift martial law but all the gains of fascist dictatorship remain intact and undiminished. The Marcos constitution remains autocratic, antinational and antidemocratic. And Marcos proceeds further to issue despotic fiats that are even worse than those issued under Proclamation 1081. We should not be misled by the razzle-dazzle of decrees that pretend to ease the situation. To Marcos, normalization means the further entrenchment and institutionalization of the abnormal—the fascist dictatorship. And this he has been doing consistently since his coup d’etat in 1972. There is absolutely no reason for us to think that he will ever stop selling rotten goods with glittering wrappings.

The only way for the Filipino people to establish democracy is to fight for it in every possible way. The escalation of fascist atrocities and the intolerable economic suffering of the people are more than ever accelerating the growth of every form of popular resistance on a nationwide scale. With Marcos’ foreign master, US imperialism, being increasingly preoccupied at home and the world over with so many troubles of its own making, there never has been a better opportunity for the Filipino people to push forward and complete the struggle for national democracy.

As soon as gigantic mass actions and a new level of armed resistance arise, it is likely that even US imperialism will start to think of junking Marcos. For all his subservience to US economic dictates through the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, Marcos is already increasingly being blamed for corruption and economic mismanagement by influential US circles. By the time that the US goes through the motion of rejecting him as a failed political agent, the national democratic forces shall have strengthened themselves as to find their way toward some transitional democratic movement or a definitely more stable democratic coalition government.

On Aquino and his Assassination

August 1983

In the wake of World War II, Benigno S. Aquino, Jr. was determined to get out of the shadow of his father who had been a high puppet official of the Japanese occupation. He gained nationwide prominence for the first time as a teenage Manila Times reporter in the frontlines of the Korean war. Subsequently, in his early twenties, he became the mayor of his hometown, Concepcion, Tarlac.

As mayor and then as governor of Tarlac, he adopted a populist style and endeared himself to many people. Although he belonged to a landlord family, he knew how to befriend and relate himself positively to the peasants and even to the armed revolutionaries through his relatives associated with the Hukbalahap. Thus, he would be attacked as a “subversive” by rabid anticommunists, especially Marcos.

As senator, he often took a progressive liberal stand on outstanding issues involving national independence and democracy. He sympathized on many occasions with the democratic cause of the workers, peasants, students and youth, teachers and other people although he refrained from discussing the need for national industrialization and land reform.

He advocated the solution of basic social problems in general, like poverty and unemployment, and took a civil libertarian stand in opposing Philippine involvement in the Vietnam war and the brutality of the military and police against the outburst of mass demonstrations that came to be called the First Quarter Storm of 1970 as well as other mass actions in the 1970 to 1972 period. He was an outstanding opponent of the Marcos regime, especially with regard to its propensity to use terror and violence against the people.

The Marcos regime was responsible not only for unwarranted military and police assaults on unarmed demonstrators but also such massacres as those of Culatingan, Lapiang Malaya, Jabidah, Sta. Lucia, Paraiso, Plaza Miranda and so many in the Moro provinces. Aquino stood courageously against the rising trend of fascism under the US-Marcos regime.

The Plaza Miranda bombing and massacre occurred in 1971. This almost wiped out the entire leadership of the Liberal Party. In Marcos’ now notorious style of intrigue and cover-up, he has always accused the Liberal Party, Aquino especially, and the Communist Party of the Philippines of being allies and yet he would maliciously blame this senseless violence on Aquino and the communists.

The people refused to believe Marcos. The Liberal Party swept the elections, with Aquino at the head of winning senatorial candidates. He became even more clearly the front-running presidential hopeful and was a shoo-in for the presidency in 1973.

But Marcos was coldbloodedly fabricating incidents, especially bombings, and creating the conditions for the declaration of martial law in 1972 and for grabbing all governmental powers for himself. When fascist dictatorship began, Aquino was not only robbed of the chance to become president but was also arbitrarily arrested and detained on trumped-up charges. He was in solitary confinement for almost seven years.

The mode of his imprisonment was so inhuman that he had to undertake a hunger strike in order to expose the barbarity of the fascist regime. He defied the fascist dictator, his military underlings and the military commissions. He thus contributed greatly to the antifascist resistance by his defiance.

As had been expected, Aquino was railroaded to a death sentence together with other patriots. This act of injustice aroused not only the just anger of the people but also the serious concern of major governments and appeals were made in his favor. Marcos had to backtrack, granting a retrial and cajoling him to give credence to the interim batasang pambansa elections in 1978 by running as an opposition candidate. He agreed to run and, of course, he was cheated in the rigged elections.

Despite entreaties of US President Carter, Marcos hesitated in releasing Aquino. It was only when the latter was on the verge of death that the former decided to allow him to leave for the United States for surgery and medical care.

Under the stress of solitary confinement and a death sentence, Aquino had developed a heart ailment. Suffering a heart attack in 1980, he was deprived of proper medical care for more than a month. Only after Marcos erroneously estimated that Aquino would die or at least become an invalid did he allow the latter to leave for the

United States. After Aquino's successful heart operation, Marcos explicitly allowed him to stay abroad for as long as he (Aquino) wanted. The tyrant calculated that it was better to keep his political rival out of the country. At the same time, he was double-facedly trying to discredit Aquino in the controlled press as one who was reneging on a promise to return. As soon as his passport lapsed in 1982, Aquino asked for renewal but was refused to the very end. Not even entreaties through Marcos' wife Imelda could persuade Marcos to allow the renewal of Aquino's passport. Both Marcos and his wife were discouraging Aquino from returning to the country because supposedly his enemies were out to kill him.

After years of exile, Aquino developed an intense and sincere desire to return to his country in order to help in a "peaceful transition to democracy" and to rebuild his political party and participate in the broad opposition. He wanted Marcos to dismantle his own fascist dictatorship and reconcile himself with the people whom his regime have intensively exploited and oppressed for an extremely long time. Aquino was keenly aware of the risks in returning home. He was ready for such possibilities as assassination, execution by firing squad, solitary confinement and house arrest. Regarding assassination, Marcos himself was making thinly veiled threats by prating about assassination plots against Aquino.

In an effort to discourage Marcos from having him assassinated upon arrival, Aquino requested the US State Department and US Congress Rep. Solarz (chairman of the Pacific and East Asia committee) to make representations with Marcos for his safe return to Manila. To show beyond doubt that only Marcos would have the power and means to have him assassinated, he took care of technical details down to the choice of a carrier, adoption of a pseudonym and booking of his real name in another plane, the company of foreign newsmen, airport welcome by relatives and friends and the wearing of a bulletproof vest.

Aquino knew well that Marcos was capable of having him assassinated. But why did he still return? He told some of his confidants that he had to make a choice between being run over by a taxi in Boston and being killed in his own country with proof of Marcos' responsibility. He would thereby die in a far more meaningful way.

In his telephone interview with Radio Veritas, he revealed that he was already being treated as an illegal overstaying alien in the United States and indicated that he was deprived of adequate protection. He said categorically that if he had to die he had better die in his own country. The people should know that the Reagan administration and the Marcos regime have been in cahoots in persecuting antifascist Filipino exiles in the United States. The general run of Filipino political exiles are harassed by the US Federal Bureau of Investigation and the US immigration authorities. Aquino in particular was exposed to the threat of a rubout by Marcos' operatives or through a contract of hired killers.

He was not close to the high officials of the Reagan administration but he had friends and sympathizers within the US Congress and among some career officials in the US State Department. He was not yet in any position to make short shrift of Marcos. He was only in a position of starting to erode the illegitimate power of the Marcos regime, especially if he could return to the country.

The retention of absolute power is a matter of life and death for Marcos. He reacted violently to the tactful suggestion of US congressmen (Rep. Solarz among them) that the pending \$900 million appropriation called for by the US-RP Military Bases Agreement would be "rearranged," the military component being reduced in favor of the economic component, if Marcos did not ease his grip on the country and allow Aquino to return. Thus, Marcos' murderous hatred of Aquino came to a new peak when Aquino insisted on his right to return home.

At crucial moments, when he feels that his "honor" or power is threatened, Marcos has always valued most the efficacy of gun and guile. This is evident in the Nalundasan assassination, the Plaza Miranda bombing, the declaration of martial law and the countless massacres before and during the fascist dictatorship.

The political career of Marcos has followed a blood-soaked path. On the surface, he can be cool and he capitalizes on his coolness to make himself appear as a clever politician. But the basic flaw in the character of the man is extreme greed and proneness to violent rage. He is indeed fit to be a fascist dictator in a moribund semicolonial and semifeudal society.

The longstanding violent temper of Marcos is complicated by a pathological disorder lupus erythematosus, which though not fatal according to experts nonetheless induces paranoia. Has US domination in the Philippines so degenerated that it must make use of a paranoid taskmaster?

Aquino took the risk of sacrificing his life. And he did make the sacrifice. But he triumphed over his murderers. He succeeded in demonstrating the injustices and madness of the fascist puppet regime; and the need for the

people to overthrow it. The Aquino assassination is one despicable crime where there is no ambiguity about the responsibility of the fascist regime. This is “salvaging” (Filipino English for summary execution) before the eyes of the world.

Certain points and facts concerning the assassination

Only the fascist dictator had the motive, the means and the opportunity to have the Aquino assassination prepared and carried out. Moreover, it is a longstanding modus operandi of Marcos to commit a crime and then evade responsibility by pointing to a scapegoat.

In politics or in bloody criminal acts, it is his peculiar tactic to conjure the illusion that his political opponents are eliminating each other. Intrigue is a commonplace trick of unscrupulous politicians but it is the distinctive characteristic of Marcos to translate this into murderous acts of intrigue when his pride or power is at stake.

As regards motive in the assassination of Aquino, Marcos had always been in mortal fear of Aquino as the serious threat to his power within the ruling system, a threat more immediate than that posed by the revolutionary movement. To the very end, Marcos did not want Aquino to return and was making death threats which he camouflaged and adduced to other quarters.

As regards means, Marcos controls the Armed Forces of the Philippines practically as his private army, through service officers headed by General Ver. Handpicked military agents carried out the assassination plot, which involved a thoroughgoing attempt to exclude witnesses and the killing of a fall guy.

As regards opportunity, it was created when the military agents arrested Aquino in the plane and made him disembark, contrary to a prior press statement by General Ver that Aquino would not be allowed to disembark without the proper travel documents.

Let us go over certain facts.

1. General Ver announced in a press statement two days before the assassination on August 21 that the Manila International Airport had been fully secured, that Aquino would not be allowed to disembark and that he would be sent back on the same plane he took to Manila if he did not have the proper travel documents. This Ver announcement was a bait. It served to assure Aquino that no harm could come to him if he flew in and that it would be a political triumph for him if he would be turned back. Marcos would be the loser.

2. Contrary to the Ver announcement, Aquino was arrested inside the plane and was made to disembark in a manner that welcoming relatives and friends would not be able to meet or see him. Military agents blocked and tried with might and main to prevent the newsmen accompanying Aquino from getting a complete and continuous view of the disembarkation and the assassination.

The most rigorous measures were adopted by the military to exclude the possibility of any hostile witness. But they would pretend to have left open the possible entry of PAL ground personnel. In such a maximum-security situation, it is only authorized personnel, Avsecom or air force ground crew, who are allowed entry in a restricted area.

3. The assassination was so designed by a legalistic criminal mind and his military implementors that there would be a disparity between the sights and sounds perceived by any possible hostile witness on the one hand and the “findings” to be made on the other hand. The assassination was so carried out that the testimony of any possible hostile witness, especially from among the people in the plane, would easily be discredited.

For instance, the three officers arresting Aquino appeared to have empty holsters but one of them would pull out a previously concealed handgun. Another gun wielder was one of the two military agents who waited outside the plane door. Several shots were fired behind Aquino but the findings will show only one bullet hitting his head. The honest testimony of a witness would be contradicted by the “evidence” of one bullet fired by one assassin. We must acknowledge the expertise of the perverted criminal lawyer and state magician.

4. The dead man who would be bandied about as the “communist” assassin of Aquino was clearly a fall guy. He was evidently shot to death inside a van before he was shoved out to appear as the assassin of Aquino. (Editor’s note: Investigation showed that Galman was a common criminal, taken from prison in Central Luzon by General Gatan, to be used as a prop in the assassination of Aquino.)

5. Aquino traveled under an assumed name, Marcial Bonifacio, and his family kept his flight plan secret until only twenty minutes before the plane he took landed. He was listed under his real name on another flight arriving at about the same time. There were eight planes arriving within the hour of his expected arrival. It was impossible for anyone outside the Aquino family and selected friends and the military agents of Marcos to know on which

specific plane Aquino was. The military agents physically prevented the relatives and close friends as well as Filipino newsmen from witnessing the disembarkation of Aquino.

6. The fall guy in a PAL mechanic's uniform but without a name tag could not have gone through the maximum security cordon if he were not brought in by the real assassins. No unauthorized person could precisely know in advance by what stairway Aquino would be brought down. It is incredible that the assassin, if he were not a military agent, would know at what precise spot and moment he would move in to aim and fire at Aquino's head from some distance of 18 inches or so. Aquino was squeezed in on both sides by two security men and close behind him was a third one while getting down the stairs and on to the tarmac. And on the tarmac were so many guards in security formation.

7. The alleged assassin remained unidentified for a long time. Supposed details about him are being retailed very slowly by the military authorities. It is astonishing why no relative could immediately come to identify him, unless he happens to be one of those criminals under the special care of General Gatan and his longtime patron Eduardo Cojuangco.

The military authorities monopolized the examination and autopsy of the alleged assassin for quite some time. They made sure that the Aquino family and friends would not be able to provide medical representatives to look over the corpse immediately. Even the very body of Aquino was not immediately shown to his close relatives and friends.

8. On the evening of August 22, Marcos came out on electronic media (TV-radio hook-up) to unleash his squid tactics on an outraged people. He declared that the situation was normal and under his control, implying that the Aquino assassination was a small and normal matter. He insinuated that the power blackout, bomb threats and rumors churned out by his own psychological war experts in a puerile attempt to distract the people from the Aquino tragedy were the handiwork of "subversives." (The symptoms of lupus and kidney disorder were clear on his face and not that of a heart attack as had been fed to the rumor mills by his agents for easy denial.)

The main thrust of his talk was to misrepresent himself as the biggest victim and not Aquino. The alleged assassin could not yet be identified but Marcos asserted that the Aquino assassination was a case of a "communist rubout." He expressed sorrow over Aquino's death and yet he poured out slander after slander against the dead man and people in the opposition. He misrepresented as "communist leaders" some military agents who had been eliminated not by Aquino or the NPA but by Generals Diaz and Gatan in the course of their conflict over garbage collection, protection rackets and gambling in Angeles City in 1976.

9. On the evening of August 24, General Olivas said that the alleged assassin could not yet be identified but echoed the same anticommunist line of his fascist boss. He harped on the culpability of the fall guy and parried questions on the responsibility of the Avsecom commanding general.

To explain the precision of the alleged assassin in knowing where, when and how to shoot Aquino, Olivas in effect said that the Avsecom had been making a public demonstration of the procedures to be used in securing Aquino. He also made a silly comparison between the Aquino assassination in a sanitized area and other assassinations in crowded areas. The cover-up job of Olivas was, to say the least, a see-through.

10. In trying to prevent Aquino from returning home, Marcos and his henchmen had claimed that they had reliable informants and solid information on assassination plots against Aquino. Where are these now? Even in his August 22 TV-radio talk, Marcos said "we had been in on this plot from the very beginning." Yet in the same talk he could not give any solid information regarding the assassination. He referred to an informant that had disappeared and was probably dead. Earlier, on the evening of the assassination, General Custodio blurted out that his office had received only anonymous calls about the threat on Aquino's life.

Marcos and his hatchetmen have long overused the trick of committing despicable crimes and blaming these on the communists and even on the direct noncommunist victims. These fascist scoundrels cannot deceive the people. Their criminal modus operandi is all too clear through sheer repetition. They have become extremely arrogant and brazen.

Remember the Plaza Miranda bombing, the San Pedro Cathedral bombing, the Jose Lingad assassination and so many other senseless killings in urban and rural areas. Under the Operation Katatagan of Marcos' chief butcher (berdugo) General Ver, massacres, torture and murder of mere suspects, arbitrary arrests and detention, arson, looting, forced mass evacuations and fake mass surrenders are being escalated.

Justice cannot be obtained from the Fernando commission. It is a creation of the master assassin or the

mastermind of the assassination in the exercise of his illegitimate autocratic powers. From the very beginning, it absolves Marcos of guilt. By all signs, the Fernando commission will be used to squelch public opinion and suppress testimonies damaging to the dictator. In the end, the commission can only overlay pompous and futile words on the findings of military investigators. The chairman of the commission has earned the reputation of being a court jester and a lackey of the fascist dictator.

It should never be conceded that such a creation of Marcos has a legitimate basis or has the capacity to bring out the entire truth. This commission is securely a propaganda tool of the master assassin.

An honest inquiry is not possible so long as the Marcos dictatorship remains. The entire Marcos government, including the Executive Committee and the top military brass, must be dissolved to give way to a caretaker government composed of leaders of all political parties and people's organizations. Only such a caretaker government can create a credible commission that is truly independent of the fascist regime of the master assassin.

Short of this, it would be well to have an international body like the International Commission of Jurists supervise the conduct of the investigation by the Fernando commission if only to squeeze out as much of the truth as can be squeezed from the witnesses presented by the regime.

It is impossible to obtain justice where the mastermind has used his autocratic power to commit the crime and at the same time stands as the final judge. The only way to obtain justice is to overthrow the fascist dictatorship and create a people's court to try the tyrant and all his bloody minions.

The significance of Aquino and his political assassination

Benigno S. Aquino, Jr. will always be remembered as the victim of assassination by Marcos, as an advocate of liberal democracy and as an outstanding opponent of the fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique.

Since 1972, when Marcos started persecution, his suffering and struggle for freedom have been part of the Filipino people's effort to liberate themselves. He fought well against the despotism of Marcos and exposed its evil essence. Aquino demonstrates that the enlightened and democratic sections of the well-to-do are willing to stake and contribute not only material resources but even their lives for the common good.

The broad national united front and the entire Filipino people mourn his death in the hands of the treacherous fascists but are inspired and strengthened by his example of patriotism and courage to carry forward the struggle for national independence and democracy. As a result of Aquino's assassination, the united front of all patriotic and progressive classes and organizations and personages will wage greater and more militant struggles for freedom.

Aquino was like Rizal. Despite the threats to his life by the enemy, he returned to his country with the desire of working for the improvement of the political, economic and social conditions of the people.

Aquino was reformist and was for nonviolent change. He held the idea that the fascist regime could be persuaded to depart from its evil ways and reconcile with the people. But the ruthless tyrant at the suggestion of significant reforms and possible erosion of his despotic powers became more violent and odious. He plotted the murder of Aquino using his extraordinary powers.

Like Rizal, Aquino while alive could not realize his noble objectives under the shadow of the enemy but was persecuted and finally murdered. By his death, however, his name has become a battlecry for the entire Filipino people. The armed revolution must move forward to avenge the fallen heroes, assert the sovereign power of the people and extirpate the tyrannical regime.

The assassination of Aquino proves once more that the US-Marcos regime is antagonistic to any serious peaceful attempt to democratize the Philippine situation; and that the broad masses of the people need to use every form of revolutionary struggle, armed and otherwise, to dismantle the fascist puppet dictatorship and win victory for their just cause of national liberation and democracy.

The assassination of Aquino brings to public condemnation the responsibility of US imperialism in propping up the Marcos fascist regime and condoning its terrorist acts. The US government, especially the Reagan clique, persecutes Filipino political exiles and is morally responsible for Aquino's death in the hands of its puppet clique.

Marcos' plot to kill Aquino was abetted to the very end by the Reagan administration. Acting as a Reagan bootlicker, US Ambassador Armacost assured Marcos that Reagan was firmly behind him and that there was nothing to worry about regarding the approach of Rep. Solarz. Marcos took this assurance as a license to eliminate Aquino, strengthening his prior resolve to do so.

From the beginning, the Reagan administration has abetted the fascist dictatorship on the grounds of

anticommunism and promoting US political and economic interests. Unwittingly, this US administration has also encouraged the peculiar criminal conceit and paranoia of the fascist dictator.

Marcos is utterly subservient to US imperialist interests because of the rapidly worsening economic crisis in the country and his desperate need for foreign funds. The US can order him to restrain his worst criminal impulses and show respect for human rights. But the Reagan administration does not mind the despotism of Marcos so long as more privileges and profits are extracted by the US multinational firms and the US military bases are perpetuated.

At any rate, the assassination of Aquino is not a mere passing incident. It has serious implications and consequences. As far as the Filipino people are concerned, it marks a new level of fascist terrorism without any doubt. Summary execution of less known people used to be done in safehouses and rural villages. But now it is done to a prominent person in broad daylight before the eyes of the world. And there is no mistaking as to who is responsible for this murder.

The Filipino people are not cowed by the commission of murder in public by the Marcos fascist regime. It can even go fullscale in applying all the death decrees it has made for preserving itself. All acts of fascist terror can only stiffen the people's resistance and hasten the advance of the armed revolution.

The death of Aquino is not in vain and will not simply blow over. Already a movement is rapidly developing in his honor. This movement is an important component of the vast democratic mass movement that will soon shake the fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique repeatedly and cumulatively until a democratic transition government takes over or the Filipino people go right ahead to win victory in the national democratic revolution and establish a revolutionary democratic coalition government under the leadership of the proletariat.

The surging democratic mass movement is first of all a manifestation of the long repressed needs and demands of the Filipino people but is also inspired by the similar mass movements breaking out in more and more third world countries that are ruled by US-sponsored fascist regimes and that are overloaded with foreign loans and reeling from inflation, unemployment and depression.

Fight for democracy!

Dismantle the US-Marcos dictatorship!

Down with the assassin regime!

Avenge the Aquino assassination!

Long live the memory of all martyrs!

Long live the Philippine revolution!

Long live the Filipino people!

On the Possibility of Restoring Democracy

September 1983

Since November 10, 1977, Jose Ma. Sison has been in solitary confinement in an unhealthy cell with no view of the outside and he is not allowed out of this cell except to attend trial hearings and for a brief hour of sunning a few times a month. He is constantly blindfolded in transit to and from his cell. Despite his prolonged solitary confinement, it is unlikely that he will stand to gain any relief by virtue of PD 1877. The authorities always insists that under Marcos' autocratic powers, Sison is excluded from the right to equal protection of the law, the right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty, the right against torture and cruel and unusual punishment, and other fundamental or constitutional rights.—Free Jose Maria Sison Committee

This is an outline offered to all patriotic and progressive classes, organizations and individuals for study and discussion towards a comprehensive understanding of the situation and possibility of advancing the struggle for national independence and democracy after the August 21-31 events.

I. The desperate and moribund fascist regime

A. Economic situation

The economic crisis is daily worsening and is not going to cease in years to come due to the accumulated and continuing effects of subservience to US economic dictates, the unbridled corruption of the Marcos fascist regime, and the deepgoing crisis of the world capitalist system.

Foreign loans have been used to aggravate the backward, agrarian and semifeudal character of the economy. These have been used overwhelmingly for nonproductive and anti-industrial programs and projects, leaving the country ever more dependent on raw material exports which are faring badly in the world capitalist market. Slightly processed reexports are a drain on foreign exchange rather than a dollar earner.

Lacking in heavy and basic industries, the Philippine economy is also heavily dependent on the importation of manufactures for local light manufacturing. The rapidly growing trade deficit and balance of payments problems are gravely affecting the undeveloped economy.

The foreign debt burden has soared from \$2.0 billion in 1972 to \$18 billion. Foreign debt service has become the No. 1 budgetary burden at ₱11.7 billion or 19.7 percent (one-fifth) of the 1984 budget. Military expenditures (defense and PC-INP) run second at ₱8.8 billion or 14.9 percent. With 34.6 percent earmarked for debt service and military expenditures, the budget reflects an ugly government and economic situation.

Massive unemployment, low incomes, soaring inflation, drastic devaluation, heavier tax burden and higher government fees have reduced the broad masses of the people to a life of extreme misery and want. The economic disaster is suffered most by the toiling masses of workers and peasants as well as by the urban petty bourgeoisie. The national bourgeoisie is also pressed down by import liberalization.

Both civil and military personnel of the fascist regime are discontented, together with the rest of the people. They too receive starvation wages. Only the high officials are satisfied with their salaries.

The US and other multinational corporations and the big comprador fascist elite continue to accelerate blood-sucking operations on an already impoverished population. After riding high on foreign-loan supported operations, Marcos and his cronies continue to grab the lion's share in foreign exchange and muscle in on the operations of other big compradors.

Foreign loans are now more difficult to secure and the terms are extremely onerous. Thus Marcos considers the \$900 million (in connection with the US military bases) and other expected financial accommodations from the US as being too precious to be reduced, delayed or rearranged; and has been maddened by efforts in the US Congress to attach to these such considerations as his human rights records, the operations of his crony corporations and the demand for democratic reforms. However, he cannot turn to the Soviet Union because this superpower is plagued by its own economic problems and is not willing to gamble on a sinking boat even if Marcos occasionally bluffs about seeking Soviet support.

B. Political situation

The fascist regime is more than ever subservient to US imperialism. The Reagan administration takes advantage of the desperate economic and financial situation of the puppet regime by exacting more privileges for US

political, economic and military interests and does not show any pretense of concern for human rights or democratic reforms.

The fascist regime is escalating its threats and acts of terror against the people. The naked use of power in the assassination of Aquino is Marcos' reminder to everyone in the Philippines and even in the US Congress that he is willing to use all available force to eliminate any threat to his own autocratic powers. Short of a revolutionary upheaval, however, the US remains the only force that can remove or ease out its own puppet. But the Reagan administration endorses the anticommunist rationale of Marcos' tyranny.

The fascist dictatorship is precisely the stimulant for the growth of the revolutionary mass movement. The assassination of Aquino demonstrates to the middle forces and the still unorganized common people that there is no way to dismantle the fascist dictatorship but to wage armed struggle.

The political desperation of the Marcos regime manifested in the Aquino murder (or double murder, including the patsy) is the outcome of critical social and economic conditions. But it also underscores the longstanding murderous character of Marcos (from the Nalundasan case to the many massacres and assassinations under his prefascist and fascist regime) exacerbated by the poor state of his physical and mental health, which is affecting his sense of political judgment. The danger about Marcos' health is not that he would die soon and that there would be a mad scramble for power; but that he would live longer than expected and with his paranoia hold on to his absolute powers.

Marcos is so obsessed with plugging every threat to his absolute power that he has issued the most absurd death decrees. He has depended more and more on his military minions who ingratiate themselves to him by playing on his fear of being overthrown and punished and by inventing reports of assassination plots against him. Aquino's murder was plotted by Marcos, his wife, Eduardo Cojuangco, General Fabian Ver, General Mejia, General Olivas and General Custodio on the malicious ground that Aquino's arrival was part of a coup plan, according to a high-ranking AFP officer.

There is now a hairline divide between Marcos being a "strongman" and being a total captive of his closest security officers, especially General Ver who is AFP chief of staff and whose son is directly in charge of Marcos' security. He is becoming the manipulated, instead of being the manipulator. He has taken all precautions against the erosion of his autocratic powers by any civilian entity. But in the process, he has made himself vulnerable to his own military protectors who may in due time grab his autocratic powers under the initial guise of martial law administration.

Unexpected by the fascist assassins, the Aquino murder only exacerbated their political isolation and roused the broad masses of the people to hold the largest ever urban collective action against tyranny in the entire history of the Philippines. The democratic mass organizations, the legal opposition parties, the religious organizations and the spontaneous masses came to the streets in millions to demonstrate their sentiments not only against the murder of a prominent political leader who had been treacherously killed but also against the oppression that they have long suffered. All over the country, the people in their tens of millions have been agitated by the Aquino murder.

All the democratic forces are bound to transform the Aquino martyrdom and all national democratic issues into an organized mass strength. The Catholic Church is determined to call for national reconciliation based on justice although this institution tends to obscure the issue of justice with a desire for peace even under the fascist dictatorship and sometimes tends to forget that it is this fascist dictatorship and no other that is consistently using violence and terror to quell the people's aspirations for justice and peace. The Aquino murder and the resultant rising of the people are also bound to strengthen the trend within the US ruling circles to reconsider the US administration position vis-à-vis Marcos and his regime.

No less than the resignation of Marcos and his top subalterns and the dismantling of the fascist dictatorship are being demanded. However, Marcos imagines the public uproar would die down. He continues to think that he can drag his feet even on such previous lesser public demands as the general amnesty (of which Aquino could have been a beneficiary) of alleged political offenders, the restoration of the writ of habeas corpus and the right to bail, the abolition of nonjudicial warrants of arrest and seizure, repeal of the Anti-Subversion Law and other such oppressive laws, a clean and honest system of elections and so on.

Marcos is hellbent on retaining his autocratic powers at whatever cost. He laughs off as fantasia or wishful thinking any serious democratic demand. He is challenging the people to show their strength through gigantic

mass actions and the growth of the armed resistance.

C. Military situation

The people's just hatred for the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) has accumulated upon so many atrocities and abuses and has peaked with the brazen Aquino murder in the hands of his military custodians. Under Operation Katatagan, Aquino-type assassinations are on the rise. People who are merely suspected of being NPA supporters are being brutally tortured and murdered and then misrepresented as NPA victims or NPA combat casualties. Also, people of entire villages suspected of being a mass base of the NPA are subjected to plunder or reconcentration and then misrepresented as mass surrenderees.

The violation of democratic rights extends to religious personnel, independent journalists, teachers, other professionals, labor leaders, students and legal opposition leaders in urban areas. Soon after the murder of Aquino, the fascist dictatorship made another unprecedented act by raiding the residence of a Catholic bishop on suspicion of harboring a communist. This act is obviously a retaliation against Church sympathy for Ninoy Aquino.

The AFP is practically destroying itself by its depredations on the people. It has an antipeople orientation. And it has many more internal weaknesses. The troops receive starvation wages and are even cheated of their rations and allowances by their officers. Hazing is also a widespread practice. Most military funds go into the purchase of overpriced equipment and other supplies as well as fanciful intelligence projects that allow the corrupt officials to enrich themselves rapidly. Officers also engage in criminal activities, including smuggling, illegal logging, robbery and holdup, extortion, drug pushing, etc. Nepotism, regionalism, favoritism are rampant from top to bottom.

There are three sections of the AFP officers. The first consists of a few who are Marcos loyalists and are the most corrupt. The second consists of the majority who follow their superiors only as a matter of discipline. The third consists of those who are already fed up with the Marcos loyalists.

The fascist dictator is overprotected. An overly large force is under the Presidential Security Command and is tied down to the Metro Manila area. Beyond that, the AFP is already spread thinly all over the country with relative concentrations in areas categorized as trouble spots. Since 1972, it has been clearly proven that it cannot quell the armed resistance. On the other hand, the NPA has grown in strength all over the country and the Bangsa Moro Army has persisted in the Moro areas.

The NPA has achieved such a level of strength as to be able to frequently launch tactical offensives all over the country at the same time. This revolutionary army perseveres in people's war. It advances wave upon wave. It becomes well rooted at every step because it combines armed struggle with mass base building and genuine land reform. When it raids or ambushes the enemy, it musters superior military strength in order to ensure victory. Thus, the enemy is being defeated part by part.

The NPA has demonstrated that it can grow self-reliantly, even without importing arms, by seizing these from the enemy who does the importing from the US. If the united front of democratic forces were to acquire arms from abroad, the US-Marcos regime would be in a far more desperate and moribund situation. Such imported arms can fill to some extent the wide gap between the large mass base consisting of millions and the relatively limited number of full-time guerrilla riflemen running only into several thousands.

As the economic and political crisis of the ruling system worsens, the AFP can only deteriorate, being an antipeople force, while the NPA can advance rapidly under the correct leadership of the Communist Party of the Philippines and with the broad support of the united front and the National Democratic Front.

II. Peaceful restoration of democracy

A. A consensus of proposals

Marcos, the entire cabinet, the executive committee, the AFP chief of staff, the commanding generals of all major services and all overstaying generals must resign in order to give way to a democratic transition government headed by a committee of retired chief justices and associate justices of the Supreme Court and other outstanding individuals who are of proven integrity and are acceptable to all political parties and people's organizations.

The democratic transition government must declare as null and void the Marcos constitution, especially its autocratic provisions; restore democracy and proclaim general amnesty to all so-called political offenders; and conduct general elections (from the presidency downwards) either under the 1935 constitution and/or rules adopted by said transition government.

To facilitate the resignation of the top officials of the Marcos regime and the assumption of office by a democratic transition government, a national reconciliation council as proposed by Cardinal Sin may be formed with

representatives of the Catholic Church and other religious organizations as active proponents for the purpose of bringing together all the forces who are willing to work for the restoration of democracy and the attainment of justice and peace in a dialogue.

A Congress for the Restoration of Democracy (CORD) must be held as soon as possible to prepare for a powerful mass movement for the same purpose, consolidate the sentiments of the people in the form of a declaration and other instruments of unity. All religious organizations, political parties and democratic mass organizations of workers, peasants, students, teachers, other professionals and businessmen that have participated in the Aquino funeral services and processions must be represented.

Any accommodation offered to the legal opposition by the US and/or Marcos, whether these be accommodations in the executive committee, the 1984 elections and/or the Batasang Pambansa, subordinate to and under the mercy of the autocratic powers of the fascist dictator must be outrightly rejected. The supreme executive, legislative and judicial powers concentrated on a single person must be eradicated. There can be no compromise with fascist dictatorship. There can be reconciliation only on the grounds of national independence and democracy.

The peaceful restoration of democracy can become a serious prospect only if a powerful mass movement for it were carried out. The movement is decidedly peaceful and legal but there should be no gratuitous stressing of "peace" above the question of independence, democracy and justice. Otherwise, people will misunderstand that "peace" under the violent rule of Marcos is better than anything else. Marcos should be made to feel that if he does not yield to the demand for democracy, he is responsible for the consequences.

B. The movement for the restoration of democracy

The broad united front of religious organizations and legal opposition parties that succeeded in mobilizing millions of people in the wake of the Aquino assassination must further mobilize the people for the dismantling of the fascist dictatorship and restoration of democracy. There must be sustained, militant and peaceful campaigns of mass education and mass actions indoors and outdoors.

The largest and strongest mass actions for democracy must be undertaken through widespread rallies and marches converging in a gigantic rally at daytime and then again dispersing into widespread rallies and sound barrage or sound-off at nighttime or designated days of protest. To escalate the demand for democracy, the days of protest can be increased and acts of civil disobedience should be made more telling. Churches and churchyards, factories, schools and plazas can become the rallying points.

Being the most insistent on reconciliation, dialogue and peace, the leadership and faithful of the Catholic Church must consistently and vigorously call for the restoration of democracy and upholding of justice. They must make it clear that they are asking the fascist dictatorship to abandon its character and desist from evil acts and in the true Christian spirit of reconciliation come into communion with the people. The Catholic Church must recognize that with its moral influence and its solid but widespread organization it can play a decisive role in persuading the fascist dictator to yield to the people's sovereign will.

The legal opposition parties and democratic mass organizations must rapidly arouse, organize and mobilize the people. Each of these entities have their special interests but all of them must always be ready to come together in campaigns for dismantling the fascist dictatorship and restoring democracy.

On a people-to-people basis, the religious, legal opposition and democratic mass organizations and their leaders must appeal to their counterpart organizations and leaders in the US to support their movement for the restoration of democracy in the Philippines and to ask their own government (their President and the US Congress) to desist from propping up the tyrannical Marcos regime with the money of the American people and to yield to the Filipino people's sovereign will. Condemning and stopping US support to the Marcos regime is a key point in the battle for democracy.

The moral and material support of other peoples the world over must also be sought. The peoples in other capitalist countries can ask their respective governments and their leaders to use their votes or influence in the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank as well as their private banks to persuade the US and Marcos to yield to the Filipino people's demand for the restoration of democracy. The peoples in the third world and socialist countries can restrain their respective governments from giving the Marcos regime any assistance that helps it to repress the Filipino people.

The US-Marcos regime must be compelled to yield to the movement for the restoration of democracy. If it

does not, the Filipino people will have to topple it in a revolutionary upheaval. There can be no compromise with injustice and tyranny. The people must put an end to fascist violence.

III. Preparedness for self-defense

Efforts must be exerted by those who have relatives and friends in the Armed Forces of the Philippines to let them understand and sympathize or side with the movement for the restoration of democracy. These AFP personnel must also be encouraged to spread the ideas of the movement within the Armed Forces of the Philippines and link these ideas with the worsening conditions of the troops and junior officers. The point is to deprive the fascist dictatorship or the dictator himself of his main support. Without the misplaced loyalty of the military, the fascist dictatorship cannot last a single day.

The people must conduct as part of the mass movement a continuous counter-surveillance on the military and police agents of the fascist regime so as to distinguish the diehard antipeople and fascist elements from the good and honest elements and so as to make possible the arrest and disarming of the bad elements in their homes, in the streets and even in their barracks at the appropriate time.

The people in urban areas must be conscious that if the fascist dictatorship persists and even becomes more brutal a time will have to come for them to rise up in arms. There will be battle-tested armed detachments to assault or defend strategic points but on a wide scale armed city partisans and people's defense committees will have to arrest and disarm enemy elements in a precise manner.

The varied democratic forces must build their armed strength and may acquire arms in every possible way locally and/or from abroad. It is best that these arms are passed on to those who are in active armed struggle in the countryside.

The enemy appears to be arrogant because it thinks the people's army does not yet have enough armed strength to move into major cities and seize power. But if the mass actions become large and widespread, the NPA is in a position to wipe out enemy units rapidly in the countryside and like the Shah of Iran, Marcos would find himself swept out of power sooner than expected.

The fascist dictatorship should respect the legal and nonviolent character of democratic mass actions in the urban areas. If it should unleash violence against the unarmed democratic movement, the fascist monster will only accelerate its own downfall. It should learn a lesson from the murder of Aquino. Millions of people came out to condemn the tyranny. It would be foolhardy of the fascists to attack this magnitude of people.

People engaged in the peaceful movement for democracy should also remember that they can achieve a measure of success only when the enemy realizes that the people are prepared to use armed force against counterrevolutionary violence. We must never forget that Marcos murdered an unarmed Ninoy who had reconciliation in his heart but who at any rate had made clear that there is no compromise with tyranny and that freedom is taken and not granted. Justice cannot be won by trusting and pleading with the fascist.

The Christians under imperial Rome ceased to be massacred every fifty years only when they took hold of the sword of Constantine. Rizal would not be honored today as a hero and martyr had the Filipino people not achieved success in the Philippine revolution. Even Gandhi merely represented a complement to the readiness of the Indian people to wage armed revolution against the British. The Holy Scriptures is one with Marxism-Leninism in upholding the principle of just war against tyranny.

Those who wish to disarm the people or to equate the modest and just people's army with the gigantic and unjust army of Marcos actually endorse the violence of the fascist dictatorship as well as the rising violence of daily exploitation and oppression. Without the people's army, the people have nothing. The violence and greed of the fascists would never cease to reign supreme over the people, especially as Marcos actually aspires to generate a dynasty of fascists. Must we disarm David as he confronts Goliath or condemn him because he used a slingshot?

The legal democratic mass movement has its own importance. So has the armed struggle. One complements the other. And this complementation should drive some sense into the heads of the US imperialists and the Marcos puppet regime.

Message to the Congress for the Restoration of Democracy

September 21, 1983

I salute and congratulate all of you for establishing the Congress for the Restoration of Democracy (CORD). I am in full solidarity with you in the fight for national independence and democracy against the fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique.

Your organization arises at a time that there is a high tide in the democratic mass movement. The Aquino funeral marches and rallies are unprecedented in the entire history of the Philippines and have surpassed the peak of the First Quarter Storm of 1970.

These marches and rallies are part of the people's democratic struggle. These would not have been possible without the people's fierce desire for freedom and without the broad united front of antifascist political parties, democratic mass organizations, progressive religious organizations and the spontaneous masses.

Crying out for democracy and justice, workers, peasants, fishermen, national minorities, the unemployed and underemployed, students, teachers, other professionals, businessmen, religious and political leaders have demonstrated their unity and militancy against tyranny.

The people have been stirred to action not only by the Aquino martyrdom which has its own far-reaching significance but also by the accumulated sacrifices and sufferings of countless other victims of fascist treachery and brutality. The people have been moved to express themselves against the intolerable oppression and exploitation that have long victimized them.

The challenge before you is to sustain, consolidate and expand the militant democratic forces. I am confident that you will exert yourselves further in arousing, organizing and mobilizing the Filipino people to enable them to assert their own sovereignty and defend their democratic rights.

I assume that you have put forward a program of action that is acceptable to the broadest possible coalition of democratic forces and that can raise the democratic struggle to a new and higher level. This program would deal with the most important issues in the fields of politics, economy, culture and foreign relations.

Of course, the key task is to fight for national freedom and democracy and to dismantle the fascist dictatorship of the US-Marcos clique. The fascist dictator and his clique have to resign or be ousted in favor of a democratic transition government. The autocratic powers of the despot have to be dissolved and the people's sovereignty and all basic democratic rights upheld and restored.

Absolutely, there can be no reconciliation with tyranny. Ninoy stood for reconciliation based on justice. He also stated that freedom is taken by the people and not granted to them. To miss these points is to reduce the meaning of reconciliation to capitulation to the very evil and to the very assassins that unjustly took away his life.

The Marcos fascist regime is to be firmly shown that it fools no one when it uses the term "normalization" as a codeword for the perpetuation and further entrenchment of the autocratic powers of the fascist dictator. This despotism fixed into the 1973 constitution as well as its puppetry to US imperialism are correctly the target of the entire people and the broadest alliance of democratic forces.

The fascist dictatorship will only be prolonged and its heinous crimes obscured if the democratic forces limit themselves to pleading for concessions that do not undo the autocratic powers of the tyrant. Mere begging for concessions is liable to prettify and endorse the fascist dictatorship.

The decision of the legal opposition to demand the resignation of the entire Marcos clique through campaigns of civil disobedience is a wise one. The legal opposition, together with all democratic forces, can now concentrate on rallying the people to the just demands for national independence and democracy instead of merely asking for a sporting chance in an election under the fascist dispensation. So long as the Marcos clique remains in power, the entire electoral system will remain rigged and the regular Batasang Pambansa no more than a rubber stamp to Marcos' superlegislative powers and brute force.

Time has run out on Mr. Marcos. The people demand no less than the end to his fascist autocracy. They have come to realize the futility of asking his regime for such minor concessions as the proclamation of general amnesty, the full restoration of the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus and the right to bail, the abolition of nonjudicial orders of search and seizure, the repeal of the Anti-Subversion Law and other oppressive decrees, and

guarantees for clean and honest elections to loosen the autocrat's grip on the country and prepare the way for a peaceful transition to democracy.

Ninoy Aquino was treacherously murdered precisely because the fascists feared that he would erode their power. But contrary to their expectations, the murder of Aquino will not just be forgotten as one of those "normal" things under the fascist dictatorship. Aquino's martyrdom has resulted in the extreme isolation of the fascist dictatorship.

We must not think though that the fascists have learned their lessons from the vigorous rising of the people as a result of Aquino's murder. We must heighten our vigilance. The despot and his minions are busy scheming to cover up the facts and hatching heinous plots to disrupt the people's protest actions. They will further use despicable tactics as they did in the 1971-72 period in creating the pretext for martial law and the autocracy.

The treacherous murder of Ninoy Aquino in doubtless circumstances and before the eyes of the world marks a new stage in the desperation and degeneration of the Marcos fascist regime. The prominent leaders of the legal opposition are now under the constant threat of assassination. The fascists have brought to Metro Manila in so dramatic a manner their barbaric tactic in the countryside of murdering suspected supporters of the armed revolutionaries, then misrepresenting them as battle casualties or even victims of the revolutionaries.

It is self-destructive for the autocratic regime to unleash more acts of terror and violence especially at a time that it is in dire financial straits and can hardly afford even the starvation wages it pays its own civil and military personnel. The fascist dictator should know that practically all government personnel boycotted their offices to join the ranks of the people and shout their grievances against his regime during the Aquino funeral procession.

The political and economic crisis of the ruling system has worsened to a point that the broad masses of the people are eager to fight for their liberation and sweep away the fascist dictatorship. In contrast to the arrogant posture and the brutal and violent ways of the autocrat and his fascist minions, the leadership of the various democratic forces is responsibly building up the organized strength of the people and developing the most effective ways to remove Marcos from power.

The people condemn Marcos for the economic disaster into which he has plunged the country. They suffer massive unemployment, soaring inflation, a heavy tax burden and so on. Under fascist dictatorship, heavy foreign borrowings have only served to deepen and aggravate the backward, agrarian and semifeudal character of the economy. The days of easy foreign loans have come to an end. There are no more loans to be had for graft-ridden and showy but nonproductive and anti-industrial projects that have come to mark the regime's development scheme.

For a number of years already, the fascist regime has been in dire economic and financial straits. The balance of payments, foreign trade and budgetary deficits have been rising and accumulating rapidly. The 1984 budget of the government is an unmitigated picture of absurdity, with debt service gobbling up about 20 percent and the military, about 15 percent of estimated expenditures.

Short of a revolutionary upheaval, only the US imperialists can remove their puppet Marcos. But the US imperialists, especially the Reagan ruling clique, are pleased with the rabid anticommunist and proimperialist policies of the Marcos fascist regime and are more interested in extracting immediate political, economic and military advantages for themselves than in anything else. So far, it is only in the US Congress where financial accommodations for the fascist regime are undergoing some rough sailing.

But the US and the world capitalist crisis is such that not even the Reagan administration can exempt the puppet regime from such crisis. The essential objective thrust of US economic policy is to shift the burden of the crisis of overproduction to developing countries like the Philippines. The fascist regime will reel from the economic crisis due to its puppetry, profligacy and corruption.

It is timely for all democratic forces and the entire people to conduct campaigns of civil disobedience which include boycotts, widespread rallies, converging marches and sound barrages. To make these mass actions significant and effective, mass education on the basis of your program and on urgent issues must be vigorously carried out.

The fascist regime will try to quell the democratic mass movement through threats and acts of terror. But so long as you stand on just grounds, you will continue to win victories. The legal, nonviolent but militant democratic struggle in the white areas is an indispensable part of the overall struggle for national independence and democracy.

The unbridled brutality and rapacity of the fascist puppet dictatorship will only strengthen the revolutionary mass movement!

Fight for national independence and democracy!

Dismantle the US-Marcos fascist regime!

Long live the memory of Ninoy Aquino and all revolutionary martyrs!

Carry forward the national democratic revolution!

Long live the Filipino people!

Draft Declaration for Democracy: Justice for Aquino, Justice for All Movement

September 21, 1983

“Justice for Ninoy, Justice for All!” The call continues to resound in the hearts and minds of the entire Filipino people.

This is the battlecry that arose from the millions of people who directly participated in the Aquino funeral marches and services as well as the tens of millions of people in all parts of the country.

The Justice for Aquino, Justice for All Movement sprang among a people in grief yet defiant. And now we hereby formalize its organization to carry on the struggle for national freedom and democracy even more determinedly against foreign, fascist and feudal domination.

We are a broad movement of patriotic classes, parties, organizations, groups and individuals. We are workers, peasants, fishermen, national minorities, the unemployed and underemployed, students, teachers, other professionals, businessmen, religious and political leaders.

We vow to fight for the people’s sovereignty and the restoration or the establishment of democracy as peacefully as possible. We aim to dismantle the Marcos autocracy—a fascist dictatorship—which masquerades as a “new republic” and has oppressed and exploited the people for so long.

The treacherous and coldblooded murder of Ninoy is the full responsibility of this tyrannical regime. This regime is also accountable for so many despicable crimes against less prominent people in countless numbers in both urban and rural areas.

Justice for Aquino and justice for all can be accomplished only through the firm unity of the entire people and their militant struggle against the Marcos fascist regime and its foreign masters, the US imperialists.

Ninoy came home with reconciliation in his heart. But he was murdered. There can be no compromise with autocracy and puppetry. There can be reconciliation only on the ground of national independence and democracy. Freedom is won by the people, not granted by a tyrant. We shall not cease to fight for the following objectives until these are fully achieved by the people:

Political

1. The dismantling of the Marcos fascist dictatorship and the resignation or ouster of Mr. Marcos, the Executive Committee, the entire cabinet, the AFP chief of staff, the commanding generals of the services and all over-staying generals of the Armed Forces of the Philippines;
2. The restoration of all basic democratic rights and the formation of a democratic transition or caretaker government headed by a committee of outstanding nonpartisan men and women of proven integrity and enjoying the confidence of all political parties and democratic organizations;
3. The scrapping of the Marcos (1973) constitution, especially its autocratic provisions, a return to the 1935 Constitution and the holding of general elections under this constitution;
4. The calling of a constitutional convention to write a new democratic constitution with safeguards against the misuse of martial law authority to install autocracy, against the unjust suspension of the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus, against nonjudicial warrants of search and seizure of persons and properties, and against such oppressive laws as the Anti-Subversion and other fascist decrees.
5. The general amnesty and immediate release of all alleged political offenders, the restoration of the writ of habeas corpus and the right to bail, the abolition of nonjudicial warrants or orders of search and seizure of persons and properties, and the repeal of the AntiSubversion Law and other oppressive laws as soon as the transition government assumes office;
6. The demilitarization of civilian functions, the termination of all offices, campaigns and operations which allow the military to inflict atrocities and abuses on the people and the rehabilitation and indemnification of all victims of fascism;
7. The termination of US political domination of the country through the dismantling of the US military bases and the repeal of all laws and decrees which give excessive privileges to US and other foreign multinational corporations and banks.

Economic

1. The emancipation of the economy from foreign monopoly control, restitution to the government and the people of the ill-gotten wealth of the fascist dictator and his cronies, and the promotion of national industrialization;
2. The achievement of genuine land reform, restitution to the peasants and national minorities of the lands grabbed by the fascists, and the promotion of labor exchange and production cooperatives among the peasants;
3. The protection of the trade union and democratic rights of workers, the improvement of the wage and living conditions of wage earners, countering inflation and depression, and creating permanent, sideline and transitional jobs for the unemployed and underemployed;
4. Promotion of the interests of Filipino businessmen along the line of national industrialization through protection, credit subsidies and joint state-private enterprises, especially in heavy and basic industries;
5. Cancellation of foreign loan obligations incurred by the fascist regime for wasteful and nonproductive purposes;
6. Expansion of economic relations with socialist and capitalist countries that are interested in assisting the Philippines to achieve industrial development through foreign loans and technology assistance at favorable terms, including low interest rates, fair pricing of supplies and payment for a portion of production or profits on an installment plan;
7. Reduction of military expenditures in favor of genuine economic development and expansion of essential services, especially education, health and low-cost public housing.

Cultural

1. The liberation of the educational system and the mass media from fascist and imperialist control and propaganda, and the promotion of a national, scientific and democratic culture;
2. The promotion of the national language as the actual and principal medium of instruction, official communication and communication with the masses on a national scale, nondiscrimination against the local languages and dialects, and the cherishing of the national cultural heritage;
3. The upholding of the freedom of the press, the dissolution of the Marcos monopoly of the major mass media and the democratization of mass media ownership;
4. The promotion of academic freedom and other democratic rights of teachers, students, researchers in the social sciences, natural sciences and professional courses as well as of educational institutions;
5. The promotion of scientific and technological education, research and training to support nationalist industrialization and the modernization of agriculture;
6. The respect for the freedom of religious belief and practice, and the termination of persecution of the religious, especially in their social action and conscientization work; and
7. The respect for the right to self-determination of the national minorities and special support for their all-round progress.

Foreign relations

1. The prevention of US interference, intervention and aggression in support of the Marcos fascist regime or any future tyrannical regime in the Philippines; and close internationalist cooperation between the Filipino and the American peoples in opposing US imperialism and its fascist puppet regime;
2. The closest relations of mutual support with all countries and peoples which unselfishly give moral and material support to the Filipino people in their current struggle for national independence and democracy;
3. Adoption of an independent, neutral and nonaligned foreign policy towards the two superpowers; and diplomatic and trade relations with all countries on the basis of sovereignty, equality and mutual benefit;
4. Active participation in the struggle of the third world for independence and all-round development and for a new international economic order
5. Dismantling of the US military bases and other related US installation, especially those for the storage and stockpiling of nuclear weapons; and cooperation with the Southeast Asian and Asian countries in the movement to make Southeast Asia a nuclear-free region and truly a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality.

We, the Justice for Aquino, Justice for All Movement, are determined to arouse, organize and mobilize the entire Filipino people for a vigorous, legal, peaceful and uncompromising struggle for the restoration/establishment

of democracy and the dismantling of the fascist dictatorship.

We are determined to undertake sustained educational and organizational campaigns throughout the country at every level (regional, provincial, district, municipal, barangay and down to the sitio or neighborhood) both for strengthening JAJAM as a distinct organization, and for moving all the people to work for the same objectives that we are working for.

We must conduct public rallies and marches, indoor seminars and convocations, research and publications, photo exhibits and film shows, stage and other cultural presentations, broadcasts, the production of posters, stickers, placards, streamers, t-shirts, etc. for the purpose of exposing the despicable character of the tyrannical regime and calling on the people to fight for their own sovereignty and democratic rights until total victory is won.

The most powerful and militant and yet essentially peaceful and nonviolent mass mobilization that we must undertake shall be those widescale and nationwide campaigns of civil disobedience, involving days of protest characterized by boycotts, widespread rallies, converging marches, sound-off or sound barrage in every neighborhood, and all other forms of vigorously militant but essentially nonviolent actions.

We believe that by demonstrating peacefully and militantly the unity of the Filipino people against fascist tyranny and for democracy, the Marcos regime and its foreign supporter, the United States may yield to the sovereign will of the Filipino people.

But we cannot pin our hopes on this possibility. By firmly uniting, the entire Filipino people can open up all the effective ways of asserting their sovereignty and overthrowing the tyrannical US-Marcos regime.

Message to the People's Congress for Justice, Freedom and Democracy

November 5, 1983

I salute and congratulate all of you for holding this Congress for Justice, Freedom and Democracy. I am in full solidarity with you in the fight for national independence, democracy and justice against the fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique.

This Congress arises at a time that there is a high tide in the democratic mass movement. The Aquino funeral marches and protest actions since then are unprecedented in the entire history of the Philippines and have surpassed the peak of the First Quarter Storm of 1970.

These protest marches, rallies and other forms of mass actions are part of the people's struggle for democracy and freedom. These would not have been possible without the people's fierce desire for freedom and without the broad united front of antifascist political parties, democratic mass organizations, progressive religious organizations and the spontaneous masses.

Crying out for freedom, democracy and justice, workers, peasants, fishermen, national minorities, women, the unemployed and underemployed, students, teachers, other professionals, businessmen, religious and political leaders, have demonstrated their unity and militancy against tyranny.

The people have been stirred to action not only by the Aquino martyrdom which has its own far-reaching significance but also by the accumulated sacrifices and suffering of countless other victims of fascist tyranny and brutality. The people have been moved to express themselves against the intolerable oppression and exploitation that they have long undergone.

The challenge before all of us is to sustain, consolidate and expand the militant democratic forces. I am confident that you will exert yourselves further in arousing, organizing and mobilizing the Filipino people to enable them to assert their own sovereignty and defend their democratic rights.

The Nationalist Alliance has put forward a program of action that is acceptable to the broadest possible alliance of democratic forces and that can raise the democratic struggle to a new level. The program deals with the most important issues in the fields of politics, economy, culture and foreign relations.

Of course, the key task is to fight for national freedom and democracy and to dismantle the fascist dictatorship of the US-Marcos clique. The fascist dictator and his clique have to be ousted or forced out in favor of a democratic transition government and eventually a democratic coalition government. The autocratic powers of the despot have to be dissolved and the people's sovereignty and all basic democratic rights upheld and restored on a new and higher basis.

Absolutely, there can be no reconciliation with tyranny. Aquino stood for reconciliation based on justice. He also stated that freedom is taken by the people and not granted to them. To miss these points is to reduce the meaning of reconciliation to capitulation to the very evil and to the very assassins that unjustly took away his life.

The Marcos fascist regime is to be firmly shown that it fools no one when it uses the term "normalization" as a code word for the perpetuation and further entrenchment of the autocratic powers of the dictator. This despotism fixed into the 1973 constitution as well as its puppetry to US imperialism are correctly the target of the entire people and the broadest alliance of democratic forces.

The fascist dictatorship will only be prolonged and its heinous crimes obscured if the democratic forces limit themselves to pleading for more concessions that do not undo the autocratic powers of the tyrant. Mere begging for concessions is liable to prettify and endorse the fascist dictatorship.

The decision of the legal opposition to demand the resignation of the entire Marcos clique through campaigns of civil disobedience is a wise one. The legal opposition, together with all democratic forces, can now concentrate on rallying the people to the just demands for national independence and democracy instead of merely for "clean and honest" elections under the fascist dispensation. So long as the Marcos clique remains in power, the entire electoral system will remain rigged and the regular Batasang Pambansa, no more than a rubber stamp to Marcos' superlegislative powers and brute force.

Time has run out on Mr. Marcos. The people demand no less than the end to his fascist autocracy. They have come to realize the futility of merely asking for such minor concessions as the proclamation of general amnesty,

the full restoration of the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus and the right to bail, the abolition of nonjudicial orders of search and seizure, the repeal of the Anti-Subversion Law and other oppressive decrees, and the guarantees for clean and honest elections to loosen the autocrat's grip on the country and prepare the way for a peaceful transition to democracy.

Aquino was treacherously murdered precisely because the fascists feared that he would erode their power. But contrary to their expectations, the murder of Aquino as of all the other political victims will not just be forgotten as one of those "normal" things under the fascist dictatorship. Aquino's martyrdom has resulted in the extreme isolation of the fascist dictatorship.

We must not think though that the fascists have learned their lessons from the vigorous rising of the people. We must heighten our vigilance. The despot and his minions are busy scheming to cover up the facts and hatching heinous plots to disrupt the people's protest actions. They will further use despicable tactics as they did in the 1971-72 period in creating the pretext for martial law and the autocracy if the people do not sustain and heighten their vigilance.

The treacherous murder of Aquino in doubtless circumstances and before the eyes of the world marks a new stage in the desperation and degeneration of the Marcos fascist regime. The prominent leaders of the legal opposition are now under constant threat of assassination. And so are those who in one way or another are privy to some of the facts and circumstances surrounding the Aquino murder and subsequent coverup. The fascists have brought to Metro Manila in so dramatic a manner their barbaric tactic in the countryside of murdering suspected supporters of the armed revolutionaries and then misrepresenting them as battle casualties or even as victims of the revolutionaries.

It is self-destructive for the autocratic regime to unleash more acts of terror and violence especially at a time that it is in dire financial straits and can hardly afford even the starvation wages it pays its own civil and military personnel. The fascist dictator should know that practically all government personnel boycotted their offices to join the ranks of the people and shout their grievances against his regime during the Aquino funeral march and the march-rally-noise barrage on the National Day of Sorrow last September 21.

The political and economic crisis of the ruling system has worsened to a point that the broad masses of the people are eager to fight for their liberation and sweep away the fascist dictatorship. In contrast to the arrogant posture and the brutal and violent ways of the autocrat and his fascist minions, the leadership of the various democratic forces are responsibly building up the organized strength of the people and developing the most effective ways of removing Marcos from power.

The people condemn Marcos for the economic disaster into which he has plunged the country. They suffer massive unemployment, soaring inflation, repeated drastic devaluations, an increasingly heavier tax burden, shortages of essential commodities and so on. Under fascist dictatorship, heavy foreign borrowings have only served to deepen and aggravated the backward, agrarian and semifeudal character of the economy. The days of easy foreign loans have come to an end. There are no more loans to be had for the graft-ridden and showy but nonproductive and anti-industrial projects that have come to mark the regime's development scheme.

For a number of years already, the fascist regime has been in dire economic and financial straits. The balance-of-payments, foreigntrade and budgetary deficits have been rising and accumulating rapidly. Even before the latest drastic devaluation of the peso, the 1984 budget of the government was already an unmitigated picture of absurdity, with debt service slated at about 20 percent and the military at about 15 percent of expenditures.

Short of a revolutionary upheaval, only the US imperialists can immediately remove its puppet Marcos. The US imperialists, especially the Reagan ruling clique has been pleased with the rabid anticommunist and pro-imperialist policies of the Marcos regime. The Reagan ruling clique still wants to prolong Marcos' rule and extract immediate political, economic and military advantages for the US imperialists. But because of the deterioration of the Philippine economic and political situation, and the regime's notorious excesses, American public opinion as well as world public opinion sympathetic to the democratic cause of the Filipino people have driven US policy-makers to seek ways of reducing Marcos' power and of restoring an electoral process acceptable to the middle forces and the anti-Marcos big comprador-landlords. Their purpose is to prevent the revolutionary masses from gaining sufficient armed strength to topple the Marcos fascist regime as well as to stave off the upsurge of support for the Filipino people's cause by the American and the world's peoples.

The US and the world capitalist crisis is such that the Reagan administration cannot save the Marcos puppet

regime from the economic disaster into which this regime has plunged. The essential objective thrust of US economic policy is to shift the burden of the crisis of overproduction to underdeveloped countries like the Philippines. The fascist regime will continue to reel from the economic disaster due to its puppetry, profligacy and corruption.

It is timely for all democratic forces and the entire people to conduct campaigns of civil disobedience that include boycotts, widespread rallies, converging marches, noise barrages, etc. To make these mass actions significant and effective, mass education on the basis of the program of the Nationalist Alliance and on urgent issues must be vigorously carried out.

The fascist regime will try to quell the democratic mass movement through threats and acts of terror. But so long as you stand on just grounds, nonviolent but militant democratic struggle in the urban and other white areas is an indispensable part of the overall struggle for national independence and democracy.

The unbridled brutality and rapacity of the fascist puppet dictatorship will only strengthen the revolutionary mass movement!

Fight for national freedom and democracy!

Dismantle the US-Marcos fascist regime!

Long live the memory of all revolutionary martyrs!

Carry forward the national democratic revolution!

Long live the Filipino people!

Message to the Kongreso ng Mamamayang Pilipino

January 8, 1984

I am honored and grateful for the opportunity to express my warm- est greetings to the delegates of this assembly—Ang Kongreso ng Mamamayang Pilipino (KOMPIL).

You cannot imagine how much I want to be with you today and participate in your deliberations. But you can be sure that in spirit and common purpose, I am completely with you—in firm solidarity with you in all your patriotic efforts.

Although I am in solitary confinement, I do not think and feel that I am alone. I am with you in our militant struggle and try to do the best I can to help advance this struggle for freedom, justice and democracy.

The mass actions since August 21 have been unprecedented in magnitude, scope and intensity. These have been exceedingly en- lightening and inspiring and have given me the confidence that in person I will be with you in the near future unless the fascist brutes do something foul, as they did in the case of Ninoy Aquino and so many others of our compatriots.

However, I consider lightly whatever will happen to me in my imprisonment under maximum security conditions. The most important thing is that the broad masses of the Filipino people are marching forward and will certainly win victory against tyranny and reestablish democracy at a higher level than any time before the 1972 Marcos coup. Great victories can be won only with a certain amount of suffering and sacrifice. Among this is the death of patriots and heroes like Ninoy Aquino and so many others.

I congratulate all of you for having successfully worked for the powerful upsurge of the people's democratic struggle during the last few months and for holding this congress in order to consolidate the gains of the struggle, to raise our resolute efforts to a new and higher level, and to win still greater victories.

Our common purpose and minimum basis of unity is to assert the people's sovereignty and their democratic rights, and to fight the Marcos fascist dictatorship until total victory is won. This despotism which we must defeat is the most brutal and most corrupt in our history, but it is, also, a creature of a foreign power, US imperialism. This power persists in propping up the dictatorship.

I hope that Kompil can define the broadest possible parameters of unity for the entire Filipino people to advance the cause of national freedom and democracy. Kompil must adopt principles, policies and tasks that reflect the essential needs and aspirations of all patriotic and progressive classes, parties, groups and individuals in the country.

Our united front should include the workers, peasants, farm work- ers, fishermen, national minorities, students and all the youth, women, teachers, lawyers, engineers, scientists, artists and writers, other professionals, businessmen, enlightened gentry, religious, and civic and political leaders. Differences in ideology, religious beliefs and party affiliations should not prevent common understanding and united action against tyranny.

Against the ultrarightist Marcos puppet clique, there can be a broad combination of the forces of the Left, Center and Right. Within this broad united front, the independence and initiative of all participating entities, in sharp contrast to the rigid antidemocratic monopoly of political power by the fascist gangsters, can be maintained.

In developing the united front, we must draw the largest mass sup- port from the toiling masses of workers and peasants, link them with the urban petty bourgeoisie and the middle bourgeoisie, and utilize to the people's advantage the conflicts among the big compradors and landlords in order to isolate and defeat the US-backed Marcos clique.

Three urgent questions

I understand from your primer that Kompil seeks to address three urgent questions. I take this opportunity to give my opinion on these questions. Thus, I am practically participating in this congress like a delegate among you.

Should the Marcos-resign movement continue? This question can be considered wisely if the point is to replace the demand for resig- nation with the call for the ouster of the fascist dictator and his entire clique. This would be quite an advance because many people think that the demand for resignation carries certain implications, such as recognizing the legitimacy of the fascist regime and its constitution and depending on the

volition of the tyrant for a change of government.

However, if there are still some of us who prefer to demand resignation, I believe that they are entitled to do so and still be in the united front, provided that resignation is explicitly meant to lead to the immediate dissolution of the fascist dictatorship and rejection of its constitution. After all, Marcos and company will not resign from their de facto rule unless they are effectively forced by the people to do so. The resignation of this fascist clique will depend on the effective power of the people to oust the despot.

The demand for resignation is less assertive than the call for ouster but is certainly far more assertive than the proposal for the dictator to form and head a national reconciliation council. Those proposing such a council must take care that it does not become an endorsement of tyranny. Any call for national reconciliation is positive only to the extent that it exposes the facts of tyranny, strengthens the will of the people to overcome this tyranny, and causes the removal from power of those who rule in the service of evil interests.

All the various forms of peaceful and militant mass actions already undertaken by the “Marcos resign” movement must continue. What needs to be done is to expand and intensify them, develop new forms of struggle and involve greater masses of the people in the struggle. Our unchanging aim is to arouse, organize and mobilize the people in their tens of millions.

We should be able to drown out the dictatorship’s campaigns of deception and vilification in the forthcoming sham plebiscite and elections. There should be more and larger indoor and outdoor rallies. There should be more and longer marches. Repeatedly, we can hold people’s marches from barrios to town centers, from towns to provincial and regional centers; and from Central and Southern Luzon to Metro Manila. The sitdown strikes dubbed “United for the President’s Ouster” or UPO will be more effective if connected with gigantic marches and rallies.

Peaceful but militant mass actions are absolutely necessary to assert and develop the democratic power of the people. These mass actions do not only prepare for, but also support, the most effective actions that destroy the capability of the dictatorship to use its armed forces against the people.

Who can replace Marcos as alternative leader or leaders of government? The myth that Marcos is indispensable is an insult that the people have suffered for too long. This insult to the people’s intelligence compounds the rigors of the political tyranny and economic catastrophe that the people have had to endure.

Not only is Marcos replaceable. He and his entire clique of puppets, incompetents, killers and swindlers must be removed from power immediately. They have trampled on the people’s sovereignty and democratic rights; they have inflicted the most barbaric forms of cruelty on the people. In connivance with the imperialist banks and multinational firms, this clique of new oligarchs has mortgaged our country and its people—us—and continues to auction us off.

I agree with Kompil that a council of leaders be chosen not only to demonstrate that there are many Filipino leaders who can individually and collectively replace Marcos and provide better leadership, but also to take initiatives in carrying forward the people’s democratic struggle. In the course of this struggle, the people have nurtured so many leaders at various levels—leaders with the correct democratic orientation and with outstanding competence.

The assassination of Ninoy Aquino was calculated by the fascists to decapitate the legal opposition. But this treacherous blow has only outraged the entire people and moved them to fight ever more determinedly for their freedom. The rapidly growing democratic movement has pushed more leaders to the forefront.

I propose that the choice of your designated number of national leaders be made on the basis of commitment to the national and democratic interests of the people; competence in political and organizational work; representation of major class and sectoral interests; accommodation of various ideological and political trends; and consideration of regional distribution.

I am confident that good leaders will be chosen to compose the council of leaders. After all, Kompil is a patriotic and democratic assembly which rejects the treasonous and antidemocratic brand of leadership that Marcos and his top henchmen stand for.

What are the mechanisms after Marcos? I appreciate the optimism and sense of confidence in this question. But I think that it should be preceded by the question on how to win. While it is true that the organized strength of the people is rapidly growing and the Marcos puppet regime is declining, it is also true that we are still engaged in an uphill struggle.

We are confronted with an enemy that still enjoys the support of US imperialism and is hellbent on using all forms of terror and deception in order to stay in power. While the treacherous murder of Ninoy Aquino has galvanized the people into conducting gigantic mass protest actions, we should recognize that this dastardly act marks a new level in the escalation of fascist terrorism.

We must prepare ourselves against more barbaric attacks from the enemy. We must conduct political education and organize ourselves better for more effective struggle. I believe that from stage to stage in the progress of our struggle, the mechanisms for uniting the people, administering their affairs and winning greater victories are created and developed. Upon the total victory of our people, all that we shall have to do will be to consolidate those tested mechanisms for winning and form a truly democratic government of the entire nation.

You are of course aware that even as there are parties, mass organizations and alliances that are legally and peacefully fighting the fascist puppet regime, there are also the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army, the National Democratic Front, organs of democratic power and mass organizations that do not have a legal status and are waging a people's war. Other illegal organizations such as the Moro National Liberation Front, the Bangsa Moro Army, Christians for National Liberation, Nagkakaisang Partidong Demokratikong Sosyalista ng Pilipinas (NPDSP), and the Movement for a Free Philippines are also to be taken into account.

On the eve of total victory or upon the final victory, there can be a people's consultative assembly to arrange the working unity of all patriotic and progressive classes, parties and organizations and facilitate the formation of a coalition government based on a truly democratic system of representation.

I would like to think that Kompil and its council of leaders as well as other united front organizations like the Nationalist Alliance for Justice, Freedom and Democracy, the Justice for Aquino, Justice for All Movement, KAAKBAY, the Unido, the National Union for Liberation, the Liberal Party, and the PDP-Laban are major contributors on the side of the legal democratic forces to the future emergence of a democratic coalition government.

The US and the Marcos regime

Let me dwell at some length on the tremendous odds that we still face. The point is not to discourage anyone among us. By being more aware of the odds, we get to know more clearly what it takes to win. We become even more resolute in striving for, and achieving, more than we have already achieved.

Even Raul Manglapus of the Movement for a Free Philippines, in a recent statement, has come to realize that Marcos has managed to establish an autocratic regime and to prolong it by using and manipulating the Armed Forces of the Philippines, and by being supported and maintained by American power.

When Marcos mocks the legal opposition, calling it fragmented and weak supposedly due to ineptness and conflicting selfish interests, he is obscuring the fact that he has used brute force in suppressing the people's sovereignty and democratic rights—keeping the legal opposition parties down for so many years, and upon their resurgence keeping them within the bounds of his despotic power.

The real party of Marcos is not the Kilusang Bagong Lipunan (KBL) but the Armed Forces of the Philippines, dominated as it is by a small clique of military officers who would do anything immoral or criminal to keep the Marcos autocracy in power. Ninoy had the high potential of leading and uniting the legal opposition parties. This is precisely why he was murdered in the most dastardly manner.

Behind deceptions such as referenda, plebiscites and elections of the fascist regime is the use of the armed forces to violate the freedom of the people and to bloodily suppress any serious resistance to the autocracy. The apparatuses of coercion are dependent on the US for indoctrination, strategic planning and intelligence, equipment and logistics, and high-level officer training.

It is the US that gives the most decisive kind of support to the Marcos fascist regime. So long as the US gets more and more extraordinary political, military, economic and other privileges, it will continue to give bilateral economic and military assistance, and facilitate foreign loans to the regime in its determination to plunder the human and material resources of our country.

In the wake of Ninoy's assassination, there have developed illusions that Marcos will back down because of the gigantic demonstrations of public outrage and protest, the exacerbation of the economic and financial crisis, and the expressions of displeasure, not so much by the Reagan administration as by the American press, the foreign creditors and the Lower House of the US Congress.

Marcos has in truth viciously reacted in words and deeds to the proposal for national reconciliation, the demand for resignation and the call for ouster. The basis for his arrogance and intransigence is not some fictitious

covenant with the people but his control of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, as well as the open and covert assurances of US support from the Reagan administration.

The US calls for an “impartial and thorough investigation of the Aquino assassination by Philippine authorities”—clever attempt to exculpate Marcos because he is endorsed as the authority to form the investigative body, despite the fact that he is the prime suspect in the crime. The formation by Marcos of the board of inquiry is meant to counter the move to form a board of inquiry under the auspices of the United Nations Human Rights Commission, the International Commission of Jurists, or some other respected international organization.

While Marcos is in power, an international board of inquiry enjoying the confidence of the aggrieved Aquino family and the entire Filipino people as well as the witnesses and experts, both Filipino and foreign, who have not come out to testify for fear of their safety, is definitely preferable to a board created by Marcos. The majority members of such an international board of inquiry may be eminent Filipinos in order to respect Philippine sovereignty, which is something different from the monarchic sovereignty actually presumed by Marcos.

The call for a “single-man successor” to Marcos is also a clever attempt to obscure the fundamental issue of autocracy or fascist dictatorship, and to divert attention from the mounting demand of the people for the restoration of democracy and the scrapping of the Marcos constitution. The Executive Committee is in fact now being replaced by something worse through a farcical plebiscite.

In case of the President’s death or incapacity, the speaker of the Batasang Pambansa is supposed to become the acting president with explicit limitations of power. But he, or she, or they who control the armed forces can presume to automatically succeed to the continuing unlimited powers of the autocrat. They can do so as they please for 45 to 60 days, including holding a sham plebiscite that suits them.

The call for “clean and honest elections” is a clever attempt to trap the legal opposition parties into accepting rigged elections for a sham parliament, thus legitimizing the autocracy. Under the signboard of nonpartisanship, Marcos monopolizes control of the Commission on Elections and all phases of the sham electoral process. In the very offices of the Comelec at any level, ghost precincts and any number of votes can be fabricated. (Even now, Marcos already knows, and has announced, that the legal opposition parties will not get more than 20 percent of the votes.)

The boycott position of former Senators Tañada, Diokno and Salonga is basically correct. This position is shared by the Nationalist Alliance for Justice, Freedom and Democracy, and by practically all organizations under the Justice for Aquino, Justice for All Movement. Such a position reflects the boycott trend among the people, as confirmed by the recent survey of the Concepcion group, the National Movement for Free Elections.

I am aware that Unido and other allies might choose to field candidates, especially in places where they calculate they can win. I suppose that their main objective is to continue hitting the target, the fascist dictatorship. If that is so, they are not thus completely cutting off their ties with the antifascist united front. We can only wish that they continue to firm up their antifascist position as time passes and that they remain open to the development of the most effective means of bringing about genuine democracy.

My estimate is that the US will dump Marcos for sure only when the New People’s Army led by the Communist Party of the Philippines shall have reached the stage of strategic stalemate, a significant segment of the middle forces shall have joined or launched armed resistance, and discontent within the Armed Forces of the Philippines shall have become conspicuous. All these are possible within a few years because of the rapid worsening of the political and economic crisis and the upsurge of legal mass actions and the armed struggle.

Only then will the US launch its operation to dislodge its ineffective puppet. I think that the present credit squeeze is mainly the result of the Marcos regime’s own excesses in foreign borrowing; it is not a move intended specifically to weaken and dislodge Marcos. The US is merely making it appear that the credit squeeze has been undertaken to discipline the Marcos regime. The fact is that there is really a world capitalist financial crisis under which the Marcos regime has been squeezed because of its excessive subservience, corruption and ineptness.

The economic disaster was coming down hard on the Philippines even before the Aquino assassination. After this brazen crime, which is a dramatization of the state of oppression in the country, the US has found it convenient to make it appear that both the economic and political crises are the sole responsibility of the Marcos clique. The US wants to impress the naive that its kind of political demands, which are in fact still supportive of Marcos, will solve the rapidly worsening political and economic crises and give the technocrats a freer hand in carrying out economic dictation from the US, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

Already, the US wants to spread the lie that it has nothing to do with the economic disaster and political terrorism of the Marcos regime. While it proclaims that the issue is political, the US actually wants to retain the autocratic regime for so long as it continues to carry out the policies of the US, the IMF and the World Bank and it gives away more extraordinary privileges to the US. Thus, such measures as drastic devaluations, import liberalization, disregard for the nationality requirement in equity and landholding, the cheap sale of citizenship rights, the conversion of foreign loans and supplies to takeover equity, and so on, have run far ahead of cosmetic changes in the political sphere during the ongoing foreign credit squeeze.

We should not have any illusions that, for the sake of democracy, or for the sake of the victims of repression as dramatized by Ninoy's treacherous slaying, the US will junk Marcos through the credit squeeze and some pretended political pressures, which are in fact pressures on Marcos to make mere cosmetic changes. The US, for example, is not even obliging Marcos to allow political exiles in the US to return home under conditions that will assure their safety and freedom in the country. The major political exiles in the US, in fact, still face the same dangers and risks that Ninoy faced in returning home.

The problem in the Philippines is both political and economic, but there is also the moral bankruptcy of the fascist regime. Both the US and the Marcos clique are responsible for the problem and are still colluding in oppressing and exploiting the Filipino people. The US will be forced to drop Marcos only if it is also effectively held accountable; and this is possible only if all forms of struggle have reached the level of development that I have already indicated earlier.

We can all agree on concentrating our fire on the Marcos fascist dictatorship. But we should not think that we can improve our chances of winning by being blind to the evil of US imperialism and following its political initiative, which in fact endorses the Marcos autocracy.

We should rely on the development of our own united front and on all forms of struggle under the united front.

Bright prospects of our struggle

Despite the odds, however, the prospect of our struggle for democracy is bright. The political and economic crisis of the ruling system is rapidly worsening. The fascist dictatorship has only served to deepen and aggravate the crisis. The broad masses of the people have found their oppression and exploitation intolerable and have risen to fight for national liberation and democracy.

All over the country, in both urban and rural areas, the people are rapidly being organized and are engaging in various forms of struggle against the fascist tyranny. The revolutionary movement is rapidly growing in strength.

The US-Marcos clique is extremely isolated as it has never been before and is in rapid decline. It has been weakened by its own puppetry, brutality, corruption and profligacy. It can no longer obtain foreign funds as easily as it could in the 1970s and is increasingly weighed down by a huge accumulated debt. The economy is still dependent on raw-material exports but the international market for these continues to be depressed. The Marcos regime's solution to the economic crisis is to worsen it by begging for more foreign loans at more onerous terms and wasting these loans on unproductive projects and on high consumption.

Even if the US wants to keep the Marcos autocracy in power, the US is constrained by the worsening crisis of the world capitalist system. It cannot exempt the Marcos regime from the workings of the world capitalist market, the high interest on loans, the tighter restrictions on foreign lending by US commercial banks, and so on.

Even at this time, it is already possible to concentrate at least two million people in a mass action on Malacañang. In the years to come, our capability to mobilize millions of people will increase. But our main line in urban areas is to conduct legal and peaceful mass actions.

There is no doubt about our mass strength. To depose the Marcos regime, the only missing element is the effective counter to his armed minions. Manglapus suggests that democratic-minded AFP officers can be encouraged to take action. But their action should not be towards a military takeover but should serve the broad-based movement for the restoration of democracy in our country.

The realization of this suggestion can be effective in advancing the democratic cause only if the Filipino people themselves carry out the various forms of struggle and have in their own hands all the necessary means for winning victory.

So long as the fascist dictatorship persists and uses its armed forces to attack and coerce the people, it will lose, whether it maintains or raises the level of its troop and armed strength. The economic crisis is worsening so

fast that the mere maintenance of the present troop strength is already a heavy drain on the economy. Yet this troop strength has been incapable of quelling the growing revolutionary forces.

Even now, political and economic discontent is already brewing among lower officers and enlisted men in the AFP because funds go mainly to overpriced equipment and hardware as well as corruption. On top of these, inflation has eaten away their salaries and allowances. An increase in troop strength will only result in the further worsening of the economic disaster which is now grievously victimizing the troops and their families.

The armed power of the fascist dictatorship is not really awesome. It is self-destructive even as, or precisely because, it is destructive of our national and democratic interests. As the political and economic crisis worsens, the rotten core of tyranny is further exposed.

We are confident of winning victory against the fascist dictatorship. This despotism will be consigned to the dungheap in a few years' time. Let us rely on the strength of our own people and not on the US or on lupus!

Long live Kompil and its council of leaders!

Down with the fascist dictatorship of the US-Marcos clique!

Carry forward the people's struggle for independence and democracy!

Justice for Aquino, Justice for all!

Long live the Filipino people!

On the Aquino Assassination Investigation

January 9, 1984

Sometime ago during a military commission hearing, you asked me what I thought of Rosendo Cawigan and what he had been claiming in press interviews. On the basis of the reports that I had read, I told you that his claims were self-contradicting, self-canceling and obviously fabricated. Repeating the words of Cory Aquino, the widow of our mutual friend Ninoy, I called him a liar and a military mercenary agent of the military. The presentation of Cawigan as a “star witness” and as an “NPA commander” before the Agrava Board proves once more the malicious, immoral and criminal character of the military regime. The fabrications that this man held captive by the military is made to utter are all calculated, not only to slander the New People’s Army as scapegoat, but also the murder victim, Ninoy Aquino. The Cawigan testimony was so clearly a big joke and a jumble of lies that the audience during the Agrava Board hearings could not resist laughing at it. But I take seriously the determined attempt of the military to use such a testimony for propaganda purposes and for hoodwinking the Agrava Board.

As one who has extensively and seriously studied the ideology, political program, system of organization, activities and morality of the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People’s Army, I am in a position to make some intelligent observations.

Here they are: 1) I do not know of any antagonism between Ninoy Aquino and the New People’s Army. It is well known in Tarlac and in the entire country that Ninoy and his family have always related themselves, in an enlightened manner, with the peasant masses and the rest of the people. In fact, President Marcos himself has accused Ninoy of being a “communist” or a sympathizer of the CPP and NPA. Even Cawigan foolishly call him the highest NPA commander and the NPA as meaning Ninoy’s People’s Army.

The truth is that Ninoy was regarded an avowed liberal democrat, a populist and an outstanding antifascist leader by all those who love freedom, including communists. The CPP and NPA considered him an ally and respected him for his courage in fighting the fascist regime of President Marcos, even as he was subjected to the most cruel kind of torture to soften him.

2) In his first attempt to invent a motive for the CPP and NPA on the day following the assassination, the self-contradicting Mr. Marcos claimed that these revolutionary organizations were vengefully mad at Aquino for having supposedly ordered the killing of “communist leaders” who had testified against him and his co-accused Bernabe Buscayno and Victor Corpus. Mr. Marcos underestimates the capacity of the people to recognize his self-contradiction.

It is public knowledge, especially in Tarlac and Pampanga, that the persons whimsically designated by Mr. Marcos as “communist leaders” were all special agents and assets of the AFP intelligence services. They were killed while in military custody after the perpetuation of their false testimonies against Aquino, Buscayno and Corpus. In an article appearing in Mr. & Ms., Ninoy’s mother, Doña Aurora, already made an effective factual refutation of the claim of Mr. Marcos that the murder of Aquino was brought about the Communists, because it is not based on competent evidence.

3) Cawigan’s claim that Aquino became the object of the NPA’s ire for failing to deliver funds from Libya to the NPA is a bumbling attempt to improve on Mr. Marcos’ previous claims and is possibly a move to please the anti-communist and anti-Libya sensibilities of the Reagan administration. Ninoy Aquino had his own political integrity and he could not have allowed himself to do errands for other political entities.

As already confirmed by the Libyan Ambassador to the Philippines, there is no direct or indirect connection between the Libyan government and the Communist Party of the Philippines. It is superfluous of the Marcos regime to add the name of Ninoy Aquino to that of the MNLF as an imaginary connection of the CPP to Libya. Considering the extent of the business dealings of some Marcos crony corporations in Libya, Mr. Marcos is better connected to that country than any other Philippine entity.

4) Cawigan was one of the false witnesses against Aquino, Buscayno and Corpus in military commission proceedings. In his testimony, he maligned the NPA by saying many of the things that he continues to say today. From being a driver of Ninoy, Cawigan became an intelligence agent of the Marcos regime. He has claimed that he has continued as such, in addition to his being a security officer of the National Food Authority.

There is entirely no basis for the NPA and even less for the alleged chairman of the Central Committee of the CPP to get into any kind of friendly meeting with a rabid convict and enemy agent. Neither would Cawigan for obvious reasons, submit himself to any secret meeting with the NPA. The claim that the NPA offered him a mission to kill Aquino and then upon his refusal informed him of who would be the alternative killer is simply preposterous.

5) Guided by the theory of the revolutionary proletariat and by the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army is an enlightened and well-disciplined army fighting for the national and democratic interests of the people. The NPA has a high sense of morality diametrically opposite to the immorality and gangsterism of the fascists. The NPA cherishes and seeks unity and cooperation with all anti-fascist leaders.

The NPA is a nationwide army of thousands of full-time guerrilla fighters who are supported by local organs of people's government, mass organizations, the militia and self-defense units. It does not employ professional killers for any function. The NPA has never engaged in anything diabolical as the attempted assassination of KBL stalwart Emmanuel Pelaez after his persistent effort to look into the accounts of the UNICOM.

6) The CPP and NPA are bound by the organizational principle of democratic centralism. No policy is adopted or action taken without the guidance of just principles and the benefit of the collective decision-making process in the interest of the people. There is no chance for any person of whatever rank or committee at whatever level to use personnel and resources of the organization on a grand scale for the commission of murder for narrow ends.

But in an autocratic regime, the dictator makes policies and laws to serve his selfish interests and order the armed forces to enforce his personal wishes, including the arbitrary arrest and detention, torture and assassination of his political opponents and the commission of so many barbarities against the people.

7) It is the Marcos regime and its big shots that have the penchant for coddling and hiring self-confessed murderers such as Rosendo Cawigan who are kept in reserve either as killers or fall guys. While there is no evidence that Cawigan or Rolando Galman have any connection with the NPA, there is ample evidence of their connection with the Marcos regime as agents of the military before the Aquino assassination that they may be justly qualified as mercenary.

Cawigan declared that he wanted to kill Aquino because a high-ranking military officer of the Presidential Security Command had told him that Aquino would have him killed. According to Cawigan, he was able to get through the Avsecom security cordon. Avsecom Col. Arturo Custodio has admitted his connection with the fall guy Galman. If Galman's girlfriend is still alive and available, she might be able to say more about his connections with military agents than she was able to say to some journalists before her disappearance.

8) Cawigan claims that he and Galman had been NPA commanders. The easiest way to disprove this claim is to go over their biographical data and to go into their ideological, political and organizational qualifications.

A genuine NPA commander leads at least a company of three platoons, has extensive political and organizational experience and has undergone several levels of theoretical and political-military training. It is sheer foolishness for anyone to claim that one becomes an NPA commander by simply killing dozens of people. Also, the NPA came into existence only on March 29, 1969. It did not exist while Ninoy was a governor of Tarlac.

9) Heads of formations lower than the company are called squad or platoon leaders and not commanders. It is the notorious practice of many AFP officers to misrepresent their victims or marionettes as NPA commanders in order to gain credibility. Within the NPA and in their relations with the people, squad or platoon leaders never describe themselves as commanders.

The scriptwriters behind Cawigan are apparently no different from those behind the Manotoc kidnapping and the ludicrous invention called Commander Ulupong. They combine malice and ignorance about the NPA. Thus, their fakery easily reveals itself. 10) I am sure that Rosendo Cawigan and Rolando Galman were never NPA commanders. Any motive can be attributed to the NPA by anyone. False witnesses can be rehearsed to harp on any motive.

But the real assassins of Aquino are narrowed down as we proceed to the investigation of the means and the opportunity to commit the crime. I would like to make some further observations: 1) It is ridiculous for Mr. Marcos and his military minions to claim that the NPA and/or Galman had the following capabilities: a) Communicating with Philippine diplomatic and consular offices, the US Federal Bureau of Investigation and US Immigration Office, the Interpol, the Taiwan Garrison and the airline companies as well as having relays of secret agents in order to trail and to monitor the movements of Ninoy from the United States through Singapore, Hong

Kong and Taiwan to Manila; b) Knowing the exact plane and time of arrival which Lupita Aquino Kashiwahara had kept to herself and from even the closest Aquino kins and friends until some minutes before Ninoy's arrival; c) Knowing in advance that Gate 8 would be used or having Galman run from gate to gate without being checked; d) Knowing General Custodio's supposed shift from Plan A (tube passage) to Plan B (stairway) ten minutes before Ninoy's arrival; and under whose orders; e) Going through several security rings and obstacles (composed of at least 1,200 security agents) and injecting Galman in an ill-fitting disguise into the most sanitized area; f) Doing what Lupita Aquino Kashiwahara failed to do even with the help of MIA general manager Luis Tabuena (the same as in item e., but the point here is to show that even one so determined, intelligent and resourceful but unauthorized could not penetrate the maximum security cordon); g) Coming from a blind side (from under the plane) and knowing the exact time (in seconds) when Aquino would appear on the killing spot; h) Ordering the security men who were supposed to be on guard at the foot of the stairs and those in the Avsecom van to position and conduct themselves in such a manner as to allow an unauthorized person to slip in and shoot Ninoy; i) Limiting the number of security agents who witnessed the actual killing so as to limit the danger of contradicting testimonies; j) With General Manager Luis Tabuena, actually preventing the foreign newsmen and news photographers and the local newsmen and news photographers with Ninoy in the plane to go through the tube to the plane; and on the tarmac, where Ninoy was to be taken, via the stairs from the side of the tube, so that pictures of the last nine seconds of Ninoy's life could not be taken, especially the exact second of the assassination; manager Tabuena admitted, under oath on the witness stand, that it was he who prevented the tri-media representatives from getting into the tube, then inside the plane, notwithstanding the fact that he stated he was not General Manager of MIA on August 21, 1983, because Avsecom took over; k) Synchronizing or making co-incident the failure of all the TV and other camera monitoring system of the Presidential Security Command, Avsecom and the Bureau of Air Transportation to monitor Ninoy from the time he emerged from the tube to the stairs, then to the SWAT van; l) Confiscating films from news photographers after the assassination and erasing from the video tape of the government-owned MBS, Channel 4, that part which recorded the last nine seconds of Ninoy life; m) Coordinating all the foregoing and taking command as Generals Ver and Custodio did; n) Ordering General Ver to approve a maximum security plan where a strict elementary requirement like hand-held cameras for close-in purposes, were significantly absent; considering that a team of military photographers and videotape operators is a part of the military organization which was always present on occasions in which the military participates, like the security of the President and his family; assisting foreign dignitaries; and the security of detainees taken to the Court; o) Designing and mastering the entire Oplan Balikbayan in order to achieve the assassination; p) Interfering with the digestive system and blood flow of Galman and yet making him perform feats that beat at least 1,200 men and outwit several generals on an interservice scale; q) Making or pretending to make sure that Galman is dead by overkill and messing up the fingerprint on the supposed gun of the alleged assassin; r) Having General Olivas make sure that the Marcos prejudgment of the assassination is sustained by incompetent and employed witnesses; s) Having the dead body of Ninoy desecrated by dumping it astride a toilet bowl in a toilet of the Army Station Hospital after his identification; t) Confronting General Baltazar Aguirre about his telephone conversation with Ninoy. General Aguirre and his wife died later in a car "accident."

If the NPA could do any or all of the above, then it must have taken over Malacañang Palace, the entire Armed Forces of the Philippines, or at least the entire Gestapo system of Mr. Marcos.

2) I do not think that Mr. Marcos, as commander-in-chief, can successfully disclaim command responsibility in the Aquino assassination on the argument stated by Minister Enrile, that the maximum security for Ninoy was a routine matter under standard operating procedures for which the chief of staff General Ver or even lower officers are responsible, against the background of the publicized information of a plan to assassinate Aquino, made public by the President; Mrs. Marcos; and Minister Enrile.

Mr. Marcos and Minister Enrile are on public record as having warned Aquino of some serious assassination threat; and trying hard to dissuade him from exercising his right to return home, which even a homing pigeon enjoys. It is ridiculous, if they claim that they had never been consulted by General Ver on so serious a matter, as security preparations for the Aquino arrival, and the sudden change of procedure which resulted in the assassination of Ninoy.

3) I do not think that the Agrava Board can pursue the investigation up to the level of the principal by induction, where evidence point to a military personnel as the killer. 4. I do not think that the said principal by induction

has the noble but tragic character of Oedipus Rex who accepted his guilt upon evidence. Under the present circumstances, not all witnesses and other evidence contrary to the military's version can be presented before the Agrava Board because of fear of those in power and the active cover-up by them. The controlled mass media are also being used now to drum up the military version and discredit contrary witnesses and evidences.

I admire your selfless effort to oversee and help the proceedings of the Agrava Board. In this way, the honor and integrity of our martyred friend can be safeguarded.

Of course, I am always deeply grateful for the relentless and learned efforts that you are also extending in the cases against us; and the violations of several guarantees in Proclamation No. 2045 which you pointed out in the Petition for habeas corpus filed in my favor, which is scheduled to be heard on January 12. It will be an acid test for the Supreme Court. The constitutional issues raised are precedent-setting affecting Filipinos of today and those of future generations.

You may use this letter as you deem fit. Please do not worry about what Mr. Marcos and military henchmen might do, against me, sooner or later. They will only accelerate their fall as they commit more barbarities.

You may furnish a copy of this letter even to the Agrava Board to refute allegations that the CPP and NPA were responsible for the Aquino assassination.

Happy New Year!

Letter to Atty. Juan T. David about Aborted Testimony

January 24, 1984

Consequent to the Agrava Board hearing today, I would like to make some observations: 1. The Agrava Board subpoenaed me to testify before it because of my letter to you dated January 9. Said letter refutes the testimony of one Rosendo Cawigan as well as Mr. Marcos' prejudgment of the Aquino assassination.

It is disgusting that in this morning's hearing the Agrava Board was more interested in aborting my testimony than in anything else. After refusing to let me read my one-page preliminary statement, the board wanted me to admit having been the CPP chairman and also indicated that I would be allowed to speak on only one point in Cawigan's testimony, i.e., his claims to having been an NPA commander, if I admitted having been CPP chairman and if I could provide some list of NPA commanders.

The Agrava Board put up unnecessary obstacles to my testimony. Instead of using my January 9 letter to you as the basis of my testimony, the board was imposing requirements on me which I would surely reject.

It is obvious that between January 20, when my military custodians failed to bring me to the Agrava Board, and January 24, when I was finally brought there, the Marcos regime persuaded the Agrava Board in some way to abort my testimony.

It was apparent during the hearing that commission chairman Agrava, general counsel Narvasa and Avsecom counsel Jimenez assisted by Presidential Security Command legal chief Col. Diego and assistant solicitor general Abad were coordinating their moves to stop my testimony.

I would not be surprised if the Marcos regime and the Agrava Board are colluding in order to preserve the Cawigan testimony in the official record of the board, sustain Mr. Marcos' prejudgment of the Aquino testimony and conclude the work of the board with an anticommunist coverup of the regime's criminal responsibility.

2. The Agrava Board is mainly and essentially a fact-finding body. Whatever else it is, it has shown some flexibility in a number of instances in dealing with persons who are invited or subpoenaed to testify. Examples of its flexibility are the following: a. Butz Aquino was allowed to read a statement which gave both the legal and political reasons for his refusal to testify. It was appropriate and unavoidable for him to say that he, like his brother Ninoy, would have nothing to do with a body created by Mr. Marcos. This is a political statement. b. Cawigan and Daraman were allowed to give in public their patently false testimonies, which are shot through and through with self-contradictions, hearsay and fantastic political claims such as that the political allies of Aquino were responsible for his murder. These false testimonies are legally worthless but are useful propaganda for the Marcos regime.

3. In my case, the Agrava Board seemed to be flexible enough to advise me that I could step down from the witness stand if I had no pertinent facts to declare. But at the same time, here are some rigidities and discriminations applied against me: a. I was not allowed to make any preliminary statement. I was ready to read only a one-page statement. I could have been allowed and then stopped at any point if the board would decide that I was veering away from what was proper and pertinent. b. I was being required to answer with a simple yes or no whether I am or was the CPP chairman. The commission could have simply taken cognizance of the fact that the state through the military prosecutors, the Office of the Solicitor General and even Mr. Marcos assert in documents and public pronouncements that I was CPP chairman to establish even only tentatively my authority on the subject at hand if the board really had any desire at any time to hear me.

It is not a commonplace fact that the state accuses anyone of being CPP chairman. When I refer to myself as a serious student of the ideology, practical program, organizational discipline, actions and morality of the CPP and NPA, I do not merely exercise legal prudence, but out of modesty I would rather allow others to judge for themselves whether I am an expert on the subject. In the first place, was I not subpoenaed because of my January 9 letter to you?

4. I stuck to my right to silence and against self-incrimination on the particular question of whether I am/was the CPP chairman. It is because I was not convinced that the "immunity" provision in the decree creating the Agrava Board would benefit a witness whose testimony runs counter to those of witnesses favorable to the Marcos regime and who has prior and pending cases of subversion and rebellion against him.

A witness like Cawigan can admit any crime, even a thousand murders, before the board. And the Marcos

regime will not prosecute and try him. But in my case, after making a public admission of having been the CPP chairman before the board for instance, the military prosecutors and military commissions prosecuting and trying me for subversion and rebellion would take note of the fact of admission to reinforce their charges against me matter-of-factly, legally and propaganda-wise even without maneuvering me into a case of perjury.

I saw no point whatsoever in admitting CPP chairmanship. Even if I did, the next move of the Avsecom counsel assisted by the assistant solicitor general and the PSC legal officer would be to question my competence in matters in the period following my 1977 arrest. I would have been prevented just the same from testifying.

5. If the Agrava Board is not in collusion with the Marcos regime in a predetermined effort to abort my testimony, then it must be honestly ignorant of the correct line of approach in the evaluation of the Cawigan testimony, especially the claim to Cawigan's having been an NPA commander.

It suffices for any person (whether or not he admits being CPP chairman or member) to be knowledgeable about the CPP Constitution and NPA Rules for him to demonstrate that Cawigan never had the time, opportunity and qualifications to become an NPA commander or even only an ordinary NPA guerrilla fighter on the basis of his own testimony.

It is ridiculous for the Agrava Board to expect me to admit to having been CPP chairman and then to produce some list of NPA commanders and fighters in order to prove that Cawigan's name is not there. Even if he has become a fool or a traitor to his cause, no single CPP officer of national rank can list down the names of all NPA commanders since 1969 for the benefit of the Agrava Board.

Another letter on how you may be able to pursue debunking Cawigan's false claims to being an NPA commander will follow this letter.

6. Unless the Agrava Board is a propaganda tool of the Marcos regime, it should immediately strike off from its record the Cawigan testimony which is completely worthless legally. Former Senator Ambrosio Padilla tears this testimony apart in his article entitled "Rosendo Cawigan and His Revelations Are Incredible" appearing in the January 20-27, 1984 issue of *Kabayan* (Vol. II, No. 12). Senator Padilla maintains the following: (a) Cawigan is not a credible witness, (b) some of his statements are hearsay, (c) his revelations are incredible, and (d) his claims regarding Commander Bilog and/or the NPA are inadmissible.

7. We should have had ample discussions before you allowed me to take the witness' oath. Our previous agreement was that I would testify only if I would be allowed to read my preliminary statement and that I would invoke my right to silence and against self-incrimination if I was asked whether I had been CPP chairman.

I took the witness stand only because you advised me that I would be able to express my preliminary statement in the course of my testimony. But I could not accept the advice that I could avail myself of the "immunity" provision of the decree creating the Agrava Board. Despite its glittering generality, this provision is specially designed to benefit the witnesses favorable to the Marcos regime and not someone like me.

The Agrava Board unwittingly did me a good turn by refusing to let me read my preliminary statement and aborting my testimony. The press and the people have only become more interested in what I was not able to say before the board.

I continue to be critical of the origin and weaknesses of the Agrava Board. But I do not think that it is completely useless. So long as it conducts public hearings and tries to maintain the semblance of integrity and impartiality, a lot of facts can be established to facilitate further investigation by an international board of inquiry.

Again, I say that it shall be a new democratic government that shall give justice to Ninoy and all other victims of fascist tyranny.

On My Appearance before the Agrava Board: A Follow-up Statement

February 2, 1984

When the Agrava Board subpoenaed me to testify before it, the board was not really interested in hearing anything from me to debunk the false testimony of Cawigan, not even his specific false claim to being a commander of the New People's Army.

The Marcos regime and the Agrava Board are obviously determined to retain in the record of the board the testimony of Cawigan. This became very clear in the course of my appearance before the board.

The Agrava Board subpoenaed me to testify before it because of my January 9, 1984 letter to my legal counsel, Atty. Juan T. David. My letter refutes the testimony of Cawigan as well as Marcos' prejudgment of the Aquino assassination.

The Agrava Board was more interested in aborting my testimony than in anything else. After refusing to let me read my one-page preliminary statement (a privilege subsequently granted to Senator Salvador Laurel when he appeared before the board on January 30), the board wanted me to admit to having been the CPP chairman and also indicated that I would be allowed to speak on only one point in Cawigan's testimony, his claims to having been an NPA commander, if I admitted what it wanted me to admit and if I could provide some list of NPA commanders.

The commission put up unnecessary obstacles to my testimony. Instead of using my January 9 letter to Atty. Juan T. David as the basis of my testimony, it was imposing requirements on me which I had no choice but to reject.

It was apparent during the hearing that the board chairman, the general counsel and the Avsecom counsel assisted by the Presidential Security Command legal chief and the assistant solicitor general were coordinating their moves to stop my testimony.

I would not be surprised if the Marcos regime and the Agrava Board are colluding in order to preserve the Cawigan testimony, sustain Marcos' prejudgment of the Aquino assassination and conclude the work of the board with an anticommunist cover-up of the regime's criminal responsibility.

To debunk Cawigan's false claim to being or having been an NPA commander, it suffices for anyone to be knowledgeable about the CPP Constitution and the NPA Rules (authentic copies of which are available publicly and from government files) and to show that Cawigan on the basis of his own testimony never had the time, opportunity and qualifications to become an NPA commander or even an ordinary fighter of the NPA.

He claims to have been a full-time driver-bodyguard of Ninoy Aquino, a provincial warden, NBI agent and finally an anti-NPA military agent who was used as a false witness against Ninoy Aquino and two alleged high-ranking NPA officers, Bernabe Buscayno and Victor Corpus.

It was preposterous that I was expected by the Agrava Board to admit having been CPP chairman and then to produce some list of NPA commanders. The commission was simply interested in requiring me to violate my principles and squelching my evaluation of the entire Cawigan testimony.

The "immunity" provision for witnesses in the decree creating the Agrava Board is specifically designed to protect false witnesses dished out by the Marcos regime.

Cawigan for instance can admit any crime, he has in fact admitted a dozen murders, and he will not be prosecuted and tried by the Marcos regime.

But my situation is different. There are prior and pending cases of subversion and rebellion against me before military commissions. And admissions of having been CPP chairman before the board would be matter-of-factly and propaganda-wise adopted by the military commissions to railroad the cases against me.

Even if I admitted CPP chairmanship prior to my arrest, the Avsecom counsel would still seek to prevent me from speaking on any matter after my arrest in 1977.

If the Agrava Board is not in active collusion with the Marcos regime in a predetermined effort to abort my testimony then it must be honestly ignorant of the correct line of approach in the evaluation of the Cawigan testimony. It is wrong to think that Cawigan's false claims to being an NPA commander can be debunked necessarily by the presentation of some NPA list of commanders.

The commission would be the first to argue that the absence of Cawigan's name in any list is no proof of the

falsity of his pretenses to being an NPA commander. There is no better way to disprove his pretenses than by showing the chasm between his claims and the strict minimum requirements for being an NPA member in accordance with the CPP constitution and the NPA rules. As I had repeatedly told my legal counsel, there was no need for me to testify before the Agrava Board. Any person who cares to study the documents I mentioned can evaluate Cawigan's false claims to having been an NPA commander.

If it were not naive and not conniving with the Marcos regime in a cover-up, the Agrava Board could have easily see through the outright lies, self-contradictions and hearsay of Cawigan as exposed by my January 9 letter to Atty. Juan T. David.

The Agrava Board cannot also be blind to the legal opinion of former Senator Ambrosio Padilla, entitled "Rosendo Cawigan and His Revelations Are Incredible" and appearing in the January 20-26, 1984 issue of *Kabayan* (Vol. II, No. 12).

The Cawigan testimony is legally worthless and is cheap propaganda calculated to sustain Marcos' prejudgment of the Aquino assassination.

The Agrava Board merely discredits itself by keeping the Cawigan testimony in its official record. The commission exposes its inclination, if not determination, to give free rein to the cover-up and squid tactics of the Marcos regime and its military minions.

As I made clear in my clarificatory statement on January 24, I would speak anywhere and anytime possible to tell the truth to the people.

There's Something Fishy about the Agrava Board: A Brief Encounter

February 3, 1984

It is possible that the Agrava Board was sincere and earnest when it issued a subpoena requiring me to testify before it on January 20. My military custodians did not bring me before the board, giving the lame excuse or threat that I might be “waylaid” and did not even bother to show me the subpoena. (To this day, I have not seen it.)

The commission had found it necessary to summon me because of my January 9 letter to my counsel Atty. Juan T. David, refuting point by point the false testimony of one Rosendo Cawigan as well as disputing the pre-judgment of the Aquino assassination by Mr. Marcos.

In the same letter, I qualified myself as a serious student of the ideology, practical program, organizational discipline, actions and morality of the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army. Out of modesty, I did not call myself an expert. The letter was proof enough that I know what I was writing about.

When I was finally brought before the Agrava Board on January 24, I came to know that it was no longer interested in hearing me under the qualification that I had stated in my letter to my counsel. As a matter of fact, I became aware of a series of maneuvers to stop me from testifying.

1. Upon arrival at the SSS compound, I was made to wait in the van that took me there instead of being brought right away to the waiting lounge of the Agrava Board until my military escort, Capt. Alcoriza, without citing the source of his question, asked me if I was willing to testify without my legal counsel, Atty. David.

I answered, “No!” And the captain was quick to say, “Then we are going back.” I had to insist that I would have to wait for my counsel because otherwise I would be castigated by the board for refusing to testify.

I would learn eventually that it was general counsel Andres Narvasa who was the source of Capt. Alcoriza's question. There appeared to be an attempt to take advantage of Atty. David's tardiness. But anyway, the ploy or non-ploy was minor.

2. At the waiting lounge, Atty. David and I had no chance to discuss matters. He was preoccupied with the general counsel and other officials of the Agrava Board.

When I was brought into the hearing hall, I was immediately made to take the witness stand. I looked in the direction of Atty. David at the lawyers' panel. Obviously, he was satisfied with what was happening.

When I requested to be allowed to read my brief preliminary statement, the board chairman vigorously denied my request and my legal counsel even agreed with her that I did not have to read the statement.

I was about to say that I was not interested in testifying. But Atty. David came over to urge me to testify and to assure me that I could make my prohibited statement in the course of my testimony. I was also able to pass my prepared statement on to the press.

I continued to smell something fishy about the Agrava Board. Why was I prevented from reading my statement? Why the discrimination? Butz Aquino in a previous appearance was allowed to read his statement even as he refused to take the witness stand. He gave both legal and political reasons for refusing to do so.

Only a few days after my appearance, the board would also allow former Senator Salvador Laurel to read a preliminary statement, thus underscoring the discrimination against me.

3. Contrary to Atty. David's previous agreement with the board that he would be the first to propound questions to me so as to properly lay the basis of my testimony to the people, it was the general counsel who started to ask me questions. It would only be on February 2 that I learned from Atty. David himself that despite his protests, the board backtracked on the previous agreement and decided to let the general counsel be my first questioner.

However, he was not yet aware of underhanded tactics underway. After all, he was confident that the basis of the board in summoning me was my January 9 letter to him.

The fish really stank to high heavens when the board chairman and the general counsel gave the floor to the Avsecom counsel who asked whether I was the CPP chairman; and the board chairman readily agreed with him that I could not testify further if I refused to answer the question with a simple yes or no.

The general counsel did not pursue his line of questioning about my personal knowledge of documents. I never had the chance to cite the CPP Constitution and the Rules of the NPA as basis for evaluating the testimony of Cawigan.

At that point, it became absolutely clear to me that the Agrava Board was not really interested in hearing anything from me regarding my letter to Atty. David. It became evident that the Agrava Board was collaborating with the Avsecom legal counsel, assisted by the Presidential Security Command legal chief Col. Albino Diego and Assistant Solicitor General Abad, in stopping my testimony.

4. In an obvious attempt to put me in a bad light as an uncooperative witness, the board chairman recited Section 5 (the “immunity” provision for witnesses) of the decree creating the Agrava Board.

This particular provision, for all its glittering generality, is suited to benefit witnesses like Cawigan who support the Marcos prejudgment of the Aquino assassination. They can admit any crime—a dozen murders or more—and the Marcos regime will not take a step to prosecute and try them.

In my case, there are prior and pending cases of subversion and rebellion against me before the military commissions. Without even bothering to maneuver me into a case of perjury (the exception to the “immunity” provision), the military prosecutors and the military commissions can matter-of-factly and propaganda-wise refer to or use an admission as CPP chairman in order to railroad the cases against me.

However, I was not simply exercising legal and political prudence in invoking my right to silence and against self-incrimination on that specific question of whether I am or was the CPP chairman.

1. I became sure that the Agrava Board itself was interested in aborting my testimony. I anticipated that even if I disregarded prudence and admitted having been the CPP chairman, the next move of the Avsecom counsel would have been to question my competence to testify on matters after my arrest in 1977.

I was also insulted by the board when it suggested that I might have access to NPA list of commanders and members and made the implication that I would make these available to the board and the regime. If the board had no intention of insulting me, then it showed ignorance of the correct method of evaluating Cawigan’s claim to being an NPA commander.

2. I considered it inflexible of the board to require me to admit being or having been CPP chairman or member. As indicated in my January 9 letter to Atty. David, any serious student of matters concerning the CPP and NPA can demonstrate the wide chasm between Cawigan’s claim of having been an NPA commander and the strictest minimum requirements for being an ordinary NPA member in the light of the CPP constitution and the NPA rules.

The absence of Cawigan’s name in any list is no proof of his being an impostor. But on the basis of his own testimony and the basic CPP and NPA documents which are publicly available, it can be easily demonstrated that he never had the time, opportunity and qualifications (ideological, political and organizational) to become an NPA commander.

3. If the Agrava Board were really interested in hearing me on more important and more pertinent matters regarding the Cawigan testimony, instead of creating an unnecessary obstacle, it could have simply taken cognizance of the fact that Mr. Marcos and the military prosecutors have repeatedly asserted in official documents and charged that I was once the CPP chairman.

The Agrava Board is just another agency of the regime, specifically some kind of glorified fiscal’s office. Why could it not recognize the assertions of the JAGS which is its parallel? It is not commonplace that someone is accused as CPP chairman. Even if he does not admit to being such, there is the implication that he is knowledgeable about the theory and practice of the CPP and NPA.

4. The Agrava Board made a lot of fuss about the question of my being or having been the CPP chairman and eventually used my refusal to answer this particular question as the excuse to stop my testimony. The commission would not be satisfied with a modest self-description of being a serious student; and would not even allow me to demonstrate how sufficiently knowledgeable I am.

And yet this same commission allowed Cawigan to make obviously false statements against the martyred Ninoy Aquino and the CPP and NPA; and then Daraman against Doy Laurel and the entire opposition. The commission did not raise any question on their qualifications so as to stop them from using the board as the propaganda instrument of the Marcos regime.

The claim of Cawigan that he had been an NPA commander is so grossly and extremely false that it does not take a CPP chairman or member to debunk it. If someone claims that he is a Catholic priest because he married four wives, one does not have to be a Pope or a bishop to debunk his claim. It suffices for anyone knowledgeable of Christian doctrine and practice to stand up and demonstrate the falsity of the claim.

The longer the Agrava Board keeps the Cawigan testimony in its record, the more it discredits itself before the

people. On the basis of its actuations towards me, I will not be surprised if the Agrava Board will finally prove to be nothing more than an instrument for the cover up of the Aquino assassination.

If the board had enough respect for the law and a sense of decency, it would immediately strike out from its record the Cawigan testimony as well as all other patently false testimonies. In the first place, the Cawigan testimony should never have been admitted into the record of the board.

The Agrava Board should refer to the legal opinion of Senator Ambrosio Padilla which is entitled "Rosendo Cawigan and His Revelations Are Incredible" and printed in the January 20-26, 1984 issue of *Kabayan* (Vol. II, No. 12).

This Padilla article covers the following: (1) Cawigan is not a credible witness; (2) some of his statements are hearsay; (3) his revelations are incredible; and (4) his admissions are not admissible against "Commander Bilog" and/or the NPA.

The Cawigan testimony is legally worthless. But it is useful to the Marcos regime as propaganda. It is part of this regime's squid tactics. It supports Mr. Marcos' prejudgment of the Aquino assassination and his scheme to make the CPP and the NPA his perpetual scapegoat.

On Marcos' Failure to Heed Six-point Call for Meaningful Elections

February 15, 1984

As correctly anticipated by revolutionaries and the freedom-loving people, Marcos has failed to heed the six-point call for meaningful elections made by some major legal opposition parties, alliances and leaders.

The Marcos regime is so insensitive, so rapacious and so determined to rule by violence and deception that it refuses to heed the call that even implies legitimization of the regime and its constitution if shorn of their most obnoxious antidemocratic features.

Those who signed the call have succeeded in underscoring the rigid autocratic character of the Marcos regime and the farcical character of both the May 14 elections and "regular" assembly. Those who signed the call can now resolutely and militantly carry out the boycott movement on just grounds which are clear to all people desirous of democratic reforms.

To participate in the forthcoming sham elections for a sham parliament is to capitulate to the illegitimacy and tyranny of the fascist dictatorship and to encourage US imperialism to continue propping up this puppet regime which is already in the process of collapse.

An active boycott movement must be launched for the people to assert their sovereignty and exercise their democratic rights and to carry forward the struggle for national liberation and democracy.

The boycott movement goes beyond the simple refusal of the major national opposition parties and alliances to field candidates and participate in the rigged elections for a sham parliament.

The movement encompasses all the peaceful but militant actions of the opposition parties, alliances, movements and mass organizations to further arouse, organize and mobilize the entire people to reject not only one more electoral farce but the entire fascist puppet dictatorship and to fight for a new democratic form of government.

It is my further perception that the boycott movement raises the revolutionary consciousness and activity of the people to a new and higher level and promotes the armed resistance for national liberation and democracy.

Since 1979, I have repeatedly pointed out that Mr. Marcos has no reason to be arrogant in perpetuating his tyrannical rule and ignoring the just national and democratic demands of the people.

His easy borrowing days are over. The accumulated debt burden is ruining the economy. The 1980s will continue to be characterized by the rapid worsening of the political and economic crisis of the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system.

Mr. Marcos has the illusion that he can indefinitely use the armed forces to terrorize the people and suppress their national and democratic rights. But from year to year, he will find it more and more difficult to satisfy his military minions as the internal crisis of the system worsens and the armed resistance grows in strength all over the country.

The national democratic revolution is bound to win. US imperialism and the fascist puppet regime cannot stop the rising of the entire people, especially the toiling masses of workers and peasants.

On the Rationale of the Boycott

Interview with Philippine News and Features, February 28, 1984

Are you in favor of boycott or participation in the May 14 elections? What is your view on the outcome of the February 14 deadline on the six-point call for meaningful elections?

I am in favor of boycott. This means that neither will I run for the farcical regular assembly nor vote for anyone in the farcical elections.

The failure of Mr. Marcos to heed the six-point call for meaningful elections exposes his refusal to give up his autocracy and adopt any significant democratic reform.

In making the call the signatories were bending backward from their Marcos-resign position and were implying that they would recognize the present regime and the 1973 constitution if both were shorn of their most obnoxious antidemocratic features.

But Mr. Marcos is obdurate. The opposition leaders have once more succeeded in underscoring that he wants to maintain his tyrannical rule.

The legal opposition appears to be split now over the issue of boycott or participation. Will not this split or cleavage weaken the opposition and strengthen the KBL strategically as well as specifically in the elections?

In general, the boycott campaign will help strengthen the foundation of the democratic movement against the US-Marcos clique. In one respect, those who are for participation tend to undermine this foundation by helping the US and Marcos create the illusion of democracy through elections that are mainly and essentially fraudulent.

In another respect, the pro-participation oppositionists can still help strengthen the democratic movement if they concentrate their fire on the antinational and antidemocratic character of the Marcos regime. Thus, the split within the legal opposition becomes merely a temporary split on methods of fighting the common enemy.

After they learn one more bitter lesson from Mr. Marcos, the pro-participation oppositionists can always rejoin the opposition mainstream.

The cards are stacked against them. They may be allowed to win in a few areas but they will be made to lose on a nationwide scale in the sham elections. Instead of making snide remarks against the boycott campaign, they can concentrate on attacking the Marcos regime for being tyrannical and for refusing to heed the call for meaningful elections. The few concessions on minor procedural matters are not enough to ensure clean and honest elections. I see that the boycott campaign is concentrating its fire on the Marcos regime—discrediting KBL candidates—and therefore would indirectly be supporting opposition candidates who take up issues against the Marcos dictatorship. So, if there is honest counting of votes, these opposition candidates stand a good chance of being elected by those who believe in the merits of participation. The problem of would-be opposition candidates is not the boycott movement but the rigging of the elections by those in power. Marcos will use a KBL “independent slate,” the Roy Nacionalistas and some “instant” political parties to create a merry circus and then say that these parties took votes away from candidates of the opposition so as to justify an overwhelming KBL “victory.”

How do you weigh the boycott campaign in the oppositions' overall struggle for democracy?

The rigged elections in May are a thing of the Marcos regime. It is merely a short-term circus. It will not make or break the opposition. The boycott campaign is the correct tit-for-tat response. We see a Captain Boycott in Mr. Marcos and the people must come together in refusing to deal with him.

It is obvious that the boycott campaign is only one of several campaigns of the national democratic movement within a given period of time—a few months. It is subordinate to the general line of seeking to dismantle the fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique and establish a new democratic form of government.

In carrying out the boycott, the campaigners and the people are positively and vigorously taking up the full scope of issues for national liberation and democracy against the US-Marcos clique in the political, economic, cultural and foreign policy spheres.

As a matter of fact, the main battlecry is: “Unite and fight for democracy against the US-Marcos fascist dictatorship! Boycott its sham elections for a sham parliament!” That puts the boycott campaign in the proper context. It is proper to stress the call for boycott in many mass actions up to May.

What do you think will be the measure of success for the boycott campaign? The advocates of participation say that

there will be a lot more voter participation in May than in the January plebiscite because of the contest of personalities and parties?

The measure of success for the boycott campaign will not be the fictitious figures on voter turnout and election results to be issued by the Comelec. It will be the great number of people aroused, organized and mobilized by the boycott campaign through mass actions all over the country.

I am sure that this campaign will be drawing a far greater number of people through various forms of mass actions than either the KBL or any of the opposition parties that would be fielding candidates.

The cause-oriented rallies clearly have a large voluntary mass following. Generally, the parties fielding candidates will be able to get large crowds by spending a lot of money through the hakot system. But by taking up the people's cause and vigorously speaking out against the regime, some candidates will become big crowd drawers.

Why will you not consider Comelec-issued results as a good measure for the success or failure of the boycott movement?

The figures that would be handled and released by the Comelec will not be a good basis for gauging the success of the boycott campaign because the new voters' registration as well as the electoral process are still securely controlled and subject to manipulation by the Marcos dictatorship.

The barangay councils are subjects to pressures and manipulation by local KBL big shots. The majority of teachers are not yet up to the level of consciousness and activism of members of the Alliance of Concerned Teachers and teachers in Metro Manila and San Fernando, Pampanga. Most of them are still subject to pressures by local KBL big shots.

The opposition candidates, their parties and NAMFREL cannot go into the secret rooms of Malacañang, the Ministry of Local Government, the Comelec and the local big shots of the regime to stop the manipulators from conjuring ghost precincts and preparing election results ahead of election day.

By the law of uneven development though, there would be places where the regime will not be able to fabricate or manipulate the lists of voters and precincts. In such places, the strength of the boycott campaign and the pro-participation opposition may be accurately reflected in official results.

Laurel is probably correct when he says that UNIDO will win 60 to 70 percent of assembly seats if elections are clean and honest. But elections will be rigged.

There is a view that boycott is negative and difficult to campaign for among the people. Participation is supposed to be positive and attractive to the people. Unlike in a plebiscite, the clash of personalities in the May elections will generate wider participation. What do you think?

The boycott campaign as it is being waged by its proponents cannot but be positive because it rallies the people to the national democratic program. It would be a different story altogether if the boycott proponents do not explain the reasons for the boycott. Not only are the issues concerning national liberation and democracy being projected but so are the parties, alliances, mass organizations and personalities in support of these.

Under the circumstances, one cannot be positive without combating the evil of tyranny and puppetry. I think that the pro-participation parties will simply have to be positive and negative in this sense if they wish to save themselves from utter obsequiousness to the US-Marcos regime.

Participants in a sham elections will try to generate a lot of hoopla. But I think that the real voter turnout will be small. There will be more people drawn by mass actions of the boycott campaign.

Both the KBL leaders and the pro-participation opposition say that boycott is running away from a fright and that participation is macho. What do you say?

Participation is submission to the electoral farce of an illegitimate and terrorist regime; it is matsunurin, not macho.

Boycott consistently and forthrightly fights for the fundamentals of democracy against the autocracy. You are already witness to the sustained and spreading militant mass actions. Are these not positively macho? You know too that boycott is not the monopoly of the legal organizations, alliances and unarmed people. If you consider the boycott stand of the armed revolutionary organizations, what is more macho than what they are capable of doing?

What do you think of the view that President Marcos actually wants the real opposition to boycott the elections?

That is supposed to be the reason why he ignored the six-point call for meaningful elections. He is also reported to be preparing to field a KBL "independent" slate and/or tap the Roy Nacionalistas to compete with the KBL.

The Reagan administration wants Mr. Marcos to stage an electoral exercise that is not so flagrantly fraudulent so that Mr. Reagan can tell the American people, the American press, the US Congress and the rest of the world that his boy in the Philippines is not so bad after all and is “democratic.” Thus, credible opposition candidates and parties are needed for the exercise.

To keep the concessions that he has to give to UNIDO as small and negligible as possible, Marcos acts as if he can run a circus pleasing to the US by having a KBL “independent” slate or the Roy Nacionalistas as electoral opponents of the KBL.

Mr. Marcos is a puppet of the US but he has his extraordinary appetite for power. He is an autocrat in the mold of a Ngo Dinh Diem, a Shah Pahlavi and a Somoza. He thinks that if he still controls the reactionary armed forces and civil organs of government, the United States and various international agencies will have no choice but to deal with him.

He is compelling more and more people to opt for armed resistance. It is very likely that he will not know when he is already overtaken by developments.

Do you think the boycott campaign will actively denounce the opposition parties participating in the elections as capitulationists and helpers of the Marcos regime in prettifying itself?

I think that the boycott campaign should unerringly concentrate its fire on the US-Marcos clique and avoid dissipating its strength by berating the oppositionists who participate in the sham elections.

There are venues for the boycott and participation sides to be on talking terms. Both sides were able to agree on the six-point call for meaningful elections. Of course, some of the signatories are more faithful to their signatures than the others.

On previous occasions, there were some spontaneous booing directed against a few political leaders advocating participation. That was because there were imprudent remarks and they wanted to seize the initiative in the same big gatherings.

When the boycott and participation sides of the opposition hold their respective rallies, there will be less or even no occasions for both sides to compete for support from the same gathering. However, this does not mean an absolute division between the two sides, especially after May.

What will be your attitude to participating opposition parties and their winning candidates after what you call sham elections for a sham parliament?

As I have already said, those for participation and those for boycott can always close ranks along the line of opposing the US-Marcos dictatorship and fighting for democracy.

Opposition candidates who win seats in the sham parliament can continue to fight for democracy inside and outside that assembly. But that assembly will still be a thing of the autocracy.

As the armed resistance advances, it will be interesting to see how the US will react to the Marcos puppet clique. The Reagan administrative definitely wants to prolong the Marcos regime. But the US will always place US interests above those of Marcos.

Suppose President Marcos heeds the six-point call for meaningful elections any time before the May elections, do you think the boycott side would decide to participate in the elections?

It would be some kind of a miracle if Mr. Marcos heeds that call. I am not inclined to think that he would ever do that. He is deadset on retaining a monopoly of political power.

The Reagan administration is still committed to propping up the Marcos regime. That is why Mr. Marcos is intransigent and arrogant. The US will decide to ease or kick Marcos out probably when the armed resistance reaches a certain point. At any rate, the Filipino people are fighting resolutely for national liberation and democracy.

If I may insist, in case President Marcos heeds the six-point call, including the release of all political prisoners and general amnesty, what will you do? Will you run for office or participate in the electoral campaign?

I would rather concentrate on teaching, research and writing right away. I can best serve my country and people that way.

But according to reliable sources, Mr. Marcos has vowed never to let me out of prison. So, I continue to place my hopes of freedom on the advance of the national democratic movement. The Aquino assassination is an indication that the regime might even send me to the firing squad or use other foul means to kill me for the purpose of exemplary terror.

The Filipino political exiles in the United States, who face trumped up political charges of subversion,

rebellion and the like, cannot even return home with guarantees that they will not be persecuted or murdered like Ninoy Aquino. Their condition is an indication of how much the US supports the Marcos regime.

Statement of Solidarity with Lakbayan

February 29, 1984

I wish to express my solidarity with all the people and organizations participating in Lakbayan. I wish I could in person partake in the joy, rigors and risks of this historic event. Although I remain cramped in a solitary cell, I am with you all the way in mind and spirit.

I admire and support the patriotic effort to peacefully and militantly manifest the Filipino people's determination to unite and fight for democracy and dismantle the fascist dictatorship of the US-Marcos clique. Here is one more great occasion to push the struggle for national democracy forward.

Lakbayan is a venue for projecting all-important demands of the people in every sphere of our national life—political, economic and cultural. The overriding objective is to achieve national liberation and democracy.

Whatever is the variance in levels of understanding the evil of US imperialism, we must fully agree with the demand that the US stop propping up the Marcos puppet regime. Without kowtowing to the US for its support, this tyrannical regime cannot last a single day. Yet it has the temerity to ascribe its own treasonous character to all its opponents.

We must condemn the Reagan administration for conspiring with the Marcos puppet clique in its futile attempt to destroy the people's democratic movement, cover up fascist crimes and deck out its autocracy as democracy. We can expect that if the US-Marcos combine succeeds in deceiving the world with the forthcoming sham elections, fascist violence against the entire people, including the legal opposition, will escalate.

The Marcos regime has been emboldened to perpetrate the Aquino assassination and other fascist crimes because of US assurances of increasing military support under a military "modernization" (requirement) program and under Oplan Katatagan, in connection with the US-RP Military Bases Agreement.

There is also the ceaseless drive of US imperialism to keep the Philippines under a pseudodevelopment scheme, plunging it into a debt trap and extracting from a bankrupt and desperate Marcos regime increasing superexploitation privileges for US multinational firms. Thus, the US—especially the Reagan administration—wants to prolong the despotic rule of Marcos.

I anticipate that you will lay stress on the refusal of the US-Marcos regime to heed the just and reasonable six-point call for meaningful elections and that you will thoroughly expose the farcical character of the forthcoming May electoral exercise for a sham legislature under the fascist puppet autocracy.

Boycott is the correct and appropriate stand of the people. This is thoroughly consistent with the overall line of fighting for democracy and dismantling the Marcos dictatorship. The caravans, marches and rallies that make up Lakbayan must be very emphatic about this line and try to win over more people to the boycott stand.

The continuing and ever growing mass actions for democracy and against the fascist dictatorship—not fake electoral results in most places in May—are the true gauge of the people's will. The people realize their democratic power against tyranny through mass actions and other forms of resistance and not by submission to the US-Marcos clique through participation in some brief exercise manipulated by it.

With firm initiative and clear goal, the people must build up their own strength for more decisive battles against the enemy. We must be relentless in conducting and developing peaceful but militant mass actions that assert basic democratic principles and drown out any quickie exercise rigged up to prettify and perpetuate the fascist regime of the US-Marcos clique.

The success of Lakbayan will mark a higher level of development in the people's democratic movement. I hope for the utmost success of the northern and southern columns and the gigantic convergence in Manila. I also extend my best wishes to similar mass actions in the Visayas and Mindanao and all over the country.

Unite and fight for democracy!

Stop US support for the Marcos regime!

Remove the Marcos fascist clique!

Boycott the May 14 sham elections!

Justice for Aquino, justice for all!

Long live the Filipino people!

Questions to Ask General Fabian Ver in Connection with the Aquino Assassination

March 1984

The military version of the Aquino assassination is that former Senator Benigno S. Aquino, Jr. was shot on the tarmac by Rolando Galman who darted from behind. The alleged assassin had been variably referred to by President Marcos and his military agents as an NPA (New People's Army) commander and as a notorious gun-for-hire used by criminal syndicates, politicians and subversives.

This version has collapsed upon the surfacing of incontrovertible facts which belie the self-interested "findings" of the military. The Suzuki sonogram analysis and the corroborating testimonies of Balang, Viesca, Wakamiya, Ueda, Ranas, Reyes and Layoso have established the following: 1) Aquino was shot to death while still on the stairway and while exclusively in the company of his military escorts; and 2) Galman was not in any position to dart from behind and shoot Aquino, and was himself a murder victim, clearly a fall guy.

Against this background, General Fabian C. Ver is reported to have been summoned to testify before the Agra-va Board on March 26, 1984.

What has been announced as the immediate basis for calling him to witness is his alleged complicity in the disappearance of Lina Lazaro, common-law wife of Galman, on January 29, 1984. She is a vital witness who might be able to shed light on Galman's connections with the military, especially Col. Arturo Custodio.

But General Ver should as well be asked a series of questions proceeding from the fact that he ordered the making of Oplan Balikbayan and approved it according to a prior testimony of Aviation Security Command Chief Brig. Gen. Luther Custodio. Thus Gen. Ver's appearance can be made most useful in arriving at the truth about the Aquino assassination.

These are the questions that General Ver should be made to answer: .

1. Why did he approve Oplan Balikbayan without the strict elementary requirements of security agents with hand cameras covering and making a photographic record of all the movements of Aquino and his escorts? In providing maximum security for a person like Aquino, security photographers are an absolute necessity.

2. Why did the Presidential Security Command press liaison officer, Col. Tigas, herd and position the local news photographers in a manner as to prevent them from taking pictures of Aquino and his escorts as they moved down the stairway to the tarmac?

3. Why did the security agents forcibly prevent the foreign news photographers who had accompanied Aquino from taking pictures of Aquino as he was led out of the plane? They went to the extent of putting their hands over the lenses of the cameras of the foreign news photographers.

4. Why did Gen. Ver not make sure that the three TV monitoring systems of the Presidential Security Command, the Aviation Security Command (Avsecom) and the Bureau of Air Transport cover and record the descent of Aquino and his escorts to the tarmac? The failure of these monitoring systems to function as they should only stresses the need for security photographers with hand-held cameras.

5. Why is there apparently an erasure (a lack of continuity) in the video tape of MBS-Channel 4 between Aquino's appearance at the top of the stairway and the fallen figures of Aquino and Galman amidst the histrionics of the Avsecom troops from the van? The person operating the video camera would have sought cover only after the first shot had rang out and not so many seconds before it.

6. Why were the films of local news photographers taken by the military through MBS official Riofrit and then processed in the absence of the photographers who owned or were responsible for them?

7. Does not the overall effort to prevent the photographic recording of the assassination and then to check the films of the news photographers indicate an attempt to conceal responsibility for the assassination?

8. Why did Gen. Ver decide to have Aquino fetched from the plane contrary to his previously announced plan to have the papers of Aquino checked on the plane and to send him back on the same plane if the papers were not in order? Did he give Gen. Custodio the discretion of bringing Aquino out of the plane? And why were minor subordinates—a mere lieutenant and five sergeants—tasked to fetch Aquino from the plane?

9. Did Gen. Ver give Gen. Custodio the discretion to have Aquino brought down the stairway? Into the open space without adequate protection at the stairway and at the foot of the stairway? And without photographic

coverage? Why?

10. Why is it that guards at the foot of the stairway were moved elsewhere at the time that security at that spot was most needed? Was this to accommodate the subsequent claim that Galman had darted from under the plane?

11. As borne out by their testimonies, no one among the several scores of military security agents on the tarmac was a comprehensive witness to Aquino's descent on the staircase up to the precise moment of the assassination. Was it the task of all these agents to be on the lookout for nonmilitary witnesses, ignore Aquino or what else?

12. Was it not the overriding task of at least a sufficient number of guards at the foot of the stairway to watch Aquino as he descended because so many other security agents on the tarmac were already on the lookout for any possible assassin?

13. Why did the security agents in the van that was supposed to ferry Aquino coop themselves up in the same van? Was it more important that they hid themselves and limit their vision than prepare themselves to look out for and receive Aquino?

14. The security agents succeeded in preventing the photographic coverage of the Aquino assassination by the foreign photographers. But as an experienced security officer, does not Gen. Ver think that the security failed to prevent the audio recording of what transpired at the stairway?

15. On the basis of the television footages of NHK and ABC and the voiceprint analysis of Dr. Suzuki, it was Lt. Jesus de Castro, leader of the team escorting Aquino, who gave the order "Pusila!"—the order before the first shot or the order to shoot Aquino. Who in the AFP command structure authorized Lt. Castro to give the order?

16. To whom did Lt. Castro give the order? Who executed the order or fired at Aquino? There can only be either Sgt. Arnulfo de Mesa or the security agent in barong tagalog who could carry out the order.

17. Why have the escorts of Aquino given sworn statements contrary to the facts? Why is it that all security agents on the tarmac who obviously had Aquino in full view given statements denying a view of the assassination?

18. In view of the Suzuki sonogram analysis and the corroborating testimonies of Balang, Viesca, Wakamiya, Ueda, Ranas, Reyes and Layoso, does Gen. Ver still agree with Gen. Olivas' findings that Galman darted from under the plane and shot Aquino from behind on the tarmac?

19. How does the general view the military version that Galman was able to penetrate the security perimeter of some 1,200 men and then the most sanitized area of the MIA at Gate 8? It is well-known that under the overall command of Gen. Ver, no one gets through a maximum security perimeter without some obscure countersign in addition to uniform, identification card and familiarity of face.

20. In view of the failure of Oplan Balikbayan to protect Aquino and also in view of facts destroying the military version of the Aquino assassination, does Gen. Ver agree that command responsibility, criminal culpability and negligence must be looked into? Was not Oplan Balikbayan practically a death trap for Aquino?

21. Why was Sgt. Arnulfo de Mesa promoted recently to the rank of second lieutenant? As AFP Chief of Staff, did Gen. Ver recommend the promotion? Was de Mesa credited for escorting Aquino and supposedly parrying off the arm of Galman?

22. President Marcos, Mrs. Marcos, and Minister Enrile had publicly and privately warned Aquino of serious threats to this life. There were supposed to be serious threats coming from 1) some friends of the President, 2) communists and 3) opposition politicians. As the source of his superior's information, will Gen. Ver present the solid facts about each of these threats, without resorting to conjectures and hearsay? The public has had enough of the tales of Cawigan and Darawan.

23. Is it not unfair to the public that Cols. Kintanar, Galido and Gavino as well as NBI director Jolly Bugarin invoked national security and testified behind closed doors before the Agrava Board on matters pertaining to the investigation of the Aquino assassination? Does not Gen. Ver agree that public interest demands that their testimony be made public?

24. Galman was not a stranger to President Marcos and Gen. Ver. He was detained under a Presidential Commitment Order (PCO) up to March 1983 at Camp Olivas although he had been suspected of common crimes, not of any political crime. Why and how was that PCO imposed on Galman and eventually lifted? Only the President upon the recommendation of Gen. Ver could impose and lift PCOs.

25. Why did President Marcos and Gen. Ver pretend not to know the identity of Galman? Their loyal subordinates such as Cols. Arturo Custodio, Maximo Mejia as well as officers of Camp Olivas knew Galman extremely

well. What was the purpose of the well publicized ₱500,000 reward offered by President Marcos for the identification of Galman so many days after August 21, 1983?

26. Is it true that Col. Mejia, a protégé and security aide of Mr. Eduardo Cojuangco, recommended Galman to Cojuangco who subsequently hired Galman and that Galman was detained at Camp Olivas after killing another employee of Mr. Cojuangco? Was not the PCO imposed on Galman to allow his indefinite detention without charges, give him the coloration of a “subversive” for the purposes of those who had been coddling him?

27. Other than the self-incriminating claims and hearsay of Rosendo Cawigan and the loose-leaf NPA “order of battle” arbitrarily drawn up by AFP intelligence agencies at various levels, are there solid proofs of Galman’s connections with the NPA?

28. How could Cawigan be an undercover agent against the NPA when it was publicly known that he had not only turned against his former employer Senator Benigno Aquino, Jr. but had become a Marcos agent soon after the declaration of martial law? He was rewarded with employment as intelligence officer of the National Grains Authority (now National Food Authority). He was convicted of illegal possession of firearms in 1974 only to buttress the charge of illegal possession of firearms against Aquino but he did not serve a single day of his sentence. The whole world knew that he was a government witness in the case against Aquino and suspected leaders of the CPP and NPA.

29. Cawigan never had the time, opportunity and qualifications to become an NPA commander. On the other hand, there is incontrovertible proof that he enjoys good connections with the Presidential Security Command. Why did Col. Balbino Diego motivate Cawigan to go to the MIA on August 21, 1983 and try to kill Aquino? Why does the PSC maintain good relations with a notorious self-confessed criminal like Cawigan and allow him to go scot free?

30. In his published interview with Ms. Ma. Victoria Gochoco (*Businessday*, February 27 issue), General Ver is directly quoted as saying that the death sentence on Aquino had been confirmed by the Military Commission trying him and that he was already “legally dead” even before he was shot to death. Has the pertinent Military Commission indeed confirmed Aquino’s previous death sentence? Has not President Marcos granted Aquino a reprieve in connection with the latter’s participation in the 1978 Interim Batasang Pambansa elections?

31. The above statement of General Ver echoes the press report some one week before the Aquino assassination that Aquino’s death sentence had been confirmed. Why was this press report made? Who was its source? Was it to assure the triggerman that he would not be criminally culpable because his target was a condemned man in the first place?

32. Was General Ver aware that Col. Custodio had close connections with Galman and that he and his men, including a certain Boy Busuego, had taken Lina Lazaro from her home for the first time on August 23, 1983?

33. Why is it that the military took Galman’s mother and his sister into official custody but not Lina Lazaro who had lived with Galman and was in a better position to shed light on his activities and connections? Was not the official seizure of Galman’s mother and his sister a diversionary ploy and the unofficial seizure of Lina Lazaro intended to cover up Galman’s connection with the military, especially Col. Custodio?

34. There is proof that up to the evening of September 4, 1983, Ana (Baby) Oliva, the woman who was reported to have been with Galman at a motel near the MIA from August 19 to 21, 1983 could easily be located. Why did not the military investigators officially and properly locate and investigate her? Instead, Ana and her sister Catherine were kidnapped on September 4, 1983 obviously by military operatives. A certain Evelyn, the friend of the Oliva sisters, would subsequently disappear after a week. What action has General Ver taken in connection with the disappearance of these three women?

35. Did Col. Tigas make any report to higher military authorities regarding the “crying lady” (Rebecca Quijano) who appeared to have witnessed the assassination? Where is she now? There should be some record of an investigation of her done by the military.

36. Where is Rebecca Abenir, a lady guard of the Lantin Security and Watchman Agency, who probably witnessed the assassination? She disappeared a week after August 21. Where is she now? Too many innocent women have disappeared either because of fear for their lives or some criminal scheme of people in authority.

37. Why is it that the military investigators headed by Gen. Olivas never succeeded in getting any witness or material evidence running counter to the military version of the Aquino assassination? Is it true that witnesses were coerced? Why were fingerprints on the supposed death gun messed up? Why were the height measurements

of both Aquino and Galman repeatedly adjusted?

38. What is the progress on the investigation of the death of Brig. Gen. Baltazar Aguirre and his wife? Is it true that he was a close friend of Aquino and had warned him of the assassination plot in a one-hour conversation taped by the Taiwan Garrison? Is it true that Gen. Aguirre was shot in the back in the course of the “accident” that killed him and his wife? Who owned the truck that bumped the vehicle of Gen. Aguirre?

39. Was Gen. Ver aware that Aquino was monitored by Gen. Kanapi and a relay of Filipino intelligence agents, Philippine missions, the US Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Interpol from the United States through Singapore, Hong Kong and Taipei to Manila? Was General Ver aware of radio and teletype intercepts of the US intelligence agencies on the conversations between Manila and Taipei authorities regarding Aquino?

40. Is it good management for President Marcos and Gen. Ver to bypass and keep the Minister of Defense ignorant on such an important matter as providing proper security for Aquino? (More questions pertinent to Ver can be formulated. Please ask lawyers to improve on the questions and add more questions.) President Marcos has described the Aquino assassination as a national shame. It is an old Marcos propaganda trick to obscure his own responsibility for some wrongdoing by pretending to condemn it in words.

At any rate, many retired generals and flag officers of the Armed Forces of the Philippines have passed a resolution holding General Ver responsible for this national shame and asserting that he is a dishonor to the Armed Forces of the Philippines and have therefore called for his ouster from the position of AFP Chief of Staff.

The courageous stand of these conscience-stricken retired AFP officers of the highest rank reflects that of a rapidly growing number of active officers and men. All of them condemn the blind loyalty of General Ver and his narrow clique to the tyrant Marcos as well as the gross treachery involved in the Aquino assassination and the subsequent attempt to cover it up.

If General Ver considers himself a man of honor, he should resign from his position because he cannot escape direct command responsibility for the occurrence of this treacherous crime. The facts show that he and a number of his subordinates in Oplan Balikbayan are also criminally liable for the coldblooded murder.

As commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, President Marcos has the highest command responsibility for the Aquino assassination. The longer he retains General Ver in the Armed Forces of the Philippines, the more Mr. Marcos exposes his complicity with his top verdugo and above all his own role as principal by induction.

Fraudulent Registration of Voters

March 26, 1984

The fraudulent registration of voters is one more reason for the boycott of the forthcoming rigged election for a sham parliament under the fascist dictatorship.

The registration of “flying voters,” illegal registration centers, noncorrespondence of precinct and territory, monopoly of citizens’ election committees by agents of the dictatorship and so many other fraudulent practices have been rampant and very visible to the people all over the country.

It appears that cheating by a variety of means has been perpetrated by lower-level politicians of the Kilusang Bagong Lipunan (KBL) and their ward leaders. In fact the worst kind of cheating is done at the highest level of the dictatorship not by the clear condoning of highly visible fraudulent practices but by the systematic nationwide manufacture of ghost precincts in some secret rooms in Malacañang, in the Commission of Elections and in the Ministry of Local Government using as a smokescreen the highly visible fraudulent practices.

The problem is not just of ghost voters but of entire ghost precincts on a massive scale. Mr. Marcos and his Comelec are again set to claim a fictitious number of registered voters far beyond the actual number of persons who have properly registered.

On the basis of the fraudulent registration of voters, it is not only the forthcoming May elections that will be rigged but also all the voting exercises in the next twelve years, if the fascist dictatorship can last that long in the face of the mounting resistance of the broad masses of the people.

The implication of the fraudulent registration of voters is that peaceful change toward democracy is not possible through elections controlled and manipulated by the dictatorship and certainly not through those who may get elected to serve under an undiminished autocracy that has usurped supreme and unlimited executive, legislative and judicial powers.

The dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique continues to insult the sovereign people who have in turn opted to wage all forms of resistance on a day-to-day basis and not through some periodic rigged electoral exercise.

The forthcoming sham elections in May will certainly fail to misrepresent the Marcos despotism as a democracy but will further outrage the people and further move them to assert and fight for their national and democratic rights with ever increasing resoluteness and militancy.

On the Government's Intensified Counterinsurgency Campaign and Related Issues

Interview released for publication by the Free Jose Maria Sison Committee, Circa April 1984

Can you comment on the announced policy of President Marcos to wipe out the CPP and NPA? Do you think it will succeed?

Such a policy will fail as it has consistently failed since 1969. The CPP and NPA have been able to overcome everything dished out by the fascist dictatorship since 1972 and have grown in strength on a nationwide scale in the course of revolutionary struggle.

The CPP/NPA strategy of protracted people's war will outlast the US-Marcos regime and will bring the national democratic revolution to final victory. Revolutionary forces fighting for the national and democratic interests of the people are invincible.

But will not the insurgents be defeated if President Marcos calls on the US to bring its troops into the Philippines?

The revolutionary forces are ideologically and politically prepared to confront even an all-out US war of aggression similar to that unleashed in Vietnam.

It is futile on the part of Marcos to call for overt US military intervention in order to frighten the Filipino people. He himself will be discarded as a bungling puppet if and when the US starts to bring in its troops and launch a war of aggression in the Philippines.

As a matter of fact, the maturation of the strategic defensive or the start of the strategic stalemate in the people's war will cause the US to junk Marcos completely.

Will not a combination of military suppression (the right hand) and civic action (the left hand), especially with an economic recovery program going into full swing, result in the defeat of the NPA?

No amount of military suppression can defeat a people's army that defends the fundamental national democratic interests of the people against the fascist dictatorship and the foreign and feudal interests behind it.

No amount of civic action by the AFP can prettify the ugly fact of fascist puppetry, terrorism and corruption. A civic action fund of one billion pesos cannot succeed where hundreds of billions of pesos poured into overpriced infrastructure failed during the 1970s.

The political and economic crisis of the ruling system is not something that will blow over after a short while. It continues to weaken the system to the core.

The so-called economic recovery program and the intensified campaign of fascist terrorism merely serve to aggravate the crisis, cause further social unrest and incite more people to take up arms.

What can you say about the claims of President Marcos that the legal opposition parties are conspiring with the CPP, NPA and NDF to disrupt the forthcoming elections?

The claim is simply self-serving. Mr. Marcos is accusing the revolutionary forces and the legal opposition parties of conspiring to disrupt the forthcoming elections in order to pave the way for his own massive use of fraud and terrorism.

What do you think are the chances of the opposition in the local and presidential elections?

Wherever the elections, especially the local elections, relatively are clean and honest, the opposition will win. It is probable however that the fascists will be able to rig the elections in most areas.

In the case of the presidential elections, the fascists will exert more effort to have their way through fraud and terrorism. From the very start, the real opposition will have a great disadvantage if the dominant opposition party (DOP) accreditation is given to the Nacionalista Party (Roy) or if the elections are synchronized and inspectors are granted to the opposition parties on a fragmented basis.

If the likelihood that elections will not be fair, clean and honest is great, why then should legal forces of the Left consider participating in them?

One major consideration is to help antifascist and progressive candidates win wherever possible. Another is to be with other antifascist forces so that if the elections prove to be completely rigged and rotten, it would be easier to form the broadest possible united front for more militant and effective actions.

At any rate, from a revolutionary viewpoint, electoral struggle is rated third after armed struggle and consistent and timely mass actions. Elections under the auspices of the US-Marcos clique cannot bring about any

fundamental change. However, it can exacerbate the contradictions within the reactionary classes of big compradors and landlords.

What do you think would happen should the ruling party win through massive fraud and terrorism?

Those who “win” through fraud and terror will not be able to enjoy their position. A fake reelection of Marcos or a fake election of his surrogate will further fan the flames of the revolutionary armed struggle.

Another six years of fascism will be fatal to the entire ruling system. There will be more than enough time allowance and enough opportunity not only for the development of the strategic stalemate but also for reaching the stage of the strategic offensive.

In case an opposition candidate wins in the presidential elections, do you suppose the CPP will accept legalization and agree to dismantle the NPA?

The CPP is a revolutionary party firmly committed to the completion of the national democratic revolution. Without a people’s army at its command, it would be at the mercy of US imperialism and its armed puppets. Most important of all, without a people’s army, the people have nothing.

It would be a miracle if the Marcos fascist gang would voluntarily and peacefully (through clean and honest elections) yield its power to any of the legal opposition parties.

It would be another miracle if the guns and goons of the US and the Marcos fascist gang would just evaporate as soon as the opposition won in the elections.

It would be still another miracle if the successor party would be a complete instrument of the people against US imperialism and the local reactionary classes of big compradors and landlords.

A revolutionary party will never allow itself and the people to be at the mercy of US imperialism and its armed puppets. The US policy regarding genuine Filipino revolutionaries and communists is to exterminate them one way or another.

Do you think the Aquino assassination will still be a big issue in the forthcoming elections?

Definitely yes. The almost sure acquittal of General Ver and General Olivas and six other accused further exposes the fact that there has been a process of serialized whitewashing of the crime from the Agrava Board to the Sandiganbayan under the direction of the US-Marcos clique.

Not only the assassination of Aquino and other prominent persons but also the entire range of terrorist policies and acts of the fascist dictatorship against the people will continue to be a big issue in the forthcoming elections and afterwards.

Post-election Views

Answers to interview questions from various sources put forward through the Free Jose Maria Sison Committee,

May 20, 1984

What is your general view of the conduct and outcome of the elections for the Batasang Pambansa?

The elections were farcical as these were conducted within the parameters of a tyrannical regime. The cards were stacked against the opposition. There were fraudulent registration of voters, massive vote-buying, fabrication of tally sheets, substitution or stuffing of ballot boxes and so many dirty tricks made possible through intimidation and terror by the regime.

Despite all these, however, the reformist opposition won a sizeable minority of seats in the batasang pambansa. What is pleasantly surprising to many is that the number of seats exceed the twenty to thirty arrogantly predicted by the dictator

What do you think were the factors that helped to elect this sizeable minority?

First, there is the regime's performance record of puppetry, tyranny, brutality, waste and profligacy, corruption, and chicanery. The people found this performance record utterly intolerable. Issues were in favor of the opposition candidates.

Second, is the incessant unity of the boycott and participation sides of the opposition in condemning the US-supported Marcos dictatorship, divided though they were on the issue of participation in the elections. The boycott movement served to stress the people's rejection of the evil of Marcos tyranny and gave steady covering fire to the participation side of the legal opposition.

But, of course, the participation side of the legal opposition deserves full credit for campaigning well and getting the votes directly for its candidates.

How do you argue against the view that the boycott movement prejudiced the participation side of the legal opposition in the elections?

Long before the sham elections, I said categorically that the boycott campaign would indirectly help the opposition candidates. The unity of the two sides in denouncing the fascist dictatorship weighed far more than any disadvantage that may have been caused by the boycott to the participation side of the opposition.

The only real disadvantage caused by the boycott to the participation side were the narrowed range of deserving candidates to choose from on a nationwide scale and the initial difficulties of the opposition candidates in holding big rallies in some areas.

The boycott did not fragment the votes for the opposition candidates in favor of the KBL. Neither were pseudo-opposition candidates able to do so in favor of the KBL. The Marcos regime and the general run of its candidates were simply detested and rejected.

In so many families made typical by the Aquino family, boycotters advised their relatives to vote for the opposition candidates if they could not be persuaded to join the boycott movement.

More than anything else, the boycott and participation sides of the opposition were complementary. This is proven by the outcome of the elections.

Don't you think that if the opposition had been united on the issue of participation in the elections it could have won the overwhelming majority of BP seats?

Notwithstanding the boycott movement, the opposition candidates actually won the overwhelming majority of seats through the number of legitimate votes cast. But this victory has been nullified by the fascist regime through massive fraud and intimidation in all phases of the electoral process—registration, voting and canvassing.

Marcos in his simplistic calculation overestimated as a factor in his favor the effect of the boycott movement in reducing votes for the opposition candidates. And so in quite a number of places, the extent of fraud committed by Marcos' KBL henchmen could not offset or nullify the overwhelming number of votes actually cast for the opposition. The trick of delayed canvassing eventually had to be resorted to after the voting trend had been established so as to accommodate more fake tally sheets and further reduce the number of winning opposition candidates.

Had the opposition been united on the issue of participation in the sham elections, the regime would have

been more vicious in the commission of fraud all over the country. The elections would have been more fraudulent than all the previous sham elections, plebiscites and referenda. It is a matter of principle that the boycott was conducted. The boycott movement would have nothing to do with rigged elections for a fake parliament under a fascist dictatorship.

Does not the heavy voter turnout prove that the boycott movement failed?

I do not agree that there was a heavy voter turnout. But I would agree that the overwhelming number of those who voted did vote for the opposition candidates. The votes that were credited to the KBL candidates were fake to the extent of 25 percent up to more than 100 percent, varying from place to place.

In so many places, the registrants and the voters exceeded the estimated number of qualified voters and even the population. Babies and unborn babies were made to vote for the KBL.

There is one independent estimate that at least 60 percent of all persons of voting age did not vote. And of those who voted, at least 80 percent voted against KBL candidates. The KBL had to offset this through massive fraud.

The participation opposition at least won a sizeable minority bloc in the batasang pambansa. And so in relation to it, was not the boycott movement the loser?

The boycott movement and the participation opposition were both winners against the fascist regime. The boycott movement expanded the politically advanced section of the people. The participation opposition was able to draw a large number of votes from the middle section (in the political spectrum from left to right).

The politically backward section—that which is still hoodwinked, awed or cowed by the Marcos regime—has shrunk. Thus, the regime has been fabricating its votes all over the country.

It would be wrong to say that the participation opposition was a winner while the boycott movement was a loser in the sham elections. Being in the minority or even being in the majority of a body subordinate to an autocrat is not by itself something to rejoice about.

The successful candidates of the opposition can be proud of their election only if they continue to fight for national freedom and democracy in the batasang pambansa and deliver effective blows against the fascist puppet dictatorship. To be able to do so, they will need the support of the people and all the organized democratic forces.

Whatever breach enlightened assemblymen can make on the fortress of tyranny will be helpful to the more important overall democratic movement outside of the sham parliament.

As a member of the Kompil national council of leaders, are you aware of moves to regroup and strengthen both boycott and participation opposition in one united front?

There are several well known moves to coordinate the various democratic forces in a broad front. It would be easy to coordinate those who opted for boycott and those for participation because they have always been united on the need to dismantle the US-supported Marcos dictatorship and to restore democracy.

There is a rising determination to compel the removal or the resignation of Marcos and his entire clique before 1987. The struggle will be carried out on all fronts—in the cities and in the countryside, in halls and in the streets, in the country and abroad. There will have to be a broad united front to carry out this struggle.

What would you wish opposition assemblymen to do in the BP?

As espoused by former Justice Cecilia Muñoz Palma, they should fight for the dismantling of the entire Marcos constitution which is antinational and antidemocratic.

They should consolidate and expand their ranks by winning over independent-minded and self-respecting KBL assemblymen, and assert their legislative prerogative by at least striking at Amendment 6 and other obnoxious features of the Marcos constitution.

All enlightened members of the sham parliament should work in consonance with the organized democratic forces outside of that sham parliament to immediately repeal all the antinational and antidemocratic decrees and issuances of the puppet autocrat Marcos.

If Marcos arrogantly exercises his autocratic powers to stop democratic reforms, he becomes more exposed as an enemy of the people and becomes further isolated for eventual removal from power.

Will the just concluded elections and the regular batasang pambansa defuse and stabilize the situation in our country or at least help to do so?

I do not think so. The political and economic crisis continues to worsen rapidly. In the main and in essence, the batasang pambansa is still a plaything of the US-backed autocracy. The open rule of terror goes on under the

despot who continues to be the superexecutive, superlegislator and supermagistrate.

The exploited masses of workers and peasants are not represented in the sham parliament. They will continue to suffer increasing oppression and exploitation. The revolutionary forces and the armed revolution will advance rapidly.

In our historical experience, so many sham parliaments created by the US and its fascist puppet regimes have only served to aggravate the violent contradictions among reactionary factions and stimulate the growth of revolutionary forces.

At best, the opposition in the *batasang pambansa* can expose and condemn the evil character and crimes of the US-Marcos regime. The oppositionist minority can become significant only as they fight for the national and democratic rights and interests of the people.

Do the elections improve the international image of the Marcos regime and therefore hasten the approval of financial packages for it? Will these solve the economic and financial crisis?

The people abroad know that the elections have been conducted within the parameters of a fascist dictatorship. They know that the *batasang pambansa* is a sham parliament subordinate to the supreme legislative power of the dictator.

By now, the people abroad would know through the foreign correspondents the massive fraud perpetrated by the Marcos regime so as to have a comfortable majority in the fake legislature.

I think that the elections have been contrived by the US and its puppet regime to mislead the American people and the US Congress about conditions in the Philippines. One of these days, US President Reagan will praise Marcos for a job well done in the name of "democracy."

The financial packages are being worked out on the basis of a wide range of considerations serving the interests of the official and private financial institutions and the transnational corporations.

But we must remember that it took Mexico and Brazil 18 months to reschedule their debts and get new loans.

So what if Marcos gets the IMF standby credit of \$650 million, debt rescheduling and new loans after elections or after the Agrava Board inquiry on the Aquino assassination or some time between October and March next year?

New loans of \$3.3 billion will not lift the Philippines from the economic and financial crisis. The amount is just about the amount needed for interest payments on the \$30 billion foreign debt. The country will be deeper in debt and will continue sinking into the quagmire of semifeudal dependence and chronic indebtedness.

As a consequence of the elections, what do you suppose will be the tendency of President Marcos?

Marcos is aware of the deepgoing hatred of the people for all the injustices heaped on them by his regime. But he is determined to hold on to his ill-gotten power and wealth because he is in mortal fear of his victims.

He likes to imagine and pose himself as a cunning master of counterrevolutionary dual tactics. But in fact, he will be torn apart by two contradictory tendencies due to the worsening crisis and the rapid rise of popular resistance.

One tendency is for him to take the stance of "maximum tolerance" and call for "national reconciliation." He will try to bait the reformist opposition into a counterrevolutionary anticommunist alliance and into sharing the blame and discredit for the grave ills of the moribund ruling system.

The other tendency is for him to escalate campaigns of intimidation and violence against the people. But every act of terror by his regime will outrage the people and will be politically costly to him.

How would the movement to restore democracy fare under such circumstances?

This movement will continue to raise the level of its consciousness and militancy and will grow in number and strength. The legal democratic movement in the urban area and the revolutionary armed struggle in the countryside will advance rapidly.

Everyone knows the fatal weaknesses of the US-Marcos regime. The people see its corruption and rottenness behind its campaign of violence and deception. This regime and the entire ruling system are being destroyed by a series of contradictions.

What are these contradictions?

The US wants the Marcos puppet clique to put up a "democratic" facade and blames Marcos for his crude tactics. But the same imperialist power dictates economic policies and supplies the regime with arms that both result in intolerable suffering among the people who increasingly put up resistance.

With the dwindling of foreign exchange in an import-dependent semifeudal economy, the rest of the ruling

classes are mad at the Marcos clique for its extreme greed. The most astute politicians of the reformist parties gain the support of the anti-Marcos groups of big compradors and landlords even as they seek support from the exploited masses of the people.

The worsening political and economic crisis of the ruling system is bound to weaken Marcos' grip on the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the politicians of the KBL. The results of the elections have demonstrated that Marcos is already a losing proposition.

The toiling masses of workers and peasants as well as the members of the middle strata of our society who are increasingly suffering the ravages of massive unemployment, depressed incomes, soaring inflation, drastic devaluations, shortages and so on, have increasingly rallied to the legal democratic mass movement as well as the armed struggle.

The armed mass movement led by the revolutionary army of the proletariat and based in the countryside among the peasants continue to expand and intensify. As the big compradors and big landlords try to extract more profit from agriculture, they exacerbate the land problem and push the peasants further towards armed struggle.

There have been reports that the New People's Army intensified its armed activities in terms of raids and ambushes on military detachments during the electoral campaign period and on the very day of elections. What do you suppose did the NPA prove by these increased activities?

I think that the NPA proved that it can increase its rifles by several hundreds within a relatively short period. On the basis of news reports released by the Armed Forces of the Philippines, I can say that the NPA was able to seize more than a hundred rifles on or around the day of the elections. The proven ability of the NPA to seize a large number of arms from the AFP within a short period is far more significant than the election of a minority bloc of oppositionists to a sham legislature. But, of course, I do not discount the usefulness even of such a minority bloc to the overall struggle of the people to dismantle the US-Marcos dictatorship.

President Marcos made a call for national reconciliation a few days before the elections. Do you welcome such a call?

I welcome any serious move towards national reconciliation on the basis of advancing national liberation and democracy. I have always wished for the reestablishment of democracy and the realization of formal democratic principles through a truly democratic coalition government with adequate representation of the workers, peasants and the middle strata of society.

All patriotic and progressive classes, parties, groups and individuals must continue to unite in order to dismantle the system of puppetry and fascist dictatorship. They should not be misled by any call for national reconciliation that is merely calculated to endorse an electoral farce and, worse, the entire regime of tyranny.

If Marcos wants his call to be believed, why does he not show good faith for a start by renouncing Amendment 6 of his constitution, restoring the writ of habeas corpus, repealing all his repressive decrees and other issuances, releasing all political prisoners and rectifying the worst of his policies.

On the Agrava Board

Circa May 1984 (after the May 14 elections)

Like the recently held farcical elections for a sham parliament, embellishing on an autocracy, the investigation work of the Agrava Board is an exercise within the framework of the US-Marcos conspiracy and is intended to defuse the people's resistance to a tyrannical puppet regime and to stabilize that wobbly regime.

Again like those of the elections, the results of the Agrava Board's work are quite predictable. There are sufficient indications that the board will not hold Marcos and Ver responsible in any way for the Aquino assassination—whether by command responsibility or for criminal culpability.

In consonance with the US Reagan administration's policy of rabid anti-communism, the Agrava Board will most likely uphold the Marcos-military version that the hapless fall guy Galman was a communist and NPA commander and that he was the assassin of Aquino. A possible sop to the betrayed public would be an immediate censure and/or rigged court martial of the Avsecom close-in security men for mere negligence.

The US hand in the predictable results of the investigation is made obvious by the handpicking of a retired US ballistic expert or ballistics expert who has already upheld the report of the NBI ballistics expert; and a US sonogram expert who has cast doubt on the findings of the Japanese sonogram expert.

Once again, we are in a situation similar to the rigging of the last elections, when behind-the-scenes the US played a decisive role in arranging the balance of procedural concessions with tremendous odds for the opposition as well as the mechanisms of delayed canvassing for the purpose of producing a 70-30 percent division of seats in favor of the KBL or the Marcos regime.

By its own glaring acts, the Agrava Board has clearly provided the basis for the predictability of the results of its investigation. Some of these acts are the following:

1. The commission has for so long failed to subpoena such vital witnesses, probably eyewitnesses, to the actual shooting, as Rebecca Quijano—the “crying lady”; two other lady co-passengers of Aquino; and the lady employee of the Lantin Security Agency who disappeared a few days after she admitted to having witnessed the assassination.

According to commission insiders, no earnest effort has been exerted to locate these eyewitnesses beyond naive requests to military agencies for locating them. The commission has shown no interest in contacting or pursuing these witnesses by its own means independent of the military. The voluntary contact previously made by the “crying lady” with the board was even leaked out to outsiders by a Marcos agent within the board.

Considering the delay in the issuance of a subpoena to these witnesses and in providing protection to them, they must have already been silenced by death, bribery or threat (direct or indirect through close relatives). If they ever surface, they may no longer be able to tell the whole truth or the military suspects may have been by then cleared.

2. By failing to immediately or promptly subpoena and give protection to Lina Galman, the board has a major share of the responsibility for her probably fatal disappearance. Certainly, this woman and her two children would have had more relevant information about Galman than his mother or his sister who did not live with him would have.

This patent ineptness is a continuation of that of the Fernando Commission which also failed to subpoena and give protection to Lina Galman and Ana Oliva. The disappearance of these two women as well as Ana's sister and two other co-employees could have been averted.

Like the Fernando commission, the Agrava Board for so long went along with the military in focusing attention on Galman's mother and sister as decoys rather than on what could have been far more important witnesses like Lina Galman and Ana Oliva.

3. By failing to send its own investigators to immediately get the sworn statement of Ruben Regalado soon after his Tokyo interview with NBC, the board gave other entities all the time and opportunity to exert pressure on him directly or indirectly through his relatives left in Manila for him to change his testimony.

It was certainly within the ordinary powers (not even its supposedly extraordinary powers of investigation) of the Agrava Board to secure the sworn statement of Regalado long before the big show at the Sheraton Hotel in

Los Angeles.

The crucial importance of Regalado's testimony (especially with regard to his witnessing the actual shooting) and his special fearful circumstances merited prompt attention from the board way ahead of its Los Angeles trip. Or was the trip made only after a change in the testimony of Regalado had been ensured?

4. After issuing a subpoena to Jose Ma. Sison to testify on the veracity of Rosendo Cawigan's claims against the CPP and NPA, the Agrava Board changed its mind and coordinated with the Avsecom counsel, the chief legal officer of the Presidential Security Command and the Office of the Solicitor General in preventing Sison from giving his testimony.

The commission wanted Sison to incriminate himself first and refused to acknowledge that he is accused by the state and the military of being no less than the former chairman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines. He is undoubtedly in a position to give expert testimony on the CPP Constitution and NPA Rules against the preposterous claims of Cawigan.

The commission has also failed to call Bernabe Buscayno, alleged NPA chief and a knowledgeable Tarlac leader, to the witness stand. The commission is determined to uphold the Cawigan testimony and the contention of the military that Galman was a communist and was the assassin of Aquino.

5. While the Agrava Board was touchy about Sison possibly turning one hearing into a political forum and prevented him from giving a preliminary statement, the same commission was extremely obsequious toward General Ver and gave him all the leeway in three hearings to make the most unsubstantiated tales, speculations, conjectures, slanders and hearsay against the CPP, the NPA, the legal opposition and other opponents of the Marcos regime as well as against the person of Lina Galman.

No limit or restriction is made on the testimonies made by the military officers and civilians so long as their testimonies are directed against opponents of the Marcos regime. Recall the testimonies of such military officers as Cols. Abadilla, Mejia and Peralta and Gen. Singson in public and reports on the testimonies of Cols. Kintanar and Galido behind closed doors. These testimonies are of the same fictive and irresponsible character as those of Cawigan and Daraman.

In being obsequious to military officers, the board suppress or limit the questions asked of these officers by accredited private counsels.

6. The game plan of the Agrava Board has served mainly to give the fullest time and opportunity to the close-in security men to "perfect" their neatly compartmentalized and yet unbelievable testimonies; and to higher authorities to iron out kinks in the aftermath of the Aquino assassination.

7. By and large, the Agrava Board has been too dependent on the "findings" of Gen. Olivas and his team of military investigators. No special credit goes to the board for the testimonies of Balang, Ranas, Reyes, Layoso, Burton, Wakamiya, Ueda and other independent witnesses. We give credit to the individual consciences of these people which the board now is bent on overriding in favor of the military version of the killing.

8. Upon the request made indirectly by its creator (Mr. Marcos), the Agrava Board docilely suspended its hearings on the ground that these might favor the opposition in the electoral campaign. In view of such subservience, can we really expect much from the board?

9. The investigation work of the Agrava Board is about to end. And the command as well as criminal responsibility of the commander-in chief, the chief of staff and other high military officials is a question that is obscured by lesser questions. Even the team leader of the close-in security can be expected to escape responsibility.

10. The chairman of the Agrava Board has repeatedly said that the final decision of the board will be geared toward the stability of the Philippines (i.e., the Marcos regime) and economic recovery (i.e., restoring the confidence of foreign creditors in the Marcos regime).

With such a bias, the Agrava Board cannot give justice to Aquino. Its predictable decision will only further outrage the people. This should move them to fiercer resistance against the machinations of the tyrannical regime.

A decision made to favor the Marcos regime by absolving it of responsibility will work against economic recovery. The continuing rule of the US-Marcos clique will aggravate the economic crisis. Marcos and his privileged kins and cronies—all under the auspices of the US—are an economic bane that must sooner be removed if there is to be a way out of the crisis.

Since the beginning, the Agrava Board has not been in a position to do justice for Aquino. Let us review comprehensively the reasons why.

1. The commission is a creation of the prime suspect in the Aquino assassination and is vulnerable to manipulation and even dissolution by its creator. It is beholden to him legally, materially and psychologically. A commission of only five members cannot be any superior to large elected bodies like the constitutional convention and congress, which Marcos manipulated and dissolved, respectively. Executive meetings and public hearings of the board are constantly monitored by Malacañang, especially by the PSC and NISA. The commission cannot make any move that will surprise and offend Marcos.

2. Notwithstanding its much-touted extraordinary investigative powers, the board is in the final analysis impotent because it can only make recommendations to Marcos and file a complaint with the proper fiscal's office. The commission cannot even file an information with any court; it can only file a complaint on which the fiscal's office will still have to decide. The fine print of the decree creating the Agrava Board limits the end result of its investigation to a mere complaint subject to the further hearing and discretion of a fiscal's office. Thus, those in power suspected of the assassination are not perturbed by the result of the investigation of the Aquino assassination.

3. The chairperson and members of the board were selected by Mr. Marcos and his political advisers (especially Ministers Perez and Ople) on the basis of such criteria as their political stand against communism and close links to the US-Marcos regime. They are predisposed to accept the official anti-communist version as well as advice from the US and Marcos regime.

4. An inquiry into the background, record and personal tendencies of each of the members of the board confirms the following: a) Mrs. Corazon Juliano Agrava is a close personal friend of Mr. and Mrs. Marcos. She is a Blue Lady of long standing and is a former classmate of Mr. Marcos. Moreover, she is the sister of a retired high-ranking officer of the Philippine Air Force, the mother unit of the Avsecom. b) Dante Santos is the brother-in-law of Atty. Teodoro Regala, a senior partner in the ACCRA—the law firm built by Eduardo Cojuangco and his UNICOM empire. Santos is also the owner of Philacor which is dependent on dollar accommodations from the Marcos regime. c) Ernesto Herrera is general secretary of the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP), a federation controlled and subsidized by the Marcos regime through the Ministry of Labor and Employment. Herrera has not made a clear breast of his conference with military intelligence officers who kept him from attending the birthday party of a commission official. d) Luciano Salazar is one of the principal owners and managing partner in a law firm whose principal clients are US official agencies, US multinational firms and Marcos or crony firms. The law firm is also sister firm to the biggest accounting firm in the country serving the Marcos regime as well as US entities. e) Amado Dizon has been a consultant of the FAPE of the MEC and has facilitated World Bank loans to universities with which he is connected.

Even if the chairperson and members of the Agrava Board were to strain in overcoming their close connections with the US and the Marcos regime, they cannot overcome the conditions of fascist rule—the same conditions that have allowed the military to prevent the surfacing of vital witnesses and evidence.

It can be expected that after the Agrava Board comes out with its predictable report clearing the Marcos regime, the US-Marcos regime will rub in the point that the rigged elections has already cleared the regime by giving it a “new mandate.”

It looks like the US-Marcos regime will be able to sweep the Aquino assassination under the rug. But the outrage and resistance of the people will rise and grow in an even more sustained manner.

We must cast away all illusions about the Agrava Board. We must raise the level of the people's struggle for freedom, justice and democracy. We must act to defeat the enemy that is trying to whitewash the Aquino assassination and do further injustice to Ninoy Aquino.

If the Marcos regime gets away with the murder of Ninoy, it will be emboldened to commit graver crimes against the people. A new investigation of the Aquino assassination must be made by an independent and trustworthy body. And the people must launch massive actions to frustrate the ceaseless malice of the enemy.

Boycott and Participation Sides of the Opposition Were Complementary

May 22-31, 1984

Sison, a prominent political detainee in the Philippines, shares his post-election views with Ang Pahayagang Malaya (The Free Press), one of the country's now thriving alternative media. Excerpts from a series of interviews published in the last week of May 1984:

How do you argue against the view that the boycott movement prejudiced the participation side of the legal opposition in the elections?

Long before the sham elections, I said categorically that the boycott campaign would indirectly help the opposition candidates. The unity of the two sides in denouncing the dictatorship weighed far more than any disadvantage that may have been caused by the boycott to the participation side of the opposition.

The only real disadvantages caused by the boycott to the participation side were the narrowed range of high quality candidates to choose from on a nationwide scale and the initial difficulties of the opposition candidates in holding big rallies in some areas.

In so many families made typical by the Aquino family, boycotters advised their relatives to vote for the opposition candidates if they could not be persuaded to join the boycott movement.

More than anything else, the boycott and participation sides of the opposition were complementary. This is proven by the outcome of the elections.

Don't you think that if the opposition had been united on the issue of participation in the elections, it could have won the overwhelming majority of Batasang Pambansa (BP) seats?

Notwithstanding the boycott movement, the opposition candidates actually won the overwhelming majority of seats through the number of legitimate votes cast. But this victory has been nullified by the regime through massive fraud and intimidation in all phases of the electoral process registration, voting, canvassing.

Marcos in his simplistic calculations overestimated as a factor in his favor the effect of the boycott movement in reducing votes for the opposition candidates. And so in quite a number of places, the extent of fraud committed by KBL henchmen could not offset or nullify the overwhelming number of votes actually for the opposition. The trick of delayed canvassing eventually had to be resorted to after the voting trend had been established to accommodate more fake tally sheets and further reduce the number of winning opposition candidates.

Had the opposition been united on the issue of participation in the sham elections, the regime would have been more vicious in the commission of fraud all over the country. The elections would have been more fraudulent than all the previous sham elections, plebiscites and referenda.

It is a matter of principle that the boycott was conducted. The boycott movement would have nothing to do with rigged elections for a fake parliament under a dictatorship.

Does the heavy voter turnout prove that the boycott movement failed?

I do not agree that there was a heavy voter turnout. But I would agree that the overwhelming number of those who voted did vote for opposition candidates. The votes that were credited to the KBL candidates were fake to the extent of 25 percent up to more than 100 percent, varying from place to place.

In so many places, the registrants and the voters exceeded the estimated number of qualified voters and even the population. Babies and unborn babies were made to vote for the KBL.

There is one independent estimate that at least 60 percent of all persons of voting age did not vote. And of those who voted, at least 80 percent voted against KBL candidates. The KBL had to offset this through massive fraud.

The participation opposition at least won a sizable minority block in the Batasang Pambansa. And so, in relation to it, was not the boycott movement the loser?

The boycott movement and the participation opposition were both winners against the regime. The boycott movement expanded the politically advanced section of the people. The participation opposition was able to draw a large number of votes from the middle section (in the political spectrum from left to right).

The politically backward section—that which is still hoodwinked, awed or cowed by the Marcos regime—has shrunk. Thus, the regime has been fabricating its votes all over the country.

It would be wrong to say that the participation opposition was a winner while the boycott movement was a loser in the sham elections. Being in the minority or even being in the majority of a body subordinate to an autocrat is not by itself something to rejoice about.

The successful candidates of the opposition can be proud of their election only if they continue to fight for national freedom and democracy in the Batasang Pambansa and deliver effective blows against the dictatorship. To be able to do so, they will need the support of the people and all the organized democratic forces.

As a member of the KOMPIL (Kongreso ng Mamamayang Pilipino) national council of leaders, are you aware of moves to regroup and strengthen both boycott and participation opposition in one united front?

There are several well-known moves to coordinate the various democratic forces in a broad front. It would be easy to coordinate those who opted for boycott and those for participation because they have always been united on the need to dismantle the US-supported Marcos dictatorship and to restore democracy.

There is a rising determination to compel the removal or resignation of Marcos and his entire clique before 1987. The struggle will be carried out on all fronts in the cities and in the countryside, in halls and in the streets, in the country and abroad. There will have to be a united front to carry out this struggle.

Will the just concluded elections and the regular Batasang Pambansa defuse and stabilize the situation in our country or at least help to do so?

I do not think so. The political and economic crisis continues to worsen rapidly. In the main and in essence, the Batasang Pambansa is still a plaything of the US-backed autocracy. The open rule of terror goes on under Marcos who continues to be the superexecutive, superlegislator and supermagistrate.

The exploited masses of workers and peasants are not represented in the sham parliament. They will continue to suffer increasing oppression and exploitation. The revolutionary forces and the armed revolution will advance rapidly.

In our historical experience, so many sham parliaments created by the US and its puppet regimes have only served to aggravate the violent contradictions among reactionary factions and stimulate the growth of revolutionary forces.

At best, the opposition in the Batasang Pambansa can expose and condemn the evil character and crimes of the US-Marcos regime. The oppositionist minority can become significant only as they fight for the national and democratic rights and interest of the people.

As a consequence of the elections, what do you suppose will be the tendency of President Marcos?

Marcos is aware of the deep hatred of the people for all the injustices heaped on them by his regime. But he is determined to hold on to his ill-gotten power and wealth because he is in mortal fear of his victims.

He likes to imagine and pose himself as a cunning master of counterrevolutionary dual tactics. But, in fact, he will be torn apart by two contradictory tendencies due to the worsening crisis and the rapid rise of popular resistance.

One tendency is for him to take the stance of "maximum tolerance" and call for "national reconciliation." He will try to bait the reformist opposition into a counterrevolutionary anticommunist alliance and into sharing the blame and discredit for the grave ills of the moribund ruling system.

The other tendency is for him to escalate campaigns of intimidation and violence against the people. But every act of terror by his regime will outrage the people and will be politically costly to him.

How would the movement to restore democracy fare under such circumstances?

This movement will continue to raise the level of its consciousness and militancy and will grow in number and strength. The legal democratic movement in the urban areas and the revolutionary armed struggle in the countryside will advance rapidly.

Everyone knows the fatal weakness of the US-Marcos regime. The people see its corruption and rottenness behind its campaigns of violence and deception. The regime and the entire ruling system are being destroyed by a series of contradictions.

For instance, the US wants the Marcos puppet clique to put up a "democratic" facade and blames Marcos for his crude tactics. But the same imperialist power dictates economic policies and supplies the regime with arms that both result in intolerable suffering among the people who increasingly put up resistance.

President Marcos made a call for national reconciliation a few days before the elections. Do you welcome such a call?

I welcome any serious move towards national reconciliation on the basis of advancing national liberation and

democracy. I have always wished for the reestablishment of democracy and the realization of formal democratic principles through a truly democratic coalition government with adequate representation of workers peasants, and the middle strata of society.

All patriotic and progressive classes parties, groups and individuals must continue to unite in order to dismantle the system of puppetry and fascist dictatorship. They should not be misled by any call for national reconciliation that is merely calculated to endorse an electoral farce and worse the entire regime of tyranny.

If Marcos wants his call to be believed, why does he not show good faith for a start by renouncing Amendment 6 of his constitution, restoring the writ of habeas corpus, repealing all his repressive decrees and other issuances, releasing all political prisoners and rectifying the worst of his policies?

The Aquino Assassination: A Marcos -Military Conspiracy

Statement issued on the occasion of the release of the Agrava Board majority and minority reports on October 23, 1984

It is obvious that the fascist dictator is the mastermind of the Aquino assassination. He was the Number One assassin. The conspiracy that killed Aquino was not simply a military one. It is a Marcos-military conspiracy.

Marcos had the strongest motive in having Aquino murdered by his military minions. The facts are well known to the people.

Marcos hated Aquino, his arch political rival, the most immediate and the most serious threat to his rule. After the bombing of Plaza Miranda which almost decapitated the Liberal Party in 1971, Marcos maliciously tried to pin the crime on Aquino (a Liberal Party leader himself) and then according to his own game plan, suspended the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus—a trial run of the 1972 declaration of martial law.

Aquino was among the very first to be arrested upon the declaration of martial law in 1972. Trumped-up charges of subversion, rebellion and illegal possession of firearms were prepared against him. Every detail of his cruel incarceration was known to Marcos and directed by him, as has been revealed by his widow.

Contrary to the claims of Atty. Juan T. David that Marcos saved Aquino's life three times, the facts are:

1. Aquino's solitary confinement and other conditions of detention had been so cruel that he had to undertake a hunger strike to call public attention to his plight in 1976. How can it be said that Marcos saved Aquino's life when in fact it was Marcos who subjected him to such excruciating psychological torture as to drive him into undertaking a hunger strike?

Close Aquino relatives and friends themselves advised him to end the hunger strike because they were sure that if Marcos were left to his own devices, he would order an intravenous feeding only after Aquino would have been reduced to a vegetable.

2. Marcos had complete control of the military commission trying Aquino. It was Marcos in the first place who ordered this military commission in 1977 to rush a death sentence on Aquino and his other co-accused, Buscayno and Corpus, despite the protests of their lawyers. How can it be said that Marcos saved Aquino's life, this time from the military commission when it was Marcos who had the death sentence imposed?

The death sentence, however, was reduced to absurdity when Marcos asked Aquino to dignify the 1978 sham elections for the Interim Batasang Pambansa by participating in it.

3. Due to pressures from the US Carter administration, and Aquino's own participation in the 1978 sham elections, Marcos promised to amnesty Aquino and allow him to go on voluntary exile within the year. Marcos re-neged on his promise. He decided to allow Aquino to go to the United States in May 1980 only after the latter had suffered a heart attack the month before and was in danger of dying. For a whole month, Aquino was deprived of proper medical attention.

Marcos allowed Aquino to leave for the United States for medical treatment only because Aquino's death in prison would have become a national as well as an international scandal. Marcos also calculated wrongly that even if Aquino survived a heart operation, he would become inutile. How can it be said that Marcos saved Aquino's life this third time when in fact it was Marcos who had subjected Aquino to so much stress as to trigger his heart attack?

When Aquino announced that he wanted to return home from the United States, Marcos was in mortal fear that Aquino would be able to galvanize the opposition and take advantage of the public clamor for change due to the worsening political and economic crisis. Marcos and his wife Imelda resorted to every maneuver to stop Aquino from coming home. In concert, Marcos, Imelda and Defense Minister Enrile vainly tried to frighten Aquino into giving up his plans to return home by warning him of "confirmed" intelligence reports of communist threats to his life.

It is a matter of public record in the Philippine Senate and in the newspapers in 1971 and 1972 that Marcos was the very originator of the accusation that Aquino was a communist or procommunist only to say later that communists were out to kill him for one reason or another!

This canard would be replayed in the conspiracy to assassinate Aquino, including the post-assassination

cover-up. In the post assassination cover-up, Marcos was the loudest in trying to present the assassination as a “communist rubout.” He attacked Aquino as a pro-communist, yet blamed him for the killing of the so-called communist witnesses against him in order to peddle the lie that Galman was his communist assassin.

Let us now line up the facts to prove that Marcos was involved in the whole conspiracy to assassinate Aquino and cover up the assassination; from the planning and preparation, to the execution and then the cover-up. These facts are supported by evidence presented to the Agrava Board. But the Board did not dare trace criminal responsibility up to Marcos.

1. Marcos directly and through his wife Imelda, Defense Minister Enrile and AFP Chief of Staff General Fabian Ver harped publicly on the baseless and patently fabricated intelligence reports of the same General Ver and the military that the communists were after Aquino. Aquino himself, the local and foreign press as well as other entities were told of this supposedly confirmed reports.

2. In July 1983, there were leaks to the local and foreign press that Defense Minister Enrile and AFP Chief of Staff General Ver were at odds concerning promotions in the AFP and the military chain of command. Towards the end of July, Marcos confirmed publicly that the line of command ran directly from him to the AFP Chief of Staff, bypassing the Defense Minister.

3. On August 20, 1983, the local press printed General Ver’s press release that the death sentence on Aquino had been confirmed by Marcos.

4. As commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, Marcos definitely allowed General Ver and his military underlings to plan and carry out the operation to assassinate Aquino. There is no interservice military operation that is not referred to Marcos by Ver. And every significant or interesting development regarding Aquino is referred to Marcos. The Presidential Security Command which is directly under Marcos played the key role in the assassination. It was the binder of the entire crime. Marcos made available to Ver and his military underlings civilian agencies and officers beyond the jurisdiction of the military for the purpose of monitoring the movements of Aquino, carrying out the assassination and covering it up. No military officer lower than Ver could get presidential authority for using such civilian agencies and offices.

a. To monitor Aquino’s movements abroad, Marcos allowed his military co-conspirators to make use of reports, personnel and facilities of the Philippine embassies in the United States, Singapore, the consulate general in Hong Kong, the ASETAL facility of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Taiwan and PAL offices. b. To have the assassination carried out, Marcos authorized his military co-conspirators to take complete control of the Manila International Airport (including the administration), the CAA air control tower which received the final tip off from the Taiwan air control regarding Aquino’s exact flight, the TV monitoring system of the Bureau of Air Transport and the MBS Channel 4 crew of the Office of Media Affairs. c. To cover up the crime, Col. Tigas of the Presidential Security Command was empowered to order OMA employees and MBS official Jolly Riofrit to collect the films of civilian press photographers.

5. On the basis of the above established facts, Marcos is culpable for the Aquino assassination not only because of command responsibility as commander-in-chief of the AFP but also because of his comprehensive responsibility as president. To repeat, facts have established that Marcos made available to his military co-conspirators certain civilian agencies and offices.

6. On the evening of August 22, 1983, Marcos himself came out on a radio-television hook up with a patent lie—the cover up story—that Aquino was killed in a communist rub-out by a communist or a hired assassin. Marcos would subsequently repeat this lie in so many public statements. A number of times he admitted that if the conspiracy involved the military, he would have known about it ahead of the assassination.

7. Even after the two reports of the Agrava Board, Marcos has not taken any step to hold General Ver et al. administratively responsible (an administrative case is distinct from a criminal case). Despite the gravity of the criminal charge of double murder against them, Generals Ver and Olivas have been simply allowed to take a leave of absence and General Custodio and the rest of the co-conspirators are practically enjoying complete liberty. There has been no known arrest order for the civilian Gosuico implicated in the report of the Board.

Worst of all, Marcos and the Tanodbayan are now engaged in an orchestrated propaganda campaign for the purpose of discrediting the majority or collective report of the Agrava Board and preparing the ground for dropping the charges against General Ver and undermining the case of double murder.

As demonstrated by the foregoing facts, it is not true that there is no evidence against Marcos. The known

facts and evidence are enough to hold Marcos accountable for the Aquino assassination.

But what can the people do against the fascist dictator? The people can intensify their revolutionary resolve and efforts to dismantle his fascist dictatorship and establish a democratic coalition government. Only under a new democratic government can justice be rendered to Aquino and all other victims of fascist tyranny, including all of us—the living victims.

The US and the Marcos gang are in cahoots in a psywar scheme to defuse the people's outrage over the Aquino assassination and to get Marcos and Ver off the hook.

First, even the relatively better majority report of the Agrava Board fails to tag Marcos as the mastermind and mainly holds Ver responsible only for lying before the Board. Ver is not essentially held responsible for approving Oplan Balikbayan, the operational plan for the Aquino assassination, including its cover-up. The exclusion of such an elementary requirement as photographic coverage of Aquino's arrival was an essential requirement for the cover-up.

Second, the so-called majority report of the Agrava Board is now in the process of being discredited by both Marcos and the Tanodbayan. There is a concerted effort to prepare the ground for clearing Ver and Olivas, with Mrs. Agrava and her nephew Col. Villa lending a hand.

Third, the much-weakened case against the remaining accused will either drag on or be terminated sooner than expected due to recanting testimonies or disappearance of vital witnesses and the loss or destruction of hard evidence.

The US-Marcos regime is intent on defusing the people's outrage over the Aquino assassination and "stabilizing" the situation for tyranny to go on unchallenged. This is a pipedream. The Aquino assassination will remain a high priority issue as the fascist dictatorship escalates its bloody campaigns of terror against the people and as the political and economic crisis continues to worsen.

The legal democratic mass movement and the armed revolution are developing fast. The people's struggle for national liberation and democracy is advancing and winning greater victories against fascist, foreign and feudal domination. The day of judgment for the US-Marcos clique is fast approaching.

Having been the founder and editor of *Progressive Review* when it first came out in 1963, I am exceedingly pleased that this historically important theoretical and political journal is once more being published in order to deal with the current Philippine and global issues in the ideological, political, economic, social and cultural spheres.

The significance of *Progressive Review* in 1963 and most of the 1960s was in committing itself to the national-democratic movement under working class leadership, in deliberately departing from and combating the pro-imperialist and reactionary ideas that had reigned almost unopposed in most of the decade of the '50s and in helping to revive the anti-imperialist and antifeudal mass movement of the working people and the middle social strata by shedding light on the crucial issues through critical analysis and constructive proposals.

Progressive Review did not only confront such blatant enemies of the national-democratic revolution as foreign monopoly capitalism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism and their utilization of anticommunism in pretended petty-bourgeois or "middle-class" terms but also took a definite position against modern revisionism generated by both the Lava revisionist renegades and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and consequently helped lay the ground for the advance of the proletarian revolutionaries and the reestablishment of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

As far as the Philippines was concerned, *Progressive Review* was at its best when it carried editorials and contributions using the Marxist-Leninist stand, viewpoint and method, made concrete analysis of the concrete conditions, sought the broadest popular support for the revolutionary struggle, pointed to the socialist future of the national-democratic movement and strongly supported the revolutionary struggles of the world proletariat and the oppressed nations and peoples, especially in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Progressive Review went into hibernation in the 1970s because its key personnel became absorbed by work in the reestablished Communist Party of the Philippines and the revolutionary mass movement and because the US-Marcos regime started in 1971 and proceeded throughout the 1970s to undertake repressive measures against aboveground progressive publications and organizations.

Upon the isolation and weakening of the Marcos fascist regime and the vigorous advance of the legal democratic movement, it became possible to resume publication in 1983. There was not only an opportunity to publish the journal but more importantly there was a crying need for it in the face of erroneous illusions and trends undermining the national-democratic movement.

On its revival in 1984, *Progressive Review*, first under the name *New Philippine Review* and later *New Progressive Review*, serialized a study of the Philippine mode of production from a Marxist-Leninist point of view. Special mention must be made of this because it contended with the propaganda of the "Left" and Right opportunists within the Communist Party of the Philippines, the Lava revisionist theorists of "neocolonial industrialization", the neo-Kautskyite theorists of "dependent capitalism", the Trotskyites and, of course, the theorists of "development" inside and outside the Marcos regime who all claimed that the Philippines had become highly urbanized and therefore industrialized.

The counterrevolutionary purpose of those misrepresenting the character of Philippine society has been to attack the CPP's analysis of it as semicolonial and semifeudal and the necessity of the national-democratic revolution through a protracted people's war and to churn out so-called strategies, nay scenarios, involving either putschism or reformism or both in order to sabotage the revolutionary mass movement.

To this day, the same individuals who have turned into out and out counterrevolutionaries try to whip up parliamentarism, reformism, capitulationism and pacifism in order to lead the revolution astray. And they, who have believed that the US-Marcos regime industrialized and urbanized the Philippines beyond its main agrarian character, now go along with the US-Ramos regime's promise of industrializing the Philippines before the year 2000 and with its demand for pacification of the revolutionary forces.

It was possible to publish *Progressive Review* continuously from 1984 to the present. But the need for it did not find sufficient interest and will to deploy the personnel and resources for it. The "Left" and Right opportunists were preoccupied by interests other than supporting any publication which did not share their false illusions.

Among the fictitious communists and their anticommunist petty-bourgeois cohorts, it became fashionable to churn out scenarios either for a quick military and insurrectionary victory or for tailing after the bourgeoisie in a united front that is opposed to working class leadership. They had their own short-lived publications, which tried to spread "Left" and Right opportunist ideas.

From the latter half of the 1980s to the present, the foreign-funded NGO bureaucrats aligned with the opportunists now turned outright counterrevolutionaries, the bourgeois populists, the anticommunist liberals, the Christian democrats, the Gorbachovites, Dengists and the Trotskyite petty-bourgeois "socialists" have issued publications, pretending to be progressive but echoing the anti-Stalin and anti-Mao propaganda of the imperialists and revisionists and serving the anticommunist cause, without correct and adequate resistance by any legal publication like *Progressive Review*.

Once more, *Progressive Review* is called upon to uphold the leading role of the proletariat and propagate the general line of the national democratic revolution openly and legally. It must contend again not only with the most overt but also the most subtle counterrevolutionary ideas of the imperialists and the local reactionary classes.

The level of political consciousness and militancy in the national-democratic movement continues to be high enough to respond promptly to the flagrantly oppressive and exploitative policies and actions of the imperialists and their local marionettes in the Ramos regime. In various publications, the best of critical analysis and repudiation of foreign monopoly capitalism and bureaucrat capitalism are at the political level of the national democratic movement.

But the *Progressive Review* is needed to promote the Marxist-Leninist stand, viewpoint and method, to combat the imperialist ideological offensive which is most misleading when couched in petty-bourgeois terms, to oppose the long-running betrayal by modern revisionism and all forms of subjectivism and opportunism, to set apart the rabid but clever anticommunists from the rest of the urban petty-bourgeoisie and to put forward the socialist perspective of the national democratic movement.

At the moment, there is an informal counterrevolutionary alliance of the imperialists, the revisionists, the opportunists-turned-traitors and an array of foreign-funded petty-bourgeois anticommunists who prate that the anti-imperialist cause and the class struggle are "marginalized" and "passe", that democracy is impossible under working class leadership, that scientific socialism is utopian, that revisionism is Stalinism, that social movements are authentic only if they are anticommunist or "apolitical", that the reactionary state needs not be overthrown by the people's democratic revolution but "civilized" by NGOs and that the issues of population, environment, gender, ethnicity, human rights, peace and the like have nothing to do with imperialism and the class struggle.

When the worst of counterrevolutionary trash can be passed off as supraclass truth and intellectual sophistication, it is urgent that *Progressive Review* should come out again to clarify the issues and help to shed light on the road to national liberation, democracy and socialism. I wish *Progressive Review* all the success in its critical and constructive tasks in support of the Filipino people's revolutionary cause.

It would be idealistic to say that *Progressive Review* in the 1960s and 1980s contained editorials and articles that were entirely correct or perfect. There were the best as well as the worst of them. But the best of them made a worthy tradition and made the *Progressive Review* a remarkable pace setter.

Now, as it resumes publication *Progressive Review* has the full opportunity to surpass its antecedents and to help bring about a higher level of consciousness and militancy in the national-democratic movement. It has such advantages as the vastly rich experience of the national-democratic movement, the current rectification movement within the revolutionary forces and the unprecedentedly great challenges of today.

On US Moves re Elections and Counterinsurgency

Interview with *Philippine News and Features*, Circa May 1985

Some sectors have made the observation that the US must be engaged now in activities, independent of Marcos, in preparation for his replacement—which could happen either in the event of his sudden demise or through parliamentary means, such as election, impeachment or resignation. What are the indications of these US moves? Is the recent expose of US funding for anti-Left propaganda part of it?

The most important preparations being made by the US for the possible replacement of Marcos are two-fold. On the one hand, the Pentagon and the CIA are trying to develop a pro-US but anti-Marcos movement among officers of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. On the other hand, funds are also flowing in from CIA coffers and the National Endowment for Democracy in particular to promote anti-Left propaganda.

If Marcos remains healthy, there is no way the legal opposition can overcome him solely through elections. The US continues to support Marcos and still allows him to control the AFP, the Batasang Pambansa, the Commission on Elections and the Courts, etc. He can rig the electoral rules, processes and results. He can remain president beyond 1987.

However, the US is giving false assurances of conservative opposition victories in or before 1987 and handing out substantial funds to some pro-US but anti-Marcos elements in order to encourage them to distance themselves from the Left. These anti-Left and anti-Marcos elements are wittingly and unwittingly undermining the broad front against the Marcos dictatorship. They fall for the US strategic objective of removing Marcos by a coup d'état sometime beyond 1987 should he fail to destroy the people's revolutionary movement that grows ever stronger.

At the moment, Marcos is worth less than a minor CIA operation. A major CIA operation was said to cost about \$6.0 million several years ago. It would cost much less than that to muster an anti-Marcos coup. Marcos has been thoroughly isolated from the people and there is serious discontent within the Armed Forces of the Philippines. But the US imperialists think that they must first extract advantages from a desperate Marcos and at the same time induce pro-US opposition leaders to steer clear of the Left.

The US is seeking to install in the post-Marcos period either an outright military regime or a military-civilian regime or a civilian regime that will be strictly pro-US and reactionary. If the revolutionaries were alert to the US scheme they would not lose pace in expanding and intensifying the armed struggle. The insoluble economic and political crisis of the dying ruling system is working in their favor.

It would not be easy for the US and its American and Filipino agents to isolate the Left and break up the Left-Middle alliance. The Rightist elements who deck themselves out as "moderates" are isolating themselves by seeking to disrupt the people's democratic movement and in effect helping Marcos keep himself in power up to 1987 and perhaps even far beyond 1987 if they remained without any clout vis-à-vis Marcos.

However, some politically reasonable sections of the anti-Marcos Right are exposing the maneuvers of the US and realize the need to keep the broad antifascist alliance.

Considering that the country is witnessing the rise of insurgency, crucial to the moves of the regime and of those for a pre-martial law status quo, what is the role of the military. How would you interpret the recent policy, which Marcos himself has admitted to a foreign correspondent, of allowing the civilian forces to participate in the counterinsurgency? Both Marcos and Ramos have admitted that the feudal lords, in Negros at least, are now paying the COLA of the ICHDF. Is this to be interpreted as a reversion to the past practice of submitting the military for direct use by big landlords?

Since the beginning of his fascist rule in 1972, Marcos has always sought to have a complete monopoly of the military and the police. It was in this regard that the police and the paramilitary forces were integrated with the Philippine Constabulary, a major service in the AFP. As a result, the mayors became powerless even as they were held responsible for peace and order. Now, Marcos and the military think that their counterrevolutionary campaign can become effective by activating the mayors as mere supervisors or foremen of the local police. There is also the specific urgent purpose of allowing the KBL mayors to use the police and paramilitary forces for fraud and terrorism in the forthcoming elections.

Under the integrated defense program the military wants to muster civilian forces (including local officials, prominent propertied citizens, the religious and civic organizations) for military purposes so as to be able to claim that the counterinsurgency campaign is a much “civilianized” effort. The fact is that civilian forces are being militarized and placed under military command for military purposes.

For quite a long time now, the military has been organizing fanatical cults to massacre suspected revolutionary fighters and supporters. Now, the military wants to trap bishops and priests in so-called peace and order councils and use them for psywar campaigns. In several instances, people in villages have been rounded up, misrepresented as “surrenderers,” brought to churches to hear thanksgiving mass and take oaths of allegiance to the Marcos regime after the mass.

In view of the rising armed revolutionary movement and the growing inability of the State to give adequate support to the military and police, Marcos and the military are now officially allowing the big landlords to organize and maintain paramilitary forces.

The reactionary pro-landlord character of the state and its main component, the armed forces, is being stressed. There is a reversion to the old practice of proliferating private armies under landlord control. These complement the regular military and police forces of the big comprador-landlord state.

The intensification of the armed counterrevolution is resulting in the accelerated growth in strength and advance of the New People’s Army. The proliferation of disjointed regular military, police, ICHDF and hacienda armed units will provide an excellent source of arms for the revolutionaries.

After Vatican Council II and the rise of progressive trends within the Catholic Church, Marcos and the military cannot go very far in utilizing bishops and priests for counterrevolutionary military purposes. The military itself is repeatedly fouling up its own scheme of using the religious by using its agents in killing the likes of Frs. Favali, Romero and Bernardo; kidnapping Bishop Escaler and Fr. Romano and by detaining so many priests like De la Torre, Tizon, Remigio and attacking basic Christian communities, etc.

The armed revolutionary movement is developing backward villages into advanced political, economic, cultural and military bastions of the revolution. Marcos and the military cannot defeat the revolution through sheer military force or through the militarization of civilian entities and psywar campaigns.

The now open US participation in counterinsurgency has enabled people to discover certain analogies between the present and the situation in the late 1940s and 1950s particularly in the persecution of nationalists like Recto and Laurel. Do you think this is a valid perception?

Yes, it is a valid perception. There are basic similarities. Aside from using the Marcos fascist gang in a vicious armed counterrevolution, the US is trying to use the most reactionary elements in business, professional, academic, civic and religious circles to vilify anti-imperialists.

There are relatively good Jesuits and there are bad Jesuits. A handful of the latter are again active in vicious anticommunist campaigns. There are also some Opus Dei elements who seek to vilify anti-imperialists. There is rivalry between the Jesuits and the Opus Dei within and outside the Church; but the most reactionary elements among both of them are united in their rabid anticommunism even if it means prolonging the tyranny of the fascists by exploiting the reactionary fear of the future (for which they put up a communist bogey of their own making) and disdain for the masses among the upper classes of big compradors and landlords.

There is, however, a big difference between now and the time of Recto and Laurel. The proletarian revolutionary party is much stronger now; has a rapidly growing people’s army; and engages in a broad united front along the national democratic line. The broad masses of the people, especially the workers and the peasants and the intelligentsia, have a far higher level of consciousness, organization and militancy, thanks to the persevering work of proletarian revolutionaries since the 1960s.

Progressive liberals and advocates of all-round independence from US imperialism are flourishing under conditions where proletarian revolutionaries are also thriving through revolutionary struggle. Recto’s successors—Taña-da, Diokno, Lichauco, Constantino—are true nationalist representatives of the Middle and have more abundant support and larger audience than ever before.

All anti-imperialists—be they progressive liberals or proletarian revolutionaries—are rapidly gaining in strength. It is by uniting with proletarian revolutionaries that progressive liberals become a potent force for the attainment of national freedom and democracy in the resurgent Philippine revolution.

On the Casey Visit, US Pressures and Synchronized Elections

Interview by Victor Soriano for *Philippine News and Features*,

June 3, 1985

What is your reading of the Casey visit and the US Senate Resolution setting conditions on US assistance?

The visit of US Central Intelligence Agency chief William Casey and the US Senate Resolution are part of the series of US pressures on the Marcos regime to make tokens of reform for the purpose of stabilizing it and promoting US imperialist interests. These US moves are in pursuance of the National Security Study Directive of the State department in November 1984 and US President Reagan's National Security Directive of January this year.

The CIA chief's mission was to give Marcos a political-military intelligence briefing and serve warning on him that if he does not follow the US recipe for some so-called reforms in the autocracy and the military, the armed revolutionary movement would continue to advance and threaten to finish off the US and local reactionaries in a few years' time.

The US Senate Resolution gives Marcos a strong message that there is a bipartisan consensus of the Republicans and the Democrats on the need for certain tokens of reform and minor shifts of policy. The "conditions" set on US assistance to the Marcos regime are meant to make the US look good even as it continues to prop up an undiminished and fortified fascist dictatorship.

Do these mean that the US is junking or phasing out President Marcos?

Marcos is merely being ordered to apply more cosmetics on his brutal and corrupt autocratic regime. But he is being allowed to appear as resisting US orders so that only the smallest concessions within the longest possible time until 1987 will be given to his political opponents within the system.

The US has all the leverage to compel Marcos to give up his despotism within a short period. But amidst all the pretenses at so-called democratization, the US is in fact encouraging Marcos to sharpen his knives and escalate his campaigns of terror against the people as well as his political rivals within the system under the shibboleth of anticommunism and counterinsurgency.

The US is allowing Marcos to rig the forthcoming local and presidential elections and to use fraud and terrorism on a wide scale. At the moment, the US and its fascist puppets are planning to humor the legal opposition parties by conceding to them some 10 to 30 percent of local seats but to keep the presidency in the hands of Marcos or his surrogates.

The deeper US game plan is to sponsor a coup d'etat against Marcos or his surrogate in 1988 or 1989 in order to meet the probability of the people's war reaching the stage of strategic stalemate and to expedite massive US military intervention as well as the extension of the terms of the US military bases beyond 1991.

At present, the struggle within the Armed Forces of the Philippines is conspicuously between the Ver and the Ramos factions which are loyal to both the US and Marcos. But the US is at the same time cultivating a new faction that is pro-US and anti-Marcos. This faction is steadily gaining ground by denouncing the shenanigans of the Marcos loyalists, especially the overstaying generals, and intends to ride on the people's hatred for Marcos.

The US is bent on perpetuating an antinational and antidemocratic system, with or without Marcos, in the style of South Korea, Taiwan and Indonesia. But the Filipino people and their revolutionary forces do not cease to prepare themselves against the worst as they hope for and achieve the best within the shortest possible time.

Can you comment on the bipartisan moves for "synchronization" of elections late this year or early next year?

As a matter of course, the KBL [the ruling New Society Movement party] in the sham legislature goes through the motions of considering the views of the minority as stipulated in the electoral code. But personally, I do not think that there will be synchronized local and presidential elections this year. What is more likely is that local elections will be held next year.

Talks of synchronized elections this year or early next year are intended to whip up election fever and focus attention on electoral parties, personalities and the false hope of reforms under the auspices of the fascist dictatorship. What the US and its fascist puppets wish to achieve is to isolate the revolutionary mass movement by means of an early and prolonged election fever (long before the actual elections), while trying to destroy the revolutionary forces through an escalation of military campaigns.

But the armed revolutionary movement and the legal democratic mass movement are expanding and intensifying and cannot be led astray by such transparent tricks. The revolutionary forces are not allowing themselves to be isolated by the election fever and eventual elections. Obviously, they are even taking advantage of these in pursuance of higher goals in the revolutionary struggle.

Some quarters claim that there is a polarization within the anti-dictatorship alliance regarding the US and early elections. Could you comment on this?

First, let me point out that there is the overriding polarization between the people and the fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique. Then, we can talk about the polarization within the anti-dictatorship front.

The Right oppositionists who depend on the US and elections in hoping to remove Marcos from power are few and impotent. But the Left and Middle opposition forces which rely on the people in waging all forms of struggle on all fronts are rapidly increasing their strength and effectiveness.

The Right oppositionists take the class stand of the comprador big bourgeoisie and the landlord class. The Left and Middle opposition forces take the stand of the toiling masses of workers and peasants as well as such middle social strata as the urban petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie respectively.

What would be your advice regarding the polarization in the anti-dictatorship front or rifts within any alliance organization?

The most stable and reliable basis for the national united front is the alliance of the working class and the peasantry who comprise at least 90 percent of our people. This alliance is easily broadened by further alliance with such middle social strata as the urban petty bourgeoisie and the middle or national bourgeoisie.

In dealing with those sections of the reactionary classes which oppose the Marcos clique but depend on the US and elections, the point is to take advantage of the splits within the reactionary classes and to further narrow the target to the fascist ruling clique.

There are several ways of dealing with anti-Marcos reactionaries. One way is to deal with them outside of a formal united front organization and achieve cooperation through ad hoc committees. Another way is to include them in a formal united front organization, but care should be taken that the basic national democratic interests are not sacrificed but in fact advanced.

The broader a united front is, the more there should be independence and initiative of the component organizations. Differences and debates are healthy so long as these are directed towards united action for toppling the fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique.

Cracks in the Armed Forces of the Philippines

June 1985

The vigorous rise of the armed revolutionary movement, the undeniable infamy of the US-backed Marcos regime and the ever-worsening economic crisis are exacting a heavy toll on the Armed Forces of the Philippines. The AFP is cracking and splitting up into three parts.

One part is pro-US and pro-Marcos. Another is pro-US but anti-Marcos. The third sides with the people and is reported to have some links with the National Democratic Front.

The pro-US and pro-Marcos group is still dominant due to the prolonged fascist rule of Mr. Marcos in favor of US monopoly capitalist interests. But this group is now divided into the Ver (former chief of staff General Fabian C. Ver) faction and the Ramos (acting chief of staff General Fidel V. Ramos) faction.

The Ver faction is entrenched in the Philippine Army and Philippine Air Force intelligence agencies and the Regional Unified Commands (the warlords); and desires the return of General Fabian C. Ver as AFP Chief of Staff or his replacement by Major General Josephus Q. Ramos, Philippine Army commanding general.

The Ramos faction is based in the PC-INP, enjoys the support of many Philippine Military Academy graduates and has the blessings of Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile. This faction wants General Ramos permanently installed as AFP Chief of Staff and its rivals in the pro-Ver faction (especially from among the overstaying generals) eased out.

Minister Enrile and General Ramos are encouraging and sponsoring the reform movement which is headed by officers personally close to them. This movement has been exposing the shenanigans of what it considers the pro-Ver scalawags and has denounced the involvement of military personnel in the Aquino assassination for bringing shame to the entire military.

The pro-Ver faction retaliates through its mouthpieces by accusing General Ramos and the PC-INP of being responsible for the atrocities against the people in the counterinsurgency campaign and for the spread of corruption of PC commands. Pro-Ver officers rhetorically ask: Can General Ramos be “Mr. Clean”?

Even while the Ramos and Ver factions are wrangling and trying to outmaneuver each other, operatives of the US Central Intelligence Agency based in the US Embassy (Manila station) and Clark Air Field (Regional Office for Southeast Asia) and those of the Defense Intelligence Agency in the RP-US Mutual Defense Board and the JUSMAG are quietly cultivating the pro-US but anti-Marcos group of AFP officers.

This group has become disaffected as a result of the Aquino assassination and certain other assassinations in connection with it (e.g., General Aquirre); misallocation of resources, favoritism and nepotism; wanton corruption in the military services and the entire regime; and the bungling of the anticommunist and counterinsurgency campaign by the two Marcos loyalist factions of Generals Ver and Ramos.

This group has a perspective beyond immediate concerns. Principal elements of this group are convinced that Marcos will hold on to the presidency beyond 1987 by sheer fraud and terrorism. They are apprehensive that the people will no longer tolerate another six years of Marcos misrule and that the armed revolutionary movement will reach the strategic stalemate or even the strategic offensive within that period.

This group therefore agrees with its secret US prompters that the AFP must head off in 1988 or thereabout the advances of the New People's Army and the popular demand for the withdrawal of US Military bases (before the termination of the military bases agreement in 1991).

The pro-US but anti-Marcos group of military officers are inclined to launch a military coup one or two years after 1987 and, depending on the conditions, put into power either a military or a civilian-military junta; or pave the way for an electoral contest of civilian parties. There is yet no serious split regarding these options.

The principal elements of this group are confident about giving Marcos enough rope with which to hang himself. Taking cue from their US mentors, they say among themselves that Marcos is worth only a “minor operation” in CIA parlance.

A major CIA operation to topple a chief of state used to cost at least \$6 million. But elements of the pro-US but anti-Marcos group claim one million US dollars would be enough to topple Marcos. Asked how they arrived at the figure, they say that \$100,000 operational fund for each of some ten battalion or company commanders would

be enough to finish Marcos off or to put him into protective custody.

They calculate that the situation would automatically be under their control as soon as Marcos is arrested and made to sign away his emergency powers, citing examples of dictators finally signing away their powers to military captors.

The third group which is presumably linked to the National Democratic Front has been very secretive about the identities of its leaders and members. The public know of them through statements they have issued with more frequency since the Aquino assassination. These statements attack what they call the fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique in fundamental national democratic terms and only indicate in general their positions within the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

These patriotic and progressive elements in the AFP are by all indications still a very modest group but they are potent and influential, especially because they have anchored themselves on the fundamental national and democratic interests of the Filipino people. Their importance and number are likely to grow as the armed revolutionary movement rises and the crisis of the ruling system continues to worsen.

The existence of an NDF-related group within the AFP had been indirectly acknowledged by no less than Defense Minister Enrile when he insisted that the reformist movement is not linked to the NDF but intended to seize the initiative from it. Both Enrile and Ramos insist that their reformist movement is not intended to attack Ver and block his return to the position as AFP chief of staff but to seek the improvement of the AFP.

Like the military machine of any regime in danger of collapsing, the AFP is rent by competing loyalist cliques, conservative intrasystem opponents and progressive elements who are influenced and conscientized by progressive relatives and friends and people outside the military service.

Marcos' throne rests precariously on an armed forces that has started to split up. His loyalist forces are divided into factions trying to outmaneuver each other. The pro-US and anti-Marcos progressive elements are gaining enough strength to become a valuable factor in the revolutionary movement.

In Solidarity with the September 21 Mass Protest Actions

September 21, 1985

In the newspeak of the fascist regime of the US-Marcos clique, September 21 is a day of thanksgiving. But this has always been a day of sorrow since 1972, when the US-Marcos clique went all out to establish a fascist dictatorship and suppress the national and democratic rights of the Filipino people by counterrevolutionary violence.

For thirteen long years, an autocracy (concentration on one person of supreme and unlimited executive, legislative and judicial power) representing in the most brutal and corrupt manner the reactionary interests of US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism has reigned in the country and aggravated the crisis of the ruling system to the point that the armed revolutionary movement of the people has expanded and intensified on a nationwide scale.

Only ten days ago, the fascist dictatorship made one more ritual call for national reconciliation. But the very text of Marcos' speech betrayed a complete lack of good faith. After countless kidnappings, murders, massacres and other barbarities; after robbing the entire people of their rights and of their social wealth; after mortgaging the nation away to foreign creditors, the puppet autocrat offered his sham call for reconciliation with no token whatsoever of his earnestness.

Instead, he demanded that the people and all his opponents capitulate to his sovereign majesty and join him in his anticommunist hysteria. As always, he vowed to continue reigning and eliminating democratic forces under the pretext of anticommunism and counterinsurgency. Like a trickster, he even displayed some burnt out AFP penetration agents and coerced villagers as "NPA surrenderers."

The sham call for national reconciliation is immediately aimed at trapping the legal opposition into condoning or endorsing the total whitewash of the Aquino assassination and the commission of fraud and terror in the forthcoming elections. The long-term objective is to castrate the legal opposition and render it inutile and effete against the continuation of the fascist dictatorship beyond 1987.

The correct response to every sham call for reconciliation by the fascist puppet dictatorship is to strengthen the revolutionary unity of the broad masses of the people and to intensify all forms of revolutionary struggle along the general line of fighting for national independence and democracy.

In view of the unceasing antipeople rampage of the fascists and the renewed threats being made by the fascist dictator himself, the revolutionaries have no choice but to expand and intensify the armed struggle. The legal democratic forces are alerted to continue their militant mass struggles and prepare to defend themselves against more bloody onslaughts.

The current acts and actuations of the fascist regime are driving more and more people to join the revolutionary armed struggle. The regime is as arrogant as it is conspicuously rotten to the core. The confidence of the people in prevailing in the end over this tyranny is derived from the rapid worsening of the insoluble crisis of the semicolonial and semifeudal system and from the ever-accelerating growth in strength of the proletarian party, the people's army and the national united front.

Unite to dismantle the fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique!

Forward with the national democratic revolution!

Long live the Filipino people!

Incredible Testimonies of Aquino Escorts

Circa October 1985

If the testimonies of Ninoy Aquino's close-in security escorts were to be believed, the assassination was not a conspiratorial tragedy but a comedy of errors or a case of too many coincidences in a short span of time.

The team leader Lt. Castro augmented his men with other men (Sgts. Casta and Pelias) in a very unmilitary freewheeling manner, forcibly prevented the foreign journalists from following and taking pictures of Ninoy Aquino and his escorts descending the staircase, and worst of all separated himself from his team.

The attempt to show that the military did not plan the assassination is so ridiculous and so obvious. The attempt to spare the team leader of any responsibility is also indicative of the arrogance of the designers of Oplan Balikbayan who continue to insult the public.

Sgt. de la Cruz committed perjury by first testifying that he was in the tube at the precise movement of the Aquino assassination. He later admitted that he was on the platform of the staircase when confronted with photographs and related testimonies that belied his claim. He was in a position to watch the Aquino assassination.

But he would insist that his eyes were so focused on the action at the exit of the tube that he failed to see the murder take place. It is made to appear that he was not in a state of alert relative to the person of Aquino, he had no reflexes whatsoever, had an inflexible neck and, most incredible, had two eyes but with neither panoramic nor peripheral vision.

A complete physical-medical examination of Sgt. de la Cruz is in order. He might prove to have defective eyes and to have no reflexes. But it is simply incredible and insulting to the public that four other escorts supposedly on the alert had the same visual dysfunctions at the same time in the same place.

The vision of each of the four other escorts was supposed to have been always averted from the very person they were supposed to be securing and riveted to such narrow focuses as the steps on the stairway in the case of Sgt. Miranda, the van in the case of Sgt. de Mesa and Sgt. Lat; and the right direction of the tarmac, in the case of CIC Moreno. So, they claim that none of them ever noticed the presence and appearance of the alleged assassin Galman.

Sgt. Lazaga may be proud of his eyesight and call his teammates blind because he was supposed to have seen all the phases of Galman's action (standing still below the plane, walking, darting, aiming and firing—except that phase of drawing a gun).

But Lazaga was unbelievably mute. He did not give any warning to his teammates. The sight of Galman with a gun and darting would have prompted an alert Lazaga to shout a warning. He was blind only to the supposed drawing of a gun and had an ample chance to see the succeeding motions of Galman but he failed to shout a warning.

A complete physical-medical examination is also in order for Sgt. Lazaga.

Galman supposedly brushed the wrist of his shooting hand on the shoulder of Sgt. De Mesa. The reflex of a karate expert like De Mesa had been so slow that he failed to foil the aim of Galman but he was quick enough to put the alleged assassin into a spin with a parrying blow.

The time gap between the shot that killed Aquino and the next shot was at least 3.5 seconds. If indeed Galman was spun by the parrying blow, he must have pirouetted several times. But what is most unbelievable is that CIC Moreno who was right behind De Mesa lost his normal eyesight and his reflexes.

As a matter of fact, either De Mesa or Moreno was in the best position to shoot Aquino or to protect him from a threat on the left side.

It is made to appear that each of the military escorts had no responsibility whatsoever for the assassination. In effect, it is even unwittingly made to appear by the escorts that individually and collectively they had no responsibility whatsoever for the security of Aquino.

The attempt to clear everyone of any responsibility through incredible claims or obvious lies only serves to stress that there is not only a coordination of lies after the assassination of Aquino but that there was a conspiracy before, during and after the crime.

That Ninoy Aquino was shot on the staircase is conclusively supported by the audio recordings of the Tokyo

Broadcasting System, American Broadcasting Company, and the reporter Sandra Burton; the voiceprint analysis of Suzuki; and the testimonies of Viesca, Layoso and Balang.

General Ver and all his subordinate officers responsible for Oplan Balikbayan made possible the Aquino assassination and the subsequent attempts at a cover-up.

There was a deliberate plan not to provide photographic recording of the operation by security photographers and to prevent independent photographers from taking pictures of the same.

All the security men were deliberately positioned in such a manner that they would be able to claim failure to witness the assassination (for example, nobody was positioned at the foot of the staircase).

The closest relatives and friends of Ninoy Aquino were prevented from witnessing his arrival, including his brother-in-law Ken Kashiwahara who had accompanied him on the plane.

The previous claims of Mr. Marcos and General Ver that Aquino's military escorts covered Aquino with their own bodies have proven to be lies. Even as the escorts have lied that Aquino was shot on the tarmac, they aver that they never shielded Aquino with their bodies. They abandoned him as soon as he was shot.

As commander-in-chief and as chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, respectively, Mr. Marcos and General Ver cannot escape command responsibility as well as criminal culpability for the Aquino assassination.

From top to bottom, those who have conspired to kill both Aquino and the fall guy Galman and then cover up this clear case of double murder appear to be tactical geniuses. But they are definitely strategic idiots.

The people have made their judgment not only because of the tyrannical framework of the crime but also because of their grasp of the crucial details of the crime.

The Aquino assassination will damn Marcos in his lifetime and long after in history.

On the Snap Elections

Interview with *Philippine News and Features*

November 10, 1985

What do you think are the reasons for the calling of snap elections? Will they be held?

According to some highly placed US officials, Laxalt in representation of Reagan stressed to Marcos that political reforms toward democratization should be immediately undertaken and that the 1986 local elections and the 1987 presidential election should be made credibly clean and honest. Also among the specific suggestions supposedly made to Marcos was that he should retire in 1987.

If these US officials are to be believed and Marcos is serious about holding snap presidential elections, then he is trying to preempt with a fait accompli the so-called political reforms the US wants and the specific suggestion that he withdraw from the scheduled 1987 presidential election.

If it is true that his second kidney transplant is not holding out well, then Marcos is also trying to preempt God or nature by putting in place his chosen successor. He still looks healthy when he appears in public, however, though his appearances might be well-timed relative to his dialysis and other maintenance treatments.

Another plausible reason for the calling—though not necessarily the holding—of snap elections is US-Marcos propaganda gimmickry: whipping up an election fever and dangling the dubious chance of changing the situation for the better possibly through a change of president.

It could also be a gimmick to divert public attention from the impending total whitewash of the Aquino assassination and to channel the potential explosion of public outrage toward an electoral circus.

Whatever the reasons of Marcos alone or of the US and Marcos for calling snap elections, these cannot be held if the opposition parties fight it all the way, from the Batasan to the Supreme Court, and at the same time make it clear to Marcos' foreign master that the calling of elections is such a surprise move and therefore such a swindle that holding them will only aggravate the political crisis.

What would be the scenario before and after the elections?

Whether held in 1986 or 1987, the US is maneuvering to have pro-US candidates for president and vice-president on both the KBL and the opposition sides. The US wants to be a winner no matter who among the contenders wins the election.

All possible contenders are now being made to go through a litmus test on the question of US military bases among others. Marcos and Enrile are still the favorite choices of the US for president and vice-president, respectively, because they are categorically for the US bases beyond 1991.

At any rate, whether the presidential elections are held in 1986 or 1987, there is no time and no way for the opposition to overcome the election rules, the Comelec, government resources, the military and paramilitary forces, the Marcos near-monopoly over the mass media and other factors that are overwhelmingly in favor of Marcos and his teammate, unless the US takes action to cut down Marcos for fear that its own interests would be threatened by the people, who will not take another six years of Marcos misrule.

A sham reelection of Marcos through fraud and terror will aggravate the political crisis and cause the intensification of the revolutionary armed struggle, especially because Marcos is under US orders to escalate armed counterrevolutionary actions. He will use a "fresh mandate" to justify a more violent antipeople and anticommunist rampage.

What would be its effects on the country in general and on the different political groups and the movement in particular?

The people cannot take another six years of Marcos and his fascist kind. The political and economic crisis will worsen more rapidly. The contradictions between the Marcos and the anti-Marcos factions of the big comprador and landlord classes will become more violent.

The middle strata of society composed of the middle bourgeoisie and the urban petty bourgeoisie will swing to the armed revolutionary cause. And, of course, the toiling masses of workers and peasants who suffer the most from oppression and exploitation will support and join the armed struggle in unprecedentedly increasing numbers. The mass organizations will intensify their legal democratic struggles.

And if they are subjected to increased repression, in connection with the so-called counterinsurgency campaign, a great number of legal activists will opt to join the armed struggle.

What is the US role? What do you think is the US, IMF-World Bank reaction to the call for snap election?

If the US is for snap elections, then it is for the sham reelection of Marcos. The sooner the presidential elections are held, the more disadvantageous they would be for the opposition parties which would be better off if given time to test and develop their mettle in the local elections first. The US is for snap presidential elections if it does not deny the widely-held belief that it is the instigator.

The roots and dimensions of the political attitude and wishes of the IMF and World Bank belong to the US. These banks are not supposed to openly make specific political demands, such as snap elections, although they are known to openly call for the improvement of political conditions in general terms as these affect the economy.

What do you think of the Cory-Doy tandem? Kalaw?

It is not yet time to declare or indicate personal preferences. What I can say is that he or she who comes closest to a national and democratic program of action such as those put forward by BAYAN and the Nationalist Alliance deserves support. Why didn't you mention Salonga, Padilla, and Diokno?

There is a minimum program on which almost all serious opposition presidential hopefuls agree on. But to get the support of particular organizations and personalities, we can expect concrete demands separately made by these organizations of any candidate seeking their support.

What do you think of the opposition politicians' jockeying for position?

I consider it normal for politicians to compete for the support of various parties and organizations in the opposition. May the most qualified contender get the most support. The important thing is that the contenders be eager to fight the common enemy.

What are the possible combinations of the opposition that you foresee? Why?

The front runners in the opposition are widely reported to be Laurel, Salonga and Cory Aquino. The presidential and vice-presidential candidates may be drawn from among them. The health status of Diokno is unclear. Salonga should not be underestimated, especially if presidential elections are held in 1987.

Considerations for creating the tandem should include: adherence to antifascist, anti-imperialist and antifeudal demands; consistent struggle against the regime; individual competence; brilliance and uprightness; ability to get the broadest support within the opposition and among the people; and access to resources for running an effective campaign.

But if the DOP (dominant opposition party) accreditation is given to UNIDO by the Comelec, Laurel will run away with the opposition presidential nomination. If to the Nacionalista Party (Roy), Tolentino would probably be the candidate. Marcos can actually choose his opponent through the Comelec.

Suppose electoral rules and processes are clearly rigged from the outset, should the genuine opposition make a fool of itself by fielding presidential and vice-presidential candidates? Even Lucio de Gala might refuse to file his candidacy.

How do you think would the underground movement react?

I think the underground revolutionary party and organizations will use the forthcoming elections in several ways to expose and fight the fascist regime of the US-Marcos clique as well as the general and essentially farcical character of the elections, broadcast the principles and program of the movement for national freedom and democracy, and support the candidacy of antifascist and progressive candidates wherever possible.

If all serious opposition parties boycott the presidential elections because these are absolutely rotten, I suppose the underground movement will also have nothing to do with it—except, perhaps, to launch dramatic offensives to break the monotony of the Marcos monologue.

How would snap elections affect the scheduled local elections?

If Marcos fabricates a "fresh mandate" for himself in snap elections, he will certainly use the US-inspired intensified campaign of repression On the Snap Elections

to fix the process and results of the local elections overwhelmingly in his favor. Much is sinister in this matter of holding snap elections before the local elections.

Can you give other insights, comments on the present political situation, particularly in relation to recent developments?

The US officials themselves loudly acknowledge that Marcos has not delivered on the US demands for

“political reforms” intended to improve the chances of the legal opposition and to create the illusion of democracy. But here comes Marcos calling for snap elections even before such so-called reforms have been undertaken.

By the way, the US has fallen silent on Amendment 6. There is no more US demand for its repeal or even mere modification. Obviously, the US wants to retain Marcos or have his surrogate as chief puppet beyond 1987; he would have the autocratic authority to sign (possibly in 1988 when the current 5-year agreement ends) an entirely new agreement extending the life of the US military bases beyond 1991.

In the war of nerves with Marcos, the opposition stalwarts are saying with bravado that they are ready to face Marcos in snap elections, provided this is in accordance with the Marcos constitution. But I think that they would be at a gross disadvantage if such elections are indeed held.

The Chances and Consequences of an Opposition Victory

Interview by *The National Midweek*

December 26, 1985

Why do you suppose President Marcos decided on holding snap elections?

The US, more specifically, the Reagan administration, ordered him to do so. It calculates that a presidential election will absorb the people's outrage over a lot of things; give the Marcos regime a "fresh mandate" to do its bidding, especially with regard to suppressing the revolutionary movement; and strengthen the pro-US opposition vis-à-vis the Marcos regime and the revolutionary movement.

The US order for snap election has coincided with the need of the despot Marcos for the thickest possible whitewash of the Aquino assassination. There is also Marcos' health problem. He wants a sham reelection before his second kidney transplant fails any time from March onward.

Even now, Mr. Marcos can no longer make extensive public appearances, as his opponent Cory Aquino does. People do not only ridicule his campaign line (for example, "subok sa krisis" is rendered as "subo sa krisis") but also note his puffiness of face and his wobble.

What are the chances of the Marcos-Tolentino or the Aquino-Laurel tandem?

The Aquino-Laurel tandem would surely win by a landslide were the elections clean and honest or the people sufficiently militated to frustrate the Marcos scheme of fraud and terrorism. The unity of the opposition political parties and the enthusiasm of the people for the opposition ticket are very encouraging.

The opposition can expect to win overwhelmingly in Central Luzon, Metro Manila, Southern Tagalog and Bicol—regions where 40 percent of the electorate is concentrated. Western Visayas can give the opposition a big lead and Central Visayas, at least a slight lead. Mindanao will go heavily for the opposition.

In order to "win," the KBL will have to cheat on the scale and in the style of the sham voting exercises held from 1973 to 1978. The fascist dictator has built-in advantages. It would be a miracle if these advantages are not used. Behind the KBL are the military and paramilitary forces, most local officials from the provincial down to the barangay level, the COMELEC, government funds and facilities, and the Marcos monopoly of the mass media.

As a matter of course, KBL fabricators will give zero votes to the opposition tandem in an unbelievably great number of real and imaginary precincts in the territories of Bongbong Marcos, Juan Ponce Enrile, Leonardo Perez, Kokoy Romualdez, Durano, Ali Dimaporo and the like. If cheating is done only in these predictable places, the opposition can offset this more than sufficiently in two or three regions where the count is authentic.

The big problem for the opposition is how to overcome the cheating. From the start, expect the snap election to be rigged. No fascist dictator has ever allowed himself to be defeated in an election he arranges and controls. Should the opposition win the votes but lose the count, the united anti-fascist forces can proceed to more effective forms of struggle with the broadest possible base.

What do you think of boycott at this time? Will not boycott take away precious votes from the opposition and allow these to be delivered to the regime?

A boycott campaign waged to the maximum—asking the people to stay away from the polls and stopping the electoral exercise in as many places as possible—will certainly take away votes from the opposition and allow these to be delivered to the regime. If, let us say, maximum boycott had an effective influence on 20 percent of the electorate, the regime would be able to usurp the vote through sheer fabrication; the opposition would thereby hit twice—suffering an effective loss of 40 percent of the votes.

As revolutionary organizations determined to overthrow the regime and carry out the people's democratic revolution, the CPP (Communist Party of the Philippines), NPA (New People's Army) and even the NDF (National Democratic Front) must boycott the snap election. However, for the sake of flexibility but still adhering to revolutionary principles, they can limit boycott to the minimum extent of not openly and not directly participating in the selection of presidential candidates and in the electoral campaign or not endorsing and supporting legal opposition candidates.

They can thus allow the opposition candidates to seek votes from their organized mass base, which is sizable and can be decisive.

An example of minimum boycott would be the United States' or the Soviet Union's refusal to participate in the Olympics at one time or another, without necessarily seeking to get all or the majority of countries to boycott. The minimum boycott would be just enough to draw attention to certain principles or certain wrongs.

Are you aware that certain alliances, organizations and personages in the cause-oriented movement have been divided on the issue of boycott or participation? Don't these splits have a debilitating effect not only on the Aquino-Laurel tandem but on the broad antifascist front as well?

To some extent, I am aware of the discussions between those for boycott and those for participation in cause-oriented alliances and organizations. I do not think that the choice is a simplistic one between maximum boycott and uncritical participation. Under present circumstances, maximum boycott is too rigid a position in view of the fact that many organizations and personages in antifascist alliances, all opposition political parties and the spontaneous majority of the people are for critical participation. Of course, uncritical participation is unacceptable because it means capitulation to the enemy.

Those who take the position of minimum boycott or of critical participation can stay and work together in the same democratic alliances and mass organizations. Their common objective is the intensification of the struggle for national freedom and democracy against the fascist dictatorship and the exposure of the regime's scheme to use fraud and terrorism and make the electoral exercise a farce and a mockery of the people's will.

Those who are for minimum boycott objectively extend indirect support to the opposition ticket and allow it to get as many votes as it can. Those for critical participation extend direct support to the opposition ticket but make clear that they do not place their hopes mainly or entirely in any electoral exercise arranged by the fascist dictatorship. The distinction between minimum boycott and critical participation is not harmful but helpful to the opposition ticket.

Those for minimum boycott can have their own rallies and other mass actions where they can fully express their views. But they can also share the same speaking platforms with those for critical participation and even with the opposition tandem without being obligated to express direct support for any candidate. The point is to maintain antifascist unity. Furthermore, they can join an electoral coalition if this has a bearing on the forthcoming local elections. Many democratic organizations and personages are involving themselves in the snap election because they want to improve their position with regard to the local elections in May.

Which of the two contending tandems is better and more acceptable to you and why?

You pose an extremely easy question to answer. To me personally, the opposition tandem of Aquino and Laurel is far, far better and more acceptable. The fascist dictatorship seeking a fresh mandate is absolutely detestable. Its performance record and experience in puppetry, brutality, corruption and mendacity are extremely offensive. Any force that seeks to topple tyranny possesses and gains positive worth.

Marcos has vowed to retain his autocratic powers and escalate his bloody campaign against the people and the revolutionary movement. In contrast, the Aquino-Laurel tandem promises to dismantle the fascist dictatorship, institute a new democratic constitution, restore the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus, repeal the repressive decrees, unconditionally release all political prisoners and so on.

Marcos is not ashamed to call as his economic program the impositions of the US, the IMF and World Bank, which spell further exploitation and misery for the people. The Aquino-Laurel tandem has the advantage of learning from the sorry experience of the Marcos regime or else it will plunge the country deeper into the pit of economic crisis. Marcos has declared categorically that he will extend the life of the US military bases beyond 1991. At least, the opposition tandem has not pledged to the US imperialists that it will perpetuate US military bases in the country and has given some consideration to the growing demand of the people for the dismantling of these bases.

Are you not worried about the pro-US and upper-class character of the Aquino-Laurel tandem?

There is no doubt that the Aquino-Laurel tandem has pro-US inclinations and big comprador-landlord interests. I do not expect much from it in terms of outright anti-imperialism and antifeudalism. That is why in giving direct and indirect support to it, one must retain and exercise critical faculties and maintain the national democratic initiative. But we can expect much from the opposition tandem in terms of anti-fascism. The Marcos fascist dictatorship is the narrowest concentration of the joint class rule of the comprador big bourgeoisie and the big landlord class and is the faction of these classes that is most subservient to US imperialism. In the World War II alliance against the fascist powers, the proletariat and other revolutionary forces did not disdain to cooperate with

the antifascist capitalist and other reactionary forces.

We must consider first of all that we are confronted with a fascist dictatorship which has long-standing intimate ties with US imperialism and has accumulated a tremendous amount of power and loot. And the US Reagan administration is unwilling to junk Marcos once and for all. The overriding interest of the US is to create the illusion of democracy through an electoral show.

It is wrong to think that Marcos is a pushover. He is still in a position to ram through his sham reelection in the same way that he did the total whitewash of the Aquino assassination. After Marcos gets himself “reelected” through fraud and terrorism, some US spokesmen will criticize the conduct of the electoral exercise while others will claim it to be clean and honest. By and large, the US will accept the fait accompli and push the regime to hunt down and kill the revolutionaries and to extend the life of the US military bases beyond 1991. Assuming he lives longer than expected, Marcos will be retired or disposed of in some other way by the US probably by the time the armed revolutionary forces have doubled or trebled their present strength.

Even if the possibility is strong that the fascist regime will cheat the opposition tandem, national democratic forces must give direct and indirect support to it so that it can reach more people during the electoral campaign and raise their political consciousness. When the dictator gets his sham reelection, the national democratic forces will be in a position to bring the greatest number of people to more effective courses of action.

Should the opposition tandem win, would it not have taken the political initiative away from the national democratic movement only to serve US and reactionary interests?

Just to have a fighting chance in the current electoral show, the opposition tandem has to get the support of the broadest possible antifascist united front. In case the tandem wins, it cannot dispense with this broad democratic alliance in order to dismantle the Marcos fascist dictatorship. In addition, there will still be the grave economic and social problems that cannot be solved without a broad democratic alliance, including the revolutionary forces.

The very dynamics of all antifascist forces trying to dislodge the despot and then undoing the effects of his worst crimes create excellent opportunities for the revolutionary forces. These forces will grow in strength and advance in every sphere of the struggle for national liberation and democracy in spite as well as because of the subjective will and objective limitations of their nonrevolutionary allies.

Should the opposition tandem win, it will not be able to ignore the revolutionary forces nor outrightly adopt a harsh policy toward them. As a matter of fact, the new regime will have to seek negotiations with them. To continue Marcos’ fascist policies will be self-defeating.

A new regime will need all possible support to wipe out the still potent remnants of Marcos’ tyranny and confront the fundamental problems of the people. If it pursues Marcosism without Marcos, it will be totally discredited in a few months and will face a people enraged at a betrayal—and, as a consequence, a stronger revolutionary movement.

If the regime cheated the Aquino-Laurel tandem of victory, what do you think will happen next?

The fascist regime will try to preempt the rise of popular resistance by invoking its fake mandate and escalate violence against the revolutionary movement. It will also escalate its verbal attacks against the legal opposition but will avoid unleashing a violent campaign against it in order to allow it to participate in the May local elections.

If they are not firmly united with the legal opposition parties, the cause-oriented organizations with national democratic orientation might be subjected to violent suppression before the local elections. They must therefore continuously develop unity with the legal opposition parties in order to discourage the common enemy from attacking anyone.

After getting the most out of the local elections, the fascist regime will try to expand the range of its violent attacks and subject the opposition to harsh persecution. By the second half of the year, the intensity of fascist violence and popular armed resistance will rise dramatically. And the fascist regime will go berserk blaming the legal opposition parties and the cause-oriented organizations for its own escalation of violence and incitement of revolutionary resistance.

By retaining Marcos as chief puppet, the US will be practically creating a Vietnam war situation. The US can thereby retain its military bases and even increase their number in the short run but it will lose them all in the end.

In case the Aquino-Laurel team wins, what are the chances of the CPP and NPA agreeing to a ceasefire and negotiations with the new regime?

I am not in a position to answer your question. I can only surmise that they will not refuse to consider any serious proposal to achieve national unity for the purpose of advancing national independence and democracy against the historical evils that afflict the nation.

Cory Aquino is to be commended for offering the prospect of ceasefire and negotiation. She is not as arrogant as Mr. Marcos who keeps raving that the revolutionaries must either surrender or be killed. If my estimate were correct, the revolutionaries or the legal national democratic forces will be interested in dismantling the fascist dictatorship and instituting a new democratic constitution, a multiparty system and a genuine parliamentary system.

Even if there were agreement with the underground revolutionary forces soon, there can be one much sooner between the new regime and the legal democratic forces.

Interview with Sekai

February 18, 1986

What do you think of the final results of the recent snap presidential election? Do you think the Batasang Pambansa has come out with just results? (If your answer is NO, kindly explain it in a manner which would be easy for the Japanese to understand.)

The Batasang Pambansa did not come out with fair results of the snap elections. The certificates of canvass submitted to the Batasang Pambansa are almost entirely the product of fraud and terrorism by the fascist regime. These did not conform to the legal safeguards and other requirements; and are loaded with statistical improbabilities.

President Reagan has recognized the victory of Mr. Marcos. He has also asked the opposition presidential candidate, Corazon Aquino, to refrain from heading street demonstrations to prevent civil disorder. What do you think would be the Filipinos' response to this?

The Filipino people are thoroughly disgusted with Reagan's endorsement of Marcos' sham reelection, his absurd claim that fraud and terrorism were committed by both the fascist regime and the opposition; and his admonition to Mrs. Aquino to refrain from holding street demonstrations.

The people are more than ever determined to undertake concerted actions to assert their national sovereignty against US imperialism and to oppose and defeat the criminal collusion between the US and its fascist puppet.

Now that Mr. Marcos has been reelected as president for another term of six years, do you think there is no other means of realizing the hoped-for government of the Filipino people except through armed struggle? Why?

In the final analysis, there is no other way for the Filipino people to realize a truly democratic government but to wage armed struggle against tyranny. The Marcos regime is determined to keep itself in power through brute force. And its imperialist master continues to support it and extend to it military and other assistance.

Peaceful and legal forms of struggle are important in arousing, organizing and mobilizing the people. But these are not enough to bring down fascist tyranny. These must lead to the strengthening of the revolutionary armed forces and their victory over the armed counterrevolution.

What is the process or steps through which the Marcos dictatorship could be brought down? After it shall have been brought down what will be the character of the government that would succeed it?

The process through which the Marcos dictatorship can be brought down may be called people's war. The people self-reliantly build their military strength and political power by seizing arms from their enemy. At the strategic level, the enemy is militarily superior. But at the tactical level the revolutionary forces can launch offensives which they can win. They shall in the end be able to accumulate strength to put the enemy on the defensive and launch the strategic offensive in concert with general uprisings.

After the downfall of the fascist government, a people's democratic government can be established all over the country. Such a government would be based on the alliance of the working class, peasantry, urban petty bourgeoisie, national bourgeoisie and other patriots. The establishment of this government serves to mark the attainment of national sovereignty and independence by the people and their realization of democracy both in form and substance. Not only civil liberties will be guaranteed, especially among the workers and peasants, but genuine land reform will be accomplished in favor of the peasant majority of the people.

Last year CIA Director Casey, Senator Laxalt, special envoys of President Reagan, and other American fact-finding groups came to the Philippines. A statement made in the US Senate Special Committee Report and Committee on Foreign Relations declared that "in 3-5 years the Philippines will fall into an irreversible situation." The continued gains of the NPA and the NDF indicate the possibility of CPP participation and influence in a democratic government which would be constituted in the future. How would you evaluate this?

The semicolonial and semifeudal system is already dying. It is wracked by an ever worsening political and economic crisis because of foreign and feudal domination. The ruling classes can no longer rule in the old way. They are bitterly and violently split. A fascist dictatorship has been imposed on the people since 1972. An armed revolutionary movement has been growing in strength at a cumulative rate.

The advance of the Philippine revolution has been irreversible since a long time ago, long before US

imperialism could acknowledge the trend that there would be a strategic stalemate in the people's war within a few years. So long as US imperialism and its local stooges seek to oppress and exploit the people further, the people's armed revolution will develop and advance at an accelerated rate. Especially after the failure of the snap elections, the people see more clearly than before that the road to national liberation and democracy is through the road of armed revolution.

When a national democratic group shall have taken over the government, what do you think will happen to the Clark Air Base, Subic Naval Base and the other American bases in the Philippines?

After victory of the national democratic revolution, the US will be told to vacate their military bases and facilities in the Philippines in accordance with Philippine sovereignty and territorial integrity. The land and permanent improvements on it will be used for purposes beneficial to the Filipino people.

However, if the ongoing civil war between the fascist dictatorship and the people becomes a national war because of US aggression, the Philippine revolutionary forces will have to attack US aggressor troops and the US military bases even before the total victory of the national democratic revolution. The US should not launch military aggression so that the dismantling of the US military bases in this country will be effected in a diplomatic and peaceful manner.

The US has the option of withdrawing its military bases as peacefully as it did from Thailand in the 1970s or it will lose them all as it did in Vietnam as a result of the people's revolutionary victory over US aggression.

Kindly give your views regarding the claim of some journalists that there will be a large-scale massacre of the Filipinos living in urban areas and intellectuals as in Cambodia. I think the movie "Killing Fields" carries a lot of influence. I do not think that we can escape from confronting the Cambodian problem insofar as contemporary history is concerned. What are your thoughts about this?

Some American journalists doubling as CIA agents have been trying to slander the Filipino revolutionaries and the NPA as copies of a distorted image of the Khmer Rouge. The CIA-funded psywar campaign is a total failure in view of the fact that the NPA is carrying out a people's war in consonance with civilized conventions and that the fascist dictatorship is the one guilty of having turned the country into its killing fields.

The NPA and the BMA have had fighters only in the thousands. Their fighters are difficult to kill because they are guerrillas closely linked to the people. However, the fascist regime has already murdered at least 150,000 people and wounded at least 100,000 in the course of their military operations. Further on, at least 250,000 have been tortured and maimed; 300,000 have been arbitrarily arrested and detained (at the least for one month); and at least six million people have been displaced and dispossessed of land and homes through military campaigns of suppression and landgrabbing activities since 1972.

I do not think that there will be any massacre of intellectuals and urban dwellers upon the victory of the people's democratic revolution. The urban petty bourgeoisie which includes the overwhelming majority of intellectuals is a basic force of the revolution. Urban residents cannot be forced to do things they really cannot do. It is foolish to punish anyone for something he is incapable of doing. Even big compradors and big landlords who have no blood debts cannot be killed or punished severely but are given a chance to earn a living and enjoy a decent life.

During and after the victory of the armed revolution, the united front of all patriotic and progressive forces and elements is necessary to build a truly free, independent, democratic, just, prosperous and progressive society.

There are many priests in the NPA. What do you think is the role in the Philippine revolution of these priests who believe in liberation theology?

The participation of many priests, nuns and other religious believers in the national democratic revolution is clear proof that this revolution harmonizes and satisfies a broad range of interests.

Religious people are no different from other people in wanting a just social system—free from the scourge of fascist, foreign and feudal oppression and exploitation; and in assuming responsibilities in the revolution according to their capability. Because they are respected by the people and sensitive to what is just or unjust, priests, nuns and other church workers are in an excellent position to help arouse, organize and mobilize the people for the revolutionary cause. Religious people who believe in national liberation and democracy are not an entirely new phenomenon in the Philippines. Many priests were in the forefront of the old democratic revolution. It is not surprising that there is an increasing number of them in the ongoing national democratic revolution.

After the establishment of a democratic coalition government led by a national democratic group, how would the

IMF loans and the multinationals here be handled? Don't you think there will be capital flight in case of nationalization and the Philippine economy would fall into a worse condition? What do you think will be necessary for all Filipinos to be able to eat three times a day?

The IMF will not be allowed to dictate economic policies of the democratic government of the people. Only those loans which have been beneficial to the people shall be honored. The loans which have been extremely exploitative and have been beneficial only to the conniving foreign firms and the bureaucrat capitalists and cronies will be canceled. If the lenders want to be repaid, they can help the government go after the ill-gotten wealth of the fascists which had been stashed away abroad.

Foreign firms which can really deliver useful technology and help in the development of the economy can deal with the government and earn legitimate income. All foreign firms must respect the policy of the government to own and control strategic industries, build a self-reliant economy and give Filipinos top priority in every field of enterprise open to the private sector.

I do not think that the nationalization of the economy will put the Philippines in a worse situation. National industrialization can be pushed forward on the basis of self-reliant efforts of the people and with the assistance of socialist countries. A great deal of savings can be made by preventing imperialist firms from taking control of the economy and bringing out superprofits.

Genuine land reform and cooperativization in stages will be carried out in order to emancipate the peasantry politically, to produce more food for the entire people and raw materials for processing industries and create a large domestic market through the peasants who will no longer be surrendering their surpluses to the landlords and can therefore use these for their production and consumption needs.

Do you have any message to the Japanese people?

I wish to express my deepest appreciation for the concern that the Japanese people have shown for the Filipino people. We as a people are struggling for national freedom and democracy in a self-reliant way. But we face great odds in our struggle because of increasing US intervention and its continuing support for a tyrannical regime whose rejection by the Filipino people has once again been demonstrated in the recent snap elections and its aftermath.

The Filipino people need a great deal of moral and material support from the peoples of the world, including the Japanese people. We therefore appeal to the Japanese people's high sense of internationalism in the interest of freedom, justice, progress and peace and urge them to support our struggle for national liberation and democracy. Whatever support they can give will be part of the confluence of international support for our people's revolutionary struggle.

We belong to one world. We must help each other create a better world—free from imperialist domination and all other forms of oppression and exploitation.

On the Snap Elections

Interview with *Der Spiegel's* Tiziano Terzani , February 18, 1986

The elections are over. President Marcos is reelected for six years. How does the future of the Philippines look from your prison cell?

It looks very bright indeed! The revolutionary forces can now advance more boldly than before the elections. From what I hear and read; the broad masses of the people are exceedingly eager to participate in the legal democratic mass movement as well as in the revolutionary armed struggle.

Had Mrs. Cory Aquino won, would the situation have been different?

Let me first clarify the conditional clause of your question. Mrs. Aquino really won. Her landslide victory was so great that days after election day, Marcos had to have the certificates of canvass from many provinces and cities repeatedly re-fabricated to be able to show a small margin in his favor.

Had Mrs. Aquino been able to assume power, she would probably have taken some steps towards democratic reforms and dismantling the fascist dictatorship. And immediately, the people would have gained better conditions and chances for ridding the country of foreign and feudal domination.

How do you evaluate the Cory phenomenon? How does it come that her following is made up of the Makati rich and the poor of the slum areas?

Cory Aquino happens to be the intelligent and dedicated widow of the arch political rival of the fascist autocrat. Her husband was brutally murdered by the regime. His martyrdom has been added to the atrocities and abuses inflicted by the regime on the people. She has emerged as a determined figure seeking justice not only for her husband but also for all other victims of fascist oppression.

When the split among the ruling classes of big compradors and landlords has become very bitter and violent, it becomes politically wise and necessary for the underdog even among the very rich of Makati to link up with the poor of the slum areas against their common oppressor. The Marcos regime is so oppressive that it has victimized a very broad range of the citizenry.

Some observers say that the CPP by boycotting the elections has actually taken votes away from Cory and thus helped Marcos to be reelected. It is an old joke that "Marcos in power is the best recruiter for the NPA." Is that so?

The boycott tactics adopted by the CPP in the snap elections had the flexibility of indirectly helping the electoral opposition to gain votes where it can. The boycott was a direct response to the fact that the elections were inherently rigged. The flexibility corresponded to the fact that many antifascist allies and the overwhelming majority of the electorate momentarily had the illusion of being able to remove the fascist dictator through a process he himself and his US masters have designed.

Even if the CPP had opted for participation, Marcos would have screwed up the snap elections just the same. His power to cheat would still have prevailed over the will of the electorate. He would just the same have affected the fabrication of votes, tally sheets and certificates of canvass in his favor. Electoral fraud was backed up and secured by the coercive apparatuses of the fascist dictatorship.

Only in an ironic sense is Marcos "the best recruiter for the NPA." So is the Pentagon its best arsenal; and so is Marcos its chief transport and supply officer for delivering US-made arms to areas where the NPA can get them—through ambushes and raids. Statements of irony are not to be interpreted as declarations of a desire on the part of revolutionaries to perpetuate evil. The revolutionary movement wants to end fascist tyranny as soon as possible and by every possible means—the most effective of which is armed struggle.

Those who believe in beating Marcos through electoral farces of his own making would be in a stronger position if they changed their minds and devote to armed struggle the same amount of personnel, efforts, money and other resources that they poured into the snap elections. Their big big problem is how to overcome the violence that Marcos is unilaterally employing against them. This is also the same problem of the entire people. At any rate, armed revolution by the people is a democratic act superior to participation in pseudodemocratic processes staged by the US and Marcos.

Now that the elections—according to many observers—have proved to be a fraud and that the hopes of many young people for change have been frustrated, do you expect many people asking to join the party and its New People's Army?

Certainly, I expect many more people asking to join the CPP and NPA. The entire people are thoroughly disgusted with the electoral farce. They see more clearly than ever before that there is no way to end the US-Marcos regime but to take the road of armed revolution.

As soon as the New People's Army was formed in 1969, the big problem was paucity of arms in relation to the great number of people waiting to take up arms. Upon the full emergence of fascist dictatorship in 1972, there was an avalanche of young people volunteering for service in the NPA. But there was a scarcity of arms. I surmise that in the aftermath of snap elections, there is again a sudden surge of people insisting on being armed above the usual level of extra volunteers beyond the number of arms available.

If so, will the NPA be forced to accept outside help in order to supply the new recruits with weapons and ammunition?

It would be fine for the NPA if there are foreign friends willing to extend moral and material support, including military supplies. This foreign assistance can help hasten the end of the people's suffering under the heels of imperialist and fascist terrorism. But I think that the NPA can march from victory to victory by self-reliantly carrying out a people's war and seizing weapons from the enemy. Anyway, the US and its local puppets have an abundance of arms for seizing by the NPA through ambushes, raids and arrest operations.

The revolutionary flow is stronger than ever before. As a matter of fact, there are now objective conditions for general uprisings. These conditions are running far ahead of the actual capabilities of the NPA. What can be done to take advantage of these conditions is for rural troops and armed city partisans of the NPA to do what they can faster and on a wider scale.

The enemy is not that awesome. He has only some 40,000 combat effectives in 77 maneuver battalions backed by 120,000 personnel in service or noncombat units. The 50,000 policemen and 70,000 CHDF most of the time are sitting ducks. Even the regular combat effectives of the AFP are divided into small units which are vulnerable to guerrilla offensives.

If in one way or another Cory Aquino will be brought to power and the communist party will be legalized, and political prisoners will be freed, do you see the CPP developing along the lines of, let's say, euro-communism? If Cory keeps her promises, don't you think at least half of the young people now fighting in the ranks of the NPA will leave the jungles to work again aboveground, within a new constitutional framework?

Your questions are very hypothetical. Cory Aquino or anyone else against Marcos can be brought to power only if Marcos' control and manipulation of the reactionary armed forces can be overcome. Mrs. Aquino herself is now liable to further persecution by the fascist regime

The record of recent communist revolutions in South East Asia leaves much to be desired. Vietnam with its "reeducation" camps and its boat people, Cambodia with its mass graves must scare a lot of people away from your party that by simply calling itself communist is rooted in the same ideology that together with "liberation" has also brought new misery and new repression. Already some observers point out that the NPA might be the future Khmer Rouge of the Philippines. What do you have to say about this? Is the record of Vietnam and particularly Cambodia a burden in your conquering the "hearts and minds" of the people in this country?

Your premises and allegations about revolutions in other countries are subject to debate. We have to weigh many factors peculiar to the history and circumstances of those countries. I can only say that revolutions in different countries cannot be exactly the same; and viewpoints regarding them can vary widely. At any rate, I can presume to speak more competently about the Philippine revolution.

Already, the Marcos fascist dictatorship has unilaterally turned the Philippines into its killing field. Since 1972, it has murdered at least 150,000 people, wounded at least 100,000, tortured and maimed at least 250,000, arbitrarily arrested and detained for a minimum of one month some 300,000, and displaced some six million through military campaigns of suppression and landgrabbing activities. The Filipino people cannot be discouraged from waging armed struggle because their enemy has an insatiable bloodthirst. On the contrary, they are driven to fight even more fiercely.

The US Central Intelligence Agency psywar campaign to label the NPA as the new Khmer Rouge is nonsense. The killing field of the US and Marcos is right here and now in the Philippines. If the people give up the armed struggle, there can be no end to the reign of fascist terror as well as the violence of daily exploitation by foreign monopolies and their big comprador and landlord puppets. Horror stories biased against revolutionaries in other countries do not frighten the Filipino people and do not deter them from carrying out their own national

democratic revolution.

As regards similarity of ideology, I do not think that the superiority of liberal democracy over absolute monarchy and feudalism was ever nullified either by the terrorism of a Robespierre or by the empire-building of a Napoleon. I do not think that the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism and the program of the national democratic revolution can be discredited in the Philippines just because the propagandists of US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism badmouth the revolutionaries of other Southeast Asian countries. The evils of fascist, foreign and feudal domination are the urgent concern of the Filipino people who fight for national freedom, democracy and social justice.

After the bishops' statement, how do you value the role of the church? How strong is the Catholic component in the NPA?

The bishops' statement denouncing the fraudulence of Marcos' reelection, pointing out the lack of moral basis for his rule and calling on the people to wage active resistance against evil is a milestone in the struggle against the fascist dictatorship. I appreciate this statement notwithstanding its proviso against violent struggle. This statement serves to help isolate the fascist dictatorship and shake its foundation. It reflects the church people's condemnation of fascist dictatorship as an evil and it encourages intensified popular resistance. The Catholic Church is improving its image before the people.

The Catholic Church in the Philippines is of colonial origin. It has been traditionally in the service of foreign rulers and local exploiters. It is only recently that the Church has been trying to present itself as the Church of the poor people of God. The most progressive of priests, nuns and lay people are under the leadership of the Christians for National Democracy (CNL), which is a major component organization of the National Democratic Front (NDF). Quite a sizable number of religious people have been integrated into the NPA as fighters. Thus, the enemy has failed to discredit the just cause of the NPA through obscurantist reactionary slogans.

If in one way or another Cory Aquino will be brought to power and the communist party will be legalized, and political prisoners will be freed, do you see the CPP developing along the lines of, let's say, euro-communism? If Cory keeps her promises, don't you think at least half of the young people now fighting in the ranks of the NPA will leave the jungles to work again aboveground, within a new constitutional framework?

Your questions are very hypothetical. Cory Aquino or anyone else against Marcos can be brought to power only if Marcos' control and manipulation of the reactionary armed forces can be overcome. Mrs. Aquino herself is now liable to further persecution by the fascist regime because she is a very imminent threat to it. What is more likely to happen is that the CPP will ultimately legalize itself by winning political power through armed struggle, or by becoming one of the decisive forces in the making of a coalition government, which would still have a lot of job to do in ridding the country of foreign and feudal domination.

There is not much factual basis for thinking that soon the US will do something to remove Marcos from power and make way for Cory Aquino. But if the US does something to this effect, it will exert strong pressure on her to take a rabid anticommunist, pro-imperialist and reactionary line. She will have difficulties fulfilling all her promises regarding democracy, even if all democratic forces will do everything to encourage her.

The possibility of the CPP becoming a party along the line of euro-communism is very remote. If the antifascist, anti-imperialist and antifeudal demands of the people are not satisfied, the NPA will certainly remain intact. It will even grow in strength more rapidly than before. The people have nothing without a people's army. Also, the CPP is nothing without it; it would become a beggar kicked around or killed off anytime.

In your view, what are the main problems of the Philippines today? Will Cory in power be able to solve them?

The main problems of the Philippines are the fascist dictatorship and those which brought it about—US imperialism and domestic feudalism. The Filipino people want not only the restoration of formal bourgeois democratic rights and processes but also the realization of national sovereignty and independence from US imperialism in all fields; and the solution of the land problem in favor of the peasant majority of the people.

Mrs. Aquino can solve these problems only if she would raise the level of her own consciousness and get the support of all democratic forces, especially the revolutionary forces. In fact, it should be the revolutionary forces and the entire people solving the problems. It is wrong to expect one person to solve gargantuan problems. A leader can succeed only insofar as he or she can initiate the correct policies and rely on the revolutionary forces and the people.

Of Revolution and Imagination

March 26, 1986

Upon his release from eight years of detention, Jose Maria Sison, 47, poet, admitted to being the founding chairman of the reestablished Communist Party of the Philippines and remarked: "I feel I can do more for the people now than when I was in prison."

*A native of Cabugao, Ilocos Sur, Sison attended high school at the Ateneo de Manila and Letran, and college at the University of the Philippines. He later taught English at the UP and political science at the Lyceum. He was national chairman of the Kabataang Makabayan from 1964, when the youth organization was founded, to 1968, when Sison went underground to "reestablish" the CPP. Apprehended on November 10, 1977, he was subjected to torture and solitary confinement—experiences which he recorded in a series of poems included in *Prison and Beyond: Selected Poems* (1984).*

The MIDWEEK interview with the most controversial ex-detainee of our time was conducted by Jose F. Lacaba and Eric Gamalinda. Midweek editor-in-chief and feature writer, respectively.

This is a question everybody has probably asked you. How does it feel to be out again after eight years?

I am exceedingly elated. I feel I can do more for the people now than when I was in prison.

What are your plans?

I plan to write and teach. If no school will take me in, I will concentrate on writing.

You have been quoted as saying this was something you foresaw— this uprising or revolution, or whatever you may call it. What forces or events led you to make this prediction?

As a result of the Aquino assassination, the Marcos regime was already in the process of rapid descent and decline. Mass actions of unprecedented magnitude arose out of the public outrage over the Aquino assassination. As early as January 1984 at the KOMPIL conference, I stated in my message that it would take only two million people to bring down the Marcos regime by encircling Malacañang. In the latter part of 1984, it was clear that there was sustained militant opposition to the Marcos regime, manifested in large demonstrations. You can say that the people's desire to overthrow the Marcos regime was sustained.

There were ups-and-downs. Kung minsan mawawala, 'tapos magkakaroon na naman ng upsurge [At times they wane, then there would again be an upsurge].

There may have been fluctuations, but on the whole there was steady, sustained opposition to the Marcos regime. It was only a matter of deploying the militant people around Malacañang and you would have a lot of people spontaneously joining in. Then Marcos made a mistake in calling for snap elections. The Aquino forces had the chance to increase their forces, and because the number of votes for Cory Aquino was massive, Marcos had to use the most flagrant methods of cheating. It came to a point where the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) eventually issued a pastoral letter pointing to the lack of moral basis of the Marcos regime. When that pastoral letter was issued, the fate of the Marcos regime was already sealed. It was a matter of so many forces, even if they were at variance with each other, practically racing towards the goal of overthrowing Marcos. They were moving in one direction.

But at the time of the CBCP pastoral letter, even Cory's forces thought it would take three weeks to three months from the time they started the civil disobedience campaign to topple Marcos. They probably did not foresee the Enrile-Ramos rebellion.

They did not foresee that. But when the events of February 23 to 25 started, you could already predict the sequence of actions. On the part of the US, you could predict that Reagan would tell Marcos not to launch violent action against Camp Crame. Even if this was not being stated publicly, you could easily deduce from the situation the advice to Marcos not to employ violent action because the principle of the uprising was to deploy the people around Crame, around Enrile and Ramos, to protect them from any possible attack. Kaya masasabi mo na meron nang usapan iyan, meron nang pahiwatig sa US embassy at saka sa White House na sabihan ang Malacañang [Thus, one can say that there had been discussions, indications of advice from the US embassy and also the White House to Malacañang]. When you start with that premise, you can predict that within the next 24 hours, Reagan would be asking Marcos to step down. You could see that as early as the early hours of Sunday, February 24, millions of people were already going to Crame because of the call made by Cardinal Sin. The call of Cardinal Sin was

important in drawing the unorganized, spontaneous masses, or those whose level of organization was religious, etc. But I could also see that the well-motivated and well-organized cause-oriented organizations would be there as the hard core of the spontaneous masses.

The cause-oriented people are naturally wary of the military. So, when the call came to surround and support Enrile and Ramos, wasn't there a risk that cause-oriented organizations would not join?

There are two types of cause-oriented groups. Certainly, Enrile and Ramos would expect at least the cause-oriented organizations supporting Cory Aquino to join. Because early in the afternoon of February 23, Enrile had already talked to Butz Aquino. Butz had preceded Cardinal Sin in calling on people to go to Crame. And I had trust in the good sense of the other cause-oriented organizations. This was already an opportunity for effecting the overthrow of Marcos. Despite previous perceptions of Enrile and Ramos as tools of the Marcos regime, I felt that BAYAN, for instance, would support them because they had already changed sides and they were withdrawing support from the Marcos regime.

Still many people who went to Crame were not too sure about Enrile and Ramos. They could have set up a military junta instead of recognizing the civilian authority of Cory Aquino.

Sa radyo pa lamang [Even only from radio broadcasts], there were indications that they had talked to Cory before they made their move. And Enrile made it clear that no military junta would be set up. They were emphasizing that they were seeking the protection of the people against aggressive actions by the forces of Marcos and Ver.

Sinundan mo ba sa radyo ang buong pangyayari [Did you follow the entire event through radio broadcasts]?

Yes, all the way. I stayed awake listening the whole night, as I knew it was already making my release possible. That was one of the considerations that attracted my interest. Aside from the fact na konfrontasi ito [that this was a confrontation]. Happening ito [This was an event]. A big, rare happening.

What made you so sure you would be released? During the campaign, at a certain point, Cory backtracked and said she would only release political prisoners who renounce violence.

I'm always prepared to argue against that phrase, "renounce violence." If you accept that phrase, there are implications that you have been using violence unqualifiedly. You have something to renounce. If I were made to sign a document with that phrase I would replace it with: "I denounce the unjust use of violence." Anyway, I was not worried about that because, at the time of the campaign, I was not expecting Cory would win. Or rather, I was not expecting that she would take the presidency through the COMELEC. But I was confident that, if she would somehow win against all odds, my release would be certain and such a phrase, a questionable phrase, like "renounce violence" would be a very small matter to deal with.

You said earlier that Marcos made a mistake in calling for snap elections. Do you think that the people who called for a boycott also made a mistake in overestimating Marcos' strength at that point in time, as Bob Garon would say?

If the boycott were rigid and maximum to the point of doing everything possible to stop the polls, I think that would have been wrong. That's why I proposed what I called the minimum, flexible type of boycott. In concrete terms I would not like the kind of boycott that was done in 1984, I would prefer a boycott stand that would enable the critical participationists—the Aquino-Laurel tandem—to get as many votes as they could even in the areas controlled by the revolutionary army, the New People's Army. I learned from the 1984 experience that in NPA-controlled areas, the enemy—the KBL and the military—could easily fabricate the votes without even going through the motion of holding the polls at the precinct and barangay level. They just filled out the forms. So if, let us say, the NPA would confiscate the electoral paraphernalia and the Marcos regime would foresee that, they would just fabricate the votes and the election returns.

In this case, what did you think of BAYAN's boycott, for instance?

Let's discuss the boycott policy first. As far as the revolutionary organizations are concerned, like the CPP-NPA and NDF, you cannot expect them to openly endorse the snap election. These underground, illegal revolutionary organizations had to take the boycott stand because of their continuing objective of overthrowing the regime by armed force, and because the snap election was inherently rigged. But the stand must be flexible this time. Now, as regards legal organizations with a national democratic orientation, there should also be flexibility, allowing alliances and component organizations to choose between boycott and critical participation. My stand was that minimum boycott and critical participation were not sharply at odds but could be complementary. Because, you see, it was important to put Marcos in a no-win situation. The special contribution of the minimum boycotters was to insist that the snap election was inherently rigged and further that Macoy would cheat. At the same time

this stand should not stop the critical participationists from trying to get the majority votes for the Aquino-Laurel tandem. Real overwhelming support for that tandem would compel Marcos to cheat in a manner that would be easy to expose, and the end result would be the utter exposure of the Marcos regime as something to be overthrown.

The position of the legal organizations was “active boycott.” They didn’t say “minimum boycott.”

A minimum boycott can be just as active as a maximum. It’s not passive withdrawal where you just don’t do anything. Under a minimum boycott, you can put the emphasis on denouncing the regime and the snap election itself, and on promoting the ideas of the national democratic revolution. And you can be very active too in exposing and opposing the terrorism.

In an earlier interview, you used the phrase “this so-called revolution” to refer to the February happening. How do you view this revolution?

This happening was a combination of a military revolt and a people’s uprising. And between the two aspects we can say that the principal one was the people’s uprising. One may venture to call it a semi-coup, but certainly you cannot call it a full coup because the military leaders of the revolt did not seize power for themselves. And if you look at the whole situation, then the people’s uprising was the more decisive force. The leaders of the military coup had to submit themselves to the civilian authority of Cory Aquino and Doy Laurel, who had been elected in the snap election. Now, I use the term revolution to mean a radical transformation of society. There is no radical transformation of the semifeudal and semicolonial society. But I would tolerate one who would insist on using the term revolution insofar as there has also been some kind of radical transformation—insofar as the fascist dictatorship has been removed. Because a fascist dictatorship is also a system. One question here is that the people did not take up arms. Now there is also the use of the term revolutionary government. I take that as a legal term. We can easily understand this term by what Neptali Gonzalez has said: “a revolutionary government is one in which the government makes the law, and it is not the law that makes the government.” I would like to add a clarification regarding the nature of a revolutionary government, especially under the present circumstances. The impression is that in a revolutionary government, laws are applied arbitrarily. There is nothing arbitrary if this government were adopting and carrying out laws that are fundamentally *democratic and just, and rejecting laws that are undemocratic and unjust*.

Edicio de la Torre makes a distinction between a political revolution and a social revolution. He says this is definitely not a social revolution, but it can be called a political revolution.

I can go along with that distinction. It is a political revolution in the sense that it has overthrown the Marcos autocracy.

You mentioned the fact that the people did not take up arms. Does that automatically disqualify it from being called a revolution? Is unarmed revolution a contradiction in terms?

Not necessarily. The point is that the ability of the regime to continue ruling has been stopped because of the withdrawal of support. In Portugal, military officers and their men withdrew support from the successor of Salazar and they were able to democratize. The people simply collected carnation flowers to give to the troops, and that served to show that the withdrawal of military support from the existing regime had popular support. The point is that the autocratic authority, the fascistic or the enemy regime, is overthrown, replaced.

Even without the taking up of arms, there was direct action. People barricaded streets with cars, commandeered buses, tree trunks, rocks, sandbags. This was not a purely electoral contest. There was a kind of uprising. Let us say Marcos had decided to attack Camp Crame. Enrile and Ramos would have been forced to open the arsenal of Camp Crame to the people. At least that was something implied in the situation.

Does the success of a political revolution discount the possibility of a social revolution?

So far, what we may now call a political revolution discounts the possibility of a social revolution.

So far, what we may now call a political revolution—meaning, the overthrow of the fascist dictatorship—is creating the conditions for various forces, including the progressive forces, to express their ideas on social revolution. And possibly the new government might listen to or adopt those ideas. But I think that’s being over-optimistic. The new government has its own inclinations. If you look at the cabinet, wala pa namang kinatawan diyan ang mga manggagawa’t magsasaka [there is yet no representative of the workers and peasants in it]. But I think this is one point we can agree on: the kind of political support that was given to Cory for the overthrow of the fascist dictatorship must be raised to a new and higher level. The fundamental problems of semicolonial and

semifeudal society remain. The responsibility is hers now to solve those fundamental problems. At this time, if you cannot effectively attend to fundamental problems, you can easily get discredited in a very short time. After you have restored the normal rights—democratic rights and processes—these very rights and processes will be used to denounce you if you cannot solve the questions of substance pertaining to national sovereignty and the emancipation of the peasantry, the majority of the people.

How do you assess Aquino herself and the Aquino government? Do you think they have what it takes to solve the fundamental problems of the people, not just the problem of getting rid of the dictatorship?

The Cabinet, as it is, is not so satisfactory, not satisfactory at all. But the Aquino government has the open-mindedness to accept advice.

Why do you say that the Cabinet is not satisfactory?

For instance, Jimmy Ongpin seems to be the Number One man on economics in the Cabinet. But he has the same policies as Virata, the same desire to conform to IMF-World Bank policies, a strong bias against industrialization and for agriculture. He wants an agrarian paradise of oranges, mangoes and shrimps. And though he has been a hero in this three-day revolt, Enrile, I think still represents the same instrument that was used by Marcos against the people. There may be honest elements who have really transformed themselves, but because the duration of this revolt was so short, there are those who simply joined the Reform Movement without really transforming themselves. The time was too short for a real conversion.

What about those who arrested and tortured you? Were they reformists or loyalists? Which faction did they join?

I don't know. I haven't made an accounting yet.

When you were released, you admitted having been chairman of the CPP. Bakit inilabas mo na 'yon [why did you reveal that already]? Do you think you will no longer have a problem with the military?

Yes, because the cases against me, if not already erased, are well on the way to being erased. And of course, as to being chairman of the CPP, I knew that anyway that was the moral conviction of the military. And just before I answered that question, my lawyer, Juan T. David, clarified that since the promulgation of PD 855 the Communist Party has become legal.

What do you see as the role of a Communist Party in the present situation? Is there a chance it will become a legal party? And do you see yourself as having a role in a legal party?

There are so many stages and so many conditions to consider before you can reach that stage where the Communist Party will accept legality and come out in the open. At the moment there are more problems on the side of the Aquino government than on the side of the Communist Party. Mrs. Aquino still has to consolidate her position before there can be negotiations with the Communist Party. How can there be negotiations if there is yet no assurance of the security for the procedure of dialogue?

I think it is more reasonable to expect a ceasefire if there will be negotiations. The ceasefire could be to achieve certain purposes. It could be between the Aquino forces and the Communist Party in order to eliminate remnants of the Marcos loyalists or to stop excessive American interference. A truce can be achieved by two forces to attend to a common enemy.

Do you see that as possible within a given time, like within this year?

It is difficult for me to lay down a timetable. But it can be said that Mrs. Aquino is really improving the conditions for national reconciliation by releasing all political prisoners.

There is talk that the Socialist Party is being revived. You were a founding member of the Socialist Party, weren't you? What do you think of this development?

It's more feasible to open up the system to organizations of a legal democratic character like BAYAN and also a Socialist Party of the Philippines. If these organizations and parties which are close to the toiling masses are accommodated, then the conditions are improved for some kind of a modus vivendi between the revolutionary forces and the Aquino government.

One last question—on an entirely different subject. Do you think your background in creative writing has helped you in your political work?

Certainly, certainly. I think without the background in creative writing I would be writing very drab prose. And you know, I think it is a requirement for revolutionary leadership to have a literary imagination. The scientific mind is important in analyzing given facts. But to be able to anticipate what will happen next, you need literary imagination. But it is literary imagination founded on scientific analysis. As Einstein said, experimental physicists deal

with given facts and with experiments, but when you're in the realm of theoretical physics, it is imagination which is important. With imagination, you create something new.

The Social Basis of a Fascist State

Lecture at the National Symposium on State Violence

sponsored by the Philippine Social Science Center

May 9, 1986

I am deeply pleased to be invited by the Philippine Social Science Council to participate in this forum on state violence and to speak specifically on the social basis of a fascist state in the context of explaining the anatomy of state violence in the Philippine experience.

I share with you the hope that in this forum we, as social scientists, can shed light on the continuing trend of violence and formulate some guidelines by which the aspirations for national liberation, democracy, justice and prosperity can be realized. However, I have to concentrate on my assigned topic—my share in the structure of this forum.

I. Fascism as world phenomenon

As the great Lenin pointed out, in extending the Marxist critique of capitalism to a critique of modern imperialism, monopoly capitalism is the highest and final stage of capitalism. It is moribund capitalism.

By its own laws of motion, capitalism suffers from a recurrent and ever worsening crisis of overproduction. To preserve the exploitative relations of production, the monopoly capitalist class sheds off the trappings of bourgeois democracy, adopts an open rule of terror and launches wars of aggression to redivide the world. Interimperialist war leads to social revolution.

The first general crisis of capitalism in the 20th century resulted in World War I and the birth of the first socialist state in Russia. It was followed by the second general crisis which would spawn a series of fascist states in Europe and Japan. These terrorist and aggressive states would cause the outbreak of World War II. This global war would further lead to the rise of several socialist states and the widespread national liberation movements in the colonies and semicolonies.

Since the establishment of the first fascist state in Italy in 1922, similar states subsequently emerging in Europe and Japan had come to be called fascist. Basic and essential similarities or features have made the general term “fascist state.”

The ruling clique headed by an autocrat, the grandiloquent leader figure, had risen to power or fortified its rule by taking a rabid anticommunist and chauvinist line and thereby getting the support of the big bourgeoisie and other reactionary forces, including the landlord class.

The coercive apparatuses of the state, often in collaboration with the armed gangs of the fascist party, were used to wipe out bourgeois democratic rights and to destroy the Communist Party, the communist-led trade unions and all other democratic forces.

To gain a mass following or create the illusion of having one, the fascist clique engaged in revolutionary phrasemongering and stealing phrases from the revolutionary movement while attacking and suppressing with brute force the communists, the working class and other democratic forces. When already in power, the clique completed the process of eliminating its opponents within the ruling class and among the people.

The big bourgeoisie was satisfied and happy with the fascist state for so long as the working class remained under discipline and repression; and public works and military-industrial contracts were highly profitable and the wars of aggression were still successful.

The fascist state was the outgrowth and narrowing of the monopoly bourgeois state. It was a manifestation of the inability of the ruling class to rule in the old way with embellishments of bourgeois democracy. It was a reaction to the growth of the proletarian revolutionary movement under conditions of grave political and economic crisis of the ruling system.

In the aftermath of World War II, the world capitalist system was sicker and weaker than at any time before but the US emerged as the No. 1 capitalist power and launched the anticommunist cold war against the socialist countries and national liberation movements in colonies and semicolonies.

The world capitalist system has been on its most prolonged and deepgoing crisis. This is its third general crisis. But the US has so far avoided becoming an outright fascist state despite the recurrent and worsening

economic crisis and wars of aggression. The US has been able to afford the trappings of democracy at home because it has continuously benefited from imperialist plunder at a rate never known by its capitalist predecessor, Great Britain.

But US monopoly capitalism has been instigating the establishment of fascist regimes in client-states or semi-colonies under its sway in Asia, Africa and Latin America wherever it becomes mortally afraid of revolutionary mass movements surging forward under conditions of severe social crisis.

The ruling cliques in neocolonial and semifeudal fascist states enjoy the support and are tools of both the US monopoly bourgeoisie and the domestic comprador big bourgeoisie. As in Europe and Japan in the past, fascism in the third world today is the tyrannical rule of the big bourgeoisie.

The fascist ruling cliques are usually military cliques grabbing power either from elected civilian leaders or from their militarist predecessors. They use the slogans of rabid anticommunism to cover up their role as stooges of US imperialism.

The fascist ruling cliques are themselves bureaucrat capitalists who use their public office to amass assets in capital and land and climb the social ladder within the unchanged ruling system. Bureaucrat capitalists in a neo-colonial and semifeudal society are a special section of the comprador big bourgeoisie. When they turn fascist, the bureaucrat capitalists are supreme both in exercising the political power of the comprador big bourgeoisie and in getting economic advantage for themselves.

The fascist ruling cliques usually adopt an autocratic form of government even as they present themselves as champions of democracy. They use the ideology of anticommunism and national security to eliminate their political opponents; repress the people, especially the toiling masses; and launch brutal campaigns of suppression against communists and the revolutionary mass movement.

II. The fascist state under Marcos

Marcos came from the middle class and climbed his way to the top in the neocolonial state through elections—from being a congressman through being a senator and the senate president to being the president of the Philippines.

In the process of political climbing, he also climbed socially through the trickery of bureaucrat capitalism. He used the public offices that he occupied to accumulate assets in capital and land by cutting into business transactions and facilitating the grant of business privileges to private entities. And he developed his links with the US and other transnational firms and with big compradors and landlords who were to finance his presidential campaign.

As soon as he became president, he himself became his own Secretary of National Defense for some time to make sure that the Armed Forces of the Philippines was firmly under his control and was to be run by his military favorites. He had cultivated the public image of having been a USAFFE military officer and a bemedaled hero of World War II.

Even as prefascist president for seven years, he had excelled as the top bureaucrat capitalist and did not hesitate to use openly lawful and discreetly unlawful means to enrich himself and his clique and to outmaneuver or bump off his political opponents.

When he got himself reelected through scandalously foul means in 1969, public outrage was high, the ruling system was going conspicuously into a new level of crisis and the revolutionary mass movement was on the upsurge.

Obviously, he had complete understanding of the Philippine state as a client of the United States and as a joint class dictatorship of the big compradors and landlords. As top bureaucrat capitalist, he considered himself superior to the superrich elite of big comprador and landlords and yet he found it unbearable to be on the way out of power and derided as the ignominiously most corrupt and brutal figure in the history of the neocolonial state.

He was still in power and had developed a strong grip on the armed forces. He could play on the anticommunist fears of the US and the local reactionary classes and could build up the armed forces. He could offer the false promise of reforms through a constitutional convention, which would be the very legalistic device to prolong his rule beyond the limits set by the 1935 Constitution and to deprive the people of their basic democratic rights.

He could physically attack the revolutionary movement as well as his intrasystemic opponents and critics and blame the communists for his own brutal acts. And he did everything to rationalize his proclamation of martial law and usurpation of absolute and supreme authority over the government and the people.

By carrying out his coup in 1972, he narrowed the joint class dictatorship of the big compradors and landlords into his personal dictatorship—an autocracy. He unleashed the armed forces against all active and potential opponents and against the people.

The US supported the Marcos fascist state completely and all the way in exchange for more imperialist privileges. The comprador big bourgeoisie and the landlord class also supported the fascist state for so long as it went on a rampage against the communists and the revolutionary mass movement and could get ever increasing amounts of foreign loans to cover deficits in balance of payments, foreign trade and government budget.

In pursuit of pseudodevelopment, the fascist regime went on a spending splurge on infrastructure projects, tourism facilities and other nonproductive or remotely productive projects. The foreign loans allowed an ever increasing portion of tax revenues to be used for military buildup and campaigns of suppression.

Then in the late 1970s, foreign loans could be gotten only at far higher interest and more onerous terms. Still further, in the early 1980s, foreign loans would become scarce even at the most stringent terms. The scarcity of foreign exchange and the resultant crisis made most of the big comprador-landlords resent the grabbing operations of Marcos and his cronies.

The economic and financial crisis in 1983 coincided with the outrageous assassination of Benigno S. Aquino, Jr. who had thought of coming home in time for the crisis to shake the fascist regime and for the electoral opposition to make a headway. The rapid interaction of political and economic crises resulted in a turbulent situation.

The US started to distance itself from the fascist puppet regime. Most sections of the comprador big bourgeoisie and landlord class drew away from the regime. The legal democratic mass movement surged forward at an unprecedented rate. In view of dramatic assaults by the people's army, Marcos himself was compelled in 1985 to admit that the revolutionary armed struggle had grown in strength instead of being quelled by the fascist state.

The staging of the snap election in 1986 only served to shake the fascist regime from the foundation to the rafters. The electoral fraud and terrorism moved the people and all legal and illegal opposition organizations to conduct a converging offensive on the regime through gigantic mass actions.

The Catholic Church, previously critical of the most flagrant human rights violations but on the whole supportive of the fascist regime, advanced to a position of total rejection of this fascist regime through the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) pastoral letter issued after the snap election. Marcos himself bungled the contradictions between the Ver-Ramas and Enrile-Ramos factions within the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Thus was set the final stage for the overthrow of the fascist dictator Marcos on February 22 to 25. He was overthrown by a combination of military revolt and people's uprising. The US which had been proposing a series of compromise formulas between the Marcos and the Aquino forces, decided to do its own share of making Marcos fall.

III. The possible emergence of a fascist state

Marcos' propensity for puppetry, despotism and corruption coincided with and aggravated the objectively worsening socioeconomic crisis of the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system.

This worsening crisis provided the objective basis for the autocratic initiative of Marcos and the rise and long duration of the fourteen-year fascist rule. The fascist dictatorship was the outgrowth of the US-dominated big comprador-landlord state in crisis.

The root causes of the fascist dictatorship are US monopoly capitalism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. So long as these remain, the reemergence of the fascist dictatorship is a strong possibility.

It is presumptuous and blind for the US imperialists and the local reactionaries to claim that the ascendance of Mrs. Aquino to the presidency had made a peaceful revolution and preempted the armed revolution of the people.

The ruling system remains in grave crisis. The same ruling classes ride roughshod over the people and the two major factions among them are in sharp contradiction. The same AFP which was the main oppressive instrument of the fallen Marcos regime remain intact and continues to oppress the people.

The legal forces of the national democratic movement and the armed revolutionary movement of the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army and the National Democratic Front and the entire Filipino people are intact and continue to grow in strength because of foreign and feudal domination.

The basic problems of the people cannot be solved by the Aquino government if it is the mere instrument of

the US and such local reactionary classes as the big compradors and landlords.

The contradictions between the Marcos and the Aquino forces are still in the process of development and are liable to break out in violent incidents within one, two or three years.

Compared to the opposition in the past under the Marcos fascist dictatorship, the Marcos forces are far stronger today because of their financial assets within and outside the country, their armed followers within and outside the AFP and their political agents who are at every level of political activity.

In various ways, the Marcos forces are making a show of force all over the country. But they are likely to make their most serious moves in the future when the Aquino government can be discredited for failure to solve the basic problems of the people, the very problems left by Marcos.

Although it remains intact as a pro-US and reactionary force, the AFP is increasingly an arena of struggle for at least three blocs and the Aquino bloc. The AFP remains seriously divided.

If the Aquino government were to face up to the basic problems of the people and to solve them, it ought to encourage and participate in a broad democratic alliance of the people, including the revolutionary forces, instead of submitting to pressures of the US, the Enrile-Ramos bloc and the Marcos forces to take a rabidly anticommunist line or succumbing to the temptation of taking this line. The Aquino government ought to encourage and participate in a broad democratic alliance of the people—including the revolutionary forces—in order to face up to the basic problems of the people and solve them. The

Aquino government can continue to get the support of the people only by completing the process of dismantling the structures of the fascist dictatorship and pursuing the anti-imperialist and antifeudal line towards national liberation and democracy in substance and form.

The reimposition of fascist dictatorship by any big comprador-landlord faction or militarist clique on the people will be lethal to the ruling system, not to the revolutionary movement. The problem of violence is not only something between the reactionary state and the people or the revolutionary movement but also within the state and the contending factions of the ruling classes.

Final Aggravation of the Crisis and the Fall of Marcos

Part II and III of “The Continuing Struggle in the Philippines”

December 26, 1987

A semicolonial and semifeudal system like that of the Philippines, afflicted by three bloodsuckers—US imperialism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism—is a society in permanent crisis. And the crisis can plunge to a new depth from which it can never rise. The declaration of martial law on September 21, 1972 and the imposition of a fascist dictatorship on the Filipino people meant that the crisis of the system had become so grave that the ruling classes of big compradors and landlords could no longer rule in the old way. The final aggravation of the crisis is joined with the rise of the determined forces of armed revolution.

The absolute lack of basic industries that are the foundation of modern industry, the frustration of even only the so-called import-substitution manufacturing (repackaging and reassembly), the exhaustion of the land frontier and the acceleration of land accumulation by the foreign and domestic exploiters, the rapid depression of the world capitalist market for raw material exports, the resultant high trade deficits and the need for colossal amounts of foreign loans, which became dramatically obvious in the financial crisis of 1970, shrank the socio-economic ground for amicable mutual accommodation through the electoral process among the factions of the exploiting classes.

Towards the end of the 1960s, culminating in the presidential elections of 1969, there was a race among reactionaries to build private armies, cultivate their own cliques within the Armed Forces of the Philippines and use armed force for political maneuvering. Being president of the country and commander-in-chief of the AFP, Marcos was able to take the lead in organizing violence for the benefit of his own faction, which was narrower than the Nacionalista Party under whose banner he had been elected president. He had the entire national leadership of the conservative opposition party, the Liberal Party, bombed and almost wiped out on August 21, 1971 while they were assembled in an electoral campaign rally for the 1971 senatorial and local elections. Then he sought to put the blame on the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army and proceeded to suspend the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus.

The legal democratic mass movement was not cowed. It fought back with rallies and demonstrations demanding the restoration of the writ of habeas corpus and Marcos would back down and restore the writ in January 1972. But before doing so, he had gotten from the Supreme Court a formal obeisance to his view that on his sole judgment as president, he could adopt extraordinary measures, including the declaration of martial law, without having to consult the legislature or present proof of the factual basis of such an action to any court.

After another round of bombings which he staged in 1972, Marcos declared martial law and usurped absolute and supreme authority on all aspects of government—executive, legislative and judicial—and sought to destroy all intrasystemic rivals and critics as well as the legal democratic mass movement and the armed revolutionary movement. He used as principal scapegoat the CPP and NPA which he claimed to have 10,000 rifles but which in fact had only 350 automatic rifles. Then he proceeded to coerce and cajole the constitutional convention into coming out with a constitutional draft giving him explicit autocratic power.

The United States encouraged, approved and supported the fascist dictatorship in accordance with the Nixon doctrine which had urged the fortification of the Philippines in view of the impending US defeat in the Vietnam war; and with the calculation that the autocratic regime could assure continuance of the US military bases and “parity rights” under a new label, “national treatment” in the economy, reverse certain decisions of the Supreme Court, which were unfavorable to US investors, and suppress the growing anti-imperialist and antifeudal mass movement.

The fascist dictatorship presented itself as the political center putting down the Left and the Right, as the promoter of democratic revolution and implementor of land reform, as savior of the republic and builder of a new society. The US celebrated Marcos for creating stability and the most favorable conditions for private investments. The ideology of national security was riding high within the policy-making bodies of the United States and repressive regimes were considered the most efficient and cheapest instrument of “modernization.”

The Marcos clique of bureaucrat capitalists was in fact the ultrarightist faction in power. It was the most subservient to US imperialism and the most rapacious part of the exploiting classes. It was conducting a fascist counterrevolution, effecting massive transfer of land and other assets to itself, narrowing the neocolonial republic

to an autocracy and aggravating the crisis of the semicolonial and semifeudal social system.

The terms of trade for Philippine raw material exports (sugar, coconut, logs, copper concentrates and the like) deteriorated throughout the 1970s. But the illusion of development was created by huge amounts of foreign loans which were used not only to cover the growing trade deficits but also to finance or induce the most unproductive programs and projects such as the rapid construction of roads, bridges, tourist facilities and office buildings, the unnecessary increase to the point of overcapacity of agricultural and mining mills, the importation of hightech equipment and high consumer goods for the upper classes; and the rapid expansion of the Armed Forces of the Philippines from 50,000 in 1972 to 250,000 regular troops, police and paramilitary personnel.

The proportion of direct investments for the entire industrial sector decreased despite the high investments in construction financed by foreign loans. The share of manufacturing decreased despite incentives for the so-called export-oriented manufacturing which involved a narrower range of products (garments and semiconductors), slighter processing and lesser value-added, lesser regular employment and a bigger drain of foreign exchange (due to transfer-pricing) than the so-called import-substitution industries of the past.

There was an aggravation and deepening of the backward agrarian character of the economy even as half a million of the thirteen million hectares of Philippine agricultural land came under the miracle rice program with its overpriced irrigation systems and importation of farm equipment and agrichemicals.

The much-vaunted land reform program of Marcos meant the actual transfer of only a measly 2,300 hectares of land to 1,230 tenants while Marcos and his cronies amassed hundreds of thousands of hectares of land. The illusion of land reform was contrived by putting a few hundreds of thousands of hectares under the fixed rent system which is even more onerous to the tenants than the old sharecropping arrangement based on the actual crop.

Accumulated unemployment went up to more than 40 percent of the total work force because of the contraction of industrial employment, the exhaustion of the land frontier and dispossession of peasants and the ceaseless depression of raw-material production for export. There was a massive increase of farm workers competing for a decreased number of farm jobs.

Both employed and unemployed suffered from the general condition of unemployment, low wages, inflation and repeated devaluations of the currency. Seventy percent of the people fell below the poverty line. Sixty percent of children were malnourished. Eventually pockets of famine would arise in areas affected by the collapse of sugar production.

It was not simply the socioeconomic crisis of the system inflicting the daily violence of exploitation on the people. There were also the conspicuous acts of violence to oppress the people. Before the end of the fascist regime, 160,000 people had been killed, tens of thousands of people had been tortured, hundreds of thousands had been subjected to illegal detention and humiliation for at least a day (70,000 of them for more than one month) and six million people had been forced to leave their homes and farms (2.5 million of them permanently displaced). The figures take into account the victims of military and police suppression in both the Moro and non-Moro areas.

The Marcos fascist regime started to worry about foreign loans and its own mortality in 1979 when the international credit system started to tighten. In the 1970s, the US and other capitalist countries encouraged the Philippines and other third world countries to avail of foreign loans in order to deploy the excessive amount of Eurodollars and, subsequently, petro-dollars and thereby stimulate the sale of manufactures from the capitalist countries. The bright idea was to pump prime the capitalist countries which otherwise would have slid into recession. But the trouble with this neo-Keynesian idea put on a global scale is that the Philippines, like most third world debtors, was prevented from going into genuine industrial development and would never be capable of paying back its debts on the basis of its persistent agrarian, pre-industrial and semifeudal base. Finally, the monetarists of the Milton Friedman type took over from the neo-Keynesian easy lenders.

In 1981, the state corporations and private crony corporations benefited by foreign loans started to collapse due to the international tight credit situation. Only the cronies closest to Marcos could be accommodated with refinancing from funds provided by multilateral agencies. The big compradors who were outside of the Marcos clique started to grumble against it. In previous years, even as the clique in power got the lion's share of the contracts, they had been benefited by a considerable amount of spin off and they had lavished praises on the regime. In 1983, on the eve of Benigno S. Aquino's determined return to the Philippines from a three-year exile to the US, the socioeconomic crisis was already so grave that Marcos was in a state of political panic.

Despite the Marcos regime's brutal policy of suppressing every manifestation of the national democratic movement and despite the colossal amounts of foreign loans to buoy up the regime, such forces of the armed revolution as the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army and the National Democratic Front grew in strength and advanced. The legal democratic movement, which was comprehensively antifascist, anti-imperialist and antifeudal also resurged with a bigger following among the basic toiling masses of workers and peasants and the middle social strata.

At the start of the martial law regime, the Communist Party had only three thousand members heavily concentrated in the three regions of Manila-Rizal, Northern Luzon and Central Luzon. Elsewhere, there were only skeletal regional organizations and seeds of revolutionary work at the grassroots. At the end of the fascist regime, the Party gained some tens of thousands of members leading the revolutionary struggle of millions of people on a national scale and at the grassroots. All the regional Party organizations had acquired flesh and muscles.

In 1972, the New People's Army had only 350 automatic rifles and several hundreds more of inferior weapons. It was heavily concentrated in the region of Northern Luzon, particularly in Cagayan Valley. It had deployed armed propaganda teams arousing, organizing and mobilizing the masses, and striving to develop armed resistance at strategic points in various regions of the country. By 1986, it had gained 14,000 firearms (7,000 of which were automatic rifles) and had created fifty-nine guerrilla fronts in sixty-three out of seventy-three provinces in the country.

The mass base of the Party and the people's army had increased from some 250,000 in rural areas and some 50,000 in urban areas in a few regions in 1972 to seven million people in more than 11,000 out of 41,000 Philippine villages or more than 700 out of 1,540 Philippine municipalities in the rural areas and to three million people in urban areas all over the country. The mass base consists of people led by organs of political power or are in mass organizations for workers, peasants, youth, women, fishermen and others.

The organs of political power have been formed along the united front line since the beginning of the revolutionary armed struggle. In principle, they are also the mass base of the National Democratic Front which was formed in 1973 and is entrusted with the task of paving the way for the People's Revolutionary Government, especially from the municipal to the national level, as a democratic coalition government.

The preservation and growth of the armed revolutionary movement did not only guarantee the doom of the Marcos fascist regime but also exposed the fatal weaknesses of the entire ruling system and proved the correctness of the strategic line of encircling the cities from the countryside until the people's army and other revolutionary forces shall have accumulated enough strength to seize the cities.

The fall of Marcos

Ahead of all objective factors causing the decline of the Marcos fascist regime was the continued deterioration of terms of trade for Philippine raw material exports and the tightening of international credit. The regime was discomfited by the exposed bankruptcies of the state corporations, crony corporations and the entire government, and by the tightening of the budget. The allocation for debt service in the budget had become larger than those for public works and the military. From 1981 to 1983, Marcos increasingly realized his vulnerabilities.

Earlier, foreign loans could directly fund the construction projects of the ministries of public works, public highways, human settlements and others; while the peso revenues of the government plus US military and economic support funds could be channeled in great amounts to the ministry of national defense. In 1983, the officers and men of the Armed Forces of the Philippines were already complaining that their salaries had stagnated while the rate of inflation soared. Marcos feared losing grip on the single instrument most crucial to his retention of power.

As early as the late 1970s, there had been protests from AFP officers from the rank of colonel downwards that the system of over staying generals, which Marcos had adopted in order to retain favorites and ensure loyalty, was holding up promotions. In 1981, the rivalry between his two cousins, General Fabian Ver, Presidential Security Command chief, and General Fidel Ramos, Philippine Constabulary chief, for the position of AFP chief of staff tended to create two strong factions. Minister of Defense Juan Ponce Enrile supported General Ramos but Marcos appointed General Ver to the contested position and showed to him a letter of the defense minister deprecating Ver's low qualifications and favoring Ramos. Thus, a feud would start between Ver who took the Philippine Army chief General Josephus Ramos as his closest ally on one side and Enrile and Ramos on the other side.

From 1981 onward, the two factions maneuvered against each other with regard to officer promotions;

domestic and foreign purchase contracts for the military; private security contracts; control of the dollar black-market, smuggling and vice den operations; tactics and deployment of troops and so on. Ver created the regional unified command as interservice composites and undercut the authority of the Philippine Constabulary chief over his own service. Marcos underestimated the severity of the feud between the Enrile-Ramos and the Ver-Ramas factions because they were all the king's men.

With regard to the armed revolutionary movement, Marcos had a long-term view of it as the principal threat to his own regime and to the ruling system. But he personally underestimated the actual strength of the New People's Army and he alternately described it as strong or weak, depending on his purpose. He did not know that the NPA had reached the critical mass of nearly 5,000 automatic rifles in 1983 and was already effectively puncturing the arrogance or morale of AFP officers and men in the field. Marcos also privately underestimated the actual strength of the legal national democratic movement.

The underestimation of the strength of the armed revolutionary movement and the legal democratic mass movement was with regard to its relation to Marcos' own armed strength. He underestimated even more the conservative opposition without the present active leadership of his chief political rival Benigno S. Aquino who was in exile. In previous electoral exercises that he had staged, Marcos had made participation of the conservative opposition a mere embellishment of his rigging operations. But on the other hand, he overestimated Aquino in 1983, especially because his return to the country was endorsed by US State Secretary George Schultz and Rep. Stephen Solarz, chairman of the House foreign affairs subcommittee for Asian and Pacific Affairs.

Marcos committed the biggest mistake in his political career by having Aquino assassinated in August 1983 on the calculation that it would be best to get rid once and for all of this dramatic figure who could take advantage of the socioeconomic crisis and revive the conservative opposition by going into a temporary alliance with the national democratic movement and gaining the dominant US support.

It was after the assassination of Aquino, the spontaneous outpouring of public outrage and the unprecedented sustained mass actions under such umbrella organizations as Justice for Aquino, Justice for All (JAJA) and subsequently the Committee for the Restoration of Democracy (CORD) and at the core of which were the solid organizations of the national democratic movement, that the US State Department adopted the stand of easing Marcos out. State Department Secretary George Schultz, who felt personally and officially insulted by the murder of Aquino, encouraged assistant secretary for East Asia Affairs Paul Wolfowitz, Philippine desk's John Maisto and US ambassador to the Philippines Michael Armacost (who would soon rise to No.3 position in the State Department) to do the paper work and seek interagency support for easing Marcos out.

Until late 1984, the Pentagon resisted the idea of easing Marcos out of power before the end of his 1987 presidential term because the operation would involve not only the withholding of bilateral and multilateral funds but also the encouragement of an anti-Marcos faction and thereby the promotion of a split within the AFP in order to persuade Marcos to announce an election before 1987. But the view that the revolutionary mass movement was fast gaining ground and would do so faster after the probable whitewash of the Aquino assassination (exoneration of Marcos and General Ver) would eventually be convincing even to the Pentagon.

Thus in late 1984, there was already a US interagency consensus for the easing out of Marcos. This was indicated by the National Security Study Directive (NSSD) in the diplomatically ambiguous terms of "reform or else." US defense undersecretary Richard Armitage and deputy assistant secretary for international security affairs James Kelley also made public statements critical of Marcos' management of military affairs and encouraging to General Ramos (who had temporarily taken over the position of AFP chief of staff due to General Ver's leave of absence) as well as to the colonels who would publicly launch the Reform the AFP Movement (RAM) in March 1985 right before the eyes of Marcos at the Philippine Military Academy graduation exercises. Defense Minister Enrile and acting AFP chief of staff General Ramos encouraged the RAM.

Then came the series of interagency pressures on Marcos, chiefly in the form of visits by Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) director William Casey in May 1985 and then by Reagan's personal envoy Senator Paul Laxalt in October 1985. The repeated message to Marcos had been to hold presidential elections before 1987 and soon after the release of the findings on the Aquino assassination by the Agrava Commission, or else funds from abroad would continue to be withheld and disaffected AFP officers would be difficult to manage. Subsequently, Laxalt kept up the pressure in telephone conversations with Marcos until the latter agreed to make the announcement on snap elections in November 1985.

A few days after Marcos made his snap election announcement, President Carter's assistant secretary of state for East Asia Richard Holbrooke came to Manila to team up with US Ambassador Stephen Bosworth and Manila CIA station chief Norbert Garrett. Presenting themselves as bipartisan representatives of US foreign policy, they met Mrs. Corazon Aquino, Jose Cojuangco and Agapito "Butz" Aquino and told them that Mrs Aquino could be a sure winner if she would keep the communists and communist sympathizers out of her inner campaign organization and prospective cabinet and if she would not make the US military bases a campaign issue.

Keeping the Reds out of her campaign organization and prospective cabinet was no problem for her because in the formation of BAYAN or Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (New Patriotic Alliance) in May 1985, the yellow pro-Aquino elements had broken off after failing to gain control. Mrs. Aquino deliberately avoided any negotiations with BAYAN on the snap election but wanted it to support her without her having to make any reciprocal commitments. On the US military bases, she departed from the basic document of the so-called convenor group which she had signed on December 26, 1984 calling for the dismantling of the bases not later than 1991. She took a new tack by declaring that she would "keep her options open" until 1991 despite the fact that negotiations on the bases would have to start in 1988 due to the scheduled renegotiation of another five-year compensation package for 1989 to 1994.

In a unique way, Mrs. Aquino played a decisive role in her becoming president. As the widow of the martyr, she was the center of public sympathy. She deliberately declared over and over that she was not interested in the presidency until it was ripe for her to declare her candidacy in the snap election. To put her in a position of moral ascendancy over all potential presidential candidates on the opposition side, rabid pro-US elements made her as one of the three presiding officers of the so-called convenor group who were not supposed to be interested in the presidency. But she would eventually run for the presidency by virtue of one million signatures urging her to run as well as of mediations by US ambassador Bosworth and Jaime Cardinal Sin between her and another opposition presidential aspirant Salvador Laurel.

The snap election of February 7, 1986 proved to be a fraud as correctly predicted by the revolutionary organizations and the biggest legal democratic organization BAYAN, which called for a national strike movement immediately after it became clear that Marcos won the presidency by massive fraud. US officialdom and mass media were alarmed that the Left was the big winner by taking the initiative in leading the fight against the Marcos regime. Under US direction, the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) departed from its old line of critical collaboration (occasional criticism of the grossest human rights violations but consistent collaboration with the Marcos regime on the fundamentals of the system) by declaring on February 14 that the foundation of the Marcos regime was immoral and illegitimate. Then, Mrs. Aquino called for civil disobedience. And contradictory forces converged to make gigantic mass actions against the fraudulent elections.

The Marcos regime cracked wide open on February 22, 1986. It aborted a coup plan of the RAM under the leadership of Enrile and Ramos but the frustrated coup plotters took a defiant stand in Camp Aguinaldo. With the help of Cardinal Sin and Radio Veritas—the Catholic radio station partly financed by the CIA—they called on the people to protect them from Marcos and Ver. It is probable that US special envoy and troubleshooter Philip Habib had given the go-signal to Enrile for a coup. But the RAM was infiltrated by Marcos' counterintelligence agents.

US ambassador Bosworth, the JUSMAG and CIA staff worked fast to ensure a military stalemate between the Marcos-Ver and Enrile-Ramos camps and immediately put in General Rafael Ileto as a mediator. Though he was Philippine ambassador to Thailand, he had been at hand because the US had put him into the committee formed by Marcos under Pentagon pressure to reorganize the AFP and ostensibly to mollify the RAM.

While the military stalemate continued, the spontaneous rising of the masses in Metro Manila and the provinces would occur. At the highway between Camp Aguinaldo (AFP general headquarters) and Camp Crame (PC headquarters), hundreds of thousands of people converged until Marcos fled on the evening of February 24, 1986 shortly after Laxalt's final advice to him to "cut and cut cleanly." Twenty percent of the people that converged on that portion of the EDSA highway came from various antifascist organizations, mainly the component organizations of BAYAN. Eighty percent were spontaneous masses.

The tens of thousands of people converging on the presidential palace and park came from BAYAN to the extent of at least 90 percent. It was some 500 members of the Quezon City chapter of BAYAN that took over Channel 4 (the government radio-TV network) at a crucial moment before the RAM detachment moved in. In the provinces, mass actions were organized and launched by BAYAN. The most crucial of these mass actions was the one

in Angeles City (location of the US Clark Air Force Base) which discouraged the tank advance into Manila by a pro-Marcos general from Camp Aquino in Tarlac.

It was a combination of contradictory forces that brought down the Marcos fascist regime. It is wrong to say that the US and anti-Marcos reactionaries were solely responsible for the overthrow. Neither is it correct to say that the legal national democratic forces did it all. Among the spontaneous masses were various kinds and levels of consciousness but all converged on the objective of overthrowing the long-hated regime.

However, if there has to be a singling out of the most decisive factor that caused the downfall of Marcos, it was the revolutionary mass movement. It worked the longest and most effectively to weaken and isolate the Marcos fascist dictatorship, especially while the intrasystemic or conservative opposition was rendered impotent until 1983. It was fear of this movement growing even faster, had Marcos stayed in power longer, that had been the main factor in the calculations of the US and the local reactionaries when they decided to ease him out or to junk him. From 1983 to the very final days of the Marcos regime, it was the revolutionary movement which provided the hard core of the mass uprising. But the overall balance of strength between the revolutionary and counterrevolutionary forces was still such that the US and anti-Marcos reactionaries would be able to determine at the top the basic character of the new regime.

1995

I am deeply pleased that this third edition of *Struggle for National Democracy* is being published in response to the demand of young activists of the national-democratic movement and in celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of *Kabataang Makabayan* of which I was the founding chairman on November 30, 1964 and in which I served as chairman until I went underground in 1968.

This book is mainly a compilation of my speeches and essays in the years 1964-68 while I was chairman of *Kabataang Makabayan*, vice-chairman / general secretary of the Socialist Party of the Philippines and general secretary of the Movement for the Advancement of Nationalism.

Like the second edition, the third edition includes messages addressed to the national-democratic organizations which burgeoned as a result of the First Quarter Storm of 1970.

This book is a historical record of the legal struggle for national liberation and democracy against US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism in the 1960s and early 1970s. It was the principal legal study material in discussion groups and schools of national democracy which educated the youth cadres and militants from 1967 through the First Quarter Storm of 1970 to the declaration of martial law in 1972.

This book was the direct precursor of *Philippine Society and Revolution*. As a matter of fact, the two books were like partners in the education of cadres and mass activists in the course of the First Quarter Storm of 1970.

For the simple and undeniable reason that the basic semi-colonial and semi-feudal conditions and problems of the Filipino people have persisted, there is the need to read and study this book not only because of its historical value but also because of the continuing validity and relevance of its basic ideas.

Since the 1960s, the basic problems of foreign monopoly-capitalism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism have been deepened and aggravated by the 20-year rule of Marcos and by the succeeding regimes of Aquino and Ramos.

The people's immediate demand for national liberation and democracy, for national industrialization and genuine land reform and for a national, scientific and mass culture and the people's aspirations for socialism remain as valid and as necessary as ever before.

I am thankful to the publisher of the third edition for assuring me that *Struggle for National Democracy* is worthy of reading and study not only because of its lasting and relevant content but also because of its persuasive popular style.

I am thankful also to *Kabataang Makabayan*, the League of Filipino Students, the Institute of Alternative Studies and other organizations as well as concerned individuals for urging the publisher to bring out the third edition and giving the assurance that it shall be well disseminated.

Jose Maria Sison
Utrecht, Netherlands

1995

Experiences during Martial Law

Interview by John Toledo, *Philippine Collegian* Features Editor

May 19, 2012

May I know your experiences during martial law. This is in connection with the commemoration of martial law on September 21. 1. What were your experiences before and during the Martial Law? What were the harsh aspects of this grim period?

JMS: I was active in the legal mass movement since 1961. I went underground together with other comrades in late 1968 in order to reestablish the Communist Party of the Philippines on December 26, 1969 and to found the New People's Army on March 29, 1969. As early as 1969, we observed the propensity of Marcos to use brute force against the mass movement in both rural and urban areas.

After the proclamation of martial law in 1972, the Marcos regime imposed a fascist dictatorship on the people and went full blast in committing human rights violations. The harshest of these were the illegal arrests and detention, enforced disappearances, tortures, extrajudicial killings, massacres, bombardments of rural communities, forced eviction and illegal seizure of land and other properties. Millions of people were directly victimized while the entire nation was being intimidated.

2. How did you form the student movements during Martial Law? What were these movements and are they still existing today?

JMS: Despite being outlawed, Kabataang Makabayan continued to secretly recruit and organize the students against the Marcos fascist dictatorship. The KM chapters in schools all over the country operated under the cover of permitted or unsuspected student organizations. They distributed leaflets against the dictatorship and engaged in lightning protest actions on the campus and outside.

As early as 1974 they started to generate a movement for the restoration of the student governments and student publications which had been banned. These were allowed under severe restrictions in 1976. Open protest actions of students spread in 1976 and even more so from 1978 onwards. They took advantage of the fascist regime pretending to normalize and democratize, especially during the elections. The student youth became more assertive in the early 1980s and especially after the assassination of Aquino in 1983. The Youth for Nationalism and Democracy (YND) and League of Filipino Students (LFS) were formed. Student organizations like the CEGP, NUSP, SCMP and the like became more militant. Except YND, these aforesaid student organizations continue to exist. In the case of KM, it has continued in the underground and has become the Communist Youth League.

3. What happened to you after the Martial Law proclamation? JMS: I was part of the CPP, NPA and the NDF in waging the revolutionary armed struggle against the Marcos regime. I was captured on November 10, 1977. I was tortured and put in solitary confinement for most of the time that I was under military detention. I was released on March 5, 1986 after the fall of Marcos. I went back to the University of the Philippines to teach and then I went abroad to do a university lecture tour in Asia-Pacific and Europe. My passport was canceled in 1988 by the first Aquino regime and I had to apply for political asylum in The Netherlands in order to defeat the scheme of the military to rearrest me.

4. Are the student movements still existing today? How is it significant in the current world order?

JMS: The student movements are alive and kicking in the Philippines and in the world. They are among the most progressive and militant in opposing the antipeople policies and actions of US imperialism and the local reactionary puppet governments, as in the Philippines.

They are very significant, especially in the underdeveloped and impoverished countries. They express the demands of the students as well as those of the entire people for national independence, democracy, development, social justice and world peace.

5. After 40 years, how do you see the people's reception to Martial Law?

JMS: The Filipino people continue to hate martial law and the fascist dictatorship as a monstrosity against their national and democratic rights and interests.

6. Who is Joma Sison and the student movement after 40 years of Martial Law?

JMS: I remain a teacher and writer, always trying to uphold, defend and promote the national and democratic

rights of the Filipino people. The patriotic and student movement continues to fight for national and social liberation against US imperialism and the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords to which Noynoy Aquino belongs and which he represents like Marcos did in the past.

7. What is the feeling of being in exile, of being far away from the people?

JMS: Sometimes, I feel that I can do more if I were in the Philippines. But most of the time, I feel well connected to the Philippines because of the constant flow of visitors and because the internet allows me to get news from the Philippines ahead of most Filipinos who are in the Philippines.

8. 40 years after Martial Law, how would you describe your struggle?

JMS: The struggle continues to grow in strength. It has created the people's democratic government in the countryside. It is led by the revolutionary party of the proletariat, the people's army and the mass organizations of workers, peasants, women, youth and other people. All these revolutionary forces are growing in strength.

9. When are you coming back? Or are you still coming back despite the harsh conditions GPH has set on you?

JMS: I still have to stay abroad to perform my duties for the peace negotiations and to do international solidarity work. I have plenty of work to do as chairperson of the International League of Peoples' Struggle.

10. Is there still hope for the proletarians of the Philippines?

JMS: The proletarians of the Philippines continue to be harshly exploited and oppressed. Thus, they must fight for their rights and welfare. There is hope for them because of their struggle.

Rise and Fall of the Marcos Fascist Dictatorship: Causes and Consequences up to the Present

September 11, 2012

September 21, the formal date of the proclamation of martial law forty years ago, reminds us of the Marcos fascist dictatorship that the Filipino nation had to suffer for 14 long years until 1986. In our forthcoming commemoration, we honor the people and all the martyrs and heroes for their resolute and courageous struggle against the dictatorship. We reflect on the rise and fall of this dictatorship and on the causes and consequences up to the present, in order to know what we as a nation have achieved and how much more we need to do in order to complete the people's struggle for national freedom and democracy.

It is highly important to undertake such reflection because the political heirs of Marcos and even quite a number of those who benefited politically from the assassination of Ninoy Aquino want to obfuscate the real and most important causes of the Marcos fascist dictatorship and shift the blame for the rise of the dictatorship to the revolutionary movement of the people. It is in the self-serving nature of the reactionaries to engage in deception and violence to preserve their ruling system and to blame the people for resisting oppression and exploitation.

The political operatives of the ruling classes of big compradors and landlords continue to pursue and carry out anti-national and antidemocratic policies against the people. They have consistently failed or refused to render justice to the victims of human rights violations under the Marcos fascist dictatorship as well as compensate them in accordance with the decision of the US court system in the human rights case against the Marcos estate. They have been deliberately blind to the millions of people who suffered deprivation, indignities and death as a result of military operations and forced evacuations and evictions.

1. Causes of the rise of the Marcos fascist dictatorship

At the reestablishment of the Communist Party of Philippines (CPP) in 1968, we the proletarian revolutionaries recognized the worsening social crisis and the increasing inability of the ruling classes of big compradors and landlords to rule in the old way, the growing desire of the people for a change of system and the urgent need for a revolutionary party of the proletariat to lead the people. In 1969 we became aware of the growing trend towards fascism in the pronouncements and actions of Marcos; and the book, *Philippine Society and Revolution*, dared to predict that he would impose a fascist dictatorship on the Filipino people. We became more convinced that he was up to something terribly evil, the louder he talked of the social volcano about to explode, the greatness he was poised to achieve for the nation and the need for a bigger military force to protect the country.

The two biggest causes of the Marcos fascist dictatorship chronologically were firstly the objective conditions and chronic crisis of the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system and secondly the subjective factor, Marcos' overweening ambition to perpetuate himself in power. Marcos estimated that he could use his presidential powers to manipulate the entire system to his personal advantage and invent the compelling reasons for using violence and deception to suppress the opposition and achieve his despotic purposes.

Marcos had a good estimate that the US imperialists would allow him to stay in power for so long as he served their economic, political, military and cultural interests; and so long as he acted to suppress the patriotic and progressive forces demanding national independence and democracy. After all, such forces did not yet have the strength to really threaten US dominance and the ruling system. Behind the scenes, he even encouraged the Supreme Court to issue certain decisions against US interests. But surreptitiously, he assured the US that he would undercut and reverse such decisions.

He also had a good measure of the mettle of his political rivals among his fellow reactionaries.

The latter loved to orate against Marcos but they had no more than platoons and companies as private armies. Many of them also fell for the illusion Marcos himself conjured that they could reform and improve on the system through a constitutional convention. Marcos' ulterior motive was to have a new constitution to do away with the limit of two consecutive four-year terms for the presidency and to rewrite further the new constitution under conditions of martial rule and fascist dictatorship. He also anticipated that Cardinal Santos and the Catholic hierarchy would welcome the martial law proclamation and give him the chance to undertake reforms.

From 1969 to 1972, Marcos demonstrated his propensity for violence against the workers, peasants and youth.

He viciously attacked the First Quarter Storm of 1970 and carried out a series of massacres in Tarlac (in the barrios of Culatingan, Paraiso, Sta. Lucia, etc.). He and his ruling clique perpetrated the Plaza Miranda bombing of August 21, 1971 and yet within a few hours and without any investigation he immediately scapegoated his arch political rival Benigno Aquino and the New People's Army (NPA) and declared the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus in 1971. This suspension of the writ was the dress rehearsal for the premeditated proclamation of martial law in 1972.

The fake assassination attempt on Enrile on the eve of the martial law proclamation was just a little piece of drama, a sop to media sensationalism. The biggest lie in Marcos' martial law proclamation was the exaggeration that the NPA had an armed strength of 10,000 rifles. There were no more than 400 rifles at that time. But Marcos excelled at conjuring the illusion of communists, separatists and anarchists threatening the ruling system and giving cause to his slogan of "save the republic and build a new society."

II. Struggle against fascist dictatorship

Even before Marcos proclaimed martial law in 1972, the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army had been waging the new democratic revolution through people's war against the US-directed Marcos regime. They integrated the revolutionary armed struggle with genuine land reform and mass base building by setting up organs of political power on the basis of the worker-peasant alliance and the mass organizations of workers, peasants, women, youth, children and cultural activists.

The legal movement of patriotic and progressive forces had developed since the early 1960s, much ahead of the revolutionary armed struggle which started in 1969. After the proclamation of martial rule in 1972, the afore-said legal forces went underground, retained some of their activists aboveground and encouraged others to join the people's war in the countryside. The Preparatory Commission of the National Democratic Front (NDF) continued in urban areas in order to develop new forces and new opportunities for continuing resistance.

It is an incontrovertible fact that the CPP, NPA, NDF and other revolutionary forces were the most outstanding in fighting the Marcos fascist dictatorship along the antifascist, anti-imperialist and antifeudal line. They grew in strength and advanced in all regions of the country during the 14 years of dictatorship, even as they paid a heavy price for their victories with daily hard work, militant struggle and bitter sacrifices.

Among those who dared to fight the dictatorship and join the NPA were the best and brightest youth and students at the time. These included Edgar Jopson, Gregorio Rosal, Lorena Barros and Maita Gomez, to name a few among the thousands upon thousands of young men and women who took up arms against the dictatorship.

They were among those who suffered the most such criminal acts of the fascist regime as abductions, enforced disappearances, torture and extrajudicial killings. But they inspired and assured the people that the overwhelming power of the dictatorship was being opposed effectively by the armed struggle in the countryside and the revolutionary urban underground.

The broad masses of the people waged heroic resistance, even as the dictatorship engaged in zonings in urban communities and bombardments to evict people from their homes and farms and grab their land in favor of plantations owned by foreign-owned agrocorporations and big comprador-landlords. Most of those who suffered illegal detention, torture, summary executions and massacres were workers and peasants.

Marcos imprisoned his fellow reactionary politicians in the opposition whom he regarded as most dangerous to the stability of his autocratic rule. But many of those whom he did not imprison or he would release from prison tended to wait for a change of US attitude towards Marcos and seek compromise by recommending to him new elections under the 1935 constitution or under the fascist constitution. They consistently refused the NDF offer of forming a broad united front and a government in exile.

The Marcos regime was also confronted by the armed Bangsa Moro secessionist movement led by the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF). The AFP had to deploy in the early years of martial rule about half of its combat forces in the Moro areas, especially in Southwest Mindanao, where it suffered heavy losses. The armed struggles of the Filipino people and Bangsa Moro against a common enemy objectively helped each other, even in the absence of a formal alliance. When the MNLF signed the Tripoli Agreement with the Manila government in 1976, the MILF arose to wage armed struggle.

After Cardinal Santos died and Cardinal Sin succeeded him, the Catholic hierarchy opened up to listen to the complaints of human rights violations and became more active in demanding that justice be rendered. It took some strenuous efforts by the Christians for National Liberation and the NDF to persuade the majority of bishops

to stand up for human rights and publicly denounce the violations.

The US government supported the Marcos fascist dictatorship for as long as it served US interests and remained more of an asset than a liability. The retention of US military bases in the Philippines, the enlargement of privileges for US investments and the prerogative of US corporations to hold land and exploit natural resources were reasons for the US to provide economic and military aid to the fascist regime. But ultimately in 1982, the US recognized that Marcos was hopelessly isolated and hated by the people for his extreme brutality and corruption; that he had become seriously ill, with the line of succession unclear and risky; and that the revolutionary movement could benefit from the tenuous situation. Thus, the US arranged the return of Aquino to the Philippines.

But Marcos and his closest cronies and generals decided to assassinate Aquino upon his return in 1983. They tried in vain to conjure the illusion that a “communist assassin” killed Aquino. The people understood that Galman was just a stage prop in a scene fully controlled by General Ver and other generals in various services of the AFP. The assassination sparked the upsurge of the anti-fascist mass movement from 1983 until Marcos fell from power in 1986. For three years, the armed revolutionary movement and the legal forces of the national democratic movement played a crucial role in the groundswell of the anti-fascist movement which led to the fall of Marcos.

III. Causes of the fall of the dictatorship

Even before the assassination of Aquino, the top Washington officials were already seriously concerned that the longer Marcos stayed in power, the armed revolutionary movement led by the CPP would become stronger and the US would face bigger problems in the future. US inter-agency meetings were being held as early as 1982 to study and draw up recommendations on how to preempt the further growth of the armed revolutionary movement in the Philippines and how to make a soft landing from fascist dictatorship to sham democracy. Clearly, the continuing advance of the people’s war led by the CPP was a major cause of and compelling factor for the US decision to prepare for getting rid of Marcos.

After Aquino was assassinated in 1983, the US officials became even more worried by the persistence of Marcos in power and were angered that Aquino was assassinated despite assurances to Solarz and Wolfowitz by regime officials that he would not be harmed. The US State Department was the most offended and went gung-ho for the overthrow of Marcos. The Pentagon resisted for a while by arguing that the overthrow would entail a serious split in the reactionary armed forces in the Philippines. Eventually it accepted the “Armacost formula” which would indeed allow a calibrated split calculated to be repaired in due course. Thus, Reagan signed the national security directive for getting rid of Marcos.

As in the earlier overthrow of Duvalier in Haiti, the US devised the Laxalt proposal for a snap presidential election of 1986 to trick Marcos into calling for it (“make him a part of the solution” was the cynical US catchphrase) and then to accuse him of cheating in order to pave the way for his overthrow through a military mutiny and paralysis of the reactionary armed forces; and through mass actions of the people. As early as November 1985, the US instructed Cory Aquino to keep out of her campaign organization the leaders of the Left, not to touch the issue of US military bases and not to appoint anyone from the Left to her prospective cabinet. By his own Comelec count and pseudo-parliament proclamation, Marcos was the electoral winner but a predictable series of events would overthrow him and nullify his claim.

Immediately after the sham results of the snap presidential election, the CPP ran ahead of all forces in denouncing the results and calling for people’s uprisings, contrary to latter-day claims that the CPP was paralyzed by its boycott policy in the elections. Only subsequently, after several days, did Cory Aquino call for civil disobedience. The third powerful blow that fell on the head of Marcos came from the Catholic bishops who, in their pastoral letter, denounced the Marcos regime as immoral and illegitimate. Then, the Reform the AFP Movement (RAM) launched its failed coup attempt. But Cardinal Sin, Butch Aquino and BAYAN called on the people to go to EDSA highway to support the military mutineers and frustrate the anticipated military offensive of Marcos.

During the last few days of the life of the Marcos fascist dictatorship, the forces of the national democratic movement mobilized large masses of people to converge on EDSA and in front of Malacañang Palace and in so many other public places in the country, especially in provincial capitals and major cities. At least 20 percent of the hundreds of thousands of people at EDSA were mobilized by BAYAN, with the rest being mobilized mainly by the calls of Cardinal Sin and broadcasts of Radio Veritas. But 85 percent of the thousands upon thousands of people in front of Malacañang palace were mobilized by the KMU and LFS.

In the provinces, BAYAN was the dominant force in organizing the mass actions. Let us mention a few notable

examples. BAYAN of Angeles city was outstanding for stopping the army tanks of General Palafox which came from Tarlac. In the Bicol region, the close friend of Ramos, General de Villa could appear big as an opponent of Marcos only because he was backed up by BAYAN, aside from his military followers. It is absurd for anyone to claim that because of the election boycott policy the forces of the Left kept themselves not only out of the farcical elections but also out of the people's uprising that overthrew Marcos.

It can be concluded that in the long haul from 1969 to 1986 as well as in the short haul from 1983 to 1986 of the struggle to overthrow the Marcos fascist dictatorship, the armed revolutionary movement led by the CPP and the legal forces of the national democratic movement encompassed by BAYAN were the most consistent, most important and most effective in arousing, organizing and mobilizing the people. The US and the most rabid pro-US reactionaries started to do their best to fight the dictatorship only in 1983, after the Aquino assassination. It can be said that in the short haul the contradictory forces of the national democratic movement, the US, the Catholic church hierarchy and the anti-Marcos reactionaries converged to overthrow Marcos.

It is true that so far the Aquino family and its associates (like Ramos and Macapagal-Arroyo) have benefited most from the overthrow of Marcos in terms of acquiring reactionary political power and accumulating wealth. But this does not give the hangers-on and propagandists of the Aquino regime the license to claim that the forces of the national democratic movement were nowhere in the struggle to overthrow Marcos. The revolutionary movement led by the CPP greatly benefited from the process of overthrowing the Marcos dictatorship but the gain it made was neither for getting a share of reactionary power nor jockeying for some posts in the reactionary government but for accumulating strength for the overthrow of the entire ruling system.

IV. Consequences up to the present

The people's struggle to overthrow the Marcos fascist dictatorship was not strong enough to overthrow the entire ruling system of big compradors and landlords. Thus, the brazen fascist dictatorship has been succeeded by a series of anti-national and pseudo-democratic and antidemocratic regimes. They are essentially similar to the Marcos regime in terms of puppetry to the US, exploitative class character, corruption and brutality against the people. The only obvious difference of these post-Marcos regimes from the Marcos fascist regime is the fact that they have carried out state terrorism without having to proclaim martial law.

It is of crucial importance to the anti-Marcos reactionaries, especially the Cojuangco-Aquino big comprador-landlords, their allies and their propagandists, to deny the role of the revolutionary movement in the overthrow of the Marcos fascist dictatorship and to claim more than their share in the process in order to misrepresent themselves as the saviors of the people and as champions of democracy and continue the counterrevolutionary role of Marcos in trying to destroy the revolutionary movement of the people for national liberation and democracy.

When the Cory Aquino regime was still consolidating its power against the Marcos, Enrile and other reactionary cliques, it offered ceasefire negotiations to the CPP, NPA and NDF and signed a ceasefire agreement. But it cast away the ceasefire agreement and "unsheathed the sword of war" after the Mendiola massacre of peasants and their urban supporters in 1987. It followed the US-dictated neoliberal economic policy and prated much about trade liberalization. It carried out a series of strategic military campaign plans in a vain attempt to destroy the revolutionary movement. After some years, when it was faced with further coup threats in 1989, it offered to engage the revolutionary forces in peace negotiations.

The US skilfully prepared and made Ramos the president in order to realize the "Armacost formula" and patch up the splits that had occurred in the reactionary armed forces before and after the overthrow of Marcos. Ramos amnestied the anti-Aquino military mutineers and the political prisoners in a show of dealing evenly with the Right and the Left. In its full course the Ramos regime used the two-handed policy of military force and peace negotiations. It went full-blast in carrying out the neoliberal economic policy to the great detriment of the Filipino people.

The armed revolutionary movement slackened in the first half of the 1990s, not because of the peace negotiations or effectiveness of enemy military campaigns but because of major errors in the revolutionary movement since the 1980s and the need to rectify these and revitalize the CPP and other revolutionary forces through the Second Great Rectification Movement. In the second half of the 1990s, the NPA was carrying out and winning more tactical offensives on a nationwide scale. The neoliberal economic policy of Ramos was thoroughly discredited when the "Asian financial crisis" of 1998 struck the Philippines hard.

Estrada succeeded Ramos and continued the policy of repression, going to the extent of terminating the peace

negotiations with the NDFP and waging a costly and disastrous “all-out war” against the MILF, with adverse effects on the economy. His regime was in the backwash of the global and domestic economic crisis wrought by neoliberal economic policy. Estrada could not conceal his direct culpability for corruption as he took cash from jueteng and raided the social security funds for shady deals. As in the overthrow of Marcos, the national democratic movement employed the broad united front to isolate Estrada, call for his ouster, and to actually oust him through a people’s uprising. His term of office was cut short as he was compelled to resign by tens of thousands of youth massing at the gates of the presidential palace at the decisive moment.

The US-Arroyo regime ran for 10 years, exceeding the ousted regime in puppetry, rapacity, corruption and brutality. The policy of the broad united front succeeded in isolating Arroyo but failed to oust her from power. Upon the prompting of the US and the Vatican, the reactionary classes, their major institutions (schools, churches and mass media) and the pro-Arroyo and anti-Arroyo reactionary politicians spread the line that the people had been stricken by protest fatigue and that the best way to achieve regime change was through elections.

In fact they were frightened that the revolutionary movement could further gain strength from the extra-constitutional process of ousting one regime after another thorough mass uprisings, even if unarmed. The forces of the national democratic movement was not able to exercise independence and initiative in order to enlarge their own protest mass actions aside from those with the participation of reactionary allies and did not overcome the repeated tactics of the anti-Arroyo reactionary allies to keep the focal mass protest actions in Ayala, Makati as well as the regime’s consistent tactics of harassing, delaying and disrupting lakbayans and intra-city marches. Arroyo was able to prevent sizable rallies of students at the university belt and marches converging on and occupying the vicinity of the presidential palace.

The current Aquino regime is good at capitalizing on the ritualistic celebration of people power (like manpower or horsepower, not people’s power) insofar as it brought down Marcos and brought to power the reactionary Aquino faction of the exploiting classes. In addition, the current Aquino regime is good at pretending to denounce the corruption and human rights violations under the Arroyo regime. But corruption remains rampant at all levels of the reactionary government. The Aquino regime has condoned and supported the gross and systematic human rights violations under the Arroyo regime. And it is now culpable for the escalation of such human rights violations.

Under the US-designed Oplan Bayanihan, Aquino deceptively calls military operations “peace and development operations” and emboldens the military, police and paramilitary forces to carry out enforced disappearances, illegal detention, torture, extrajudicial killings and the forced eviction of entire communities for the benefit of mining, logging and plantation companies. He is obsessed with seeking to destroy the revolutionary movement by military force and has gone so far as to paralyze the peace negotiations between his government and the NDFP.

The exploitative and violent character of the post-Marcos regimes from Cory to Noyoy Aquino clearly shows that no social revolution occurred in 1986. The Marcos fascist dictatorship which arose in 1972 did not result in a new society different from the semicolonial and feudal system of big compradors and landlords. Neither did the fall of such dictatorship in 1986 result in the national and social liberation of the Filipino people. The perseverance of the revolutionary movement remains valid and just against the persistence of the reactionary ruling system under US hegemony.

The revolutionary struggle is bound to strengthen and grow as the Aquino regime shamelessly collaborates with the US and in return benefits from the recently announced US strategic balance shift to Asia-Pacific region. This is meant to tighten US hegemony over the region. It entails the increased military presence and interventionism of the US, aggravation of political and economic domination, and intensified exploitation and oppression of the Filipino people.

As the crisis of the world capitalist system and the ruling system worsens, the reactionaries continue to engage in a bitter struggle for power and bureaucratic loot among themselves. As the Filipino people suffer more exploitation and oppression, more poverty and misery, they are driven to intensify and advance their revolutionary struggle for national liberation, democracy, development through national industrialization and genuine land reform, social justice and world peace.

On the Commemoration of September 21

September 21, 2010

Ferdinand Marcos himself designated September 21, 1972 as the date for Presidential Proclamation 1081, declaring martial law. In previous days, he had set in motion the imposition of fascist dictatorship on the people, including the mobilization of his armed minions, the murder of a whistleblower in his own intelligence agency, the fake ambush on his defense secretary and the mass arrest of his opponents and critics.

More than a year before, he had staged the dress rehearsal for the declaration of martial law by proclaiming the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus on August 21, 1971 when without evidence he blamed the Communist Party of the Philippines and Benigno S. Aquino for the Plaza Miranda bombing immediately after it happened.

It is important to commemorate the declaration of martial law today in order to recall the 14-year long fascist dictatorship, the gross and systematic infliction of violence and suffering on the broad masses of the people and the steady growth of the resistance of the people and the revolutionary forces until there was a convergence of contradictory forces that effected the overthrow of the fascist dictator on February 25, 1986.

It is useful for the people to remember the fascist dictatorship not only because of the need to draw up consciousness and courage to prevent the rise to power of the junior of Ferdinand Marcos and his other political heirs but also more urgently to struggle against the manifest plan of the son of Benigno Aquino to beef up the military, use his power to enlarge the wealth of his family and cronies and seek to destroy the revolutionary movement of the people.

Irony of ironies! The son of the underdog and outstanding murder victim of the Marcos fascist regime is practically aping the fascist dictator. Mr. Benigno S. Aquino III has declared that the Philippine population has doubled since the last time that Marcos beefed up the military and that by implication, he must double the strength of the military.

Unmindful of the severe economic difficulties and bankruptcy of the reactionary government, he has begun to increase the budget of the military by 81 percent. He has also increased the budget of the DSWD by 123 percent only because it is going to be the chief partner of the military in so-called base-denial operations and forcing the evacuation of the people from their homes and land. A huge part of the national budget is for debt service. The budgets for education, health and other necessary social services have been reduced.

The Aquino regime is hellbent on following the US Counterinsurgency Guide and intends to use the US\$434 million windfall from the Millennium Challenge Corporation as complement of the peso budget for the military. It has continued Oplan Bantay Laya and the gross and systematic violations of human rights under the Arroyo regime. It has made its own five-year operational plan for one more futile scheme of atrocities to destroy the revolutionary movement. It has condoned the bloody crimes of the Arroyo regime and has kept hundreds of political prisoners, including the Morong 43. I

It looks like there is no end to the chain of rulers who serve US imperialism and the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords and who are exceedingly corrupt, brutal and mendacious. But let us remember that the New People's Army had only 300 automatic rifles when Marcos falsely claimed that it had 10,000 rifles in justifying the declaration of martial law in 1972. At the fall of Marcos in 1986, the NPA had grown to 6,000 automatic rifles and had gained a rural base of millions in all regions of the country, except the predominantly Moro provinces.

The armed revolutionary movement was a major force that caused the downfall of Marcos but it did not have enough armed strength yet in 1986 to overpower the reactionary state of big compradors and landlords. It is not true that the NPA had 25,000 high-powered weapons. Moreover, certain ultra-Left and Rightist opportunist currents were already undermining the armed revolutionary movement in most of the 1980s and up to 1991, resulting mainly in the loss of substantial parts of the revolutionary mass base in the rural areas.

But the Communist Party of the Philippines launched the Second Great Rectification Movement in 1992. Since then, according to publications of the CPP, the armed revolutionary movement has been revitalized and has grown in strength in an all-round way. However, it has not yet gained sufficient strength to overthrow the reactionary state or to compel the formation of a coalition government of national unity, democracy, social justice,

development and peace against US imperialism and the worst forms of reaction.

The CPP and the NPA have publicly announced that in the next years they will strive to advance from the stage of strategic defensive to that of strategic stalemate in the people's war. This course of probability is well-founded because of the growing strength of the subjective forces of the revolution and the rapid deterioration of the long-rotten ruling system of big compradors and landlords. As demonstrated in the 14-year long fascist dictatorship, the rule of open terror and unbridled greed can only drive the broad masses of the people to the road of armed revolution.

The revolutionary forces and the people can be expected to grow in strength through people's war if Benigno Aquino III should choose to rule like Marcos or even like his mother, trying in vain to use military force to defeat the revolutionary forces and the people, instead of availing of the peace negotiations with the National Democratic Front of the Philippines in order to address the roots of the civil war and lay the ground for a just and lasting peace through basic social, economic and political reforms.

On the Declaration of Martial Law Forty Years Ago

September 19, 2012

Forty years ago, on September 21, 1972, then Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos signed General Order 1081, proclaiming martial law over the entire Philippines in order to prolong his rule. For fourteen years the Marcos fascist dictatorship, with the full backing of US imperialism, inflicted terrible hardships and suffering on the Filipino people. But the Filipino people, with the support of freedom-loving peoples all over the world, valiantly struggled against the dictatorship until it was overthrown through a people's uprising in 1986.

The International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS) hails the determination and heroism of the Filipino people in fighting and eventually overthrowing the Marcos fascist dictatorship, and commends the international solidarity of the peoples of other countries with the Filipino people in their struggle for national independence and democracy.

Even before Marcos proclaimed martial law in 1972, revolutionary forces in the Philippines had been waging the new democratic revolution through people's war against the US-directed Marcos regime. Revolutionary armed struggle was integrated with agrarian reform and rural mass base building. Organs of political power were established on the basis of the worker-peasant alliance and the mass organizations of workers, peasants, women, youth, children and cultural activists were formed.

Since the early 1960s, the legal movement of patriotic and progressive forces had developed, followed by the revolutionary armed struggle which started in 1969. The proclamation of martial rule in 1972 temporarily stymied the legal democratic movement, but radically strengthened the underground and the armed struggle as many of the legal forces went underground and to the countryside to wage people's war.

Fourteen years of brute fascist dictatorship failed to crush the revolutionary forces. Instead, they grew deep roots among the masses throughout the country, and gained strength by advancing the antifascist, anti-imperialist and antifeudal line. The Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army, the National Democratic Front of the Philippines and other revolutionary forces distinguished themselves in the struggle against the US-Marcos dictatorship even as they paid a heavy price for their victories with daily hard work, militant struggle and bitter sacrifices.

The Bangsa Moro led by the Moro National Liberation Front also waged armed struggle against the Marcos dictatorship and pinned down a large component of the reactionary armed forces in Mindanao. Thus, the armed struggles of the Filipino people and Bangsa Moro against a common enemy objectively helped each other, even in the absence of a formal alliance. The Moro Islamic Liberation Front arose to continue the armed struggle after the MNLF signed the Tripoli Agreement with the Manila government in 1976.

The Filipino revolutionaries sought and quickly gained international support from democratic and anti-imperialist forces all over the world. This led to the isolation of the US-Marcos regime not only in the Philippines but also internationally, amidst the growing crisis of global capitalism and that of the local semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system.

US imperialism supported the Marcos fascist dictatorship for so long as it remained more of an asset than a liability to US economic, political and military interests. But by 1982, the US had known that Marcos was hopelessly isolated and hated by the people for his extreme brutality and corruption; that he had become seriously ill, with the line of succession unclear and risky; and that the revolutionary movement could benefit from the tenuous situation. Thus, the US arranged for his eventual replacement by his arch-rival Aquino. The continuing advance of the armed revolutionary movement led by the CPP was a key and compelling factor for the US decision to ease Marcos out of power.

The assassination of Aquino in 1983 upon his return to Manila triggered an anti-fascist upsurge. The armed revolutionary movement in the countryside and the legal national democratic forces in the cities played crucial roles in bringing about the overthrow of the Marcos dictatorship in 1986. It is clear that in the struggle against the Marcos regime from 1969 to 1986 the armed revolutionary movement led by the CPP and the legal forces of the national democratic movement were the most consistent, most important and most effective in arousing, organizing and mobilizing the people.

The overthrow of the Marcos fascist dictatorship did not result in the overthrow of the entire ruling system. The succeeding anti-national and pseudo-democratic and antidemocratic regimes have been essentially similar to the Marcos regime in terms of puppetry to US imperialism, exploitative class character, corruption and brutality against the people. The only obvious difference of these post-Marcos regimes from the Marcos fascist regime is their carrying out state terrorism without having to proclaim martial law.

The current Aquino regime unabashedly continues the implementation of the neoliberal economic policy that has intensified US imperialism's extraction of superprofits from the blood and sweat of the Filipino toiling masses. It shamelessly lauds and collaborates with the US-announced US strategic balance shift to Asia-Pacific region which is meant to tighten US hegemony over the region. The Aquino regime seeks to benefit from the increased military presence and interventionism of the US, aggravation of political and economic domination, and intensified exploitation and oppression of the Filipino people.

The ILPS joins all democratic and anti-imperialist forces in supporting the Filipino people's continuing revolutionary struggle for national freedom and democracy. As the crisis of the world capitalist system and the ruling system worsens, the reactionaries continue to engage in a bitter struggle for power and bureaucratic loot among themselves. As the Filipino people suffer more exploitation and oppression, more poverty and misery, they are driven to intensify and advance their revolutionary struggle for national liberation, democracy, development through national industrialization and genuine land reform, social justice and world peace.

On Ferdinand Marcos

Interview by Korean Government Scholarship Grantee Christine Mae F. Sarito for her Master of Arts Thesis at the
Department of History, Graduate School of Sogang University
Circa end of May 2013

1. What is your memory of former President Ferdinand Marcos, his family, and his regime?

JMS: I remember him very well because we came from the same region. I came from Ilocos Sur and he came from Ilocos Norte, where I have close relatives. The mother of Marcos, Josefa Edralin, came from a small landowning family. The father Mariano Marcos came from a rich peasant family, who became an agriculture school graduate before he studied law and became a lawyer.

He ran unsuccessfully for congressman against Julio Nalundasan. The latter celebrated his victory by parading a mock black coffin with the name of Marcos painted on it in white. For this, he would be assassinated allegedly by the son Ferdinand Marcos, using a rifle from the UP rifle team in which he was a member. Ferdinand was convicted for the crime by the Court of First Instance but was absolved by the Supreme Court.

Mariano Marcos became the Northern Luzon chief propaganda officer of the Japanese Occupation during World War II. For this reason, he was captured and executed by Filipino guerrillas near San Fernando, La Union. My uncle was the medical officer of the guerrilla unit. But the son President Marcos would celebrate him as a hero and put up a shrine in his honor in La Union.

Ferdinand Marcos fought in Bataan under the USAFFE. He was part of the surrender to Japan and was in the forced march from Bataan to Capas Tarlac. After he was released from detention by puppet president Jose Laurel, who as Supreme Court justice had also argued for his release in the Nalundasan murder case, Marcos acted as a double agent for Japan and the US. His so-called medals from the US would be exposed as fake by the research of Bonifacio Gillego in US archives.

Now, regarding my memory of the Marcos regime, I can state briefly that Marcos was subservient to US imperialism in economic, political, military and cultural terms. He was representative of the worst elements of the ruling classes of big compradors and landlords. He was corrupt, wantonly using public funds and foreign loans to undertake costly graft-ridden infrastructure projects. He was brutally antidemocratic and carried out physical attacks against the protest rallies and strikes of the youth and workers in the urban areas and against the peasant movement in the countryside even before he declared martial law in 1972. He committed far worse crimes against the people after imposing a fascist dictatorship on the people.

You can look up my books and articles against the Marcos regime from the 1960s onwards if you wish to know more how I regarded the Marcos regime.

2. What is your memory of the political and social climate in the Philippines during the following events: a. when Marcos was first elected to presidential office in 1965;

JMS: When Marcos was first elected president in 1965, the chronic crisis of the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system was sharpening. The youth organization Kabataang Makabayan and the Workers' Party were leading mass actions against the US and the Marcos regime.

b. Marcos' re-election in 1969;

JMS: Marcos was notorious for overspending public funds to get himself reelected. He was denounced for it by his political rivals within the ruling system. The workers, peasants and youth opposed the rising costs of living and the involvement of the regime in the US war of aggression against Vietnam and the whole of Indochina. The Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army had been founded in 1968 and early 1969, respectively.

c. when Marcos declared martial law in 1972;

JMS: Marcos was hated by the people for declaring martial law in 1972 and for having used barbaric attacks like the Plaza Miranda grenade blasts in 1971, the assaults on mass demonstrations and massacres in the country and blaming the victims in order to prepare martial law. He was seen as using martial law to suppress the legal opposition and the people in order to monopolize political power and amass wealth without any restraint.

d. when Marcos lifted martial law in 1981;

JMS: Marcos was denounced as engaging in a mere face lift or cosmetic act to prettify the continuing open rule of terror and thievery by the Marcos family and cronies.

e. the assassination of Ninoy in 1983;

JMS: The assassination of Aquino outraged the people and led to the upsurge of the mass movement nationwide in both urban and rural areas. It was the beginning of the end for the Marcos rule.

f. the February 7, 1986 Snap Elections;

JMS: The broad masses of the people assumed that the elections were rigged by Marcos. The electoral victory of Marcos only served to further enrage the people and even the Catholic bishops. Cory Aquino called for continuing non-violent resistance or civil disobedience. The CPP called for the overthrow of the Marcos fascist regime. In a pastoral letter, the Catholic bishops denounced the regime as being immoral and illegitimate.

g. and the 1996 EDSA Revolution

JMS: The organized forces of the national democratic movement were the hard core of the EDSA uprising against Marcos and provided the majority of the people in front of the presidential palace and all the big mass meeting in cities and municipalities throughout the Philippines. But the balance of forces still allowed the US, the Catholic Church and the anti-Marcos sections of the exploiting classes to make Aquino the presidential successor of Marcos.

3. What is your memory of Marcos' responses to the groups opposing his regime, especially his responses to the Communist Party of the Philippines?

JMS: Marcos maintained a brutal policy against the CPP and all other patriotic and progressive forces. He scapegoated them for his own criminal acts in order to justify martial law and the fascist dictatorship. The brutal policy of Marcos included forced disappearances, abductions, illegal detention, torture, selective murders, massacres and forced mass evacuations the people with the use of aerial bombs, artillery fire, bazooka and machine-gun fire.

4. What is your opinion of the Marcos family's desire to bury the remains of former Pres. Marcos in the Libingan ng mga Bayani?

JMS: You know that not all of those who are buried in the Libingan ng mga Bayani are heroes of the people. Many of them are traitors and oppressors of the people. But Marcos is the worst of the worst. And I agree with the people that Marcos should not at all be given any semblance of honor by being buried in the Libingan ng mga Bayani. He deserves to be buried in his hometown cemetery or in the yard of his house.

5. What is your opinion of the museum displays in the Ferdinand Marcos Presidential Center?

JMS: I have not been there. Thus, I cannot describe anything there in detail. But I can say in general that the museum is definitely in honor of a traitor, a tyrant and a thief of gargantuan proportions. You have the freedom to travel and find out whether the fake medals, the ghostwritten works and the list of ill-gotten wealth of Marcos are there.

6. How should Filipinos and the world remember Ferdinand Marcos?

JMS: As I have already said, he should be remembered as a traitor, tyrant and thief of gargantuan proportions. He was the most brutal and greediest, as puppet of US imperialism and as bureaucratic chief of the exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords in the Philippines. Unlike Park Chung Hee, who played a role in the industrialization of South Korea, Marcos deepened and aggravated the agrarian, preindustrial and semifeudal character of the Philippine economy and made the Philippines the basket case of Asia.

A View of the Fall of Marcos from Inside and Outside Prison

Contribution to Remembering/Rethinking EDSA Anthology 2014

Circa September 2014

I did my best possible recollection and evaluation of the fall of Marcos when I answered at length the questions posed to me by the German scholar and journalist Dr. Rainer Werning in 1987-88, when we composed Chapter 6 Marcos' Fall: Aquino's Rise in The Philippine Revolution: The Leader's View.

There is nothing better than to rely on the fresh memory of events, factors and considerations related to the fall of the Marcos fascist dictatorship. I therefore base myself on the aforesaid chapter in making this article.

Sealing the doom of the Marcos dictatorship

In 1979 international credit under the auspices of the IMF and the World Bank started to tighten for the Philippines and the third world. As a result, the state corporations and the crony corporations—all big comprador enterprises—start to collapse in 1981. More and more groups of big compradors and landlords began to openly criticize Marcos and his cronies who were the only ones bailing themselves out of the crisis with the financial resources of the state.

The fascist regime had difficulties providing funds for the over-expanded military establishment. It had also failed to suppress the armed revolutionary movement. Instead, it succeeded in causing its accelerated growth in strength. The legal democratic movement had by then started to make conspicuous advances in the form of new militant mass organizations, increasing indoor and outdoor rallies and workers' strikes.

In 1983 Benigno Aquino Jr., who had been in exile in the United States since his 1980 release from prison upon the intercession of the US government, thought it was time for him to return home and seize the political initiative from a Marcos whom he believed to be extremely sick from lupus erythematosus. He decided to fly to the Philippines on August 21, 1983. The Marcos clique considered him an unbearable threat and decided to have him assassinated.

The Aquino assassination proved to be the biggest political mistake of the regime. The outrage over it unlined the long pent-up hatred of the broad masses of the people and resulted in unprecedentedly huge mass actions in urban areas and further intensification of the armed struggle from 1983 up to the fall of Marcos. At the core of the sustained revolutionary mass movement was the Communist Party of the Philippines.

The series of Marcos' mistakes, starting with the Aquino assassination, sealed the doom of the Marcos dictatorship. This doom was ensured by the aggravated and deepened socioeconomic crisis of the system which had become thoroughly exposed, as well as by the dramatic advances by the revolutionary mass movement, especially the armed revolutionary mass movement.

It was the revolutionary mass movement that had consistently and vigorously isolated and weakened the Marcos dictatorship over a long period of time. And it was fear of this revolutionary mass movement already making large strides that drove the United States and the majority of the big compradors and landlords, including the Catholic Church, to decide on preparing the way for Marcos' replacement in anticipation of the whitewash of the Aquino assassination.

I would say that at the end both the revolutionary forces and the anti-Marcos reactionary forces converged against the Marcos dictatorship. But if we single out the most decisive factor that brought about the fall of Marcos, we must point to the revolutionary mass movement led by the Communist Party of the Philippines, despite the rise of Corazon Aquino and her pro-imperialist and reactionary cohorts to government positions.

The balance of forces was such that the revolutionary movement could cause the downfall of Marcos but could not as yet seize political power or get a major share of power in a government headed by Aquino. Even then, the US and the anti-Marcos reactionaries were not able to coopt or destroy the revolutionary movement of the workers and peasants.

The biggest advantage gained by the revolutionary movement from the downfall of Marcos has been the aggravation of the violent contradictions among the reactionary factions. The increased tendency of the ruling system to disintegrate is beneficial to the growth of the revolutionary forces.

Role of the US in toppling Marcos

Soon after the assassination of Aquino, the US State Department steadily took the stand of easing Marcos out and pushed the line that he would have to institute reforms or face serious consequences. US pressures were made through threats of withholding bilateral economic and military assistance funds and freezing of requests for loans and loan rescheduling.

Close to the return of Aquino, US Representative Stephen Solarz and US assistant secretary of state for East Asia and Pacific affairs Paul Wolfowitz had advised Marcos to allow Aquino to return and not to harm him. US state secretary George Shultz took the assassination as an affront to the US government. As has been revealed in Raymond Bonner's *Waltzing with a Dictator*, Shultz encouraged Michael Armacost, Stephen Bosworth, Wolfowitz, Morton Abramowitz and John Maisto to advocate the ouster of Marcos. The general feeling of outrage in the US Congress helped the US State Department in pushing for the ouster.

As the mass movement surged forward in an unprecedented way from 1983 to 1986, surpassing the mass movement in the early 1970s, the US State Department became more convinced that Marcos had to go. There was the growing fear that should Marcos stay in power until the end of his term in 1987, the armed struggle and the united front would advance so greatly that the entire ruling system would be gravely jeopardized or at the very least the situation would become too difficult for the United States to manage.

It was the Pentagon that at first opposed the view of the US state department with the argument that if Marcos were to be removed before the end of his term in 1987 a split within the AFP would have to be made in order to break Marcos' grip on it. The split was at first considered too high a cost to pay.

But even within the Pentagon, assistant secretary of defense for international security affairs Richard Armitage and his deputy James Kelly issued, as early as September 1984, identical papers stimulating elements in the AFP that were opposed to chief of staff and Marcos henchman Fabian Ver. They were in effect accusing Marcos and Ver of mismanaging military affairs and impressing upon Marcos that he could no longer use the US bases as a bargaining chip. Admiral William J. Crowe, commander-in-chief of the Pacific Area Command, also derided the mess in the AFP and warned against the growing armed revolutionary movement.

In November 1984 the National Security Study Directive (NSSD) signified that there was already a US inter-agency consensus for weakening the position of Marcos through a demand for "reforms" and for easing him out. But there was the misleading diplomatic language about Marcos not being the target of removal and destabilization and his being a part both of the problem and the solution. In January 1985 Reagan signed the NSSD to become the National Security Decision Directive (NSDD).

The Pentagon encouraged the formation of the Reform the AFP Movement (RAM), which was openly launched in March 1985, with the covert support of defense minister Juan Ponce Enrile and AFP vice chief of staff Fidel V. Ramos. CIA director William Casey saw Marcos in May 1985 to propose a snap presidential election. It was obvious that at the level of the National Security Council, the plan was to ease or kick Marcos out before 1987 and preempt further public outrage at the anticipated whitewash of the Aquino assassination.

The formation of the RAM in early 1985 and the snap presidential election in 1986 worked as complementary devices against Marcos. Reagan appeared to vacillate on Marcos despite the interagency consensus until the chips were falling down and Philip Habib gave him the final explanation. At any rate, it was Reagan's confidant and shield Senator Paul Laxalt who had succeeded in putting Marcos into the snap election trap in November 1985 and who would advise him to "cut and cut cleanly" in the end.

To effect the military stalemate between the Marcos-Ver and Enrile-Ramos camps, Ambassador Bosworth, the US military attache and the CIA station chief picked General Rafael Ileto as the mediator between the two camps. It was Bosworth who would make sure that Marcos did not give the final order to fire artillery at Camp Crame from the University of Life campus and who would arrange the exit of Marcos. He would also be the first to greet Corazon Aquino as Madame President.

The United States had a great deal to do with the toppling of Marcos. So did the mass organizations of the national democratic movement and other anti-fascist forces among the broad masses of the people. Contradictory forces that had different motivations and objectives converged against the Marcos fascist regime.

Contribution to the fall of Marcos

Even while I was in prison, I did my bit in hitting hard at Washington for propping up the Marcos regime. In several interviews I repeatedly pointed out that Marcos would bring down the entire ruling system with him should he be allowed to stay in power up to or beyond 1987 and I demanded that the US and local reactionaries

had better drop a hot potato like Marcos.

But I estimated that even if Marcos had been removed and Aquino had assumed power, US imperialism and the exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords would persist and the crisis of the ruling system would continue to worsen and the armed revolutionary movement would continue to forge ahead.

After Julie was put on temporary release as a nursing mother on March 30, 1982, almost four months after she gave birth to our fourth child, Jasm, in December 1981, I gained more immediate and extensive access to the forces of the national democratic movement and all other forces in the broad antifascist movement. My opinions and suggestions were sought by these forces through my wife as well as through defense lawyers in the cases against me.

It was also in 1982 that I would be allowed by the military commissions to move more freely in the hearing room during hearings. I could talk with my friends as well as with journalists who came for the hearings. There were now more ways for me to know what was going on in the outside world and to send out articles and prearranged written interviews with local and foreign journalists.

Julie was in the best position to help me because she could visit me in prison every week and was active in the human rights movement. She was a consultant of the Task Force Detainees of the Philippines. And she became a national council member of the Nationalist Alliance for Justice, Freedom and Democracy (NAJFD) headed by the eminent anti-imperialist and civil libertarian Lorenzo M. Tanada. This was the biggest legal alliance of national democratic forces before the formation of Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (BAYAN—New Patriotic Alliance).

It was principally through her that I often got invited as guest speaker in absentia to important meetings of various organizations. She delivered the speeches on my behalf. It was also through her that I received questions from journalists and dispatched the answers.

On Sunday, August 21, 1983, when Benigno Aquino Jr. was assassinated, Julie happened to be visiting me in prison. We learned about the assassination over the radio and I told her that Marcos had made his biggest political mistake so far. I communicated right away with forces of the national democratic movement and other antifascist forces, including relatives and friends of Aquino.

I did my bit to help push the mobilization of the people. I urged the organized basic forces of the national democratic movement to unite all antifascist forces more closely than ever and serve as the hard core of the emergent spontaneous rising of the masses ignited by the Aquino assassination. The spontaneous masses outraged by the assassination were huge at the wake and funeral of Aquino. But the organized forces of the conservative opposition were far smaller and weaker than those of the progressive forces.

The organized forces of the national democratic movement were the largest of the antifascist forces and could become larger by being able to lead the masses who were spontaneously rising. I urged the revolutionary leadership to hasten the building of urban-based progressive mass organizations and urban community organizations that had been adversely affected by the boycott-participation dispute in 1978.

Broad united front against the Marcos dictatorship

Justice for Aquino, Justice for All (JAJA) became the unifying slogan as well as the name of the broad organization binding all antifascist forces. I wrote an article under a pen name to urge the progressive forces to pick up the issue of the Aquino assassination, condemn US support for the fascist dictatorship, cause the downfall of the regime, and strengthen the revolutionary movement in the process.

JAJA was somewhat loose. The human rights groups and other progressive urban petty bourgeois groups held it together. Subsequently, I proposed the expansion and consolidation of the antifascist forces to include the organizations of the basic toiling masses and drafted a plan for a proposed Congress for the Restoration of Democracy, which would eventually become the Coalition for the Realization of Democracy (CORD) in 1984.

Acting on a proposal I made in a national news weekly for the formation of a broad alliance to include even representatives of anti-Marcos conservative forces, Agapito "Butz" Aquino took the initiative in organizing the Kongreso ng Mamamayang Pilipino (Kompil—Congress of the Filipino People) in January 1984 and invited the progressive forces to send delegates and myself to send a major address to the founding congress.

I made a long address detailing how the broadest antifascist alliance could be forged to topple the dictator and Julie read the address for me at the founding congress. I was elected in absentia as one of the fifteen national council members of Kompil, each of whom was rated capable of replacing Marcos as president of the Philippines.

Kompil was short-lived because the coalition of forces was not sufficiently prepared in advance. There was a

predominance of anti-Marcos conservative leaders from the upper classes. However, Kompil served to stress that a wide range of forces was converging against the fascist dictatorship as a narrow target. The CORD became a more viable organization because of the enthusiastic participation of the progressive organizations of the basic masses and the middle social strata.

As a result of the Aquino assassination, the fascist dictatorship became thoroughly isolated. Marcos could not afford to have another person killed so soon. Aware of my increasing advantages, I issued public statements and gave interviews condemning the Marcos dictatorship not only for the Aquino assassination but the entire range of its crimes against the people—its puppetry to the United States, mendacity, corruption and brutality.

Although CORD was succeeding as a united front organization, various forces felt it was not broad enough and they continued to take interest in my proposal for a still broader united front. I continued to make as many detailed suggestions as I could. Thus, the idea of forming Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (BAYAN) continued to be pushed until its eventual formation in 1985.

I was able to concentrate on details of the surging mass movement and get the facts on the developing positions of the various revolutionary and counterrevolutionary forces, including the various US agencies, the reactionary political factions, the business groups, the military, and the Catholic Church. I was so focused on the process of putting Marcos out of power from 1983 to 1986 that I could tell his end had come as soon as I heard over the radio that the Enrile-Ramos tandem and the Reform the AFP Movement (RAM) were in mutiny on February 22, 1986.

Discordance in anti-fascist united front

The United States had its information assets and political operatives among the Filipino reactionaries. Most prominent among these were members of the Manindigan! (Take a stand!), a group of top executives in US firms, and the pro-US and clericalist right-wingers of the so-called social democrats, who sought in vain to use the progressive forces as their footstool, to undercut them in the long run and ultimately disrupt unity in the broad antifascist united front.

These elements had advance notice from Washington and the US embassy that there was already a consensus among US agencies as early as November 1984 for loosening Marcos' grip on the state, especially on the military, under the guise of demanding reforms; and for easing Marcos out of power, or for kicking him out, if easing him out became impossible.

The pro-US elements worked feverishly to prepare for presidential elections and in December 1984 succeeded in creating the convenor group, which cleverly placed Mrs. Corazon C. Aquino between two other chief convenors—Nationalist Alliance chairman Lorenzo M. Tanada and big businessman Jaime Ongpin; and raised her to pre-eminence over other presidential hopefuls.

When BAYAN was being organized in May 1985, with the full participation and support of the progressive forces, these pro-US elements wanted to have a disproportionately large share of the organs of leadership and take control of BAYAN. Failing to grab BAYAN, they bolted out and formed BANDILA—a very small group. But they were also able to mislead and carry away two small influential human rights groups of lawyers, the Free Legal Assistance Group (FLAG) and the Movement of Attorneys for Brotherhood, Integrity, Nationalism and Independence (MABINI).

KAACBAY, a small urban petty bourgeois group, could have been easily integrated into BAYAN but chose to set as a precondition for joining BAYAN the satisfaction of the demands of those who were already determined to form BANDILA and stay away from BAYAN. The August Twenty-one Movement (ATOM) headed by Butz Aquino split, with the majority joining BAYAN. Not all the arguments went against BAYAN even among the well-to-do.

There were misunderstandings involving notions of “unified command” and “federation”, which were violative of the independence and initiative of component organizations in an alliance; confused categories of “national democrats,” “liberal democrats,” and “social democrats”; questions of proportion in the allocation of seats in the leading organs of BAYAN; and poor communication between caucuses and the mass of delegates and between national and regional delegates.

Had the pro-US elements in control of BANDILA gotten a large share of leadership seats in BAYAN in May 1985 and stayed on, they would have split BAYAN just the same and possibly carried away more BAYAN components in November 1985 after Mrs. Aquino, accompanied by her brother Jose “Peping” Cojuangco and her brother-in-law Agapito “Butz” Aquino, sealed their deal with the US.

They secretly met and pledged to former US undersecretary of state Richard Holbrooke, US ambassador Stephen Bosworth and Manila CIA station chief Norbert Garrett that she would keep out of her presidential campaign organization and her prospective cabinet suspected Communists and communist sympathizers so-called and that she would start to move away from her 1984 position calling for the dismantling of the US military bases.

From the time that Marcos announced the snap presidential election on November 3, 1985 to the day of the election on February 6, 1986, Corazon Aquino and BANDILA consistently refused to have any negotiations with BAYAN even as the latter overeagerly tried to negotiate with her, even through newspaper advertisements.

The inner group of the yellow organizations (pro-Aquino groups) wanted BAYAN to support the Aquino candidacy but at the same time wanted BAYAN to be merely looking in and applauding from the outside and without the benefit of any formal agreement on issues of mutual concern. US agents—both American and Filipino—were at the core of the Aquino electoral campaign.

BAYAN electoral boycott policy in 1986

The BAYAN leadership's boycott policy was a major tactical error for the short duration of the 1986 electoral campaign. The error separated the BAYAN mass following from the larger masses in the electoral campaign rallies of the opposition. But it must be recognized that BAYAN soon overcame that error by acting according to its consistent and correct view that Marcos would cheat in the snap election and by taking the lead in calling for a national strike movement to bring down the Marcos regime.

BAYAN was a major force in the people's uprising of February 22 to 25, 1986. The kind of loss that BAYAN incurred due to its boycott policy during the electoral campaign period was a mere loss of opportunity to increase its strength during the electoral campaign, a temporary separation from the huge electoral rallies against Marcos, and definitely not any permanent decrease of whatever strength it had already gained before the electoral campaign.

The boycott line in the snap election was different from the line of the national strike movement, which no longer separated the progressive organizations from the largest antifascist mass of people but instead, intensified the effort of the broad masses of the people to overthrow the fascist regime.

As a matter of fact, BAYAN was the largest of the antifascist organizations at the core of the February 22-25 people's uprising. At the fall of Marcos, BAYAN had more than 1,000 member-organizations with a total membership of one million people, a far cry from the 300 members of KAAKBAY and the less than 300 members of BANDILA. In six months after the fall of Marcos, BAYAN increased its membership to more than two million people.

A Metro Manila-centered event?

In the overthrow of Marcos, the most decisive and most dramatic mass actions were, of course, centered in Metro Manila. But there were mass uprisings organized and spearheaded mainly by BAYAN in provincial capitals, cities, and towns outside of Metro Manila. The most dramatic among these was the one in Angeles City, which blocked the tanks of General Palafox from Camp Aquino in Tarlac. The mass uprisings in the provinces served to neutralize and paralyze the civilian and military followers of Marcos.

If the imperialists and obscurantists were to be believed, the people's uprising was no more than that one on the EDSA, between Camp Aguinaldo and Camp Crame. And they invent the myth that the organizations of BAYAN were not present here despite the fact that they formed the bulk of the hard core of the uprising. Twenty percent of the mass uprising was hard core and 80 percent was spontaneous.

There can be no denying that more than 90 percent of the people who surrounded Malacanang Palace and the Malacanang Park came from the member-organizations of BAYAN, especially Kilusang Mayo Uno, League of Filipino Students, KADENA and so on. It was also more than 500 members of the Quezon City chapter of BAYAN who stormed Channel 4 (the government radio-TV station) at a crucial moment.

Such organizations as BANDILA, KAAKBAY, PDP-Laban, and UNIDO were very small in comparison to BAYAN. Their members made a tiny fraction of the hard core of the mass uprising even at the EDSA highway. Most of the spontaneous masses at the Edsa were brought in by the calls of Cardinal Sin and the broadcasts of the Catholic Radio Veritas,

Personal experience during the fall of Marcos

While the masses rose up for several days and nights, there were people who feared that the Marcos regime would order the execution of political prisoners. But I had no such fear. I estimated that the entire Marcos-Ver

camp was too busy minding the Enrile-Ramos camp, the growing people's uprising, and US dictates to even think of killing the political prisoners. I estimated that the Marcos-Ver camp would be afraid to kill political prisoners because to do so would complicate and aggravate its own situation.

I knew and was emboldened by the fact that the Marcos-Ver camp was increasingly isolated and desperate from hour to hour. The masses from the progressive organizations of BAYAN, especially Kilusang Mayo Uno, League of Filipino Students, KADENA, and others encircled and pressed upon the presidential palace. Marcos must have been terrified and could easily imagine that the masses would break through the ranks of his demoralized palace guards if he committed the outrage of killing political prisoners.

Moreover, a helicopter gunship of the Enrile-Ramos camp at one instance strafed the palace. Upon the advice of concerned friends, anti-Marcos elements in the military warned the pro-Marcos elements that they would not be able to escape responsibility if they harmed the political prisoners. The International Committee of the Red Cross and the human rights organizations like the Task Force Detainees of the Philippines also made appeals to Marcos about the safety of political prisoners.

Let me tell you more about what I did, thought and felt during those days. It was around ten o'clock in the evening of February 22 when I overheard the voice of Marcos from the television set in the cell adjoining mine. I thought it was unusual for Marcos to be on TV so late in the night. So I called out to my co-detainee viewing the TV to ask what Marcos was talking about. He shouted back that there was a coup attempt and that it had been foiled.

Immediately, I turned on my radio set and tuned in to Radio Veritas. I heard the agitated declarations of Enrile and understood that a critical event was still developing. In the space of less than a minute, I was happily calling out to my fellow detainee Alex Birondo in the adjoining cell, "Crisis! . . soon!"

From that time on, I was thrilled as I listened to the radio. I felt like I was on a ringside seat in an exciting boxing match. I could fully understand the developing situation. Enrile, Ramos and RAM were making a stand at the Ministry of National Defense administration building in Camp Aguinaldo. They were calling on the people to support them and bring food to them.

Cardinal Sin was calling on the people to protect his friends. Butz Aquino was asking the people to converge in front of a large department store along the EDSA highway near Camp Aguinaldo. General Ileto was acknowledged by Enrile as the mediator and arranger of a truce between the Enrile-Ramos camp and the Marcos-Ver camp. Mrs. Aquino was being contacted in Cebu City.

I did not sleep anymore. I listened to the radio through the night. At around four o'clock in the morning, a colonel and another officer came to ask why I was not yet asleep. I told them that Marcos was in a process of collapse, that General Ileto was the US-appointed pro-Aquino mediator between the two armed camps and that the Marcos-Ver camp would become impotent as the people would rise up and the troops would change sides.

I knew that General Josephus Ramas, the Philippine Army chief and commanding general of the Military Security Command, was a close adjutant of General Ver. But tongue-in-cheek I told the higher officer, Colonel Managbanag, to tell General Ramas to change sides because he was no match for General Ileto within the Philippine Army.

The two officers left and I continued listening to the radio. I went to sleep only at around noon and woke up after only two hours to resume monitoring the developing situation. Julie came late in the afternoon for her weekly visit. Before coming she went briefly to EDSA where the masses had converged to see things for herself.

The previous Sunday, February 15, I had told her both seriously and jokingly that I could be out of prison within a month because I had already heard over the radio the full text of the February 14 pastoral letter of the CBCP condemning the Marcos regime as illegitimate and immoral and based on fraud; and endorsing nonviolent protest. A former classmate of mine in high school, Bishop Teodoro Bacani, had pushed the pastoral letter successfully and was a militant in the mass uprising. This time I told Julie to stay with me up to Wednesday morning because I had a hunch that Marcos would fall before midweek.

I felt that my prediction was certain, especially after word came from Reagan threatening to cut off military aid if Marcos attacked the Enrile-Ramos camp. That was the clear public rejection of Marcos by his own foreign master at the highest level. At any rate, it was quite an exciting game calculating when Marcos would finally fall.

The conservative opposition leaders were predicting as late as Tuesday afternoon that Marcos would hold out in Malacanang Palace for a period ranging from one week to one month. Marcos flew out of the presidential

palace at 9:05 PM. or 21:05 Manila time on Tuesday. Over Radio DZRH, I heard the sound of helicopters in the background and I thought at that instant that Marcos, his family and close associates were already being flown out. It would only be some twenty minutes later at 9:25 PM. that the radio announcer started to speculate that it was Marcos who had flown out with his retinue. He confirmed the fact only at around 9:40 PM.

Mutual sense of gratitude between Aquino and myself

For specifically ordering my release when she became president, despite US and military pressures on her not to do so, I expressed gratitude to Mrs. Aquino. But in the first place she was being grateful to the national democratic movement, including myself, for having closely cooperated with her in the struggle against the Marcos dictatorship. We actually thanked each other when we met at the penthouse of the Cojuangco building, where she was holding office, at the time of my release,

You must recognize that the organizations of the national democratic movement were the staunchest, most sizable and most solid antifascist organizations that had been the hard core of the unprecedented and sustained mass actions from 1983 to 1986. At the very least, everyone should recognize a reciprocal sense of gratitude between Aquino and myself. I did my bit in supporting her against Marcos. To support her, I did more than just the published interviews favorable to her even while I was in prison.

To gain the support and cooperation of the people in the struggle against her mortal enemy, she pledged to release all political prisoners. She made other pledges, of course. In my particular case, Aquino had actually no choice but to order my release. Otherwise, she would have validated the arbitrary rule of Marcos and the authority of the military commissions that had also persecuted her husband.

I could not be excluded from her pledge to release all political prisoners as well as from the effects of the repeal of certain fascist proclamations (Nos. 2045 and 2045A) and the restoration of the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus.

Mrs. Aquino neither amnestied nor pardoned me, contrary to some shallow news reporting. All the charges against me by the fascist dictatorship were automatically wiped out by the nullification of those proclamations and decrees which had been used to keep me in prison and violate my constitutional rights.

Basic character of the first Aquino regime

Since the beginning of the first Aquino regime, I had clearly described it as mainly and essentially a pro-US and reactionary government of the ruling classes of big compradors and landlords, with an axe to grind against the Marcos dictatorship and with a liberal democratic tendency through the bourgeois liberal and nationalist human rights lawyers in the cabinet.

In all my pronouncements, especially my lecture series entitled "Philippine Crisis and Revolution" at the Asian Center of the University of the Philippines soon after my release, I declared that the basic character of the Aquino regime was pro-imperialist and reactionary.

And the easiest way to try to prove this was to point to the fact that the key positions in the Aquino cabinet were in the hands of rabid pro-imperialist and reactionary elements. The defense ministry remained under Juan Ponce Enrile. The finance ministry and other economic agencies were given to such elements as Jimmy Ongpin, Jobo Fernandez and the like who were agents of the IMF and the World Bank and big business.

The human rights lawyers in the cabinet occupied secondary positions and were good only for restoring formal bourgeois democratic rights of the individual in the abstract and the check-and-balance system in a government still monopolized by the exploiting classes. Although accused by rabid anticommunists of being Communists and communist sympathizers, some of these human rights lawyers in the Aquino cabinet were at best bourgeois nationalists and liberals who were personally trusted by Mrs. Aquino because they had walked out from the BAYAN founding congress in May 1985.

I have always criticized the naive description of the Aquino regime as liberal democratic, a description made as if it were possible to foster liberal democracy on the basis of semicolonial and semifeudal conditions gravely deteriorated by economic bankruptcy and violent strife among the reactionaries themselves.

By the composition of the constitutional commission on May 23, 1986, it was clear that President Aquino was bent on making a pro-imperialist, big comprador-landlord constitution, embellished by provisions on civil and political rights of the individual in the abstract and on a system of check-and-balance of the three basic branches of government.

As her presidency unfolded, the full range of Aquino's submission to US demands became more evident: 1)

removal of the human rights lawyers from the cabinet; 2) fighting to extend the tenure of the US military bases beyond 1991; 3) more prompt compliance with policy dictates of the IMF and World Bank, including the wage squeeze, import liberalization, privatization, conversion of foreign debt to equity and so on; and 4) implementation of the Pentagon-designed "low-intensity" conflict (LIC) scheme.

The US-Aquino regime continued to deteriorate and expose itself. Oppression and exploitation of the people continued to worsen. The regime could not solve but could only aggravate the root problems of the people. The crisis of the system was ceaselessly worsening.

President Aquino touted herself as one "restoring" democracy in the Philippines. Indeed, she was for a while the opposite of the autocrat or fascist dictator that Marcos had been. But the fascists were very much within her regime, committing brutal crimes against the people at a rate higher than during the time of Marcos.

The United States wanted to carry out through puppet officers and men of the AFP more barbarities against the people under the facade of a "democratic" regime rather than under an out-and-out fascist regime. But the trend was still toward further fascization and, in response, more determined resistance by the people.

April 15, 2016

1. *Professor Sison, you witnessed the Marcos dictatorship and the implementation of Martial Law. Could you share with us what kind of government Ferdinand Marcos had? Why is it said that he was a dictator president from 1972 to 1986?*

JMS: I witnessed the Marcos dictatorship. And it was resisted by the Filipino people until its overthrow in 1986. Through martial law beginning in 1972, Marcos seized all governmental powers: executive, legislative and judicial, especially in trying his opponents through the military commissions. Thus, he became a dictator.

Those who ended up being tried by the military commissions were the lucky ones. Many were outrightly killed, (through extrajudicial killings) after being abducted, tortured and divested of property. Through dictatorship, nothing could prevent Marcos from killing people and directly stealing from the government's coffers through overpriced infrastructure projects etc.

2. *After 30 years, after the people's ouster of the Marcos family due to unprecedented plunder and human rights violations, we see the return of three leading members of the Marcos family—Imelda, Ferdinand Marcos' wife, as congresswoman of the 2nd District of Ilocos Norte; Imee, the elder daughter, as Governor of Ilocos Norte; and Bongbong or Ferdinand Jr., as senator and now vice-presidential candidate in the coming national elections. What is your take on this?*

JMS: It is the fault of the Aquinos and Cojuangcos why the Marcoses have been able to return to the country and run in elections since 1992. They are all part of the oligarchy. Even if they benefited from the uprising of the toiling masses against the dictatorship, what was most important to the Aquinos and Cojuangcos was to enrich themselves, and they also allowed the Marcoses to do so so long as they (the Aquinos and Cojuangcos) were the principal thieves.

Now that it has become clear that Aquino-Cojuangco rule reeks of corruption, Bongbong Marcos sees the opportunity to bring his family back to Malacanang. It is his ambition to become vice president first and become president in the next election. He thinks that the masses and the youth have forgotten the large-scale plunder and widespread violations of human rights perpetrated by his father. He also thinks that the people will disregard his criminal responsibility for hiding and using his father and mother's ill-gotten wealth.

3. *During Martial Law, many were killed, involuntarily disappeared, illegally arrested, had their houses burned, raped, massacred, had their livelihoods ruined and suffered many other human rights violations that up to now the Marcoses have not been held accountable for. Why do you think that after five successive presidents, none of them had decided to take the side of the victims of Martial Law repression?*

JMS: Those who became president, from Cory Aquino to Noyon Aquino, they all have the same class interest to exploit and oppress the Filipino people. They and the Marcoses are part of the oligarchy of big compradors, landlords and government plunderers. To maintain the system of exploitation, they enter into arrangements among themselves.

4. *Getting back to Bongbong Marcos. What do you think about his belief that his father did not commit any transgressions against the Filipino people? That he was "sorry" if his father did wrong anyone, and that the victims and survivors of Martial Law are only interested in being compensated with money.*

JMS: Bongbong Marcos is crazy in believing that his father did not do anything wrong. He insults his father's victims who won the human rights case against the Marcos estate in saying that all they are interested in is money. With such statements, he may even provoke the victims into punishing the Marcoses. Blasting Marcos' big bust along Kennon Road and the Aquino government's pretense of going after the Marcos loot certainly aren't enough.

Bongbong Marcos was complicit in his father's crimes because he continued to benefit from his father's ill-gotten wealth. He has a condescending view of the masses. He thinks that money is all it will take for him to win as vice president. He is spending a lot on TV infomercials and posting his propaganda materials in houses. It's true that elections under the oligarchy are all about money. It's a good thing that the revolutionary movement is gaining strength.

5. *What is your message to today's Filipino youth who were not able to see, smell, hear and feel the blows of Martial Law and believe in Bongbong Marcos' words?*

JMS: I call on the Filipino youth to study history carefully so they could understand why and how the systematic exploitation, oppression and suffering of the toiling masses persist. Revolutions and not elections are the means to end the continued rule of foreign monopoly capitalism, big compradors, landlords and corrupt government officials.

Reply to La Salle Students regarding the Memory of Martial Law and the Marcoses

August 7, 2016

We are Fourth Year Communication students of the University of St. La Salle in Bacolod City doing a thesis on social media and the failure of the institutions of remembering in relation to martial law and the Marcoses.

We have noticed that during the campaign period of the 2016 elections, there was an intensified effort to revise Philippine history in relation to Martial Law and the role of the Marcoses.

Our adviser, Mr. Julius Mariveles, former multimedia director of the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism, suggested that we seek you out as two of our key informants in our study. We hope that you would find time to answer our questions:

1. As one of those imprisoned by Marcos, how would you describe efforts by past and previous Philippine governments in seeking justice for you and other victims of Martial Law?

JMS: The Philippine government or administrations, from that of Cory Aquino to that of Noynoy Aquino, have been grossly and deliberately negligent in helping the victims of martial law seek justice. Close to 10,000 victims had to file the human rights case against the Marcos estate in the US judicial system in the absence of any determined effort to hold Marcos, his criminal accomplices and business cronies accountable for human rights violations and corruption.

The Cory Aquino regime was under US instruction to unify the oligarchy and make peace even with the Marcoses and other opponents of the late Ninoy Aquino in order to preserve the ruling system and fight the revolutionary movement led by the CPP. Thus, Imelda Marcos, Eduardo Cojuangco and big human rights violators and plunderers were able to return to the Philippines after a few years of exile. Imelda Marcos and Danding Cojuangco were allowed to run for the presidency in 1992.

Not a single military or police officer was punished for human rights violations. The Presidential Commission on Human Rights was inutile in this regard. Not a single member of the Marcos family or any business crony was held accountable for corruption. The Presidential Commission on Good Government was tasked to go after the ill-gotten wealth of Marcos but functioned mainly as an agency for compromises among the Marcos family, its business cronies and the corrupt officials of the commission under the Cory Aquino and succeeding administrations.

The Aquino family has been satisfied that Cory and Noynoy have become presidents and expanded their private wealth. Through Jose Cojuangco, the family compromised with Eduardo Cojuangco as early as 1989 and forgave him for being the biggest accomplice of Marcos in the murder of Benigno Aquino. Eduardo Cojuangco helped Noynoy become president with campaign funding and pre-programming of the Smartmatic automated system.

Enrile and Ramos, many of the military and police officers and business cronies shifted their loyalty from Marcos to Aquino. Thus, they would succeed in covering up their crimes of human rights violations and corruption and in preventing the educational system, the curricula, history book and other publications, the system of libraries and museums, the mass media and other means from keeping alive the memory of the fascist crimes under martial law.

2. Our findings based on analysis of content and reactions across all platforms of social media seem to indicate that the nation does not have a collective memory about martial law. What is your view on this?

JMS: The revolutionary forces like the CPP, NPA and NDFP and the legal patriotic and progressive forces have a strong collective memory of martial law and are responsible for the perpetuation of such memory in the advanced section of the masses. But indeed it is true that there is a weak and weakening memory of martial law in the backward and middle sections of the masses.

Such waning of memory about martial law has allowed Bongbong Marcos to become a top contender for the vice presidency in the 2016 elections. He spent heavily for the glorification of his father and contrasted the debt-driven and graft-ridden public works projects of Marcos senior with the corruption and deterioration of infrastructure under the regime of Noynoy Aquino. Duterte praised Ferdinand Marcos, Sr. as the country's most brilliant president and promised to bury him in the Libingan ng Bayani in order to court the pro-Marcos votes.

3. Our interview with teachers of public elementary schools in the city revealed that teaching martial law is not

included in the curriculum and would depend only on the initiative of the teacher. Your comment please.

JMS: Public school teachers have had to use the curricula and study materials made under the policies generated by foreign educational advisors from the US AID and World Bank and adopted by the highest puppet authorities to prettify the ruling system and obscure its rottenness, as exposed by the fascist crimes of Marcos and by the critique and struggles of the patriotic and progressive forces and the revolutionary forces.

The rulers from Cory Aquino to Noynoy Aquino have sought to obscure martial law and the fascist crimes of Marcos to perpetuate the presumption that they have solved the chronic crisis and problems of Philippine society that brought about the Marcos fascist dictatorship and also to obscure the continuing struggle of the revolutionary forces that contributed greatly to the weakening of the Marcos dictatorship and compelled the US government, the Catholic Church and most of the local oligarchs to get rid of Marcos.

4. Remembering, social scientists say, is a process of not forgetting. In your view, what are the institutions of remembering that are supposed to be responsible for this and did this fail or succeed?

JMS: The institutions of the government itself and its coercive apparatuses (especially the military and police), the educational and cultural system, the mass media of the oligarchy and the churches are responsible for understating, underplaying, even obliterating and misrepresenting the experience of martial law in a sustained but futile attempt to conjure the illusion of the stability of the ruling system and to dampen the continuing revolutionary struggle.

5. How does the revolutionary movement make sure that the lessons of martial law will not be forgotten?

JMS: The revolutionary movement must keep on growing in strength and encouraging the legal patriotic and democratic forces and the broad masses of the people to demand and pressure the aforementioned institutions to adopt and carry out the policy, programs and measures to keep alive the memory of martial law and propagate the lessons drawn from the exposure and condemnation of the fascist crimes and from the revolutionary mass struggles that caused the decline and downfall of the Marcos dictatorship.

Ten Major Reasons for Not Honoring Marcos as a Hero in any Manner

Reply to J.V. Ayson, November 16, 2016

1. The Filipino people cannot allow Ferdinand Marcos, the 14-year long fascist dictator, a traitor and a criminal of colossal proportions to be honored in any manner as a hero. They cannot forget and forgive his gross and systematic violation of human rights. He was culpable for the murder of at least 3,240 of his political opponents. He caused the torture of at least 34,000 and the illegal imprisonment of 70,000. He used his despotic power to enrich himself and his family. He incurred excessive foreign debt for overpriced infrastructure projects. He plundered public resources amounting to at least Php167 billion in pesos and at least USD 15 billion.

2. Marcos was definitively and categorically condemned by the Filipino people as a fascist dictator and was overthrown from the presidency through the sovereign revolutionary act of the people who stormed the presidential palace in 1986 and flooded Edsa to persuade the reactionary armed forces to withdraw support from him. Had he not been helicoptered out of his palace by his US imperialist master, he would have been immediately arrested and tried by the Filipino people or he would have been dealt with summarily like Mussolini upon the defeat of the fascists in Italy.

3. But even then, his thousands of victims of at least 9,500 sued him for human rights violations in the US judicial system. He was found criminally culpable for these human rights violations. The heirs of his estate are under obligation to indemnify the victims. The final US court decision is accepted by the Philippine government, which has taken responsibility for processing and distributing indemnification to victims from the erstwhile Swiss bank deposits of the plunderer Marcos.

4. In view of its recent decision to allow the remains of Marcos to be buried in the Libingan ng mga Bayani (LNMB), the current majority of the Supreme Court should be reminded that the 1973 Constitution which was used by Marcos to impose fascist dictatorship on the Filipino people was scrapped upon the downfall of Marcos and was replaced by the 1987 Constitution. This current Constitution carries explicit provisions regarding human rights and restraints on presidential powers by way of condemning and repudiating the colossal crimes of the Marcos fascist dictatorship. These were committed through unlimited concentration of executive, legislative and judicial powers in the hands of one person.

5. Since the fall of the Marcos dictatorship, the three branches of the Philippine government have always agreed that the Marcoses have engaged in the criminal plunder of public resources and that the ill-gotten wealth must be recovered. Investigations and court proceedings have been successfully undertaken to establish the criminal culpability of Marcos for plunder.

6. No less than the chief PDF-Laban party mates of President Duterte, the founder Aquilino Pimentel Sr. and Senate President Aquino Pimentel III demand that Marcos should not be honored as a hero and the victims of the Marcos dictatorship should not be made to suffer further injustice.

7. Many of those who are personally close to Duterte say that he should not betray the stand of his own late mother who stood up articulately and courageously against the Marcos dictatorship.

8. Marcos himself wanted to be buried beside his mother. Why submit to the political whim of his heirs to use the burial of his remains or display of his wax figure at LNMB as a means of revising history, covering up the monstrous crimes of Marcos and boosting the Marcos family's political stocks.

9. To bury the remains of Marcos in LNMB is a violation of the agreement of President Ramos and the Marcos family that said remains must be buried in Batac Ilocos Norte.

10. Too much public resources will be wasted to secure the remains of an arch traitor at LNMB from being blown up like the oversized bust of Marcos on the way to Baguio.

On the Struggle against the Marcos

Fascist Dictatorship

Questions by the Host Edna Becher, Anakbayan-Europa

September 20, 2020

1. Even before Marcos proclaimed martial law in 1972, revolutionary forces in the Philippines had been waging the national democratic revolution. How big was this movement before Martial law?

JMS: In the entire 1960s, the national democratic movement against US imperialism and the local reactionary classes of big compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists grew steadily among the student youth, workers and peasants through activities to arouse, organize and mobilize them.

The Student Cultural Association of the University of the Philippines (SCAUP) made the first major mass action in the struggle for national democracy when it led 5000 students on March 15, 1961 to scuttle the anticommunist hearings of the Committee on Anti-Filipino Activities of the Lower House of Congress. Those hearings had persecuted the faculty members and student activists of the UP for writing patriotic and progressive essays.

The leading activists of the SCAUP subsequently generated study groups and seminars to promote the national democratic line of resuming the Philippine revolution among the students, young workers, peasants and professionals. They established the Kabataang Makabayan as a comprehensive youth organization in 1964.

The KM gained national prominence as an articulator and militant force of the national democratic movement in 1964. It worked with student organizations, labor federations of Lapiang Manggagawa and the MASAKA led by Felixberto Olalia. It spearheaded demonstrations that peaked with 25,000 rallyists in 1965 against the treaties, agreements and arrangements that bound the Philippines as a semicolony to the US.

It also led the youth demonstration against the so-called Manila Summit in which US president Lyndon Johnson rounded up the Asian puppet government to join the US in its war of aggression against Vietnam. The demonstration was violently dispersed but the student demonstrators were inspired to launch the October 24th Movement for carrying out social investigation and recruiting the youth in urban and rural poor communities.

In 1967-68, the KM led nationwide student strikes against reactionary school owners and administrators; and built school chapters nationwide. In 1969, the KM cooperated with jeepney drivers to carry out transport strikes against rising oil prices.

In the meantime, the Communist Party of the Philippines was established under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism with only 12 delegates representing more than 80 full and candidate members. And it soon established the New People's Army on March 29, 1969 with only a few squads in Tarlac but with a mass base of some 80,000 people.

The First Quarter Storm (FQS) led by the KM broke out in 1970. From January to March, a series of mass protests surged, with 100,000 to 200,000 youth and workers joining each protest action. As a result, the national democratic mass organizations increased their membership by leaps and bounds.

The violent dispersal of the mass actions which resulted in the killing and injury of mass protesters only served to arouse popular outrage, inspire further mass actions, drove many activists to study revolutionary theory and practice and embolden many activists to join the CPP and NPA.

The mass protests continued despite the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus in 1971 until the declaration of martial law in 1972. Against the strident threats of Marcos to declare martial law, the mass protesters shouted people's war as the answer to martial law.

On the eve of the declaration of martial law, the KM had a membership of 15,000. The revolutionary trade unions reached a membership of at least 30,000 and the peasant mass base was at least 200,000 mainly in Tarlac, Pampanga, Ifugao, Cagayan, Isabela and Nueva Vizcaya provinces in 1972.

The CPP membership was approaching 2000 and the NPA had more than 300 Red fighters with automatic rifles, excluding the people's militia with inferior weapons. Marcos exaggerated the number of NPA fighters as 10,000 in his declaration of martial law.

2. Please tell us about the First Quarter Storm. What were the significant mass actions? What did it achieve?

JMS: Metro Manila was the center of the FQS of 1970 but the mass actions spread nationwide. As I have already said, they ranged in size from 100,000 to 200,000. The storm broke out when Marcos ordered the violent

dispersal of the students gathered before Congress after he delivered his state of the nation address on January 26, 1970.

The violent dispersal and the death and injury of the student demonstrators provoked further mass actions. The subsequent mass actions involved having assembly points in various parts of Metro Manila and then the demonstrators marched from those points, picking up more demonstrators and mass support along the way before converging on Congress, the presidential palace or the US embassy.

Following the violent dispersal of the rally before Congress on January 26, 1970, the KM mobilized 150,000 demonstrators to march to the presidential place on January 30. The presidential guards and Marines attacked the demonstrators and the demonstrators captured a fire truck to ram through the gate of the palace. A see-saw battle ensued at the Mendiola bridge, resulting in serious casualties on the side of the students and the reactionary side.

Marcos pleaded to the Movement or a Democratic Philippines (MDP) to stop the mass actions. But the KM decided that the mass movement must go on. The next demonstration in February gathered at Plaza Miranda in Quiapo, Manila and then proceeded to the US Embassy. The demonstrators broke into the gate of the embassy and vented their ire on the entire ground floor of the embassy.

The mass movement proceeded with major issues raised against US imperialism and the Marcos puppet regime. After the FQS, more demonstrations occurred on labor and land reform issues as well as on the US military bases and the US war of aggression against Vietnam until the declaration of martial law in 1972.

3. What was the effect of Martial Law on this national democratic movement?

JMS: The martial law declaration of 1972 served to inflame the revolutionary spirit of the Filipino people. They were outraged that Marcos was imposing fascist dictatorship on them in the service of US imperialism and his own selfish interests, despite his propaganda of saving the republic and building a new society.

Marcos outlawed all the legal forces of the national democratic movement and engaged in the mass arrest of their leaders as well as the leaders of the opposition Liberal party. The mass activists who could not be arrested went underground. In Metro Manila alone, 4000 mass activists went underground with the intention of joining the people's war in the countryside.

The CPP membership leaped to more than 2000. By 1974, most of the thousands of activists joining the urban underground were deployed nationwide to help build the Party, the NPA the revolutionary mass organizations, and the local organs of political power in so many regions nationwide.

Instead of being able to destroy the legal national democratic movement, with martial law and fascist dictatorship, Marcos unwittingly succeeded in helping the armed revolutionary movement by driving the mass activists from the ranks of the workers and educated youth to join the CPP, NPA and the peasant masses in the countryside.

4. What were the different forms of resistance against the Marcos fascist dictatorship?

JMS: Despite the violence and terrorism of martial law, various forms of legal and illegal resistance were possible against the Marcos fascist dictatorship. Only those threatened with arrest, torture and death had to go underground. The civil rights and religious organizations tried their best to defend the human rights of the social activists, the disemployed print and broadcast journalists, the trade unionists and leaders of the conservative opposition.

There was no way Marcos could stop the patriotic and democratic forces among the workers, peasants, students, professionals, religious people and the legal opposition parties who carried on their daily work to express their views and among themselves, especially because Marcos insulted every one by closing all mass media that were not under his control and by trying to monopolize information.

The National Democratic Front of the Philippines was formed on April 24, 1973 to build and strengthen the broad united front against the Marcos fascist dictatorship. This united front was successful in coordinating the legal forms of resistance and the armed revolutionary movement. Anti-fascist publications circulated and lightning protest actions occurred.

Under conditions of martial law, both legal forms of struggle and the people's war flourished. That was why the Marcos fascist dictatorship was ultimately overthrown. In class terms, the working class as the leading class relied mainly on its basic alliance with the peasant masses, won over the middle social strata and took advantage of the splits among the reactionaries in order to isolate and destroy the power of the Marcos fascist regime.

5. The Bangsa Moro led by the Moro National Liberation Front also waged armed struggle against the Marcos

dictatorship. Was there an alliance between the CPP and the MNLF? What was their relationship?

JMS: Nur Misuari and other key leaders of the Moro National Liberation Front got their political education and training from Kabataang Makabayan, which propagated the right of national self-determination among all indigenous peoples in the Philippines. There was therefore a high level of common understanding between the MNLF and the revolutionary movement of the entire Filipino people.

There was at least an objective alliance between the MNLF and the revolutionary movement of the entire Filipino people in fighting the reactionary Manila-based government as the common enemy. The Moro nation's fight for self-determination had the effect of helping the revolutionary struggle of the entire Filipino people. Reciprocally, the struggle of the Filipino people helped the Moro people.

The CPP and all patriotic and democratic forces succeeded in countering the attempt of Marcos to use Christian chauvinism against the MNLF, the MILF and the Moro nation. The NDFP and the Christians for National Liberation advocated ecumenism and mutual respect between the Christian and Islamic believers. The military minions of Marcos committed atrocities against the Moro people but were condemned by the Filipino people for doing so.

The NDFP and the MNLF agreed to stand together as complainants on behalf of the Filipino and Moro peoples against the Marcos fascist dictatorship as defendant in the trial conducted by the International People's Tribunal in Antwerp, Belgium in 1980. Marcos and his criminal accomplices were convicted by the International People's Tribunal.

6. Was there an international support in the movement against the fascist dictatorship? If so, what kind and what was its significance?

JMS: There was abundant international support for the Filipino people and their just struggle against the Marcos fascist dictatorship. As early as 1969, we in the CPP anticipated that Marcos would impose fascist dictatorship on the people. Thus, we started to deploy cadres to conduct solidarity work in socialist countries, in certain countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, in the US, Europe and in the Asia-Pacific region.

The CPP formed committees and branches in whichever country it had Party members. These engaged in mass work in order to build Filipino community organizations and solidarity organizations with the host people. The NDFP also had its international political work. It was able to form alliances of Filipino organizations and solidarity organizations and develop diplomatic and protodiplomatic relations with foreign governments and their agencies.

The CPP and the NDFP were open to alliance and cooperation with all Filipino organizations in opposition to the Marcos fascist regime even if they belonged to the conservative opposition. The national democratic organizations abroad were themselves alliances and could include Filipinos of various ideological, religious and political persuasions as long as they agreed to fight against the Marcos fascist dictatorship.

7. The assassination of Aquino in 1983 upon his return to Manila triggered an anti-fascist upsurge. How significant was this in the overthrow of the Marcos fascist dictatorship?

JMS: The Aquino assassination on August 21, 1983 triggered the gigantic mass actions that led to the overthrow of the Marcos fascist dictatorship in 1986. That was the biggest mistake of Marcos. It led to the firm conclusion of the US government that Marcos had become more of a liability than an asset to US interests. The US State Department and the Republican and Democrat parties were offended that Marcos resorted to murder to eliminate a political leader they thought could replace Marcos in a peaceful way.

The Catholic and other Christian churches were also offended. So were most sections of the big comprador and landlord classes that had long been offended by Marcos and his upstart cronies for engaging in flagrant plunder, monopolizing the infrastructure projects and grabbing the enterprises and assets of others.

The Ninoy Aquino funeral was attended by a million people. But the pro-Aquino forces did not have solid mass organizations for launching mass protests. In the interest of the broad united front against the Marcos fascist dictatorship, the forces of the national democratic movement cooperated with the pro-Aquino forces in mobilizing the masses in great numbers to seek justice and effect the overthrow of the Marcos fascist dictatorship.

8. Could you tell us about the EDSA uprising? How did it happen and what effect? How did the regime respond to it?

JMS: The biggest contradiction between the Filipino people and the Marcos fascist dictatorship became conspicuous with the rise of the mass actions after the Aquino assassination from 1983 to 1986 and the electoral

rallies of the opposition during the campaign period for the presidential snap election of February 7, 1986.

As a result of the electoral cheating of Marcos through his control of the Comelec, the CPP immediately announced intensified armed resistance. The legal democratic forces also announced the intensification of mass protests. Subsequently, Cory Aquino announced a campaign of civil disobedience and the Catholic bishops issued a pastoral letter proclaiming the Marcos regime as having no legal and moral foundation. The stage was set for unprecedented mass actions against the Marcos fascist regime.

Meanwhile the contradictions between the side of Marcos and General Ver on one side and defense secretary Enrile and General Ramos on the other side broke out into the open. The former side was able to foil the coup attempt of the Reform the AFP Movement (RAM) as the instrument of the latter side. From Camp Aguinaldo, the Enrile-Ramos side and the RAM called for public support before they walked over to Camp Crame. Cardinal Sin called for public support for the beleaguered military opponents of Marcos and Ver.

Using the radio Veritas broadcast station of the Catholics, Boots Aquino (Ninoy Aquino's brother) called on the people to assemble at the Isetann along EDSA. The forces of BAYAN, Justice for Aquino and Justice for All and Congress for the Restoration and Democracy were the first to appear in significant number. Thus, the great number of people started to build up along EDSA. Colonel Santiago called for volunteers to accompany him in seizing the broadcast station of Kanlaon Broadcasting System (KBS) and the government. And 500 members of BAYAN-Quezon City accompanied him.

The people who occupied EDSA from Cubao, Quezon City to Makati, Rizal peaked to as high as two million people to block the Marcos loyalists from attacking the Enrile-Ramos side. Some 80 percent of the people responded to the calls of Cardinal Sin, using the Veritas broadcast station. Twenty percent of the people were mobilized by BAYAN. In the direct encirclement of the Malacanang Palace, more than 90 percent of the 100,000 people were mobilized by Kilusang Mayo Uno and the League of Filipino Students.

Marcos and Ver tried to use force against the Enrile-Ramos side but the gigantic mass of people along EDSA and around the palace was insurmountable. They blocked the army and marine convoys sent out by Marcos from Fort Bonifacio and Sangley Point. At the same time, the US embassy used General Ileto to neutralize the Marcos loyalists in the Philippine Army. He and US ambassador Bosworth remanded the orders of Marcos for the artillery bombardment on Camp Crame from the site of Imelda's Ministry of Human Settlements. Air force General Sotelo of Camp Basa Air Base was ordered to bomb Camp Crame but instead he defected to the Enrile-Ramos side.

At the end of his power, Marcos and his family had no choice but to be airlifted by US helicopters to the Clark Air Base and from there to Guam and further on to Hawaii. If Marcos took the road to escape from the palace, he would have been ambushed by one of the special platoons which had been deployed by the NPA in Manila.

g. What was the role of the national democratic movement in the EDSA uprising?

JMS: I have already pointed out the particular role of the forces of the national democratic movement in joining the great number of people at Edsa, in seizing the broadcast facilities of KPN and the government and the encirclement of the presidential palace in the final days of Marcos in power from February 22 to 25, 1986.

I have not yet mentioned many other important contributions of BAYAN, like their organizations in several regions and provinces building the united front against Marcos and persuading the pro-Marcos politicians and units of the AFP and Philippine Constabulary to withdraw support from Marcos.

The regional commander of the PC in Bicol General de Villa cooperated with BAYAN in neutralizing the pro-Marcos politicians in the Bicol region. The BAYAN organizations of Angeles City blocked the way of the convoy of Marcos loyalist troops headed by General Palafox coming from Camp Aquino in Tarlac.

But the biggest role of the national democratic movement in ultimately bringing down the Marcos fascist regime was its long resolute and active resistance in the legal forms of resistance as well as in the form of the people's war. As the Marcos fascist dictatorship reigned long and had the illusion of ruling forever, the organizations and local organs of political power grew in strength and spread nationwide.

The legal democratic forces were outlawed and had to go underground but they kept on launching lightning protest mass actions and new legal mass organizations also kept on arising, especially after Marcos pretended to lift martial law in 1981. However, as early as 1974 to 1975, the trade unions were able to carry out a nationwide strike in 300 workplaces; and in 1976 the student masses were already able to reestablish student councils in the UP and so many other schools.

The people's war was inspirational to the broad masses of the people during all the time that Marcos rode

roughshod over them with his armed minions and with US imperialist support.

The heroic resistance of the CPP, NPA, the NDFP, the revolutionary mass organizations and the local organs of political power demonstrated to the broad masses of the people that it was possible to fight the fascist regime.

The inspiration of the revolutionary forces became even stronger when the economic, social and political crisis of the fascist regime and the suffering of the people became conspicuous from 1979 onward. The budgetary and trade deficits were widening and international credit for the regime was tightening.

10. It was a time of social unrest and political instability. Why was the revolutionary movement not able to seize political power from Marcos at that time?

It was a time of social unrest and political instability. Why was the revolutionary movement not able to seize political power from Marcos at that time?

JMS: As of November 1985, when the Plenum of the CPP Central Committee convened, the New People's Army had already accumulated a total of 5,600 high powered rifles and was already operating nationwide in so many guerrilla fronts, in all rural regions and in the majority of Philippine provinces. That was not a small achievement from having only a few squads with only nine automatic rifles and 26 inferior firearms in 1969. But the strength of the NPA was not yet enough for destroying the armed strength of the enemy and seizing political power in the cities.

The advance of the NPA would have been more rapid if not for the subjectivist line gaining currency within the CPP in 1981 that the Philippines was no longer semifeudal but industrial capitalist and that it was wrong to follow the strategic line of protracted people's war of availing of the peasantry and the country as the social and physical terrain for maneuvering against the militarily superior enemy and for accumulating armed strength from stage to stage and from phase to phase in every stage.

The subjectivist line led to the Right opportunist line of turning the NDFP into a reformist united front by ending the class leadership of the proletariat supposedly to attract more people to the NDFP. But the worst political errors resulting from the subjectivist line were several "Left" opportunist lines of insurrectionism in several regions at several times. These insurrectionist errors resulted in severe losses of mass base and worse in the commission of crimes when the failure of line became a pretext for the so-called anti-DPA witchhunts. The Second Great Rectification Movement of 1992 to 1998 dealt with and rectified these errors and crimes through ideological and political education.

The Trotskyite urban insurrectionism of Popoy Lagman in the Manila-Rizal region presumed that it was enough for the workers to seize political power in order to win the entire Philippine revolution. And in Mindanao the Reyes-Quimpo Trotskyite Red Area-White Area strategy presumed that people's strikes so-called and armed city partisan warfare were the lead factor of the armed revolution, with the NPA as secondary factor trying to catch up with the urban actions by rapidly organizing companies in an absolutely vertical way without sufficient horizontal deployment of sufficient armed units for mass work and mass base-building.

11. You were part of this struggle against Marcos dictatorship. Can you share with us your experiences in participating in this struggle?

JMS: I am happy that I was able to contribute what I could to the ideological, political and organizational development of the revolutionary forces that struggled against the Marcos dictatorship. I took part in the development of labor, peasant and youth organizations and alliances during the entire 1960s. These led to the founding and development of the CPP, NPA, NDFP, revolutionary mass organizations and local organs of political power.

I was in the preparation of the revolutionary forces that anticipated the emergence of fascist dictatorship. From 1969 to 1972 I was already involved in the people's war against the increasing military actions of the Marcos regime against the people and from 1972 to my capture in 1977 I fought what was blatantly a fascist dictatorship. Together with many comrades, I faced the tremendous odds, dangers and risks to life, limb and liberty and became tempered by overcoming them in the course of struggle.

Even while I was under maximum military detention, I continued to fight in the best way I could up to my release after the downfall of Marcos in 1986. I was confident that the revolutionary comrades and the masses outside of prison were doing their best and were advancing the revolutionary struggle according to the founding principles and strategic and tactics already laid.

I was conscious of fighting from inside prison to demonstrate to the people outside that if I could fight under extremely limited conditions, they could fight the enemy even more and better. I was never discouraged by the

various forms of physical and mental torture inflicted on me. These only strengthened my determination to fight.

Since I went out of prison in 1986, I have continued to be guided by the revolutionary principles and to do the best that I could. I have been able to do ideological, political and organizational work to the best of my ability. By being a refugee abroad for a long time and no longer of the age for military combat, I can share my accumulated knowledge and experience with the people in order to offer lessons that they can study and learn from. Thus, I keep on doing research, writing and participating in study sessions like this webinar.

We should be cognizant of the fact that it is now the task of much younger comrades to take advantage of the ever-worsening chronic crisis of the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system, the nationwide spread of the revolutionary movement and the deep roots of the revolutionary forces among the exploited masses. They can be more daring in the revolutionary struggle and accelerate the offensives for the maturation of the strategic defensive, move into the strategic stalemate and advance to the strategic offensive on time for the unravelling of neoliberalism, the rising tide of the anti-imperialist and democratic struggles and the resurgence of the world proletarian revolution.

In Commemoration of the Escalante Massacre

Message to the Filipino People through Teatro Obrero

September 25, 2021

Dear fellow activists and compatriots, I thank Teatro Obrero of Negros for informing me in advance of its online commemoration of the Escalante Massacre and for inviting me to express my solidarity with the Filipino people, especially in Negros Occidental, in remembering the martyrs and paying them the highest respects. I wish the Teatro Obrero the utmost success in presenting meaningful and inspiring cultural performances in the commemoration.

The Escalante massacre occurred on September 20, 1985, in Escalante, Negros Occidental when the armed minions of the Marcos fascist dictatorship, represented by the Marcos crony Gov. Armando Gustilo, gunned down the people engaged in a protest rally marking the 13th anniversary of the declaration of martial law, expressing grievances and making just demands.

The thousands of protesting people, more than 5000, included sugar workers, farmers, fisherfolk, students, urban poor, professionals, and church people. They were rallying against subhuman low wages, loss of jobs, rising prices, mass hunger, malnutrition and poverty and they were demanding agrarian reform, land distribution, fair wages and improved government services.

Instead, they received hails of gunfire from the Regional Special Action Force, the Civilian Home Defense Force, the local police and the private goons of Gustilo. Twenty of the rallyists were killed and thirty were wounded. The names of those martyred are inscribed on the wall of remembrance in the Bantayog ng mga Bayani:

William Alegre, Michael Dayanan, Rodney Demegilio, Rovenia Franco, Juvelyn Jaravello, Alex Labatos, Angelina Lape, Norberto Locanilao, Rodolfo Mahinay, Rogelio Megallen, Jr., Claro Monares, Maria Luz Mondejar, Rodolfo Montealto, Aniano Ornopia, Nenita Orot, Edgardo Salili, Ronilo Santa Ana, Juanito Suarez, Jr., Manuel Tan and Caesar Tejones.

It is of great importance that we commemorate the Escalante Massacre in order to honor the patriotism, heroic struggle and sacrifices of the martyrs and the rest of the suffering people who were with them and in order to draw inspiration from them because we are once more confronted by a reign of terror and greed that competes in brutality and rapacity with the long-detested Marcos fascist dictatorship.

The Duterte regime knows no limits for its acts of treason, tyranny, mass murder, plunder and deception. The tyrant has taken advantage of the Covid-19 pandemic in order to enact a law of state terrorism in the name of anti-terrorism, step up the mass murder of workers and peasants, social activists, human rights defenders and critics of the regime, rechannel huge amounts of public funds to the military and to the private pockets of Duterte and his gangmates and gear up for the rigging of the 2022 presidential elections.

Let us recall that the heroism and supreme sacrifice of the martyrs in the Escalante Massacre were not in vain. The Escalante Massacre outraged the entire Filipino people and the people of the world and moved them to condemn, isolate and fight the Marcos fascist dictatorship. It helped to bring about after five months the downfall of the brutal and corrupt Marcos's regime in February 1986.

I hope that the cultural performances in the online commemoration of the Escalante Massacre by Teatro Obrero will stir up the memory and conscience of the people and will inspire the people to rise up and end the current Duterte reign of terror and greed as soon as possible. Patriotic and progressive cultural organizations will follow the example of Teatro Obrero.

The people have had more than enough of the Duterte regime and are being driven by their own sense of dignity and suffering to get rid of this despotic and corrupt regime that has already committed too many grave crimes, worsened the crisis of the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system and escalated the intolerable conditions of oppression and exploitation of the people.

Long live Teatro Obrero!

Long live the national democratic movement!

Long live the Filipino people!

1. *What was the significance of the overthrow of Marcos dictatorship to the national democratic movement? What were the gains, even though it did not lead yet to complete victory?*

JMS: The overthrow of the Marcos fascist dictatorship proved that the national democratic movement had gained enough strength and had advanced to such an extent that it could play a decisive role in the process of overthrowing the dictatorship. More than 90 percent of the people directly encircling the presidential palace when Marcos fled in 1986 came from the national democratic movement. The 20 percent hard core of the two million people at Edsa also came from the national democratic movement.

The fascist dictatorship could last for 14 years because the traditional intrasystemic opposition became impotent when Marcos enjoyed US support and used the armed strength of the state against the entire people. Despite their previous large mass actions, the legal and democratic forces were vulnerable to the brute strength of the armed forces under the orders of Marcos. They had to go underground.

But they were able to develop networks of resistance in the underground, circulate publications and launch lightning mass actions against the fascist regime. In 1974 they were able to launch a nationwide workers' strikes in 300 workplaces. In 1976 the student masses were able to establish openly student councils and student organizations in defiance of the fascist dictatorship. The fascist regime came under pressure to "normalize" the situation as a result of the public outrage in the Philippines and abroad over the gross human rights violations.

Consequently, many legal forces of the national democratic movement emerged among the workers, peasants, students, community youth, teachers, professionals, women, journalists and human rights defenders. After the Aquino assassination, they played a decisive role in launching mass actions along the united front line under such banners as justice for Aquino, Justice for All (JAJA), Conference for the Restoration of Democracy (CORD), Nationalist Alliance for Freedom, Justice and Democracy (NAJFD), Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (BAYAN) and others against the regime in the years of 1983 to 1986.

When martial law was declared in 1972, the revolutionary forces like the CPP, NPA, NDFP, revolutionary mass organizations and local organs of political power were still small and weak relative to the armed forces of Marcos. But by waging armed struggle and other revolutionary forms of struggle, they were able to grow in strength nationwide in several scores of guerrilla fronts.

Thousands of activists belonging to the Kabataang Makabayan joined the armed resistance after being forced to go underground. The increasing strength and tactical offensives of the NPA undermined the previous US confidence of Marcos being able to destroy the NPA. By 1985 the NPA had increased its high-powered rifles from only nine in 1969 to 5,600 automatic rifles in November 1985. But this number was not yet enough for it to be able to capture any city, especially Manila, the national seat of reactionary power.

After the Aquino assassination, the US conclusively judged Marcos as more of a liability more than an asset to US national interest and decided to junk him. It persuaded him to call for a snap presidential election and when he cheated as expected, the broadest range of political forces condemned the cheating and called on the broad masses of the people to rise up.

The legal forces of the national democratic movement joined up with all other antifascist forces to arouse, organize and mobilize the people for gigantic mass actions in Metro Manila and nationwide. The NPA intensified the armed struggle and was able to seize 500 more high powered rifles, raising its rifle strength to 6100. This was more than two times the armed strength of the old people's army in the late 1940s. And the NPA did not benefit from an inter-imperialist war as the old people's army did.

Upon the overthrow of Marcos, the balance of strength between the revolutionary and reactionary forces was such that the US, big compradors and landlords, the Catholic church and the majority of the armed forces and police could still put into effect the proclamation of Cory Aquino as the duly-elected president of the neocolonial republic.

The way to measure the victory of the CPP and the revolutionary movement in the struggle against the fascist

dictatorship is to know how small and weak were the revolutionary forces from 1968 to 1972 and how much bigger and stronger they became from then on to 1986. The local organs of political power established in the countryside constituted the People's Democratic Government (PDG) of the workers and peasants.

The exploiting classes managed to hold state power in the cities. But in the countryside, the toiling masses of workers and peasants were able to establish and develop the People's Democratic Government under the leadership of the CPP, defended by the NPA and supported by the NDFP, the revolutionary mass organizations and millions of people nationwide.

The People's Democratic Government has lasted for more than 51 years, surpassing the life spans of the governments put up by the old democratic revolution. It continues to accumulate strength politically, economically, culturally and militarily. It governs millions of people, has a people's army with thousands of full-time fighters, people's militia with tens of thousands of members, self-defense units with hundreds of thousands of members and mass organizations with tens of millions of members.

2. You have stated in various interviews that Duterte can be compared to Marcos, or even worse. Can you tell us what their major similarities are? Or differences, if there are significant ones?

JMS: In terms of personal character, Duterte and Marcos are both extremely greedy for power and personal wealth and extremely deceptive, capable of saying anything at a given time to gain a personal advantage but ever ready to say the opposite when it suits them. They have a proneness to the criminal use of violence for personal gain or out of malice or braggadocio.

In terms of class character, they are bureaucrat capitalists who are obsessed with using political power to gain personal wealth in quick way and rise from their provincial origins as middle class and small landowners to the stratosphere of the super-rich among the big compradors. They have relatives and friends who are previously far wealthier than their parents and they are hell-bent on surpassing them through the use of political power.

Marcos was far smarter and became president at a much younger age. Duterte was a mediocre student by his own admission but streetwise, wily enough to become a long-time mayor of Davao city and demagogic enough to outshine other presidential candidates who were lackluster in addressing crowds. As regards being a butcher, Marcos killed 3,257 political opponents and critics. Duterte has already killed far more poor people, more than 30,000 in the bogus war on drugs. And he wishes to kill more political opponents by applying on them his law of state terrorism and his Tokhang methods of mass murder.

It is a matter of history that Marcos was able to rule as a fascist dictator for 14 years. Duterte still needs to prove that he can rule beyond his six-year term that is supposed to end in 2022. It is already well-known that he is seriously sick physically, mentally and morally. He has already made himself a de facto fascist dictator with his own law of state terrorism. But it remains to be seen whether through a charter change he can make himself formally a dictator and rule beyond 2022 or handpick a successor

3. In the beginning of the Duterte regime, he presented himself to be open to pro-people policies and working with activists. How did it turn into the direction his regime has today, which is actively having a violent crackdown on activists?

JMS: In trying to outshine his rivals for the presidency and obfuscate his reputation as a human rights violator and as a factotum of the Marcos and Floirendo families, he claimed to be Left and socialist, appeared in ceremonies to honor the late Ka Parago, volunteered to be the medium for the release of the prisoners of war of the NPA and promised the amnesty and release of all political prisoners prior to peace negotiations, despite his being told frankly that the revolutionary movement was not in any position to support his presidential bid.

Soon after he became president, he started to wiggle out of his promise to amnesty and release all the political prisoners. It would also become clear that the US used former President Ramos and Esperon to encourage him to run for president, that he got financial support from the Marcoses, Arroyos, Estradas and other big plunderers and their respective financiers and that he got unrecorded cash contributions from some Filipino-Chinese big compradors and from the Chinese criminal triads.

Despite Duterte's failure to amnesty and release all the political prisoners, the NDFP proceeded with the peace negotiations in response to the clamor of the peace advocates and the people to negotiate a just peace and in the spirit of giving Duterte a chance to fulfil his promises and of testing him. At the same time, the NDFP wanted to present not only to the enemy but more importantly to the people the social, economic and political reforms they desired to be adopted and carried out to achieve a just and lasting peace.

As soon as the NDFP draft of the Comprehensive Agreement on Social and Economic Reforms was being

presented to the public, Duterte signaled that he could not agree because his pro-US retired and active military officers were already pressuring him to back out of the peace negotiations, escalate the all-out war to destroy the CPP and NPA and pretend to opt for fake localized peace negotiations with their own psywar agents. But the estimate of the NDFP is that Duterte was never interested in peace negotiations, except as a device for deceiving the public and for trying to trick the NDFP into capitulation.

4. Would you say that the Philippines is under an undeclared Martial Law? If so, can you please state concrete basis of this?

JMS: Indeed, the Philippines is already under an undeclared martial law by virtue of Duterte's law of state terrorism and the frenzied actions of the military and police to apply it through red-tagging, abductions, gruesome acts of torture and extrajudicial killings.

Before Marcos declared martial law in 1972, he suspended the writ of habeas corpus in 1971, Duterte looks like he is imitating his idol, Marcos. In advance of his last year in power, Duterte has also signed into law his law of state terrorism. But this law is far worse than the suspension of writ of habeas corpus in 1971 and is even far worse than the martial law declaration of 1972.

Why? Duterte's law of state terrorism allows him and his armed minions even now to ignore all civil and political rights, red-tag social activists critics or political opponents and then abduct, torture and murder them with impunity. Thus, you observe quite a number of victims like Randall Echanis, Zara Alvarez, Jory Porquia and many others being murdered in quick succession.

Human rights organizations in the Philippines and abroad are now concerned that Duterte and his armed minions are hell-bent on slaughtering people to stay in power. The troll armies of Duterte and Marcos in the social media boast that the military and police will apply Tokhang methods on their political opponents and they plan to kill more people whom they red-tag as "communist terrorists" than the poor people they have arbitrarily listed and murdered as alleged drug users.

5. Do you think Duterte would officially declare a nationwide Martial Law?

JMS: Duterte's law of state of terrorism is already far worse than the kind of martial law declared by Marcos in 1971, in which executive orders took the place of judicial warrants of arrest. It is well demonstrated in Oplan Tokhang and in the recent cases of political murder by Duterte's masked armed minions simply barge into private apartment or homes to torture and kill someone like the peace consultant Randall Echanis or to kill someone in a public place, like health worker Zara Alvarez who was peppered with bullets.

Most likely Duterte will formally declare martial law to take full control of the ruling system and make sure that he will also get a new charter that will centralize absolute power in his hands under the pretext of establishing a revolutionary government or shifting to federalism and parliamentarism. He would certainly prefer to declare martial law and have a new charter to secure his fascist dictatorship and his power to choose his successor because of his ill health.

6. Marcos' declaration of Martial Law was backed by the United States. How is the relationship now of Duterte and the US? And how about China? Would it benefit them if Marcos declared Martial Law?

JMS: Definitely, Duterte has gotten approval, advice and logistical support from the US for his all-out war to destroy the CPP and NPA and even the legal anti-imperialist and democratic forces. But the US has already noticed that Duterte is failing to destroy the revolutionary forces but succeeding in encouraging more people to join the armed revolutionary movement.

The US is already offended by Duterte's allowing China to build and militarize seven artificial islands in the exclusive economic zone of the Philippines, to control the national power grid of the Philippines, to erect China Telcom-DITO cell towers inside AFP military camps, and to assist the military and police in improving their communications systems. There are indications that the US will not approve Duterte's declaration of martial law. Political leaders of the US and the European Union are already calling on Duterte to stop the extrajudicial killings and other human rights violations or else face economic sanctions.

But there are some speculations that the US has some deep scheme to let Duterte declare martial law and get the full wrath of the people for doing so and then signal to its assets within the AFP and PNP to withdraw support from Duterte. That would be similar to the US persuading Marcos to call for snap presidential election and then bringing him down for cheating.

China has become wary of Duterte since some two years ago for failing to surrender outrightly to China the

entire West Philippine Sea. Thus, the delay in the implementation of infrastructure projects it has promised. There is more reason for China to be wary of Duterte because of his recent speech to the UN General Assembly, saying that no Philippine government can give up the 2016 judgment of the Permanent Arbitration Court in favor of the Philippines pertaining to the West Philippine Sea.

7. What would Martial Law mean to the socioeconomic situation of the Philippines now, which is already in deep crisis?

JMS: Martial will certainly accelerate the worsening of the already terrible socioeconomic and political crisis of the ruling system. The people will suffer far worse conditions of exploitation and oppression. There will be far more unemployment, less income and more mass poverty. There will be more social discontent and the fascist regime will inflict more acts of state terrorism on the people.

The recurrence of fascist dictatorship from Marcos to Duterte is a manifestation of the chronic crisis and fatal rottenness of the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system. It is a sure sign that Philippine society is in need of revolution and radical social transformation. Unwittingly, Duterte is giving the revolutionary movement of the people one more chance to take a great leap forward in the people's war. The revolutionary movement now has a far wider, deeper and stronger base for advancing in the people's war than in 1972.

8. The people's struggle during Marcos's time was strong enough to overthrow the Marcos fascist dictatorship but not yet the entire semicolonial and semi-feudal ruling system. Would you say that the movement now is strong enough to be able to overthrow the entire semi-colonial and semi-feudal ruling system?

JMS: There is a greater possibility now than during the time of Marcos for the revolutionary movement to bring down not only a specific fascist regime but even the entire ruling system. The starting base for the revolutionary movement in 1972 was relatively too small and too weak in comparison to the current strength of the revolutionary forces nationwide.

Let me hypothesize on the basis of my experience: when we started guerrilla warfare in Tarlac and then in Isabela, our mere squads could finish off enemy combatants at the rate of at least 10 enemy combatants and their weapons per week per guerrilla zone or base. In two years in Tarlac from 1969 to 1971, our nine rifles increased to more than 200 through tactical offensives.

At present, the revolutionary movement has more than 110 guerrilla fronts. Their platoons can launch tactical offensives that can wipe out more enemy combatants. It would be a conservative and lackluster guerrilla front that cannot finish off ten enemy combatants per month. That would mean 110 times 10 enemy combatants and weapons or 1100 enemy casualties. That is equivalent to 11 companies wiped out per month or 132 companies wiped out and an increase of Red companies every year. At that rate, the people's war will be graduating soon from the strategic defensive to the strategic stalemate.

The CPP and NPA have issued publications to the effect that they are shaking off conservatism and are committing one third of NPA armed strength for battles with short rest periods against the enemy while two-third of the strength attend to mass work and local self-defense. The NPA units are rotated periodically for full-time combat duty so that they can wipe out more enemy units and increase the arms of the NPA. They benefit from the wise decisions of the leading organs, the daring spirit of their commanders and the mass base that provides them the wide area for maneuver in extensive and intensive guerrilla warfare.

The objective conditions for the people's war in the Philippines are favorable because the chronic crisis of the domestic ruling system will certainly worsen from year to year. The crisis of overproduction in the world capitalist system is also worsening the inter-imperialist contradictions, especially between the US and China. The proletariat and people of the world are already rising up against neoliberalism, fascism, chauvinism, racism, gender discrimination and the destruction of the environment.

9. Were there mistakes that the movement experienced during Marcos' Martial Law that the current generation of activists should not repeat?

JMS: There were great triumphs as well as certain setbacks due to mistakes of varying scales. There were mistakes that could be dealt with through periodic and timely criticism and self-criticism sessions. And there were bigger mistakes that required a rectification movement of some duration and territorial scale.

The biggest error of subjectivism during the time of Marcos was the spread of the notion of a Trotsky-influenced cadre since 1980 who promoted the line that the Philippines was no longer semifeudal but industrial capitalist. He veritably echoed Marcos' false claims of industrialization, the revisionist and imperialists.

The subjectivist line led to the Right opportunist trend of reformism, which advocated taking out working class leadership in the national united front supposedly to attract more popular support. The worst result of the same subjectivist line was whipping up the “Left” opportunist line of urban insurrectionism among certain regional cadres influenced by Trotskyism.

To cite major examples: in Metro Manila there was the line that it was enough for the workers to take the lead in armed revolution and the rest of the people in the whole country would follow. In Mindanao. There was the line of making the people’s strikes and armed city partisan warfare in urban areas the lead factor and the people’s army in the countryside as the secondary factor that must catch up with the urban insurrectionists by rapid formation of regularized companies in absolute concentration without minding the balance of relatively concentrated units for tactical offensives and relatively dispersed armed units for mass work.

When the “Left” opportunist lines resulted in damage to the mass base and military setbacks, especially in the period of 1985 to 1988, the cadres did not focus on reviewing the erroneous line and the circumstances but suspected “deep penetration agents” of having sabotaged the line. So, they carried out punitive actions without due process. The central leadership of the CPP acted promptly in 1986 to 1991 in one region after the other to stop the wrong line and the violations of due process.

And the Second Great Rectification Movement was launched in 1991 as a campaign of education in Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and in the strategy and tactics of the people’s democratic revolution through protracted people’s war until 1998. From 1994 onward, the revolutionary movement became stronger from year to year as a result of the rectification movement after overcoming urban insurrectionism, reformism and the inroads of bourgeois liberalism, Trotskyism, Gorbachovism, Dengism and other obnoxious currents.

10. On the other hand, what were the successes, effective practices and lessons can activists today learn and apply from the activists during the Martial law dictatorship?

JMS: The most important successes, effective practices and lessons arose by virtue of ideological, political and organization building of the CPP as the advanced detachment of the leading revolutionary class, the proletariat.

Ideological building meant learning the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism (then called Mao Zedong Thought). The CPP cadres and members read and studied the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao on philosophy, political economy and social science and sought to apply the basic principles in the study and understanding of Philippine society, current circumstances and the concrete practice of the revolution.

In political building, the CPP set the general line of people’s democratic revolution through protracted people war against fascism, imperialism and feudalism. It developed itself as the vanguard of the proletariat, the revolutionary armed struggle and the united front as the political weapons of the proletariat and the people against US imperialism and the local exploiting classes of big compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists.

In pursuing the protracted people’s war, the CPP realized the strongest alliance of the proletariat and the peasantry and integrated the revolutionary armed struggle with agrarian revolution and mass base building. The CPP started first with some guerrilla bases and guerrilla zones and then connected these and consolidated them as guerrilla fronts.

In organizational building, the CPP was guided by the principle of democratic centralism. This means centralized leadership on the basis of democracy. The CPP took deep roots among the toiling masses of workers and peasants and organized itself on a nationwide scale by requiring every Party member to belong to a party group within various types of mass organizations and related formations of various patriotic and democratic classes and sectors.

Debunking Lies and Distortions about Martial Law under Marcos

Keynote Speech at the Conference of Tanggol Kasaysayan ng Martial Law @50, February 22, 2022

Dear compatriots and friends, first of all, I wish to thank Profs. Francis Gealogo and Laurence Wilson S. Castillo of Tanggol Kasaysayan for inviting me to serve as keynote speaker in this conference billed as Tanggol Kasaysayan ng Martial Law @50, a conference of progressive academics, activists and mass leaders.

It is highly commendable that Tanggol Kasaysayan is sponsoring this conference and will publish a book containing the speeches and papers in this conference. The publication of the book is an excellent way of marking the 50th anniversary of the Marcos fascist dictatorship, refreshing and reinvigorating the collective memory of the Filipino people about it and inspiring them to fight all attempts to revive and perpetuate such an evil rule of terror and greed.

We must uphold, defend and propagate the historical facts about the background, circumstances and consequences of Proclamation No.1081 dated September 21, 1972 and issued by Ferdinand E. Marcos. This was mainly and essentially intended to impose a fascist dictatorship on the Filipino people and enable Marcos to violate their national and democratic rights and interests, commit gross and systematic human rights violations and plunder the national treasury, social wealth and natural resources of the country.

We must stand up, tell the truth and condemn the lies and distortions being spread by the propaganda machinery of the Marcos political dynasty, the incumbent president Duterte and their allies through the state and corporate mass media, the social media and the bill boards, streamers and other paraphernalia of propaganda at street level.

The single message being delivered is that the brutal and corrupt regime of Marcos the father was a golden era for the Philippines and that the people must in an act of gratitude elect the junior as president. Bongbong is in tandem with Sara, the daughter of the incumbent fascist tyrant Rodrigo Roa Duterte. The Marcos-Duterte tandem represents the most brutal and corrupt political dynasties that have ruled the Philippines.

The Marcos political dynasty is now using huge amounts of money for propaganda and buying the support of reactionary officials and groups at various levels. Only a small part of the Marcos bureaucrat loot, conservatively estimated at USD 10 billion has been recovered by the post-Marcos regimes. Even then, the Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG), initially created by the Cory Aquino to investigate and recover what Marcos had stolen, has the biggest collection of evidence against Marcos and his family in this regard.

The PCGG has recovered assets valued at USD 3.6 billion or about one-third of the greatly understated ill-gotten wealth of the Marcoses in the Philippines and abroad, despite such obstacles as multi-layered corporate methods of concealment, protraction of legal and judicial processes, the noncooperation of foreign governments and corporations complicit with Marcos and the internal weaknesses of the PCGG. Thus, most of the ill-gotten wealth of the Marcoses are being used by them to keep the life style of billionaires, to secure their provincial political base and to reclaim political power at the national level for the purpose of further butchery and plunder.

At present, it is most convenient for Marcos Jr. to team up with Sara Duterte because her father Rodrigo is in a position to rig the 2022 presidential elections because of his control over the military and bureaucracy, especially the Comelec. The Marcos-Duterte tandem and its slate of senatorial and local candidates go through the motion of campaigning even as they are self-confident about winning through electoral fraud and terrorism.

But still it is necessary for the Filipino people and all their patriotic and democratic forces to debunk the lies and distortions of the Marcos-Duterte campaign and to engage in the arousal, organization and mobilization of the masses and to demonstrate who are the real winners in the elections and prepare for gigantic mass actions similar to those that felled the Marcos fascist dictatorship in 1986 within the framework of protracted struggle for national and social liberation.

Let us now proceed to expose the major lies and distortions being made about the Marcos fascist dictatorship to deceive and mislead the people. We present the historical facts about political, socio-economic, cultural and foreign policy issues pertinent to the Marcos fascist dictatorship.

Political issues

To become a congressman of Ilocos Norte after World War II, Ferdinand Marcos relied on his reputation as bar topnotcher, oratorical skills and pro-poor populist rhetoric but he depended mainly on the captive votes of the tenants of landlord families, like my relatives ramifying from the Valdez-Serrano family of San Nicolas, Ilocos Norte. As congressman, he set his mind on becoming a big bureaucrat capitalist and no less the president of the Philippines.

He got his share of pork barrel from contractors of graft-laden public works but he got his largest loot from facilitating Chinese immigration and naturalization and then from foreign exchange allocations of Central Bank to Chinese businessmen through their Filipino dummies. The amount of bureaucratic loot that Marcos made allowed him to purchase his San Juan residence, build a mansion in Batac, Ilocos Norte and, according to Imelda, keep sacks of cash for patronage and other political purposes.

It is not true that before becoming a politician he was already wealthy by inheritance from his parents, from his practice of law, from the Yamashita hoard and from the blatantly mythical "Tallano gold." Mariano Marcos, the father of Marcos, was of rich peasant origin and the Edralin mother had a father who was a small landlord who had been the administrator of church land before the Philippine revolution of 1896.

Marcos was nowhere near the so-called Yamashita hoard in the mountain provinces during the anti-Japanese offensive 1944-45 because he was regarded as a traitor by the USAFFE guerrillas and his own father was a notorious pro-Japanese collaborator who had been recently executed by the guerrillas as a traitor. The false history about the Philippines being known before as Maharlika and ruled by the Tallano family which ultimately through the ages delivered gold to Marcos in a quantity beyond the mining done by the whole world is a fairy tale contrived by Marcos.

When he rose to the Senate presidency, he had bigger opportunities for graft and corruption and used them. He challenged the leadership of the incumbent president Macapagal within the Liberal Party and eventually he joined the Nacionalista Party through the sponsorship of Jose P. Laurel who had become his patron since the latter as justice of the Supreme Court had maneuvered to overturn the criminal conviction of Marcos for the murder of Rep. Julio Nalundasan of the second district of Ilocos Norte in 1935.

He ran for the presidency in 1965 against Macapagal. By then, the latter had become thoroughly discredited by the national democratic movement for his pro-imperialist and reactionary policies and actions. Marcos cleverly hired Blas Ople and the like to campaign for him with the use of bourgeois nationalist slogans. He himself kept on babbling about "making this nation great again" and he misrepresented himself with fake medals as war hero against the Japanese occupation.

Indeed, as USAFFE junior officer, he was in Bataan and became interned in the Tarlac concentration camp. But after the puppet president Laurel caused his release from the camp, Marcos focused on business deals with the Japanese invaders in line with his own father's notorious role as chief propaganda officer of the Japanese fascists. Only after the war did Marcos invent his Maharlika guerrilla regiment and his medals of valor. But the US authorities uncovered his false claims for war back pay as well as for war damage payments for imaginary ranches of the Marcos family in Davao.

When he became president in 1965, he became his own defense secretary for 13 months before appointing Ernesto Mata. He made sure that military officers from Ilocos Norte would be dominant in the reactionary armed forces. He started to hype the need for increasing the number and firepower of the military. At the same time, he planned to use infrastructure projects on a grand scale to impress the public and to accumulate his cuts from the contracts. He rapidly exhausted the Japanese war reparations.

A major part of his loot from the Japanese-funded projects was deposited in Credit Suisse in several accounts under the names of paper foundations. The cash deposits grew from an initial deposit of USD 100 million to more than USD 800 million and would be exposed after the fall of Marcos and became subject to claims by the Philippine government and by the victims of human rights violations who had won the human rights case against the Marcos estate in the 1990s under the US judicial system.

After the exhaustion of the Japanese war reparations, Marcos would use foreign loans from the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank for his infrastructure projects and his private accumulation of bureaucratic loot. He shunned genuine land reform and national industrialization and favored pork barrel economics and corruption. He also kept on raising the budget for the military and sent the Philippine Civic Action Group to Vietnam as part of the US war of aggression.

In his second term as president from 1969 onward, Marcos raised the volume of his propaganda that the Philippines was a “social volcano about to explode” and he clamored for more appropriations for the military and for more grants and credit sales of military equipment as rent from the US in for the use of the military bases in the Philippines. He readily agreed with Nixon when he issued his so-called Asian doctrine that Asian countries must take care of their own national security with US military and economic support against the “communist threat.”

In the meantime, the Communist Party of the Philippines had just been reestablished on December 26 1968 and the New People’s Army founded on March 29, 1969. The Moro people also became restive and assertive of their right to national determination. Marcos exaggerated the strength of the CPP and NPA and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) even while they were still small and weak.

In 1971, he and his military minions carried out the Plaza Miranda grenade attack against the Liberal Party and other false flag operations, using explosives, to give him the pretext for immediately suspending the writ of habeas corpus and preparing for the declaration of martial law in 1972 and imposition of fascist dictatorship on the Filipino people. In 1972 He repeated the bomb explosions at public places in order to set the stage directly for the proclamation of martial law.

In his proclamation, he declared that he was out “to save the republic” and “build a new society” and he made the brazen lie that the NPA had 10,000 rifles. At that time, the NPA had only some 300 rifles in Isabela and a few other regions. By imposing martial law on the entire nation, Marcos was able to concentrate the powers of government in his hands as he padlocked Congress and intimidated the Supreme Court to declare his martial rule non-justiciable.

He closed all mass media, except those of the government and those he confiscated and placed under the ownership of his crony Roberto Benedicto and other dummies. He ordered the mass arrest of opposition leaders, constitutional convention delegates, leaders and members of patriotic and democratic mass organizations and social critics. He hijacked the ongoing constitutional convention and forced changes in the draft constitution to turn it into a fascist constitution. He brazenly described his fascist dictatorship as “constitutional authoritarianism”.

He committed gross and systematic human rights violations in order to suppress any manifestation of criticism or opposition to his fascist dictatorship from 1972 to 1986. The conservative estimates of these made by Amnesty International and the Task Force Detainees include at least 70,000 arbitrarily detained, undetermined number of “disappeared”, 35,000 documented torture and 3,257 known extrajudicial killings cum torture and mutilation. These were reported and documented in the human rights case filed in the US against the Marcos estate.

According to the International Committee of the Red Cross, millions of people were displaced internally and some three million of Moros sought refuge in Sabah. The worst and most numerous human rights violations were committed in the rural areas and urban poor communities by the fascist military, police and paramilitary. Here the victims were not recorded fully by human rights organizations because of their limited personnel and means, especially during the years of fascist dictatorship.

The rigors and brutality of the Marcos fascist dictatorship failed to suppress the revolutionary movement of the people. Instead, this became stronger by leaps and bounds nationwide because the patriotic and democratic mass organizations went underground and formed the National Democratic Front in order to fight the regime of terror and greed. At the same time, many of the people who could not leave their children and families had to stay aboveground and take high risks in the legal struggle.

From 1979 onwards, the fascist regime was thoroughly discredited by its own brutality and corruption. International credit began to tighten. US President Carter told Marcos to lift martial law. Thus, Marcos pretended to lift it 1981. By then, new patriotic and democratic mass organizations had arisen aboveground to take the place of those organization that went underground in 1972.

By 1982, inflation was running high amidst high unemployment and mass poverty. Marcos made his biggest political mistake by having his arch political rival Benigno Aquino assassinated in 1983. This resulted in the upsurge of mass protests which resulted in the gigantic mass actions in the national capital region and nationwide that toppled the Marcos fascist dictatorship after it cheated in the 1986 snap presidential elections.

The Marcos dictatorship was isolated and defeated by a combination of developments, such as the rapid advance of the armed revolutionary movement of the people, the resurgence of patriotic and democratic forces in the urban areas and the junking of Marcos by the US, the Catholic Church and other religious organizations, the

Makati Business Club and the conservative opposition who were outraged by the murder of Aquino and feared the further rise of the revolutionary movement if Marcos remained in power any longer.

Economic and social issues

Despite some limited amount of rhetoric for economic nationalism to oppose Macapagal's blatantly pro-imperialist "free enterprise" ideology during the 1965 electoral campaign, Marcos proceeded to adopt and implement an economic policy subservient to foreign monopoly capitalism and the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords. He perpetuated and aggravated the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system which he as bureaucrat capitalist could prosper together with the big compradors and landlords.

Marcos was determined to enrich himself by overspending on and overpricing infrastructure projects in order to collect huge amounts of commissions, brokers' fees and other forms of bribe from the foreign firms preparing feasibility studies, foreign suppliers of construction equipment and a hierarchy of local contractors headed by cronies. At the same, he gained prestige from building the roads and bridges even these were merely for facilitating the extraction of mineral ores, logs and other natural resources and the distribution of finished manufactures from abroad.

It is true that Marcos was responsible for the construction of 1,201 km new asphalt roads; 2,124 km of gravel roads; 15,831 lineal meters of bridges; 38,705 permanent school buildings and 58,745 prefabricated school buildings. But these were funded by onerous foreign loans and were extremely overpriced to allow for huge bribes for Marcos and his cronies. Many of these infrastructure projects were substandard and would eventually become decrepit.

Financial resources were deliberately taken away from the direction of genuine land reform and national industrialization. The industry sector continued to be described as import-substitution and heavily dependent on imported equipment and components. The economy remained agrarian, pre-industrial and semifeudal, with more than 65 percent of the population devoted to agriculture. But Marcos tried to misrepresent as factors of industrialization certain crony companies involved in the infrastructure projects and in the supply of reshaped steel products, cement, gravel and the like.

The overspending on infrastructure projects, the bureaucratic corruption and annual increases of the military budget would eventually cause huge budgetary and trade deficits, resulting in a mounting debt burden and huge debt service payments. The technocrats of Marcos were aware of the unsustainability of the huge deficit spending and foreign loans. And they pushed the Omnibus Tax Law of 1969 in order to collect taxes from real estate owners and landlords to augment revenues from excise taxes and foreign loans.

The Marcos regime spent colossal amounts of financial resources not only on roads, highways and school buildings but also on the Bataan nuclear power plant and high-profile health and cultural edifices. But always the vile purpose of Marcos was to overprice the public construction and take his bribes at various levels of each contract. It is well known that contrary to the traditional practice of presidents exacting 20 percent of every project Marcos exacted 80 percent of project cost because of the extreme overpricing.

Let us focus on the notorious case of the \$2-billion Bataan Nuclear Power Plant, which has never been operated because it sits on a major geologic fault line. Total repayments amounted to \$22 billion up to 2007. The annual debt service was \$140 million. A crony claimed that Marcos received an \$80-million payoff. But this is too small and unbelievable. In fact, Herminio Disini the main crony of Marcos in the project was able to put up a bank in Austria and manage a number of investment accounts for the Marcos family. Disini is one of the loyal Marcos cronies who is managing some of the ill-gotten assets of the Marcos family which are stashed away abroad.

Starting as early as 1977, international credit tightened and the Marcos regime had to beg for debt restructuring from the IMF, prompting the latter to impose tighter credit restrictions and compel the Philippines to shift from import-substitution to export-oriented manufacturing or semi-manufacturing, which involved minor processing of imported components in the garments and semi-conductors. By 1983 foreign loans had comprised 91 percent of GNP and 509 percent of export earnings. The loans also became costlier as creditors imposed higher and floating interest rates.

At the beginning of the Marcos regime in 1965, the foreign debt was only USD 600 million. At the end in 1986, this had risen to USD 28.3 billion or a big leap by 4300 percent. At first, the overspending artificially pushed up the economic growth rate to as high as nine percent in 1973 and 1976. But in the later years of the fascist dictatorship the Philippine economy became depressed, contracting by 7.3 percent in 1984 and 1985, presaging the

downfall of Marcos in 1986. Ultimately, his excessive deficit spending and overdependence on foreign loans caused his downfall.

The Philippines used to be rated as the second largest economy in Asia, behind only Japan, from the 1950 to 1964 when the other Asian countries were still recovering from World War II. It was during the rule of Marcos that the Philippine economy became the basket case of Asia, below South Korea, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, and Singapore, especially during the martial law years of 1972 to 1986. Marcos accepted the dictat from the US that the Philippines would remain a supplier of raw materials to Japan and the other neighboring countries.

In his first term, Marcos pretended to be for developing Philippine agriculture by promoting the so-called miracle rice variety earlier cultured by the International Rice Research Institute. This required high amounts of water from irrigation dams and high amounts of agricultural chemicals, preferably by plantations with some amount of mechanization. Marcos and his cronies had an eye on getting cuts from the irrigation dam projects and monopolizing the local trade of seeds and pesticides under the brand of Masagana 99, which bankrupted the peasant masses.

The cost of rice production became so high that by the time Marcos pretended to be for land reform with Presidential Decree No. 27 in 1972 after the proclamation of martial law the intended land reform beneficiaries could no longer afford the instalment plan for amortizing payment for the land. Furthermore, the landlords and the bureaucrats connived to raise the land price at the expense of the tenants by falsifying the previous annual production figures.

The sugar industry used to be the main foreign exchange earner in the export of agricultural crops. But it was sabotaged by Marcos and his cronies exactly when world sugar prices were rising and they monopolized the warehousing of sugar supposedly to wait for still higher prices. The world demand and prices for sugar suddenly dropped. But still Marcos and his cronies benefited from the disaster by taking over the land of the bankrupted sugar landlords and by privatizing and owning the traditional bank of the sugar industry, the Philippine National Bank.

Under the guise of rejuvenating the coconut industry, Marcos pushed the cutting down of the old coconut trees and the planting of a new breed of shorter coconut trees. He imposed the coconut levy tax supposedly to aid the coconut farmers. But in fact, the tax collected has been used to establish the United Coconut Planters Bank (Cocobank) and to finance the land acquisitions, takeover of the San Miguel Brewery Corp. and other business enterprises of the Marcos dummy Eduardo Cojuangco.

Marcos appointed technocrats from the ranks of academics in order to impress the people that he was using honest and competent people but he used them mainly to produce glossy plans and glittering generalities. He relied on his initial cronies, such as Roberto Benedicto who was put in charge of the Philippine National Bank and the sugar industry, Eduardo Cojuangco the Cocobank and the coconut industry and Rodolfo Cuenca in the Construction and Development Corporation of the Philippines. In due course, especially during the fascist dictatorship, the number of cronies expanded and they controlled all major enterprises in the Philippines.

In getting himself re-elected as president in 1969, Marcos spent a huge amount of public money for buying political supporters and votes from the general public. Thus, he generated inflation and stirred up social unrest. The balance of payments crisis of 1969-70 further stirred up the social unrest. The First Quarter Storm of 1970 broke out, signifying not only the upsurge of the legal patriotic and democratic forces but also the reemergence of the revolutionary forces in the countryside and the urban underground.

Instead of offering substantial social, economic and political reforms along the line of national independence and democracy, Marcos chose to use the social unrest as pretext of declaring nationwide martial law and imposing fascist dictatorship on the people under such bombastic slogans of "saving the republic" and building a new society". He tested the waters by having his agents throw grenades at the Liberal Party meeting at Plaza Miranda on August 21, 1971, instantly accused the Communist Party of the Philippines of being responsible for the crime and proclaimed the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus.

The Plaza Miranda grenade-throwing was followed by 20 bombings at public places in Manila. This caused significant property damage and some forty casualties in one instance. One bomber was arrested. He turned out to be a bomb expert belonging to the Marcos regime and specifically to the Philippine Constabulary. Senator Benigno Aquino exposed Oplan Double Strike as the Marcos' scheme of bombings to attack the opposition party and blame communist guerillas for the attacks, and to justify the declaration of martial law in September 1972.

The fascist dictator was satisfied that he was able to obtain absolute power to use the reactionary armed forces and police as he wished, suppress any kind of opposition and plunder the national treasury and social wealth without limits. Under martial law, Marcos had extraordinary legislative as well as executive powers. He was able to extort and confiscate for himself and his cronies a wide range of privately-owned public utilities, such as Meralco, PLDT, three Philippine airline services and mass media corporations, including 7 television stations, 16 national daily newspapers, 11 weekly magazines, 66 community newspapers, and 292 radio stations.

He expanded his use of cronies and established monopolies under their control on his behalf. He used his presidential decrees and letters of instruction to enable his defense secretary Juan Ponce Enrile to control the logging industry, Eduardo Cojuangco to control the coconut industry, Roberto Benedicto the sugar industry, Antonio Florendo to control the banana industry, and so on. In a semifeudal economy, control of vast agricultural lands to plant export crops is directly connected with the export-import and financial roles of the comprador big bourgeoisie.

The economic and social crisis continued to worsen under the Marcos fascist dictatorship. The oil crisis hit the Philippines in 1973 but the petrodollars flooded the international capital markets from 1975 onwards. However, what appeared to be a boon to the Marcos fascist dictatorship turned out to be a lethal bane. It was emboldened to take bigger foreign loans at an accelerated rate. Philippine foreign debt was at USD \$4.1 billion in 1975 and doubled to US \$8.2 billion in 1977. Then it zoomed to USD 28.3 billion despite the second oil crisis of 1979 and tightening of international credit.

The main cause of the economic nosedive of the Marcos fascist dictatorship was the aggravation of the semi-colonial and semifeudal extractive economy and the overdependence on foreign loans to cover the chronic budgetary and trade deficits. When the nose dive began in 1979, the bureaucrat capitalist Marcos and his cronies also unwittingly committed political suicide by rapidly stashing away a major part of their ill-gotten wealth by depositing it in foreign bank accounts, buying shares of stocks in foreign companies and buying property assets (land, buildings and art works) under the names of paper corporations and foundations abroad.

Cultural and educational issues

The first presidential term of Marcos from 1965 to 1969 coincided with the great upsurge of the national democratic movement among the youth led by the Kabataang Makabayan and the national student organizations. They were consciously striving to continue the unfinished revolution of the Katipunan and the Filipino people and carrying out the Second Propaganda Movement or a cultural revolution demanding a national, scientific and mass educational and cultural system and casting away colonial, feudal and elitist mentality.

The demand for a national culture and education was a demand for patriotism and national liberation against US domination and colonial mentality, for promoting the national language and national cultural heritage and for serving the national rights and interests of the Filipino people. The demand for a scientific culture and education was a demand for expanding the public educational system to counter the dominance of private schools run by religious and commercial interests and to propagate science and technology for national industrial and agricultural development. And the demand for a mass culture and education was a demand for serving the democratic rights and interests of the masses of workers and peasants.

Marcos chose to be most concerned about the mass demonstrations of the youth in 1965 and 1966 against the unequal treaties, agreements and arrangements with the US and the participation of the Philippine reactionary government and military in the US war of aggression against Vietnam. Thus, he invited the National Council of the Movement for the Advancement of Nationalism (MAN) to seek the slowing down the mass protests as a form support and cooperation. But Senator Lorenzo M. Tanada, MAN chairman, stood his ground and told Marcos that he ought to welcome and encourage the mass actions inasmuch as they support nationalist and democratic policies and actions.

Marcos did not heed the advice of MAN and its chairman. He was a dyed-in the wool puppet of US imperialism even if to some extent he posed as having some sense of patriotism by having the lease of military bases to the US reduced from 99 years to 25 years under the US-RP Military Bases Agreement. But he was merely leveraging his demand for more military grants and credit sales from the US to support his program of beefing up the reactionary armed forces. And he readily agreed with the US to join the US war of aggression against Vietnam in 1966.

In the entire decade of the 1960s, many of the faculty members and students of the University of the

Philippines and in other universities were already adopting the Tagalog-based national language as the medium of instruction as a result of the growing strength of the national democratic movement. But the Marcos regime emboldened the UP president Carlos P. Romulo to maintain English as the medium of instruction and worst of all to counter the national democratic movement by tinkering with and further Americanizing the curricula of the university.

Romulo's tinkering with the curricula in the US involved among others reducing and downgrading of such subjects as Philippine history, the national language and Philippine studies and textbooks written by patriotic Filipinos. For the purpose, he drew funds from the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, the US Agency for International Development and the American foundations, like Rockefeller and Ford. He gained a wider scope of authority when Marcos appointed him as secretary of education in 1966 to 1968.

The Marcos regime deliberately reduced the public appropriations for the public educational system at all levels in order to increase appropriations for public works and the military, to make the public educational system susceptible to foreign funding and US imperialist influence and to let the private schools of religious and commercial interests prevail. At any rate, the entire Philippine educational system was being tailored to serve the interests of foreign monopoly capitalism and the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords.

The national democratic movement of legal patriotic and democratic forces continued to surge with mass protests in the early 1970s until Marcos declared martial law in 1972. In 1970 Marcos created the Presidential Commission to Survey Philippine Education (PCSPE) to evaluate the educational system and its relevance to "development" goals for the purpose of overhauling the system, with the guidance and assistance of the IMF, World Bank and Asian Development Bank.

The PCSPE issued in 1972 the first 10-year Education Development Plan which underscored proficiency in English under the cover of encouraging bilingualism and manpower development through the expansion of technical-vocational education. In 1973, Gustav Ranis led a team of foreign and Filipino economists that produced the "Ranis Report", batting for a strategy of labor-intensive export-oriented "industrialization" and rural development as a development strategy for the Philippines.

In fact, the Ranis Report was for keeping the Philippine economy underdeveloped and reducing it to being a user of imported equipment for the fringe-processing of imported components, subject to transfer pricing by the multinational firms. The export-processing zones producing garments and semiconductors have ultimately been converted to smuggling zones for importing cars and other luxury goods as well as illegal drugs after China became the giant platform for export-oriented processing, especially after the Asian financial crisis of 1997.

As a complement to the labor-intensive export-oriented "industrialization", the Marcos fascist regime adopted and implemented the policy of exporting cheap labor in order to augment the chronically inadequate foreign exchange revenues from the export of cheap raw materials and exotic fruits and from foreign loans, to relieve the rapid accumulation of the unemployed and to stem the tide of mass protests and revolutionary resistance, especially among the unemployed educated youth.

It was in 1974 when the Marcos fascist regime launched the labor export program ostensibly as a measure to deal with the annual increase of domestic unemployment. The domestic economy was supposed to be failing to provide jobs for the 700,000 or so new entrants into the labour force every year. But in fact, Marcos and his technocrats headed by Prime Minister Cesar Virata regarded the program as a way for countering the growing social unrest and dissent of the educated, young, urban and unemployed population.

Consequently, millions of Filipinos have migrated from the Philippines, now amounting to 10 to 12 million or more than 10 percent of the national population. We still have to assess what is the impact of the global depression since 2008, the Covid-19 pandemic and anti-migrant campaign of reactionaries abroad on the so many Filipinos who are working abroad either as documented workers or undocumented ones.

Finally, let us discuss the claim of the Marcos family and its fanatics that Ferdinand and Imelda contributed a lot to cultural development in the Philippines because they were supposedly responsible for institutionalizing the Awards for National Artists, for promoting the efflorescence of art and architecture, for building such edifices as the Philippine International Convention Center, the Cultural Center of the Philippines, the Folk Arts Theatre and the Film Center and for sometimes commissioning art work to glorify Malakas and Maganda of the mythical realm of Maharlika.

We should honor the many artists who deserve the title of National Artists and praise them for refusing to be

coopted politically by the Marcoses; the architects who designed the buildings and the artists who have used them; the workers for building the edifices, especially those died in the rush to complete the building of the Film Center; and the Filipino people who are burdened by heavy taxes, the public debt and debt service payments.

We should condemn the Marcoses for overpricing the construction of the buildings, for taking as bribes a big portion of the overprice, for overburdening the Filipino taxpayers, for misallocating precious resources, for trying in vain to coopt all the writers, artists and cultural workers and for using some of them to glorify the Marcoses and obscure their gross and systematic crimes of human rights violations and unbridled greed and corruption.

Foreign Policy Issues

To defeat the reelection bid of Macapagal in 1965 and become president, Marcos had to make assurances to the US, Japan and Taiwan on policies and projects beneficial to them and to get campaign funds and other kinds of support from corporate sources. But the most important foreign entity that Marcos had to woo and satisfy was the US, its officials in Manila and Washington and its corporate interests.

Macapagal was no match to Marcos in having the support of the agents of the US Agency for International Development, Central Intelligence Agency and the Defense Intelligence Agency and their Filipino assets in the Department of National Defense and the reactionary armed forces. Despite the fact that Marcos had rendered no military service beyond being a junior USAFFE in Bataan for short while, he was allowed to invent myths about fighting battles in the mountain provinces, private grabbing Yamashita's hoard of gold and getting medals from MacArthur.

On the argument that he must appear patriotic, deceive the public and the anti-imperialist organizations demanding the removal of the US military bases and seize the initiative from Macapagal, Marcos solicited and received permission from the US authorities to take a nationalist posture on a number of issues, like reducing the lease provision in the US-RP Military Bases Agreement from 99 years to 25 years and refusing to send Filipino troops to Vietnam as part of the US war of aggression.

But when he became president, it would become clear that the reduction of the lease term of the US military bases was a mere leverage for demanding higher military grants and loans from the US for beefing up the reactionary armed forces. He agreed to send to Vietnam the Philippine Civic Action Group (Philcag) and he was pleased that US president called him his "right hand man" in Asia when the Manila Summit was held in 1966 to round up support for the US war of aggression against Vietnam and the whole of Indochina.

He went so far as to order the Marines to attack the anti-imperialist demonstration of 2000 students and workers in front of Manila Hotel on October 24, 1966. The Philcag was a mercenary puppet force, funded mainly by the CIA to do intelligence work against the Vietnamese people under the guise of civic action. At any rate by 1969, after the Tet offensive, it became clear that the US was a big loser in its war of aggression because it lost thousands of aircraft to the rocket-propelled grenades of the revolutionaries.

In connection with the 1969 decision of the US to negotiate with the Vietnamese Socialist Republic and the South Vietnam National Liberation Front in Paris and eventually withdraw from Vietnam, US president Nixon issued his Asian doctrine that the Asians must take care of their own defense and receive economic and military aid from the US.

Marcos took this as signal for him to increase the number and firepower of the reactionary armed forces as a bulwark of anti-communism and counterrevolution in the Philippines. He informed Nixon of his understanding and his plan to imitate the anti-communist massacres committed by the Indonesian reactionary forces under US direction. Nixon agreed with the scheme of Marcos. He knew in advance of the Marcos plan for fascist dictatorship.

In the meantime, as the chronic crisis of the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system worsened, the legal national democratic movement of patriotic and democratic forces stimulated the initial growth of the armed revolution in 1969 in the second district of Tarlac. While Marcos proceeded to beef up the reactionary armed forces, he launched Oplan Prophylaxis and deployed Task Force Lawin against the NPA. He began to engage in massacres against the people in Tarlac.

Instead of intimidating the people, Marcos drove the CPP, NPA and the revolutionary workers and peasants to intensify their revolutionary struggle. The Moro National Liberation Front also arose to assert, defend and fight for the Moro people's right to national self-determination in their home grounds. But instead of trying to negotiate with the revolutionary forces, while they were still small and weak, Marcos calculated these were an easy pretext

for proclaiming nationwide martial law and imposing fascist dictatorship on the entire nation.

He carried out a number of massacres from 1969 onward. And in 1971, he ordered his operatives to attack the Liberal Party meeting at Plaza Miranda on August 21, 1971 to make an instant declaration to suspend the writ of habeas corpus. He further ordered 20 bombings at public places to lay the ground for Proclamation 1081 dated September 21, 1972, declaring martial law. The Marcos fascist dictatorship was in greater need of economic and military support from the US. And the US provided that support until 1983 when Marcos ordered the murder of Aquino.

After the death or murder of Lin Biao and his entire high staff of defense officials in 1971, China started to reverse its line of class struggle, cultural revolution and proletarian internationalism and hastened to improve its relations with the US and pave the way for the Nixon visit to Beijing in 1972. As early as 1973, Marcos was worried about the oil crisis and wanted to establish relations with China and the Soviet Union. He would eventually visit China in early 1976 and the Soviet Union in 1977.

During his visit to China, Marcos asked the Chinese leaders to provide oil and gas to the Philippines and claimed that the Arab countries were supporting the Moro National Liberation Front and were reluctant to supply the fuel. He was assured of a small but steady supply from China. He also asked China to stop supporting the CPP and NPA. The Chinese leaders agreed. Marcos was not aware that as early as 1975 Deng Xiaoping no less had told the CPP Central Committee delegation that China must be given time to improve relations with the US and undertake reforms and opening up to the world capitalist system.

After Deng Xiaoping took full control of the CPC Central Committee and all organs of state power in October, 1976, he was able to carry out a campaign of full vengeance against the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, condemning it as complete catastrophe, and carry out capitalist-oriented reforms and the integration of China in the world capitalist system. By 1981, the CPC general secretary Hu Yaobang was already pressuring all Central Committee delegations of fraternal parties of the CPC to leave China and seek asylum elsewhere.

To counter the Moro National Liberation Front, Marcos also engaged in diplomatic maneuvers to befriend Libya where Nur Misuari was residing. He sought to approach Libya directly as well as to befriend countries friendly to Libya in ASEAN, Organization of Islamic Countries and the Non-Aligned Movement. To appease Malaysia, he went to the extent of announcing in 1976 to the ASEAN that he intended to drop the Philippines' Sabah claim.

The Philippines established diplomatic relations with Libya in 1976 and these paved the way for the Marcos government to forge the Tripoli Agreement with the MNLF. The MNLF agreed to a ceasefire, opted for regional autonomy and submitted itself and Bangsamoro to the national sovereignty and constitutional processes of the Philippine reactionary government. Libya also gave a contract to the Marcos dummy corporation Landoil Resources Corp. to participate in the making of the great underground river in Libya.

Despite all the economic, financial and military resources provided by the US and the advantages of diplomatic maneuver by a UN member-state like the Philippines, the chronic crisis of the semicolonial and semi-feudal system worsened from year to the year, the revolutionary forces and people led by the CPP and the Moro people's resistance grew in strength and advanced and the conflict among the Filipino reactionaries sharpened.

The peoples of the world and many governments were offended by the gross and systematic human rights violations being committed by the Marcos fascist dictatorship, the scandalous acts of corruption, economic bankruptcy and the rampant mass poverty, high unemployment. The foreign debt of the Philippines grew by leaps and bounds during the Marcos fascist dictatorship. The Philippine economy became the basket case of Asia.

The assassination of Aquino in 1983 was the last straw, the fatal mistake of the Marcos fascist dictatorship. The US decided to junk Marcos in 1984 because it became worried that the aforesaid grave criminal act would exacerbate the socioeconomic and political crisis of the Philippine ruling system and boost the people's democratic revolution led by the CPP to advance by leaps and bounds beyond the ability of the US to control.

Thus, the US compelled Marcos to declare the 1986 presidential snap election. This set the stage for him to be accused of electoral fraud and overthrown by gigantic mass actions from February 22 to 25, 1986. A broad range of forces (the US, the Catholic Church, the Makati Business Club, the conservative opposition and the various patriotic and democratic forces) converged and compelled Marcos and his family to flee the palace by US helicopter.

Conclusions

I have amply presented the gross and systematic crimes of the Marcos pre-fascist and fascist regimes from 1965 to 1986. It is unfortunate though that the Filipino people were not able to arrest, detain, investigate, try and punish Marcos and his accomplices for their crimes. Even as the US junked Marcos from 1984 onwards, it was still thankful to him for having long served as a puppet.

It yanked Marcos out of the Philippines to save from him from punishment by the people and deprive them of the justice that they have a sovereign right to render. It also deleted from the list of documents seized from Marcos by US authorities those documents revealing the complicity of the US and other foreign agencies and corporations in the crimes of corruption committed by him.

We must underscore the need and duty to uphold the historical facts in order to combat and frustrate the scheme of the Marcos and Duterte political dynasties to glorify themselves, destroy the historical records, spread false claims and revise history, hoodwink the people and perpetuate themselves in power in order to continue oppressing and exploiting the people. They are using ill-gotten wealth in the electoral campaign in order to stay in power and further engage in plunder and butchery.

The publication of the book containing the speeches and papers in this conference in order to mark the 50th anniversary of the Marcos fascist dictatorship will be a highly significant and long-lasting counter to the lies and distortions about it. In the meantime, all of us who can review and refresh the historical facts about the Marcos fascist dictatorship must share these with the people, raise their vigilance and militancy against every lie and distortion made by Marcos and Duterte and their agents and refute refute them in a timely manner through public statements, speeches, articles, memes, audio-visuals, performance art, small and big meetings, the mass media and the social media.

We must debunk the lies and distortions about the Marcos fascist dictatorship not only in connection with the presidential elections of 2022 but also in connection with the intensive and extensive struggle that will develop after the Marcos-Duterte tandem is installed in power through electoral fraud and terrorism by the incumbent president. When this happens, the people will strive to overthrow the Marcos-Duterte tandem as when the Marcos fascist dictatorship was overthrown in 1986 or for a much longer period of time.

We can be certain that if this tandem comes to power, the Filipino people will suffer greater oppression and exploitation than ever because the social, economic and political crisis will be far worse in the years to come. But the people's democratic revolution will make greater strides than ever towards complete victory.