

On the Workers' Movement



jose maria sison

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14

julieta de lima
editor



Jose Maria Sison



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Sison Reader Series

Book 14



Julieta de Lima

Editor

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Published by
International Network for Philippine Studies (INPS)
Cover and Book Design by Biko & Lukas Mak

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Foreword

This book consists of the writings of Jose Maria Sison on the workers movement from 1966 to 2022. The first article The Labor Movement “Labor and the Philippine Revolution” was delivered at the 64th anniversary of Union Impresores de Filipinas on February 6, 1966 and again another article at its 100th anniversary in 2022. The first article makes a review of the trade union movement and its connection with the national-democratic movement and concludes with the tasks of building up a proletarian party to provide leadership in the struggle for national democracy, without which this cannot be won. The second honors the founders and all trade unionists of the UODF as pioneers of the modern trade union federation. Their pioneering example and their achievements are a necessary part of the history of the labor movement in the Philippines that brought about the emergence of the revolutionary party of the proletariat.

The founders of the UODF continue to inspire the Filipino working class to develop the trade union movement and the revolutionary party of the proletariat, advance the people’s struggle for national and social liberation, win total victory until the socialist revolution can commence and contribute to the resurgence of the proletarian-socialist revolution.

Important are Joma’s articles, interviews, messages, and statements marking the founding or the anniversaries, the conferences and May Day statements celebrating the victories of the workers movement.

The growing imperialist turmoil in the world capitalist system makes socialism a clear prospect to the broad masses of the people. This necessitates the study of the historical background and the analysis of the current concrete conditions of the workers’ movement in the Philippines and all over the world.

Joma’s firm wish was always for the proletariat and peoples of the world to dismantle the monopoly capitalist system and replace it with a just, democratic and peaceful new world in which socialism prevails.

Julieta de Lima
Utrecht, The Netherlands
May 22, 2023

The Labor Movement

Labor and the Philippine Revolution

Delivered at the 64th anniversary of Union Impresores de Filipinas

February 6, 1966

A review of Philippine history will show that the Filipino proletariat emerged before a determined national liberation movement could be formed. The *Katipunan* was initially based among the city workers and it was steered by a leadership epitomized by Andres Bonifacio.

The revolutionary movement included the shipyard workers and warehousemen whose considerable number signified the great impact of the opening of the Suez Canal and the opening of the ports of Manila to foreign trade since 1815. Commerce and liberal ideas came to the country more easily and stirred a trend towards bourgeois democracy and jarred the old colonial and feudal order. Andres Bonifacio who embodied this new development in Philippine society was both a *bodeguero* and a student of the French revolution.

The revolutionary movement also included the clandestine printers' union inside the UST press which secretly printed some materials for the *Katipunan* and brought out some types for the printing machine of *Kalayaan*. The immediate involvement of the printers in the revolutionary movement was again indicative of the progressive character of the struggle.

The first elements of the Filipino proletariat — the shipyard workers, warehousemen and printers — were immediately in the forefront at the very outset of the national liberation movement, only to be pushed aside by the more articulate advocates of liberalism, the *ilustrados*. The Tejeros Convention clarified the class leadership of the old type of national-democratic revolution.

One might say, however, that earlier, through more than three centuries, forced labor in encomiendas, in timber-cutting, in shipbuilding, in church and government house constructions, in mining and in building roads and bridges spurred the continuous occurrence of localized revolts which were the objective preparation for the Philippine Revolution.

One can be more pointed and definite about the role of the Filipino worker in the preparation of the Philippine Revolution by citing the fact that the Cavite Mutiny of 1872, besides being the occasion for the Gomburza martyrdom, was in the first place a strike of the shipyard workers who demanded better living and working conditions and who were violently suppressed by the colonial authorities.

Significantly these workers had organized themselves into a mutual aid and benefit association as early as 1861. But, even as we recognize the decisive role of the Filipino proletariat in the preparation and initiation of the Philippine Revolution and in making the clear call for national liberation, let us also recognize the fact that the Filipino proletariat was still in its germinal stage in 1896 and that at that time it was more influenced by the liberal ideas of Europe and of the *ilustrados* than imbued with the proletarian ideology of Marx which was already quite a specter frightening the ruling bourgeoisie of Europe. In other words, the workers were more patriotic in a spontaneous way than class conscious. The *Katipunan*, though steered by men from the proletariat, was basically a patriotic movement embracing the masses in the most general sense. Andres Bonifacio could only realize that the Filipino *ilustrados* were reformistic and the masses were revolutionary and that the Filipino rich tended to associate themselves with the colonial authorities against whom the masses were already in revolt.

The importance of an ideology which is truly that of the proletariat and which guides all the toiling people according to their own national-democratic interests is starkly demonstrated by the ease with which the *ilustrados* and landlords derailed the *Katipunan* from its original course and weakened the entire revolutionary movement as soon as they combined to form the leadership of the Aguinaldo government and command the peasant masses. The liberal frame of mind which prevailed in the higher councils of the movement led eventually to a series of compromises like the Pact of Biak-na-Bato, and the naive agreement with the clever representatives of US imperialism in Hong Kong and Singapore, the proclamation of a republic under the “*noble protection*” of the United States and capitulation to the US “*pacification*” campaign in which the masses fighting for national freedom suffered and died in their hundreds of thousands.

Guided by their self-seeking liberalism and their genteel tradition, the representatives of the *ilustrados* — such

as the Buencaminos, Legardas, Paternos, Pardo de Taveras and others — sat back in their comfortable chairs as the plundering hordes of MacArthur stamped their bloody feet on the face of our nation. The most traitorous section of the *ilustrados* had clapped their hands when the price of US\$20 million was settled in the US-Spanish Treaty of Paris in payment for the Philippines. With their *creole* mentality, the renegades embraced the imperialists as fast as they had first refused to heed the Cry of Pugad Lawin.

US imperialism marched in to cheat our people of their freedom and to massacre them for refusing to submit. But the proper blood money was available, the proper spoils were in government offices and in commerce, and the proper liberal language was employed to veil the brutal reality of imperialist conquest. US imperialism made use of deceitful slogans like “*democracy*,” “*Christianity*,” “*benevolent assimilation*” and “*tutelage for self-rule*” as they dealt brutally with non-compromisers who refused to take the oath of allegiance to the US flag and who continued to fight for Philippine independence.

Though we are highly critical of the inadequacy of the liberal frame of mind and method of struggle which in the long run weakened the Philippine Revolution, we recognize the revolutionary government of Aguinaldo at the height of its strength as objectively a bourgeois-democratic formation. The spontaneous masses, including the proletariat, found their rights formally respected in the Malolos Constitution and in practice. The government needed their strength to fight Spanish colonialism and US imperialism.

At the height of the Filipino-American War, the printers working in the press of the revolutionary government and led by Hermenegildo Cruz, Felipe Mendoza and Arturo Soriano struck to protest the supercilious behavior of the foreman and to demand better working conditions. The revolutionary leaders could have invoked the critical war situation as an excuse for quelling the just demands of the workers but, because of the national and democratic character of the revolution, the strikers found ready and warm sympathy among them, particularly from General Antonio Luna, editor of *La Independencia*, who declared: “*We are actually for the honor, independence and prosperity of the Filipino people. I see no reason why we should not give the demand of the strikers if we really are for the improvement of the Filipino workers. The first concern of the Filipino government is to give protection and prosperity to the Filipinos.*”

We relate this incident not only to belabor the fact that workers continued to be an organic part of the revolution but also to show that they were beginning to be conscious of their class interests even as they had entered into a bourgeois-democratic alliance. From that time on, even through the harshest years of the US imperialist regime, the Filipino working class continuously developed in ideology, in politics and in organization.

Union Obrera Democratica

The return of Isabelo de los Reyes in 1901 from the prisons and barricades of Barcelona invigorated to some extent the Filipino workers as a distinct class. Isabelo de los Reyes smuggled in a broad range of socialist reading materials to be read by workers and immediately made contact with Hermenegildo Cruz and other leading organizers from the ranks of the working class.

The workers recognized De los Reyes as a fearless Filipino patriot who defied the Spanish colonial authorities and suffered incarceration several times. They also saw in him a man who understood the international brotherhood and experience of the proletariat and who was prepared to provide leadership to the Filipino proletariat. In a way, at that time, De los Reyes comprehended the popular advance in the storming of the Bastille and the proletarian advance in the Paris Commune.

On December 30, 1901, when for the first time Rizal’s martyrdom was commemorated, the leaders of various printers’ unions and *gremios* met and decided to integrate themselves under the name of *Union de Impresores de Filipinas* (UIF). Participants in the meeting were Isabelo de los Reyes, Hermenegildo Cruz, Arturo Soriano, Melanio de Jesus, Luis Santos, Juan Geronimo, Timoteo Anzures, Nazario Pasicolan, Leopoldo Soriano and Margarita Pasamola — all leading pioneers in the Philippine trade union movement. In this meeting, the Marxist slogan of the First International, “*the emancipation of the working class must be the task of the workers themselves*,” was adopted by the men who formed the *Union de Impresores de Filipinas*, the undisputed premier trade union which served as the base for the first labor federation, the *Union Obrera Democratica* (UOD).

The *Union Obrera Democratica* was established on January 2, 1902, in the first labor congress ever to be held in Philippine history. The Congress also approved the UOD Constitution which embodied the principles adopted from the books *Vida e Obras de Carlos Marx* by Friedrich Engels and *Los Dos Campesinos* by the Italian radical socialist, Malatesta. Isabelo de los Reyes was elected president and Hermenegildo Cruz, vice president.

All the speakers in the Congress attacked US imperialism and the Catholic Church while secret agents listened and took notes. While advancing the economic demands of the labor movement, the UOD expressed its purpose to encourage the people's movement for independence. Alleging that the trade unionists were "*subversives*" and "*anarchists*," Governor General Taft himself directly ordered their blacklisting and surveillance. Thus, US imperialism proved alert to the patriotism and class-consciousness of Filipino workers and prepared its instruments of coercion and suppression.

On August 2, 1902, when the UOD waged the first general strike of the Filipino labor movement to protest the rejection of their demand for a general wage increase as an adjustment to the inflationary crisis, the US colonial government moved to charge Isabelo de los Reyes with sedition and rebellion and convicted him upon the false witness of a striker who turned out to be a secret service man. The charges and conviction were based on a Spanish conspiracy law. Soon after, Isabelo de los Reyes who had withstood various vicissitudes in the Spanish era succumbed to the antilabor tactics of imperialism and resigned from the UOD to concentrate on his religious activity in the Philippine Independent Church.

UIF president and UOD vice president Hermenegildo Cruz acted to have Dr. Dominador Gomez replace De los Reyes in the leadership of the labor movement. The UOD was renamed *Union Obrera Democratica de Filipinas* (UODF). In his proclamation speech as UODF president, Gomez said:

"Do not be like some of our countrymen who are wise and able but have no courage to fight our masters and oppressors. They are timid and would like always to retreat. The banner of Union Democratica de Filipinas is dynamic nationalism against any form of imperialism, against oppression."

In spite of US imperialist repression, the labor federation under Gomez grew by leaps and bounds from 33 to 150 unions. Fearing the growth of organized labor, the US imperialists instructed the ever-useful colonial errand boys, Pedro Paterno and Dr. Trinidad Pardo de Tavera, to persuade Gomez to resign as UODF president and accept a high government post. Gomez was only enraged to hear the two promoters of compromise and told them that he had already committed himself to the labor movement and to militant nationalism.

On May 1, 1903, despite the refusal of the US colonial government to give UODF a permit to demonstrate, the federation staged a demonstration of 100,000 workers to celebrate labor day for the first time in the Philippines. The demonstration was held in front of Malacanang and the workers shouted: "*Down with US imperialism!*"

As recorded by Hermenegildo Cruz, Dr. Gomez spoke before the demonstrators:

"We were told that America is the mother of democracy, but the American government in Malacanang is afraid to talk with the people who want democracy. The Americans said that they are for freedom, but why is it that they want to curtail our freedom by displaying fixed bayonets? The workers will not accept from the capitalists even a single centavo without an exchange of its equivalent in honest labor. What we are against is the practice of the capitalists of robbing the workers of the product of their sweat by not giving them what is due them. The workers should always bear in mind that they must achieve their emancipation themselves. We will not win without a struggle. We need strength in our struggle. We must always be united. In our struggle for better working and living conditions, we must at the same time struggle for the liberation of the motherland."

Within the same month of May, 1903, the home of Dr. Gomez and the printing press where the UODF organ was printed were simultaneously raided by American and Filipino policemen in violation of the right to home and the right of free press and free assembly. The UODF president, like his immediate predecessor Isabelo de los Reyes, was charged with "*sedition*" and "*illegal association*."

What US imperialism resented in the leadership of these two men was the conjunction of the labor movement and a militant anti-imperialist movement which, it was afraid, would pursue the Philippine Revolution. The UODF was accused of giving assistance to the persistent armed struggle of Macario Sakay against the US imperialists. Afterwards, the US colonial regime stirred the rumor that Dr. Gomez had betrayed Macario Sakay. Immediately after the crackdown on the UODF which was intended to silence anti-imperialist workers, the agents of the American Federation of Labor tried to take over the Philippine trade union movement and to propagate the bourgeois-liberal concept that labor be separated from political activity and that it be always in unity with capital. To pursue its imperialist and antilabor aims, the American Federation of Labor encouraged Lope K. Santos to organize the *Union del Trabajo de Filipinas* (UTF) and to stress the separation of labor and politics and the unity of the working class and the capitalist class. The UTF, in contrast with the UODF, enjoyed the full backing of Governor General Taft.

However, despite US imperialist sponsorship, the UTF failed to deceive the workers. The stalwarts of the premier labor organization, the *Union de Impresores de Filipinas*, like Hermenegildo Cruz, Felipe Mendoza and Arturo Soriano, exposed the attempt to mislead the Filipino workers. Their experience in the struggle for national liberation and for workers' rights and their exposure to Marxist ideas, chief of which is that the proletariat must win political power, had taught them how to withstand brutal repression and deception even if done in the style of US imperialism.

With the disappearance of De los Reyes and Gomez from the trade union movement by force of imperialist power, Hermenegildo Cruz found himself at the helm, and he concentrated on transforming the craft unions (*gremios*) into full-fledged industrial unions so that these would be the stronger basis for a new labor federation. On May 1, 1913, he organized the *Congreso Obrero de Filipinas* and was elected its president.

Congreso Obrero de Filipinas

The *Congreso de Obrero de Filipinas* (COF) continued to expose and condemn the American Federation of labor, its racial policies and its attempts to subvert the Philippine trade union movement and subordinate it to the US colonial government. The COF vigorously advocated the independence of the Philippines from US imperialism.

In the era of imperialism, the COF was not free from splitters. In order to pursue their pro-imperialist tendencies and their US style of political muckraking, Vicente Sotto, Ramon Diokno and Lope K. Santos formed a faction and split away to form the *Asemblea Obrera* in 1917. In order to pursue his program of company unionism, Joaquin Balmori also split away in the same year and formed the *Federacion del Trabajo de Filipinas*. Balmori advocated that labor unions should charge no membership dues and should receive financial support from management. His federation even made a resolution against strikes and so-called subversive ideas.

In the meantime, in the strongest single labor organization of the period, the UIF, a reorganization was made on March 1, 1918, in which Crisanto Evangelista was elected president. The period was marked by an atmosphere of militancy in the trade union movement as the October Revolution ushered in the first proletarian state.

In the entire trade union movement, the emergence of the young Crisanto Evangelista as a leader marked a new era. Upon his assumption as UIF president, he created a committee, composed of Hermenegildo Cruz, Pablo Lucas and himself, to make a labor survey in the various printing establishments and to draft a general petition to be presented simultaneously to all managements. A campaign for a strike fund was immediately launched in preparation for a general walkout if the petition was rejected. The press capitalists were so impressed with the determination and unity of their workers that they submitted to the demands which included wage hikes ranging from 100 to 500 percent. As a result of this successful campaign, the prestige and leadership of Crisanto Evangelista rose.

President Quezon, in an attempt to undermine the proven strength of the UIF, appointed Evangelista as a member of the Philippine Independence Mission to the United States in 1919. The mission though gave Evangelista the chance to meet and evaluate the various American labor leaders and organizations. He noted the reactionary and racial policies of the American Federation of Labor led by Samuel Gompers. He also came across more materials on scientific socialism and he was positively influenced by the widespread enthusiasm of the workers to launch a Third International.

Maintaining a high political consciousness over its daily economic struggle, the UIF, under the energetic leadership of Crisanto Evangelista, struck for the cause of national freedom and integrity in 1920 against all the American-owned and American-controlled newspapers which had suddenly waged a press campaign to forestall the movement for national independence and denigrate the Filipino people as incompetent for self-government and, therefore, deserving of further US imperialist "*tutelage*."

In 1922, Evangelista established the *Partido Obrero* (Workers' Party), the precursor of the Communist Party of the Philippines. On May 1, 1927, the COF elected Francisco Varona president and Crisanto Evangelista secretary. On this day, it decided to affiliate with the Red International of Labor Unions. This was the culmination of Filipino labor participation in the Canton Conference of 1925, and in the conferences where the Filipino representatives discussed with the representatives of other national labor organizations (especially those from the East), shared their experiences in economic and political struggle and arrived at the conclusion that since they all faced Western imperialism they needed to band together in equality and in coordination against the common enemy.

In 1928, a more extensive contact of Filipino labor leaders with the international labor movement occurred.

The leaders of COF, headed by Crisanto Evangelista, attended conferences in Shanghai, Moscow and Berlin. This development frightened the US colonial government and it instructed its agents to make trouble in the COF. US imperialism was afraid that the Filipino proletariat would derive greater strength by coordinating its efforts with the international labor movement.

On May 1, 1929, the COF split into the yellow faction led by Ruperto Cristobal and the red faction led by Crisanto Evangelista. The former packed the meeting hall with his own men and the latter had no alternative but to bolt. In this manner, the COF became inutile and a more militant and more progressive labor federation, *Katipunan ng mga Anak Pawis*, arose in June 1929. At the close of the third decade, Crisanto Evangelista emerged as the most outstanding leader in the trade union movement, extending his influence to Visayas and Mindanao by maintaining fraternal relations with the *Federacion Obrero de Filipinas* of Jose Maria Nava.

The Communist Party of the Philippines

Pursuing the objective of creating a solid political instrument of the working class, which he had earlier attempted in the *Partido Obrero*, Crisanto Evangelista established the Communist Party of the Philippines which would be imbued with Marxism-Leninism. Supported by the *Katipunan ng mga Anak Pawis* and the *Katipunang Pambansang Mambubukid sa Pilipinas*, the chief organizations of the trade union movement and the peasant movement respectively, the Communist Party of the Philippines was founded on August 26, 1930, and formally launched on November 7, 1930, thus bringing into an alliance the working class and the peasantry.

The Communist Party of the Philippines immediately became the object of concerted vilification and provocations by the ruling class and the US colonial government. It faced immediately the same reactionary forces of imperialism and feudalism which thwarted the Philippine Revolution at the turn of the century and the first labor federation, the *Union Obrera Democratica*, in 1902 and 1903.

On May 1, 1931, workers marching under the two o'clock sun were bombarded with jets of water at Maypajo, Caloocan, upon the orders of the US colonial regime. Subsequently, the meeting of the workers to celebrate the day was raided by American secret policemen and constabulary soldiers. The jails of Manila were filled with industrial workers and peasants. Twenty-eight communist leaders headed by Crisanto Evangelista, Juan Feleo, Guillermo Capadocia and Mariano Balgos were singled out from hundreds of arrested workers and were accused of sedition and illegal assembly. The leaders were given considerably long prison terms, others were banished. The Communist Party was outlawed, only a few months after its establishment. Provincial governors and town presidents were instructed by the US colonial regime not to give any permit to the KAP and KPMP for any gathering.

It was only when the demand for the Popular Front grew stronger, as a result of the depression and worsened condition of the masses, that President Quezon pardoned the imprisoned and banished labor leaders in 1936. The Roosevelt government, in an antifascist act of expediency, acceded to the clamor for the release of the Communist Party leaders; communist parties in all parts of the world had become the most reliable antifascist fighters.

At the same time, Quezon tried to establish labor “unity” under his leadership and he tried establishing the National Federation of Labor with government subsidy. His attempt failed and Evangelista succeeded in upholding as a matter of principle and in practice the independence of the working-class movement from the Commonwealth government.

Come 1938, the Communist Party of the Philippines became numerically stronger as it merged with the Socialist Party led by Pedro Abad Santos. Through this merger, it made up for the years when it was outlawed and its leaders were either in prison or banished. The Socialist Party, which had become strong in the countryside, brought the peasantry in greater number to the Communist Party of the Philippines. The latter party had continued to enjoy the support of the proletariat even in its underground years, as proven when it again emerged.

In 1939, Crisanto Evangelista made another consolidation in the trade union movement and organized the Collective Labor Movement. This later became an organic part of the anti-Japanese resistance movement.

At this point, we give recognition to the profound development of the ideology, politics and organization of the working class under the leadership of Crisanto Evangelista. With respect to ideology, the working class started to grasp the universal theory of Marxism-Leninism. With respect to politics, the Communist Party started to make the working class a significant force in the struggle for national democracy. With respect to organization, the Communist Party of the Philippines was established as a definite working-class party.

A serious shortcoming of the leadership of the Communist Party of the Philippines, before the contradiction between the Filipino people and Japanese fascism became the principal contradiction, was the failure to place the

principal stress on the national and agrarian struggle against US imperialism and feudalism. The leadership was well-versed in the contradiction between the proletariat and the capitalist class in general, but it failed all the time to stress the fact that the main contradiction within the Philippine society then was between US imperialism and feudalism on the one hand and the Filipino people, mainly the workers and peasants, on the other hand. While all the workers, Marxist or not, demanded Philippine independence from US imperialism, the matter of national liberation was obscured by the slogans of class struggle between the capitalist class and the working class.

The Communist Party of the Philippines was so immersed in legal and urban struggles that it was unprepared to wage armed struggle against Japanese fascism immediately. Crisanto Evangelista and other leaders of the Party were apprehended in the city by the Japanese a month after enemy occupation of Manila. Evangelista died a patriotic death in the hands of the Japanese fascists.

During the war, the CPP failed to make use of the Popular Front and the anti-fascist struggle as an occasion for building up anti-imperialism that would last the duration of the war and be capable of meeting the return of US imperialism. Had the people been prepared to fight the return of US imperialism, the slogan of “*democratic peace*” would not have been raised to allow the US imperialists to crush the forces of national democracy, which broadly included not only the Communist Party of the Philippines and the HUKBALAHAP but even such a party as the Democratic Alliance.

The Japanese Occupation put the trade union movement into disarray as industrial and commercial activity became irregular and fell under the control of the aggressor.

Congress of Labor Organizations

In 1945, therefore, the Committee of Labor Organizations practically started from scratch after the ruin of war. It emerged from the ranks of the newly installed workers and came under the leadership of Mariano Balgos, Amado V. Hernandez and Manuel Joven, Felixberto Olalia, Pedro Castro and Cipriano Cid — to mention only a few. The committee within a short time became the Congress of Labor Organizations, embracing all genuine labor organizations.

As the leading and most comprehensive organization of the workers, the Congress of Labor Organizations became a massive force for national democracy. It became an effective instrument of the working class in seeking economic welfare and also in fighting for the true independence of the Filipino people.

Led by ardent patriots, the CLO found itself in the city fighting vigorously against the measures the US government and the monopoly-capitalist class behind it wanted to impose upon the Filipino people in order to perpetuate colonial control and influence over our national life.

Against the basic principle of self-determination, the US government arrogated into itself the power to “*grant*” sovereignty and independence to the Filipino people in an act of the US Congress. In the US-RP Treaty of General Relations of July 4, 1946, which made the “*grant*” of independence, it is stated that the US government would retain control over military bases strategically placed all over the archipelago.

Against this background of imperialist chicanery and a treaty which retained the basic coercive instruments of US imperialism in the Philippines, the Congress of Labor Organizations girded itself for other measures that were still to be rammed down our throats. It opposed the Bell Trade Act, which would extend the conditions of “free trade” and grant to US citizens the right to exploit our natural resources and operate public utilities, necessitating the Parity Amendment of the Philippine Constitution.

US imperialism prostituted democratic processes by expelling through its puppets the duly-elected members of Congress belonging to the Democratic Alliance and to the anti-imperialist wing of the Nacionalista Party, who were determined to block the passage of the Bell Trade Act and the ratification of the Parity Amendment in 1948. Despite the broad character of the Democratic Alliance, the reactionaries tried to pin it down as a subversive organization.

Not satisfied with expelling the duly-elected members of Congress who opposed its anti-Filipino designs, US imperialism also engaged in sinister actions which did physical harm to members of the Democratic Alliance and the mass organizations supporting it. The Congress of Labor Organizations became the object of imperialist-guided attacks in all forms, in propaganda and actual murder. Its Secretary General, Manuel Joven, became a victim of kidnapping and assassination.

In 1951, in the course of the white terror campaign against persons and groups suspected of having association with the Communist Party of the Philippines, the national headquarters of the Congress of Labor

Organizations was raided and its leaders and members were arrested en masse. The Congress of Labor Organizations was forced out of legal existence at the prompting of US imperialism. This abuse of democracy was made in the name of democracy by the CIA-directed Ramon Magsaysay.

As borne out thirteen years later by a Supreme Court decision on Amado Hernandez et al, on May 30, 1964, acquitting Hernandez and other leaders of the CLO and “*upholding*” the right of expression and free assembly, the action of Magsaysay was indeed an attack against democracy, particularly those rights piously invoked by the Supreme Court, and also a dastardly attack against the national-democratic movement in which the CLO had excelled by fighting for our most basic national interests.

After every major imperialist crackdown on the Filipino labor movement, attempts are made by reactionary agents to take over the field. Since 1951, various attempts have been made to take over where the CLO left off. The American Jesuits put up their Institute of Social Order and the Federation of Free Workers. The US imperialists—through their labor attaches and the AFL-CIO representatives—have directly extended subsidies to all sorts of puppet organizations and organizers. The International Labor Organization has also been used to subvert and redirect the labor movement in the Philippines, ideologically, politically and organizationally. The Philippine Trade Union Council was put up under the direction of US agents in the International Labor Organization. The Asian Labor Education Center was also put up and assured by American foundations of continuous subsidy in order to subvert the thinking of the Filipino working class. The line of the counterrevolutionaries, as before, is to make the working class bend backwards to suit US imperialism and to prevent it from developing a revolutionary consciousness.

Together with the agents of imperialism and clericalism, labor racketeers have flourished on the seeming carcass of a labor movement. But a class-conscious and anti-imperialist proletariat, with a clear socialist perspective, will surely rise up.

The CLO was busted to stop it from rallying the workers under the banner of national democracy and to leave the field wide open for all sorts of misleaders. US imperialism was the leading enemy force behind the suppression of the CLO as it was previously in the case of the Philippine Revolution of 1896, the UOD, the COF and the CPP.

But the Filipino workers will prevail in the long run as they have always risen from the most trying crises imposed by their class enemy, US monopoly capitalism. They know well now that their class enemy is US monopoly capitalism, which squeezes the surplus value created by Filipino labor in the most exploitative way by bringing out of our country superprofits from its investments and in this way depresses internal economic growth. They also know well now that it is US imperialism, through its military instruments, agents and bases right here within our national territory, which provides the puppet state with its coercive power. They now see through the subtlety of US power and influence in all organs of the ruling class, whether bureaucratic, political, cultural, economic or police and military.

The progressive labor leaders of today are again developing the labor movement as an instrument of national democracy. As they realize that other patriotic classes, groups and elements are involved in the anti-imperialist struggle, they are learning in practice how to move with them and how to mass themselves against the chief enemy, US monopoly capitalism or imperialism.

That the labor movement has consistently advanced despite the difficulties already described is best proven by the establishment of the *Lapiang Manggagawa* (Workers’ Party) in 1963. It was established with the biggest number of labor following at that time. However, at the present moment, it is seriously faced with the danger of disintegration from which it has evidently suffered through four years of existence, apparently, because of the deleterious impact of bourgeois politics which wracks the leadership every election time and because of the right-wing opportunism of certain elements and also because of narrow interfederation *amor propio*. But in the most objective manner of criticism, let me state that a party like the *Lapiang Manggagawa*, which tries to assume the role of leadership, will be strong only if it fulfills certain conditions in the fields of ideology, politics and organization.

In the ideological field, a working class party must have a truly proletarian world outlook, must be able to comprehend strategic principles and must maintain a socialist perspective and orientation. It must set up an educational program which promotes among the workers a proletarian outlook, a scientific viewpoint of history, an analysis of capitalist economy and imperialism, and socialism and a new democratic line. It must maintain workers’ schools at all levels. It must hold conferences on problems affecting the working class. It must set up a

newspaper to serve as an ideological vehicle. Above all, it must, through actual mass struggle, raise the revolutionary consciousness of the people.

In the field of political activity, a workers' party must be able to daily carry out concrete militant struggle for national democracy. It must build itself up not only among the workers but also among the peasants. It must arouse and mobilize the peasant masses for agrarian revolution, the key to the victory of the national-democratic revolution. It must respond promptly to the daily shifting demands of the anti-imperialist and the anti-feudal struggle, independently and in cooperation with all other anti-imperialist and anti-feudal forces and organizations. It should be alert to valuable alliances and keep on the alert after such alliances have been formed. It must have the firm and single objective of developing and acquiring political power for the masses.

In the field of organization, a workers' party must be guided by the principle of democratic centralism. It must require individual membership from masses of all patriotic classes willing to assume the proletarian viewpoint. It must draw the greatest number of members and put up the greatest number of branches among the workers and peasants. It must build up itself on a nationwide scale to achieve the capability of withstanding the well-oiled bourgeois parties of the ruling class. It must arrive at organizational plans and must be able to fulfill them within the given period of time with all given party assets and resources clear beforehand. Organizations at all levels, from the branch upward, must be maintained on a daily basis and not on a seasonal basis during election years as it is in the NP and LP.

In our review of the trade union movement and its connection with the national-democratic movement, we have concluded with the tasks of building up a proletarian party. Without a proletarian party to provide leadership, the struggle for national democracy cannot be won.

Under the auspices of Labor Secretary Bias Ople, labor aristocrats made a formal agreement last month to merge the Philippine Labor Center and the Philippine Trade Unions Council.

The "united labor movement" was obviously necessitated by the emerging wave of workers' strikes challenging the authority of bourgeois trade union leaders.

The labor aristocrats expressed the view that most of the recent strikes were caused by "squabbles" within and between unions. Slavishly, they declared, "Management is just the innocent victim of these strikes." The truth is that the trade unions run by labor aristocrats are either disintegrating or rebelling against sham trade unionism. The labor aristocrats justified their merger as a step to "make organized labor a potent sector this coming elections." They declared, "By being directly involved in the affairs of the government, labor can play a decisive role during elections and can put into office pro-labor officials."

The truth is that the merger is another transitory device to create the illusion that the working class supports the Marcos regime in the November elections.

Among the labor aristocrats, there can be no lasting and true unity because all of them treat trade unions as their own private business ventures.

The Communist Party of the Philippines should work hard in creating party branches and groups among workers in factories, mines, transportation lines and shops in order to topple down fake labor leaders and bring about the ideological, political and organizational unity of the working class. The Party should exert all efforts to smash the bourgeois authority of labor aristocrats and spread among the workers Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought, which is the proletarian revolutionary ideology.

1970 May Day Statement

From *Ang Bayan*, Vol. II, No. 3, June 1, 1970

May Day is a glorious day for the world proletariat. It is a day for the Filipino workers to rededicate themselves to the cause of the world proletarian revolution under the great red banner of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought. It is a day for them to strengthen their resolve to carry out the Philippine revolution even more vigorously in furtherance of the national democratic interests of the people against US imperialism, modern revisionism and all reaction.

The Communist Party of the Philippines stands forth as the proletarian vanguard of the Filipino people and as the firm defender of proletarian internationalism in the Philippines. The cadres of the Party are now resolutely striving to arouse and mobilize the Filipino working class as the leading force of the Philippine revolution. In this regard, the cadres are heroically combating the overt and covert agents of US imperialism who keep on trying to mislead and disunite the Filipino working class. The powerful ideological weapon, Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought, is now in the hands of an ever-increasing mass of workers. They are sure to smash the Lava revisionist renegades, the yellow trade union bosses and such other counterrevolutionary reformists as those who try to spread the illusion that workers can seek adequate relief within the present reactionary system or become capitalists themselves by buying shares from the corporations that oppress them.

In the decade of the 1970s, the revolutionary storm in the Philippines will certainly grow ever stronger with the militant mass actions of the Filipino working class against the bestial system of exploitation. Real wages have been forced down far below the subsistence level by a series of steps taken by US imperialism and its reactionary puppets to increase their profits and step up the subjugation of the people. The devaluation of the peso in relation to the US dollar means concretely higher prices of essential commodities. At this stage, it is blatantly clear that the state is incapable of legislating a minimum wage level adequate to maintain the old hand-to-mouth existence of the vast majority of workers.

The Filipino working class has clearly no alternative but to unite and fight fiercely against its oppressors who never hesitate to use all apparatuses of the state (the army, police, courts and prisons) to suppress workers' organizations and strikes. In the countryside of the Philippines, the Party and the New People's Army are resolutely creating revolutionary bases. These are areas where proletarian leadership has emerged and where all revolutionaries are welcome. These are areas from where the Philippine revolution is rapidly advancing in concert with the militant mass actions in the city. The campaign of intimidation being carried out in actual deeds of terror and saber rattling by the Marcos reactionary regime is nothing but a sign of its desperation in the chasm of its own bankruptcy and in the face of the growing avalanche of the revolutionary movement.

The Party and the New People's Army are engaged in the broadest national united front with all revolutionary patriots. A definite national united front organization for waging revolutionary armed struggle is now being formed to further isolate the enemy. The working class is firmly uniting with all other patriotic classes and strata interested in the triumph of the people's democratic revolution.

The Philippine revolution is now in progress under extremely favorable conditions. US imperialism, modern revisionism and all reaction are inextricably sunk in crisis. The Chinese working class has risen to take firm hold of the material base and superstructure of Chinese society. In the process, it has consolidated the most powerful socialist base in the present era of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought. As Chairman Mao has so lucidly put it, "The enemy rots with every passing day while for us things are getting better daily."

Cast Away the Labor Aristocrats!

Ang Bayan, Special Release, February 18, 1971

The unprecedented mass actions that are unfolding during this decade have reinforced the role of the Communist Party as the most advanced detachment of the proletariat and isolated the evil of bourgeois trade unionism that has for so long served to fragment and prevent the proletariat from asserting its revolutionary role as the leading class in the struggle for national democracy.

While great masses of workers are calling for general strikes against US imperialism and its running dogs, principally the Marcos fascist puppet clique, labor contractors like Oca and Co. openly offer their strike-breaking services to the reactionaries. The bourgeois trade union bosses like the labor lawyer Lacsina, despite their previous pretensions of being progressive, also openly show their lukewarm attitude or outright opposition to the development of general strikes and persistently deprecate the propagation and implementation of the universal theory of the revolutionary proletariat, Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought. The Lava revisionist renegades, despite their counterrevolutionary abandonment of the trade union movement during the last more than two decades, are once more creeping out of their holes to combine with notorious saboteurs of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat in attacking Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought.

The Communist Party of the Philippines faces a bright future in organizing trade unions and Party branches in factories, transportation lines, mines, plantations, logging concessions and other places of work. The political and economic crisis of the enemy is getting worse every day and all the labor aristocrats are clearly becoming incapable of making apologies for the reactionary system.

The workers have long awaited their Party to intensify ideological, political and organizational work among them. During all the time that the barefaced labor aristocrats and the Lava revisionist renegades had all the field to organize the workers, not even 10 percent of the working class population heeded their sham calls for unionization. A great number of workers preferred to join militant national democratic mass organizations which follow a revolutionary policy.

The labor aristocrats have played the role mainly of either being labor contractors and labor lawyers, represented mainly by the likes of Oca. These anti-proletarian scoundrels have gone too far in their counterrevolutionary and corrupt activities. Their ideological and political bankruptcy and their ill-gotten personal wealth lay them open to all-out repudiation by the proletarian revolutionaries.

The conspicuous personal wealth of the labor aristocrats is derived from secret brokers' and retainers' fees from the big bourgeoisie; subsidies from US imperialist agencies, the puppet government and the anti-China lobby; overt and covert strike-breaking and strike-peddling; establishment of company unions; huge salaries from labor federations; collection of huge negotiation fees and lawyer's fees ranging from 10 to 25 percent; manipulation of union funds under various pretexts; and so on and so forth.

The Party in performing its leading role is duty-bound to expose the various forms of betrayal of the proletariat perpetrated by the labor aristocrats. If the workers and student activists participating in mass actions are well mobilized for the trade union movement, these labor aristocrats can certainly be cast away and the revolutionary path of the proletariat can be rid of obstacles. Never before has the situation been as favorable as now for the development of revolutionary trade unions and the establishment of Party branches.

Long live Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought!

Down with the labor aristocrats!

Long live the Filipino proletariat and the revolutionary masses!

The masses of workers are stirring. They are breaking out everywhere against the intensified exploitation characterizing this crumbling semicolonial and semifeudal system. They are throwing off the yellow labor leaders, labor dealers and labor aristocrats from their backs and rising up in irrepressible political and economic struggle against the rule of the exploiters and oppressors.

A great wave of mass strikes battered the reactionary ruling order in 1971. The two unprecedented general transport strikes of January 5-13 and February 2-10, which started off the mass actions for the year, brought about the mobilization of masses of jeepney drivers, transport workers and the broad masses of the people against the intensified exploitative schemes of the US imperialist oil monopoly and its local running dogs.

Widespread industrial strikes affected a number of plants in the tire and rubber, textile and textile goods, metal products, cement, food manufacturing industries, in fact practically every other significant manufacturing industry. Long drawn-out strikes likewise hit a considerable number of restaurants, hotels, department stores, insurance and accounting firms, private schools and other establishments.

A month long general strike was held by thousands of Filipino workers in Clark Air Force Base with the support of the people of Angeles City and other towns in Pampanga. Significantly, this strike culminated in a giant march and rally at the gates of the US imperialist military installation.

Farm workers, particularly those in sugar and coconut plantations in Central and Southern Luzon and Western Visayas, also fought for their democratic rights throughout the year, organizing themselves into effective forces against all reaction.

Everywhere youth activists have been linking up with the masses of militant workers in fighting against the strikebreaking and union busting tactics of the reactionary capitalist managements, their labor stooges and the constabulary police and lumpen gangsters.

Significant progress has been made in building up a broad alliance of militant labor federations encompassing the whole trade union movement. The big-time labor leaders and labor aristocrats Oca, Lacsina, Hernandez, Lerum, Mendoza, Cid and others of their yellow stripe, are more and more starkly exposed and one by one cast away by the rapidly surging revolutionary trade union movement.

The Filipino proletariat repeatedly proved its high sense of self-sacrifice in the service of the people in the January 13 Plaza Miranda massacre, May Day massacre and Caloocan massacre, which saw the heroic death, among others, of Liza Balandó and Fred Tibar, representatives of the new militant worker activists, and the wounding of hundreds of other militant youth and workers.

The break of a glorious new day has come for the Filipino proletariat. Once again it has the glorious opportunity to give full play to its revolutionary ideology, militancy and organization in leading the struggle of the Filipino people for national liberation and democracy.

Great strides were taken in 1971. Bound by unshakable unity with the masses of peasants and revolutionary intelligentsia and integrating the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought with the concrete practice of the Philippine revolution, the Filipino proletariat will surely take greater strides in leading the people's cause further on the road to victory in the coming year.

***Uphold the Leadership
of the Proletariat in the Revolution
and Go Deep
among the Masses of Workers***

Ang Bayan, Vol. VII, No. 2, May 1, 1975

On May First, we celebrate the glorious sacrifices and triumphs of the working class in its long history of revolutionary struggle against the oppressors and exploiters throughout the world and in our own country. We uphold the leadership of the proletariat in the Philippine revolution and resolve to go deep among the masses of workers.

We, the advanced detachment of the proletariat, perform our revolutionary tasks in our country not only for the sake of the broad masses of the Filipino people but also in the spirit of proletarian internationalism. We are determined to fulfill our share in the struggle of the world proletariat for the liberation of the people of the world from the scourge of imperialism, modern revisionism and all reaction.

The millions of workers in our country are suffering from extreme oppression and exploitation under this fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique. They are eager to defend their political and economic rights and join the ranks of resistance. They know that their liberation is impossible without the liberation of all the oppressed and exploited in the country.

The masses of workers are neither cowed nor deceived by the fascist regime. Fully aware of the viciousness of the US-Marcos dictatorship through their concrete experience, they recognize that revolutionary militancy and consistent revolutionary work must be qualified by prudence and vigilance, especially in the cities and the enemy's main lines of communication.

Patient underground work is the general character of revolutionary work among the masses of workers today. To have well-selected cadres working underground, to accumulate strength and bide our time, and to avoid rashness and exposure is the rule. It requires a great deal of revolutionary effort and struggle to reach and unite the workers in a series of workplaces and in entire industries.

Every open and legal manifestation of strength must presuppose an underground strength that is several times larger. We can never tire of working arduously and patiently for the revolutionary cause of the working class and the entire nation. We can measure our daily cumulative successes against the difficulties and even some setbacks that we encounter. If we look a few years back, we started with so little or nothing at all. We have every reason to be confident of winning victory. The objective conditions for waging revolution are more excellent than ever before. The political and economic crisis of the Philippine ruling system is getting worse everyday. The world crisis of the capitalist system is getting worse everyday. The world is aglow with the victories of the people. All that needs to be done is to steadily build up the subjective forces of the revolution. We expand and consolidate them in the course of revolutionary struggle. At the beginning of the fight, our forces are small and weak and the enemy's are big and strong. But the objective conditions show the way for us to grow big and strong step by step and defeat in the end an enemy that is now outwardly big and strong but is rotten to the core.

The plight of the Filipino workers

The fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique prides itself in suppressing the workers' political and economic rights, in "stabilizing" the political situation by brute force and pressing down workers' wages for the benefit of the US and other foreign monopoly capitalists and such arch reactionaries as the big compradors and big landlords.

The Labor Code of the Philippines, which has replaced the Industrial Peace Act, systematizes and incorporates all the anti-worker orientation, content and effects of Proclamation 1081, General Orders Nos. 1, 2, 2-A & 5 and Presidential Decrees Nos. 21, 133, 143 & 148, among others. There is nothing new about this handbook except that it conveniently sums up the anti-worker character of the "new society."

The masses of workers, including those in the government service, remain under the threat of arbitrary arrest, raid, murder, torture and indefinite detention by the fascist military. There is nothing that dispels the presupposition and effects of such consummated and still being consummated acts of the fascist regime in carrying out arbitrary dismissals of government workers, in raiding and looting the homes and offices of progressive workers

and trade unions, in arresting and indefinitely detaining trade unionists and common workers and encouraging private employers to punish trade unionists and make the most profit from their workers.

General Order No. 5, which scandalously deprives the masses of workers of their right to strike, reigns supreme. The subversion and nullification of the workers' right to unionize and undertake mass actions is a continuing fact. The "labor code's" recognition of the workers' right to self-organization and right to concerted activities or its harping on the line of "one union, one industry" is senseless formality. Without the right to strike, trade unions whose collective bargaining agreements terminate face extinction and workers, who have no trade union at all to start with, face extreme difficulties in organizing one.

It is keeping to an old ritual for the Department of Labor to be talking about the "rationalization" of the trade union movement, even if such "rationalization" were merely aimed at putting all trade unions at the dictation and command of the fascist regime. What so far is the principal intention of the fascist regime has been to subvert and nullify all kinds of trade unions rather than carry out a reactionary syndicalist policy. A reactionary government becomes concerned about organizing its own kind of trade unions only when it is faced with a large trade union movement with a revolutionary character.

The employers, with the foreign monopolies on top, are far ahead in integrating their organizations. It is already evident that the fascist regime is more interested in such farces as "tripartite congresses," with itself and the highly organized employers playing ball with a few handpicked labor aristocrats who pretend to represent all the disparate yellow trade unions and even the overwhelming majority of workers, who remain unorganized and are outside of either yellow or genuine trade unions.

The "labor code" retains every obnoxious feature of Presidential Decree No. 21. It adopts the National Labor Relations Commission (NLRC), the same dog as the Court of Industrial Relations (CIR) with a new tag. With the never-ending increase of cases involving the workers and their employers, the shifted officials of the CIR and a bigger pack of arbitrators and lawyers continue to prey on the workers and take advantage of bureaucratic delays to carry on their corrupt work.

While there is pretense of protecting the workers from lockouts, dismissals and suspensions, employers are allowed to carry out "preventive suspensions," "reassignments," and "demotions" and are no longer considered criminally liable for unfair labor practices because cases involving these are now conceived to be mere administrative cases easily decided under the table or indefinitely delayed, if not outrightly dismissed, when the workers insist on their rights. The workers are under a permanent and absolute injunction because they are deprived of their right to strike. And only in "limited cases" may the NLRC issue injunctions or restraining orders against employers. Since the trade unions are prohibited from collecting strike and defense funds, the workers are in the most difficult situation to pay for competent legal advice and make their way through the NLRC.

More cases than ever before do not reach the NLRC. Employers simply call on the fascist military and the integrated police to quell any just demand from the workers and punish their leaders. The workers and their leaders are simply charged with "economic sabotage," "possession of deadly weapons," "theft of company property" or any such fabrication. For "stealing" any material, spare part, product or article worth even only a few centavos, a worker can be imprisoned for six to twelve months under a fascist decree.

All the hard-won economic gains of the workers through decades of struggle have been drastically reduced or wiped out. Upon the repeal of the Blue Sunday Law, the employers are allowed to rearrange the work schedules of workers so as to permit them no slack period, avoid paying for overtime work and sabotage every attempt of workers or even only their leaders to meet on Sundays.

Female workers are discouraged from working in nighttime productive enterprises but are encouraged to work in tourist-oriented enterprises like bars, nightclubs, sauna baths and massage clinics. Maternity leave benefits of working mothers have been drastically reduced. The exploitation of child labor has been liberalized because work permits are no longer required for such. The sick and injured can no longer seek compensation under both the workmen's compensation and the Social Security System (SSS) schemes but instead they can do so only under one integrated scheme, with drastic reduction of benefits and with the workers required to pay premiums, unlike before.

The job security and wage conditions of all regular workers are grossly undermined with the approval and encouragement given by the "labor code" for employers to take in "apprentices" and "learners" at wages far below the minimum wage and farm out aspects of an enterprise to contractors who are not bound by the minimum wage

law. Regular workers are being forced to resign or retire early only to be replaced by lower-paid workers. For exploiting “apprentices” and “learners,” the big capitalists are even given tax deductions as incentives.

The big capitalists are maximizing their profits by taking advantage of the political and legal conditions set by the fascist regime, by enforcing speed-ups, by lengthening the working hours, setting excessively high production quotas on every worker and instituting arbitrary work regulations that are used to cause wage deductions. Of course, the semicolonial and semifeudal character of the economy has not only remained but has even deepened. The landlords are carrying out an enclosure movement but the depressed industries cannot absorb the displaced tenants and homesteaders. The army of reserve labor has rapidly increased and is being deliberately used to depress wage levels.

Contrary to the claims of the fascist regime that it has reduced the unemployment rate to 4.1 percent—an obvious lie because in the present crisis-ridden capitalist world even the leading capitalist countries have high rates of unemployment—the rate of unemployment now in the country could be at least 35 percent. Every year, about a million youth reach working age without finding employment. Large masses of workers are being thrown off their jobs due to the economic crisis churning in the capitalist world.

In a semicolonial and semifeudal country like the Philippines, unemployment is usually camouflaged by the seeming absorption of those who reach working age into the ranks of farm workers. The percentage of farm workers who have daily work within the agricultural season is certainly flimsy and is fast thinning out in all agricultural areas. To create a false picture, statisticians of the reactionary government beat themselves every year in manipulating figures on the unemployed and underemployed.

The vast majority of industrial and other non-agricultural wage-earners in the Philippines do not receive the minimum wage of eight pesos a day. They get coolie wages. Employers circumvent the minimum wage law by resorting to pakyaw or piece work. It is also through this method that employers of farm workers circumvent the law requiring a minimum wage of ₱4.75 for farm workers. The benefits from the Sugar Act of 1972, social security contributions and the “social amelioration bonus” for sugar workers are gobbled up by the sugar landlords themselves through various devices. Farm workers in rice, corn, coconut, banana and other areas have no defined rights whatsoever.

The fascist regime brazenly declares that there should be no fuss about minimum wage levels because it considers “development,” the “generation of more jobs” and “strengthening the purchasing power of the peso” as more important. But the truth is that the minimum wage levels set in 1970 have been left far behind by inflation and the continuous devaluation of the peso.

The open-door policy for foreign investments, the incurring of huge foreign and local debts, the unrestricted remittance of superprofits, the large foreign trade deficits, the expensive and graft-ridden infrastructure projects, the endless increase of the tax burden and the continuous devaluation of the peso have resulted neither in “development,” “generation of more jobs” nor “strengthening of the purchasing power of the peso.” They have merely served to squeeze the toiling masses and the entire nation dry.

Though the fascist regime claims to have cut down the rate of inflation from an already reduced figure of 34 percent to a mere eight percent — another obvious lie — the rate of inflation is actually running high at over 35 percent and is mercilessly cutting down the real wages of workers. It is bad enough, even if we go by the understated figures of the reactionary government’s statisticians, that since 1970 the prices of basic goods and services purchased by the average household of six has been increasing at 20.64 percent yearly.

According to the May 1974 statistics of the reactionary government, a day’s supply of nutritious food costs ₱18.16—a far cry from the minimum wage. What about the other basic needs of workers such as clothing, decent shelter, transport fare, medicine and medical care, some utilities as water and electricity and a certain educational level for members of their families? Only the most callous anti-worker will insist that there should be no fuss over the minimum wage level. Since 1965, the minimum wage level has gone up from six to eight pesos or a mere 33.3 percent. But, during the same period, the value of the peso has gone down from 100 to 33 centavos (0.33 of the peso value in 1965) or a drop of 67 percent.

The plight of the workers calls for resolute revolutionary work. Their misery is intolerable. They are certainly ready as ever to develop within their ranks the organizations capable of asserting and advancing their class interests as well as the interests of the entire nation.

The Party and the workers

It is in keeping with our firm Marxist-Leninist principle that the working class is the leading class in the Philippine revolution that we must go deep among the masses of workers. We must arouse and organize them on the basis of their needs and demands and draw from their ranks the best elements into their own party, the Communist Party of the Philippines.

We should shun the notion or tendency to keep the Party a preserve of members who are of petty-bourgeois origin. We should be seriously concerned with the ever-pressing task of drawing into the ranks of the Party those who come from the toiling masses of workers and peasants. The Party can become strong only if it succeeds in drawing into its ranks members of worker and peasant class background, making them the majority of the Party membership and developing cadres among them.

Once clarified simply, relevantly and step-by-step, Marxism-Leninism is more easily and profoundly grasped by the workers than by the petty bourgeois. It is after all the theory that touches the essence of the workers' daily experience, that shows the leading role of their class in the Philippine revolution and that is drawn from the revolutionary experience of the world proletariat.

The reorganization of the Party organization in the Manila-Rizal region that has recently taken place is in the correct direction. The principal feature in strengthening the Party branches and Party groups at the base of the regional Party organization should be going deep among the masses of the workers. It is necessary to make more cadres available for work in the factory areas and workers' communities. After all, the largest and strongest possible mass force in the region is the working class.

The urban committees of other regional Party organizations should look up to the example of the Manila-Rizal regional Party organization in going deep among the masses of workers, without neglecting other sections of the urban population. It is also obvious that in guerrilla bases and zones the Party in the New People's Army should not fail to pay attention to the workers even as principal attention is paid to going deep among the peasant masses and in carrying out a peasant war.

Inasmuch as the masses of workers are most concentrated in the Manila-Rizal region, we refer mainly to them when we discuss the tasks and methods that should be undertaken with regard to going deep among the masses of workers.

We have more than enough cadres to start with for going deep among the masses of workers. Even before the Party was reestablished, we had done some modest amount of trade union work. The most important thing now is that we have a correct ideological and political line in approaching the workers and we know where to concentrate our efforts in order to make wise use of our limited personnel and resources even as we readily work where we most easily can, where we have some contact in one form or another with the workers or where one or more of our Party members are employed or are residing.

We cannot go far in arousing and mobilizing the workers without first doing social investigation. We can always start by making friends with some workers in a given factory or line of work and holding a series of talks with them, preferably in their homes, about their work and living conditions. The few friends that we start with have their own friends in the same workplace. So, it is always possible to expand our source of information whenever a previous round of talks seems insufficient.

A good knowledge of the reactionary laws pertaining to trade unions and workers is necessary. Actual work and living conditions of the masses of workers are so bad that certain provisions of these laws can be invoked and used to improve these conditions. We must be good at raising questions on trade union experience, job security, compliance with the minimum wage, medical and dental care, the system of promotions, the number of regular and nonregular workers, the departments or sections of work, the profits made by the company, the need for a trade union truly concerned with the welfare of the workers and the like.

Though strikes are banned, there is no expressed ban against trade unions. Though the collection of strike and defense funds is banned, that of funds for education and seminars is not. Though employers have the prerogative of making "preventive suspensions," the suspended workers can demand compensation for the period that they are suspended. The workers can always demand due cause for punitive measures against them. Of course, there are certain laws (like the minimum wage law, law on overtime pay, workmen's compensation law, social insurance law and medicare law), which are supposed to be automatically applied for the benefit of the workers but are not, when the workers are not well organized and do not demand what is due them. All these and others can provide a legal basis for making petitions to the NLRC and organizing or maintaining trade unions.

We must be good at being pupils of the workers. A worker-cadre must always remember this in dealing with co-workers. At the same time, we must not fail to inform the workers as to how they are being exploited and what they stand to gain by organizing a trade union and demanding compliance by the employers with provisions of the law that are beneficial to the workers. In the course of social investigation, we do not only accumulate data and firm up in the end a list of workers' demands. But we also develop close relations with the interviewees and pick out among them those who can initiate organizational work.

As soon as a list of demands can be drawn up, we must be able to form a workers' organizing committee of at least five members. Just as the social investigation is conducted without the employer's knowledge, the workers' organizing committee must be formed discreetly. The task of this committee is to draw in the masses of workers step-by-step so that in the end the majority are solidly behind the list of demands. The employer must not be made aware of such a campaign until the overwhelming majority of the workers have adopted a definite form of legal organization or course of legal action by which to pursue their demands and are thoroughly united to fight for what is due them.

Under conditions of fascist martial rule, it is foolhardy to expose the leadership of what could be a trade union before the majority, if not all, of the workers are fully united to the point of being able to back up their petitions or demands, if need be, by carrying out slowdowns, making the products off-standard or unsaleable, trooping the offices, creating snags in the production line, simultaneous leaves of absences or any tactic in lieu of a strike. The closer the employer is to the fascists, the more prudent the workers should be and the more patient they should be in waiting for conditions to ripen.

To gain the support of the vast majority of the workers step-by-step in a given workplace is a worthy revolutionary struggle. To expose one's plans prematurely and expose a few people to an enemy crackdown is certainly "Left" in form but Right in essence because it brings the workers' movement nowhere but defeat. To accumulate strength secretly and wait for conditions to ripen involves a recognition of the fact that in so many other workplaces Party cadres are also busy arousing and mobilizing the workers for the development of a general situation beneficial to the workers in every workplace.

It is very possible that before we can organize trade unions in large droves or launch some general strike the Marcos fascist clique shall have been overthrown by a coup d'etat by other reactionaries, who are still supported by US imperialism but who may adopt some antifascist posture. Our underground efforts among the workers shall not have gone to waste because these can be carried out further to develop a revolutionary trade union movement on a scale larger than ever before and overthrow the labor aristocrats who are now licking the boots of the fascist dictatorship.

The workers' organizing committees as an underground force in the ranks of workers should not stop at pushing forward mere economic demands. We must combat reformism and economism. After all, even only in fighting for the establishment or continued existence of a trade union, a high level of political consciousness is required to maintain the militant unity and firmness of the workers against the fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique.

So, the workers' organizing committees must relate the economic struggle to the Party's general line of people's democratic revolution. It is through group discussions not only on trade unionism but also on the whole range of the Philippine revolution that a strong political unity can be forged among the workers. The workers' organizing committee and its possible subdivisions, like the subcommittees and groups or cells, should generate these group discussions.

Only by raising the political consciousness of the mass of workers both through their practice and study can we succeed in choosing the most advanced elements to recruit into the Party. As soon as there are three or more Party members in a factory or line of work, a Party branch can be established. The workers' organizing committee and its subdivisions can continue under the direction of the Party branch for as long as there is yet no legal organization that can openly work for the workers' demands.

Besides reaching the workers directly in a given factory or line of work, we can reach the workers who may belong to several workplaces by establishing community organizing committees and developing mass organizations of various types in workers' communities. Certainly, we can establish and develop the most intimate relations with the workers in workers' communities. After all, it is the appropriate style of a workers' organizing committee to hold its meetings in its members' homes rather than in the premises of a factory.

There is also the interaction between the workplace and the workers' community; between the workers' organizing committee and the community organizing committee, together with various mass organizations in the community; and between the Party branch based in the workplace and that based in the community. Workers in one factory belong to various communities and workers in one community belong to various workplaces. Thus, the possibility for expansion is limitless so long as we exert arduous efforts and we know how to rely on a never-ending chain of comrades and masses.

By going deep among the masses of workers, we intend to develop and strengthen further the subjective forces of the revolution, the organized workers and the revolutionary party of the proletariat, the Communist Party of the Philippines, among others. The proletarian revolutionary character of the Party would be greatly enhanced by increasing the number of Party cadres and members of working class origin who can either carry on the revolutionary struggle in the urban areas or be shifted to the countryside, especially to the New People's Army.

Conditions for waging the revolution

The most incontrovertible evidence that the reactionary classes in the Philippines can no longer rule in the old way is the setting up and continued operation of the fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique. While the fascist dictator is fond of boasting that he thrives on crisis after crisis, because he has in the first place set up what he calls a "crisis government," the glaring fact is that this anti-national and antidemocratic regime has not only failed to stem a continuing political and economic crisis but has even aggravated it and intensified the oppression and exploitation of the broad masses of the people.

The hatred of the broad masses of the people for the fascist puppet dictatorship is profound and it deepens with every day that passes. US imperialism and the big comprador-landlords on whose account the fascist dictator wishes to remain in power indefinitely are inevitably seen by the people as the malefactors behind the fascist counterrevolution. Each moment that the tyrannical regime stays is a favorable occasion for the subjective forces of the revolution to grow and develop.

The Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army and various revolutionary people's organizations are growing and developing steadily. Having taken the correct road of armed revolution from the start, though from scratch, and applying the strategic principle of encircling the cities from the countryside, the Party and the New People's Army have frustrated the attempts of the enemy to crush them and have become tempered in the course of fierce struggle. Also in the urban areas, the Party has proven to be resilient because of its underground character from the very start.

The Party and the New People's Army have sown the seeds of a protracted people's war in all regions of the country. Fierce fighting is going on without letup in several regions. There is no region in the country where the fascist enemy has not received a hard blow from the NPA. Small hard blows are being made to accumulate strength and rouse the people to a wider scale of armed resistance.

With the Party going deep among the peasant masses, the solid basis for the national united front is being laid. The organs of democratic political power (the barrio organizing committees and the barrio revolutionary committees) are springing up in the countryside. Mass organizations for workers, peasants, youth, women, children and cultural activists enthusiastically support them. At levels above the barrio level, the Preparatory Commission of the National Democratic Front is actively working for cooperation between the Party and its antifascist allies.

The people of southwestern Mindanao, the Moro National Liberation Front and the Bangsa Moro Army are persistently fighting for national self-determination. They have extended considerable support to the NPA by tying down large enemy forces and inflicting heavy losses on them.

The Lopez group has started to stir after more than two years of being blackmailed since the declaration of the fascist martial rule. Fascist rule is bound to be shaken in the Visayas. Antifascist sentiments and currents are also building up within the Catholic Church, Iglesia ni Cristo and the Protestant sects. Thus, the fascist dictator is not getting anywhere in whipping up a "Christian-Muslim war."

The group potentially most capable of overthrowing the Marcos fascist clique by a coup d'etat remains to be seen. This group has some representatives openly making anti-Marcos propaganda in the United States and are working with significant sections of US policymakers. The fascist dictatorship is demanding more US military aid under the pretext of fighting the revolutionary people of southwestern Mindanao. But US imperialism is already concerned about Marcos' own determination to stay in power beyond his puppet usefulness and calculates that

some day it must wash its hands of any accountability for keeping him in power.

However, by all indications, especially the third fake referendum which brusquely removed from the people the formal right to suffrage, it is clear that the fascist dictator has the illusion that he can stay in power on a stretch as long as that of Suharto, Pak or even Franco. There cannot be a more foolish illusion. He underestimates the broad masses of the people who cherish national independence and democracy. The civil war which he has instigated has barely started.

This is the worst time in the world for someone to undertake a fascist puppet dictatorship in the Philippines. A semicolonial and semifeudal country has its own chronic political and economic crisis that has its own worsening course. Thus, this has led to a fascist puppet dictatorship. But consider that on top of this is an unprecedentedly grave crisis of the world capitalist system that is now occurring due to the accumulated defeats of US imperialism in the hands of the revolutionary peoples of the world and its endless struggle with Soviet social-imperialism for world hegemony and arms supremacy.

Trying to make up for its losses elsewhere, US imperialism is exacting a rate of profit that is higher than ever before on its direct investments and loans in the Philippines and is shifting here the ravages of its inflation and recession. This is on top of the unbridled corruption and profligacy of the Marcos fascist gang. The broad masses of the people are forced to suffer soaring prices, an increasing tax burden, a breakdown of local industries and even of agricultural production and an accelerated rate of unemployment. The end result cannot but be the expansion and intensification of revolutionary struggle.

At any rate, US imperialism is in a state of rapid decline in its homegrounds and throughout the world. It continues to suffer defeat and weaken in the hands of the revolutionary peoples of the world. At the same time, it cannot get out of its ever intensifying contention with the other superpower. There is no detente but war preparations between the two superpowers. Under these circumstances, the first world of the two superpowers is opposed by the second world of the lesser capitalist countries and even more militantly and thoroughly by the third world of developing countries.

The Philippines is now being tugged between demands of puppetry to US imperialism and demands of being part of the third world. The former still very much prevails over the latter. The increasingly contradictory stances taken by the fascist puppet dictatorship does not prove any cleverness on the part of the fascist dictator but merely reflects the actual contradictions in the Philippine situation and in the relations between the Philippines and other countries. These contradictions can no longer be handled in the old way either by the Marcos clique or any other clique of reactionaries no matter how strong is its wish to remain under the shadow of US imperialism.

The resounding defeat of US imperialism in Indochina clearly shows the inevitable doom of US imperialism in Asia. Even as in the Philippines a relative tightening of the US grip is to be expected, because this is in line with the US scheme of remaining a "Pacific power" and of holding back its general and absolute decline in Asia, Europe is inexorably becoming the focus of contention between the two superpowers. The struggle between the two superpowers in the Middle East and the Mediterranean relates closely to their struggle in Europe.

We are still in the era of imperialism. The imperialist powers are becoming more desperate than ever before. The factors of both revolution and war are increasing. The people of the world must make revolution and be prepared against war more determinedly than ever before. As the two superpowers lurch on to a world war, the people should make revolution on an even wider scale and countries should assert national sovereignty and independence.

The unionized workers are coming out from the narrow view of unionism lorded over by union aristocrats, lieutenants of capitalism, since the early part of the 1950s due to the errors and irresponsibilities of the renegade Lava gang.

Instead of being overcome by fear, the masses of workers are being forced by the fascist dictatorship to unite and struggle in unison. The 30 workers' strikes held since October of last year until February of this year is just a signal of bigger storms to come from the Manila-Rizal area and other regions wherein the majority of workers are concentrated.

We dare to predict that before the end of the decade, a tumultuous storm will occur, a storm much bigger than the First Quarter Storm of 1970 and participated by more masses of workers than students. But this even will only take place if the Party—as the political party and vanguard of the working class—can effectively undertake its tasks.

In learning from the planned demonstration which failed to materialize on January 25, we should give more emphasis in doing secret political work within the ranks of the workers, and popularize mass discussions in exposing workers' demands; popularize more strikes, slowdowns, work stoppages, picketing and other forms of protests in various factories in preparation for bigger political demonstrations in streets, plazas, and even in from of Malacañang.

There are many holes and cracks that we can exploit in the dam put up by the fascist Marcos dictatorship to stem all political and economic struggles. The 30 workers' strikes have demonstrated the weaknesses of this apparatus. If the Party will give more time and effort, we can gather a big force that will burst the fascist dam.

The Party should strengthen revolutionary propaganda and agitation in order to heighten the political consciousness of all workers, whether organized into unions or not; whether the union is genuine or not. Moreover, it should undertake solid organizing work in the midst of such propaganda and organizing campaigns.

The scarcity of Party cadres assigned to work within the workers' ranks should not be a deterrent. The key to this problem is to rely on the workers themselves. That is why we created workers' committees long before martial law was declared. As an underground force, this type of committee can cope better with the present condition.

The workers' organizing committee is a tool for undertaking social investigation, developing revolutionary propaganda and studies in Marxist ideology, developing worker activists and mobilizing the majority of workers to create new unions or change old ones in order to truly serve workers' interests in politics and economics.

In starting a committee, we should have as members of the core, workers that have potential as revolutionary activists in their workplaces. These advanced workers should comprise the majority if not the total membership of the committee. The Party may assign one, two, or three cadres from the outside to this core who may in due time transfer their tasks to local worker activists. There can be from five to ten members who can constitute a committee. Under a committee, subcommittees should be created within the largest department or section in a certain workplace. Thus, a bigger number of workers can readily advance forward.

We should propagate revolutionary struggles with the goal of striving to embrace the workers around just demands and to provide them with political education before any open mass action can take place. In time of open mass actions, more worker activists will be tested and the Party can then further recruit and expand its ranks.

The workers' organizing committee is a temporary tool for expansion. This will be dissolved when worker activists have been integrated in the ranks of the local union and when a Party branch has been established in the factory.

Worker activists who are party members should not monopolize the official positions of the union nor should they place into leadership positions of the union all those who are heading up the local party branch. There are two reasons for this: one is that we do not want the party branch to be destroyed or paralyzed by the enemy when it attacks the union; another is that the democratic character of the union must be upheld.

There are two ways we can expand our organizational work and broaden the propaganda among the working masses. One is to expand from one factory to another to forge the unity among the working masses. Another is to mobilize workers to form mass organizations in their communities so that they can reach other workers from other factories.

By being active in organizing their local communities, the workers can unite not only among their fellow workers but with other oppressed and progressive sectors of the population like the urban petty bourgeoisie. They can assist in the process of uniting workers' organizations with other organizations in the democratic movement.

In many communities of the Manila-Rizal area and other cities, the vast majority of workers should be able to fight off attacks of the fascist dictatorship that uses the barangays against them. Last January 25, the fascist dictatorship ordered the barangays to carry sticks and wait for workers who were scheduled to march from different points of the city.

The working masses can turn the table around and defeat the enemy's tactics of pitting workers against each other. The barangay can be used as a forum voicing out demands and complaints against the fascist dictatorship.

Under the leadership of the Party, the working masses should be able to effectively unite with other progressive classes and sectors of the population in the city in order to broaden and expand the antifascist and anti-imperialist democratic movement. The working masses are the largest, most productive but most oppressed, most concentrated, most progressive, and most important force of the democratic movement in the city. However, they need allies, just as their allies need them, in order to expand and mobilize the antifascist movement.

As an organization of the working class, the Party is working closely with the peasant masses to advance the worker-peasant alliance, which serves as the basis for the broadest national and revolutionary united front. Even if they maintain their jobs in the city and wage revolutionary struggles in their workplaces, the workers should realize their relationship to the peasant masses, and the revolutionary armed struggle in the countryside.

The revolutionary workers' movement, although primarily legal for a long time, is a powerful political support for the revolutionary armed struggle in the countryside. The workers must continue to undermine and shake the enemy resolutely. The working masses must continually undermine and shake the enemy which it daily surrounds in the cities.

At present, the revolutionary workers' movement can provide concrete support for the revolutionary armed resistance in the countryside. Party cadres who are workers are warmly received in the countryside. They should systematically be sent there, especially in regions where they grew up or established roots. They can also collect funds, medical and military supplies, medicine, clothing, etc., to be sent to the countryside.

In the distant future, general strikes or general uprisings of workers in the cities will be launched in coordination with general offensives of the New People's Army. The workers should realize the great task they must carry out to accomplish the seizure of state power nationally. After the seizure of state power and after the national democratic revolution, the historic task of the working class will intensify more in the stage of socialist revolution and socialist construction.

In raising the political consciousness of the workers, it is not enough to tell them of their great role and task in the Philippine revolution; we should also raise their enthusiasm by relating the glorious history, the revolutionary victories and continuing struggle of the proletariat and people of other countries and encourage them to contribute to the revolutionary struggles of the international proletariat and the whole of mankind against the two imperialist superpowers and all forms of reaction and opportunism.

There are many twists and turns along the revolutionary path. No major victories are achieved by the proletariat without sacrifice and suffering. We should be determined to accomplish our just goals and do everything we can. We are sure to win victory.

May 1: Workers Lead Oppressed in Biggest Rally against US-Marcos Dictatorship

Ang Bayan, Vol. IX, No. 5, May 15, 1977

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 pm, 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.

April 1983

Since the Marcos coup against the established system of government in 1972, the rights of Filipino workers have been trampled upon and violated simultaneously and consistently at two levels by an open rule of terror in the service of US imperialism and the most reactionary clique of big comprador-landlords headed by the fascist dictator.

The first level involves the violation of basic national and democratic rights of the entire people, including the workers. The second level involves those rights which specially pertain to the workers as a distinct class; these rights may consistently be referred to as trade union rights.

Intensifying political repression

Despite the formal lifting of martial law in 1981, the fascist puppet dictatorship has not only remained intact but has even entrenched itself further. It continues to launch bigger and wider onslaughts against the entire people and the workers. To Marcos, normalization means institutionalizing and perpetuating the conditions of abnormalcy which is the fascist dictatorship.

Against the democratic and republican principle of people's sovereignty, this regime of tyranny continues to base itself on the treasonous ground that the Philippine president as the commander-in-chief of the armed forces has the license to concentrate on his single person supreme executive, legislative and judicial authority. And this usurpation of authority has been consistently and repeatedly upheld by a captive Supreme Court.

General Order No. 5, the antilabor Labor Code, Presidential Decree 823, Batas Pambansa 130, Batas Pambansa 227, BP Resolution No. 473 are distinguishably antiworker issuances of the fascist regime but are inextricably linked with the violation of the basic national and democratic rights of the people. The simultaneous violation of both basic democratic rights and trade union rights are most dramatically seen in concrete acts of fascist violence, like the arbitrary arrest and detention, torture and murder of workers in the course of union-busting and strike-breaking campaigns.

The fascist puppet dictatorship is the monster born of the political and economic crisis of the ruling system in a semicolonial and semifeudal society. This monster has come forth because of the excessive shifting of the burden of imperialist crisis to the country and the inability of the domestic ruling classes to settle internal differences amicably and rule in the old way.

Marcos might think himself clever in citing the growing anti-imperialist and antifeudal movement of the people as the excuse for his despotism. But under his despotism, the crisis has worsened and the revolutionary movement has accelerated its growth from year to year. The fascist dictatorship has served only to aggravate the crisis and compel the people to rise.

At any rate, US imperialism and the Marcos regime agree that anticommunism is a convenient excuse for covering up their inimical roles and for perpetuating all sorts of barbarities against all patriotic and democratic forces. Thus, the working class and its revolutionary party have always been pinpointed as the main target of the fascist counterrevolution.

In fact, those suspected of being communists suffer the most heinous forms of fascist violence; and those who are regarded as enemies of the dictatorship are invariably denounced as communists even if they are not. Anticommunism is a worn-out line of imperialists, fascists and other reactionary diehards for rationalizing their oppression and exploitation of the people, especially the workers. It accords with the reactionary determination to keep the workers a docile source of profits and prevent them from effectively asserting and exercising their rights.

The Marcos dictatorship shamelessly advertises throughout the world that it has been able to keep Philippine labor cheap for the benefit of foreign investors. Not satisfied with the long-standing semifeudal conditions that generate a large supply of cheap labor, the dictatorship has adopted policies clearly intended and objectively resulting in the aggravation of these conditions and has vigorously acted to repress the workers in order to press down their wages.

Since the start of the fascist dictatorship, the right to strike and conduct other concerted activities has been taken away from Filipino workers in line with the all-out attack on the national and democratic rights of the people. It was presumed by the fascists that without the key right to strike, trade unions not outrightly busted would

wither on the vine. The entire trade union movement would be destroyed and all benefits it had gained through collective bargaining would be wiped out.

Reacting to the upsurges of the workers' struggle despite the strike ban, the regime has always pretended to take steps towards the restoration of the right to strike. But in fact, the regime always expands the coverage of the strike ban and increases the pretexts and the methods for preventing and breaking up strikes. In order to sow terror among all workers, trade unions and labor federations suspected of being communist-led have been outlawed as "subversive" organizations. Their leaders and militant members have been forced underground and hunted down, tortured when arrested and detained indefinitely without being charged, if not summarily executed.

Leaders and members of other trade unions and labor federations that are not suspected of being communist but have acted militantly in the interest of the workers have also been arbitrarily arrested and their families starved in the process in order to make more ripples of intimidation against the workers. Government employees have been banned from organizing trade unions. In the course of picketing in strikes that cannot be preempted, workers have been mauled, run over, shot at and killed by the military, police and scabs. In other cases, workers have been kidnapped, tortured and murdered beyond the public view. Antiworker crimes are easily perpetrated because these are encouraged and condoned by the Marcos regime.

Organized or not into trade unions, masses of workers have been subjected to such campaigns of terror as zoning, raids on their communities, various forms of humiliation, looting of their houses and ejection from their slum dwellings. The workers are even more vulnerable to atrocities and abuses committed in the name of counterinsurgency.

Benefits made available by law as a result of several decades of trade union struggle have been removed or drastically reduced. It becomes a feat of workers' unity and militancy to secure a collective bargaining agreement satisfactory to the workers.

While wages have been frozen, their real value is continuously cut down by the rising prices of basic commodities. The workers are further weighed down by withholding taxes, special levies and other exactions. Ways for employers to avoid the payment of regular and minimum wages set by law proliferate.

Whenever real wages fall extremely low as a result both of a protracted wage freeze and an abrupt price hike initiated by him, the fascist dictator expects the workers to beg for wage increases from him and thus he presents himself as the redeemer of his own victims.

But the formal wage increase or the cost-of-living allowance that the dictator orders invariably falls short of the previous real wage level and is used to camouflage the erosion of wages. Worst of all, these paltry concessions are not enforced but remain on paper. Marcos also puts in exemptions and loopholes for employers to avoid paying these concessions.

Another deceptive method used by the fascist regime to misrepresent itself as a friend of labor is the hiring and coddling of a handful of labor aristocrats to whom it has assigned the pretense of integrating all trade unions into the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines and standing in for labor in "tripartite" rituals intended to endorse antilabor measures.

Marcos and his imperialist masters have actually no intention of making the TUCP more than a paper organization and integrating all unions under a one-union-one-industry concept. There is the simple fear that even a regimented labor organization might get out of hand. There is a preference for a more manageable clutch of labor dealers for misrepresenting labor.

Still another bane in the labor front is the encouragement given by the fascist regime to such foreign agencies as the US Central Intelligence Agency conduit Asian American Free Labor Institute, that specialize in diverting trade unions into pro-imperialist and reactionary channels, corrupting trade union leaders and subverting the national and democratic interests of the Filipino working class and people.

Contrary to the expectations of the fascists and their revisionist collaborators, the cheap labor policy and the wide range of other investment incentives (anti-expropriation guarantees, free flow of foreign exchange, tax exemptions, etc.) have not induced the foreign investors to invest heavily in the country as to industrialize it and generate sufficient employment opportunities.

Increasing rate of economic exploitation

There have been increases in foreign direct investments in such areas as trading, banking, minor processing, mining, plantations and the like where the profits come high and quick. But certainly, there have been no

investments in heavy and basic industries. The transnational corporations have even made far more local borrowings in order to promote their trade offensive and stay ahead in purchasing foreign exchange for import payments and profit remittances.

The main neocolonial thrust of the pseudodevelopment policy of the US-Marcos regime is not industrialization but anti-industrialization. Foreign loans have been poured into the country, especially during the 1970s, in order to hasten the importation of construction steel, all sorts of equipment and other supplies for anti-industrial projects and thus help pump-prime industries in the United States and other countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), i.e., the advanced capitalist countries, which have been in decline due to the crisis of overproduction.

Financial resources that would have otherwise gone into industrial development have been wasted on massive and rapid programs of building roads, bridges, ports and dams, five-star hotels, convention center, office buildings, palaces and other luxury constructions; acquiring transport vehicles, military equipment, communication equipment, marine equipment, farm inputs, a nuclear plant and geothermal plants, computers and other office equipment, upper-class luxuries and intermediate goods and knockdowns for tariff-circumventing and cheap labor-using pseudo-manufacturing enterprises for reexport and local market penetration.

The so-called export-oriented manufacturing enterprises like those in garments and electronics are involved in mere fringe processing. These are a decoy for the heavy importation of foreign manufactures that do not add to basic industrialization of the country. These enterprises are even farther removed from industrialization, have far less local value-added, generate far less employment and drain foreign exchange faster than the so-called import-substitution industries of the 1950s.

The country does not actually make any net income from the export earnings of the reexport pseudo-manufacturing enterprises because of the heavy import payments for equipment, intermediate products and raw materials; the outflow of profits, interest payments and the like; tariff exemptions and local market penetration; and the cost of putting up export processing zones and infrastructures for these zones. The wages paid to regular factory employees are hardly enough for subsistence.

The Kautskyites are utterly misinformed should they believe that the multinational corporations would concentrate on high-technology industries in the North and shift labor-intensive industries to the South to the extent of industrializing the Philippines, converting it into a modern industrialized neocolony and allowing it to depart from a pattern of raw-material production for export. The nature of modern imperialism remains unchanged. It is moribund and there is no truth more telling than its current economic crisis. It is also completely in error to imagine that the US-Marcos regime has carried out land reform in support of a supposed neocolonial industrialization.

After more than a decade of fascist dictatorship and unhindered dictation by the US government and the US-controlled International Monetary Fund-World Bank combine, the Philippines has an even more backward, agrarian and semifeudal economy. It remains dependent on raw-material exports (mainly agricultural) and foreign loans to be able to import manufactures, semimanufactures and raw materials.

The principal means of production is still a backward form of agriculture. Not more than 4 percent of agricultural land is worked by imported tractors. What passes for local manufacturing is heavily dependent on imported equipment, semi-manufactures and raw materials. There are no heavy and basic industries, no capital goods industry which is the basis for industrialization. The Philippines has a long way to go before it can exploit its rich natural resource base for industrialization.

Among the producers of goods as of 1979, industrial workers (in mining, quarrying, manufacturing, construction and utilities) are 22 percent; and peasants (including farm workers, loggers, fishermen, animal husbandmen and handicraftsmen which are mainly sideline occupations) are 78 percent.

The share of industrial employment is reported to have fallen from 17.6 percent in 1970 to 14.2 percent in 1979. It is in the share of the service sector that employment is supposed to have risen from 23.5 percent to 34.2 percent in the same period, absorbing the reductions from both industry and agriculture.

The fascist dictatorship has deepened and aggravated the semifeudal character of the economy dominated by the big comprador bourgeoisie and the landlord class. In the absence of genuine land reform and national industrialization, feudal and semifeudal forms of exploitation have persisted and maintained a circular relationship. The national bourgeoisie is increasingly squeezed by the economic policy of the US-Marcos regime. The urban petty bourgeoisie finds itself in a sorrier state.

In the 1980s, foreign loans have become scarce and more burdensome, raw material exports more depressed than before and yet the imperialists are pushing harder for import liberalization. The value of the peso is sinking daily. The fascist dictatorship is in deep financial trouble.

The regime is compelled to collect more taxes and more fees from local sources at a time that these same sources have far less income than before. It is as if the fascists do not know that more taxes could be collected in the 1970s because of the artificial prosperity induced by foreign borrowing in certain sections of the economy. The people are revolted by the fact that the leading items in government expenditures are those for the military and foreign debt service, far ahead of essential services.

Unemployment is going beyond 50 percent of the labor force. The inflation rate is well beyond the doctored figure in the regime's statistics. Massive layoffs and soaring prices of basic commodities are gravely affecting not only the toiling masses of workers and peasants but also the urban petty bourgeoisie. They are being reduced to a life of want and misery. At least 90 percent of the people now live below the poverty line.

The facile explanation of the fascist autocrat for the economic disaster is the world capitalist recession. But puppetry to the dictates of US imperialism is his inescapable responsibility. Besides, he has a monopoly of responsibility for so many inflationary activities, price-hiking taxes, special levies and the unbridled graft and corruption that is unprecedented in Philippine history.

The fascist dictatorship has no solution to the economic disaster except to poise more acts of terrorism against the rising proletariat and people, await business recovery in the United States and beg for more foreign loans at more onerous terms, more US military assistance and trade concessions. The political and economic bankruptcy of the US-Marcos regime is obvious.

The political and economic struggle of workers

Within some three years after the declaration of martial law in 1972, the trade union movement appeared to have been conquered and pacified. The fascist dictatorship added to the serious injury it had inflicted on the trade union movement the insult that the workers together with the rest of the people had acquiesced to the intensification of their oppression and exploitation.

But beneath the surface, the Filipino workers detested the fascist dictatorship and their anger seethed. The prudence of unarmed people before an enemy armed to the teeth and eager to attack them is not acquiescence. Trade unionists and cadres of the proletarian party who were not known to the fascists kept intact as many trade unions as they could and as many more as they could develop.

Thus, the upsurge of workers' strikes would come about in 1975 and 1976, starting with the La Tondeña strike. Before mid-1976, more than 300 strikes occurred nationwide. Bukluran emerged as an alliance of trade unions and other people's organizations, including the religious and conscientized laity, to provide a wide support for the workers' strike movement. From then on, the trade union movement would continue to march forward despite the odds and risks. The next high point would be the formation of Kilusang Mayo Uno on May 1, 1980 as a broad alliance of all trade unions and labor federations devoted to the development of a genuine, militant and nationalist trade union movement. This is the result of open mass struggles and patient, discreet work. This workers' movement is far stronger and larger than the Bukluran. In terms of principles and magnitude, KMU put to shame the profascist and pro-imperialist TUCP, which is just a paper organization of long-discredited labor aristocrats.

In June 1982, the National Coalition for the Protection of Workers' Rights (NCPWR) was established amidst the growing strength of the trade union movement and in the face of increasing threats of renewed antilabor white terror. The formation of the coalition was indeed timely because in August and September the threats were carried out in an obvious attempt of the fascist dictator to assure US imperialism before his tributary trip to the United States that he could always pounce on the Filipino workers for the benefit of US multinational firms.

The fascist dictatorship had been under orders from the US multinational interests to attack the Filipino workers because the trade union movement had seemed to be on the way to carrying out more strikes than it had in 1981 and these were increasingly directed against the multinational firms. Even in the sacrosanct Bataan Export Processing Zone, 15,000 workers from 18 factories had made a general walkout.

To some extent, the labor crackdown adversely affected the momentum of the strike movement. More strikes could have broken out in the October-December period. It is boasted by the fascist authorities that the figure came to only 155 compared to 260 in 1981. But what is glossed over is that 10.6 million man hours were lost in the 1977-1980 period. More companies of major size and importance were affected in 1982. So, the repressive

actions did not at all stop the trade union movement from reaching a high level of success.

The attempt to suppress strikes by the use of brute force against local unions, labor federations and the KMU can only result in the further accumulation of workers' demands and the outbreak of strikes on a wide scale eventually. The masses of workers are agitated by the rapid deterioration of their economic conditions and by the clear injustice of being denied even those paltry concessions decreed by the fascist regime several years ago.

It can be expected that in the spiral of antilabor repression and workers' resistance, the trade union movement will come out more tempered and stronger than ever before. The fascist dictatorship has unwittingly served to generate not only militant trade unionists but also proletarian revolutionaries and to render ineffective the labor aristocrats and other antilabor elements in the trade union movement.

While recognizing that economic conditions are so bad and cry out for the formation of trade unions, the workers also recognize that every attempt to exercise their trade union rights and carry forward their economic struggle has to cope with extraordinarily unjust laws and brutal measures used by both the fascist state and specific employers, especially the firms close to the ruling clique.

The antilabor policy and actions of the US-Marcos regime are so harsh that no economic struggle can be waged without the corresponding political struggle. A trade union whose members do not have sufficient political education along a national democratic line and which is not therefore politically prepared to overcome the anti-union and anti-strike measures of the regime can easily lose its bearing and cannot last long.

The workers themselves ask political questions on how to contend with the fascist dictatorship as soon as the formation of a trade union is proposed to them. A labor organizer would fail in his role if he were not ready to answer these questions at any time and if he were not to deal with the matter of political struggle comprehensively as soon as possible.

Basic political questions are matters of life and death for the union. The workers need to understand fully the dangers and difficulties that they face and how to cope with these. But it is not enough for the workers to know how to beat or go around the fascist laws and measures. They must have a comprehensive political education—a national democratic education—that makes clear what they stand for. They must understand their class role beyond the narrow interests of the trade union and they must participate in a comprehensive political struggle.

The labor organizer who can effectively link the economic struggle with the political struggle is more successful in trade union work at the present time than one who acts according to such notions as that trade unionism must have nothing to do with politics; that economic struggle must first be attended to for a long time before the political struggle; or that, if there be politics, it must be confined to the interests of the trade unions as if these were merely a pressure group within the present system. Let there be no misunderstanding, though. Politics is no substitute for competent knowledge of trade unionism. It is no excuse for incompetence and failure to do what it takes to form and keep a union. In the education of the workers, there must be a basic course on trade unionism, with relevant political questions dealt with; and then right away there must be a political course following. There is no harm though if the basic political course comes ahead as the case may be. It is possible for political organizations, including the proletarian party, to reach some workers before they can be reached or attended to by a labor organizer.

At any rate, in organizing workers into a trade union, the labor organizer must have adequate knowledge of working class history and existing labor laws. He must conduct social investigation among the workers according to a checklist of rights and benefits, draw up the list of demands with the workers. He must form discreet groups and an organizing committee and recruit members. He must impart all the necessary basic knowledge about trade union work, relevant legal procedures and so on and so forth.

Workers who have the correct trade union and political education are the most determined in struggle and have a keen appreciation of the strategy and tactics of the struggle. They are the best able in coping with the dangers and difficulties posed by the fascists and the imperialists and are not awed by them. They know what to do under whatever circumstances. They have a vantage point from which to view the trade unions within a wider context and discover the many ways to assert the rights of the working class and let this class assert its significant role in the people's struggle for national and social liberation.

Experience proves that workers who are well educated politically are vigilant against company spies and fascist agents and against all sorts of pitfalls and are at the same time militant and confident of what they are doing at the critical time that the union is in the process of formation. They know that the union can be aborted when the

employer and the fascists resort to accusing them of being subversives or rebels and undertake countermeasures against them.

When they are ready to make their demands for economic benefits and against unfair labor practices, they are prepared not only to strike and picket but also to undertake alternative courses of action in view of outright prohibitions and other measures against the right to strike and even against the right to form a union.

These alternative courses of action include the slowdown, sit-down, mass leave of absence, trooping the offices, mass chanting, public exposure of the injustices, etc., and their almost infinite variations. These can be as effective as the strike if sustained. These can be sustained only if there is a high degree of unity and militancy among the workers.

Since 1975 and 1976, these have been resorted to on a wide scale. If done for a short period in a given company, these actions are actually milder than the outright strike. But if prolonged, these can cut down production as much as a strike does. In most of these actions, the workers stay in the company premises according to their schedules and so the employer cannot replace them with scabs.

The workers have to be resourceful in making their demands, because of the union and strike bans and other extraordinary obstacles. In certain areas, workers have measures in order to drive sense into the heads of employers who use their connections with the fascists to suppress the workers. In still other areas, workers have had to resort to armed force to defend themselves from the prior use of violence by their employers in connivance with the fascists.

A number of urban workers who have become unemployed and who are on the manhunt list of the fascists have joined the ranks of the armed revolutionary movement. The fascists have given them no other choice. Before going to the countryside, they make countersurveillance on the fascists to seize arms and bring these with them to the countryside. Farm workers have been joining the people's army for a long time as the depression of export crops has worsened. Thus, the sugar and coconut areas are particularly aflame with the armed revolution.

All the foregoing forceful actions of workers are cited in the controlled press from military and other government sources. These actions are a response to the intensified exploitation and oppression of the workers as well as the entire economic disaster wrought by the fascist dictatorship. So far, Marcos himself has found difficulties in making the workers his scapegoat. The one-sided victimization of the working class by the US-Marcos dictatorship is too large a fact to conceal at this stage.

The most effective way to stop the workers from resorting to extraordinary measures in order to defend their rights and interests is to end the fascist dictatorship and cast away its antilabor, antinational and antidemocratic policies. If workers must be encouraged to avail themselves of lawful means it becomes the responsibility of the authorities to do away with their own fascist laws and respect the trade union and all other democratic rights of workers, together with those of the whole people.

The aggravation of the political and economic crisis by the fascist armed counterrevolution has been most effective in agitating the workers and the entire people to take the path of democratic armed revolution. The fascist dictatorship is unwittingly urging the people to rise up in arms and increasing the ranks of armed revolutionaries.

The political education of workers should not be limited to making the best out of the present political conditions or to pleading for a few minor concessions at a time. It should not be limited even to seeking the end of the fascist dictatorship. It must encompass all the tasks to change the semicolonial and semifeudal conditions fundamentally and to build a truly new society (this phrase has nothing to do with Marcos' false slogan) that is completely independent, democratic, just and prosperous. Political education means a basic and comprehensive understanding of the national democratic program, which includes the following points: national independence from US imperialism; the victory of democracy over fascism and feudalism; genuine land reform and national industrialization; the promotion of a national, scientific and mass culture; self-determination and all-round progress of the national minorities; and foreign policy committed to the development of friendly relations with all countries and peoples on the basis of independence, equality and mutual benefit.

Political education further means that the workers should become conscious of their own class outlook and methodology; their historic mission in the national democratic and socialist stages of the Philippine revolution; the world development of capitalism up to the stage of imperialism; the basic principles of socialism; and the principles of internationalism. Of course, there should be higher courses to raise the theoretical level of the advanced elements of the working class.

By their correct political orientation, the workers recognize the importance and necessity of linking up with the rest of the people and engaging in political struggle beyond the confines of the trade union movement. They should participate in activities and campaigns that promote the national democratic line. They need the support of other patriotic and progressive classes just as these classes also need the support of the workers. The victory of the national democratic revolution is not possible without a broad national united front.

The industrial workers in this country are still a small minority. Only in a broad sense as to include other wage earners can it be said that we have a sizable working class. At any rate, it is of decisive importance that the industrial proletariat link up with the peasants and farm workers in order to advance in a comprehensive way their common interests as the toiling masses of the country.

The toiling masses of workers and peasants should further link up with the urban petty bourgeoisie because its interests are close to theirs, especially upon the worsening of the social crisis. They should also make distinctions among the capitalists and link up with the national bourgeoisie against the foreign monopoly capitalists and the big comprador-landlords, especially the fascists.

In the course of political education and mass struggles, the most advanced elements of the working class become the cadres and members of the proletarian party. If such a party is at the core of the leadership of the trade union movement, the workers can play a more effective role in promoting their own class interests and the interests of the whole people along the national democratic line. But even then, such a party is always for an alliance of trade unions and labor federations irrespective of ideologies, because there are sufficient patriotic and progressive grounds for unity and the process of learning from each other and supporting each other.

At any rate, the struggle to protect the political and economic rights of workers should encourage them to get organized as a political force and develop their own political strength and advance as the vanguard of social revolution and modern industry.

May 1 Message

May 1, 1983

As one devoted to the national democratic revolution and to the leading role of the working class, I salute all Filipino workers for their militant struggle against the fascist dictatorship of the US-Marcos clique and wish them to achieve greater victories in their trade union struggle as well as in their political struggle. I join you in commemorating the glorious sacrifices of the working class and celebrating its victories in fighting for a better world against imperialism and all reaction. We join the workers of the world in one gigantic festivity that is full of revolutionary meaning.

We are filled with the spirit of proletarian internationalism and we reaffirm the historic mission of the working class as the vanguard of social revolution and modern industry. This class has created the conditions for a world proletarian socialist revolution. And these conditions favor the advance of the Filipino proletariat and people in a new type of democratic revolution.

We renew our determination to realize and strengthen the leading role of the proletariat in the Philippine revolution at its present national democratic stage. We must first complete the struggle for national independence and democracy by doing away with the unjust dominance of US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism in this semicolonial and semifeudal society. Then we shall proceed to build a truly new society – socialism.

In the process of combating the fascist dictatorship, which is the brutal concentrated expression of foreign and feudal domination, the Filipino workers and the rest of the people can gain the strength to realize an independent, democratic, peaceful, just and prosperous social system. The Filipino proletariat has a party to ensure that the ideological, political and organizational requisites for victory are undertaken.

The fascist dictatorship of the US-Marcos clique has aggravated the political and economic crisis of the ruling system. More than ever, the ruling clique of big comprador-landlords is driven by its greed to use brute force against the workers and the entire people. Oppression and exploitation are being intensified.

The present economic disaster in our country is the result of accelerated superprofit-taking by the multinational corporations and the unbridled bureaucratic corruption under the auspices of the pseudo-development policy of inflationary anti-industrial projects and excessive foreign borrowings. More than ever the Philippines is a source of cheap raw materials and cheap labor vulnerable to the worsening imperialist crisis of overproduction.

The lives of workers are now being wrecked by massive unemployment, soaring prices of basic commodities and starvation wages. The workers assert their trade union and other democratic rights in order to seek the improvement of their working and living conditions. But the fascist dictatorship unleashed more vicious antilabor laws and more brutal acts of repression.

The fascists and their imperialist masters themselves are agitating the proletariat and the people to rise up. The antilabor prohibitions, threats and onslaughts serve only to militate the workers to develop the trade union movement and launch various forms of concerted mass struggles not only on trade union issues but on broad economic and political issues affecting the workers and the whole people. Beneath the surface is a far greater amount of strength which is bursting out.

The workers' struggle is part of a comprehensive political struggle of the people. All patriotic and progressive classes and strata are today rising up rapidly against the fascist tyranny. The strength of one adds to the strength of the others in the broad national united front. There is also a complementary and reciprocal relationship between the struggle in the cities and that in the countryside.

Like all despots, Marcos relies more on campaigns of terror as his regime becomes more politically isolated and economically bankrupt. The increasing acts of fascist terror can only serve to accelerate the growth of the people's armed resistance. Take note of the changing balance of armed strength between the New People's Army and the Armed Forces of the Philippines: in 1969, it was 1:1,500 (35 vs. 50,000); 1972, 1:200 (500 vs. 100,000); 1977, 1:125 (2,000 vs. 250,000) and in 1982 based on AFP estimates which tend to minimize NPA strength, 1:25 (10,000 vs. 250,000). The NPA growth rate has been cumulative.

It will not be long before the balance of strength reaches 1:10. At that point, the fascist dictatorship will be even more isolated. Claims of the people's "acquiescence" to it or that the "situation is under control" will become

even more ridiculous. Those who do not understand the theory of people's war will learn that people's war is not a single make-or-break uprising but a cumulative process of growing from small to big and weak to strong by relying on the strength of the masses of the people. The people's armed forces grow through a process of seizing arms from the enemy in areas most favorable to the revolutionaries.

Simply maintaining the Armed Forces of the Philippines at its present force level will strain the political and economic position of the fascist dictatorship. The economic disaster into which the Marcos regime has steered the country will only become more devastating and is bound to hasten the political doom of the dictatorship. Direct and indirect US military assistance to the puppet regime of tyranny is increasing. But it can no longer give as much as it could to its puppets in the Vietnam war.

By their resolute and militant struggle for national independence and democracy against the US-Marcos regime, the Filipino proletariat and people serve their own interests and at the same time contribute to the strengthening of the proletariat and other oppressed and exploited people abroad. In the face of increasing US support to the fascist dictatorship, the proletariat and people of the world understand that the Filipino proletariat and people need their support.

- Long live the Filipino working class!
- Long live its proletarian revolutionary party!
- Long live the trade union movement!
- Carry forward the national democratic revolution!
- Defend the workers' trade union and other democratic rights!
- Free Ka Bert, Ka Bel and other workers and working class leaders in prison!
- Down with the fascist dictatorship of the US-Marcos clique!
- Long live Kilusang Mayo Uno! Long live the Filipino people!
- Long live proletarian internationalism!

Tasks of the Trade Union Movement: Keynote Address to the Kilusang Mayo Uno National Congress

May 1, 1985

I wish to greet the Filipino workers and express my solidarity with them as they join the international proletariat in celebrating International Workers' Day. In spirit, I join them in their marches and rallies together with the rest of the people in the National Capital Region and all over the country.

We raise high the red banner of the international proletariat, reaffirm the historic mission of the working class in the liberation of the people from imperialism and all reaction and renew our determination to carry the revolutionary struggle forward.

We resolve anew to further strengthen the broad national unity of the working class with the rest of the people in the fight against the fascist dictatorial regime of the US-Marcos clique and in striving for the total victory of the national democratic revolution against US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

It is not the Marcos dictatorship alone but the entire semicolonial and semifeudal system that is dying. The fascist counterrevolution has failed to quell the revolutionary mass movement; it has, in fact, succeeded in causing this to grow rapidly.

The anti-industrial and pseudo-development policy adopted by the US imperialists to prop up the tyranny has only served to aggravate and deepen the agrarian character of the economy; and plunge it irretrievably into the foreign debt trap.

Every IMF-World Bank "economic recovery" measure imposed by the imperialists and fascists spells further loss of economic sovereignty and further intensification of the exploitation of the working class and the entire people. The rapacity of the imperialists and the fascists knows no bounds.

Millions of workers have been laid off. Those who hold on to their jobs are forced to receive starvation wages and are in constant danger of being laid off. The prices of basic commodities keep on soaring rapidly. The peso has been repeatedly and drastically devalued and depreciated. The pre-industrial import-dependent economy is in a deep state of depression.

The urban unemployed as well as bankrupted entrepreneurs are being urged by imperialist and reactionary propaganda to turn to agriculture, notwithstanding the fact that the economy is in shambles precisely because it has been mainly dependent on agricultural export crops whose prices are constantly depressed in the world capitalist market. Even staple crop production is adversely affected because it has been made dependent on imported inputs for which foreign exchange is in short supply.

A great number of urban workers who have been laid off are indeed going back to the countryside to avoid starvation in the cities. Many of them find their way to the revolutionary armed struggle and reinforce the worker-peasant alliance and the proletarian leadership.

Workers who manage to eke out a living in the cities are participating militantly in the rapidly growing trade union and strike movement as well as in the broad legal democratic movement. The most advanced members of the working class are finding their way into the revolutionary underground and the party of the proletariat.

With the intensification of social unrest, the fascist dictatorship has become increasingly vicious and violent. Under the prodding of the US imperialists, it is escalating campaigns of terror against the working class and the entire people. The US imperialists continue to provide their puppets all the means—military and otherwise—with which to trample on the national sovereignty and all democratic rights of the people.

The more the US imperialists tout the fascist dictatorship as an improving "democracy," the more are the workers deprived of their basic trade union and other democratic rights; and the more are they made to suffer all kinds of atrocities and abuses—including the brutal dispersal of strikes, murders on and off picket lines, kidnapping, illegal detention, arbitrary dismissals and union busting.

But the workers have not been cowed. They are ever more determined to expand and intensify the trade union and strike movement; and in joining the rest of the people in the broad democratic mass movement, which is a united front of all patriotic and progressive forces.

Genuine and militant anti-imperialist trade unionism is developing vigorously. Economic struggles easily

become political struggles against the fascist dictatorship and its imperialist master, especially because of the wanton use of counterrevolutionary violence on the workers.

Right now, the working class movement is in the forefront—developing general strikes and nationwide people's strikes. These strikes will certainly hasten the dismantling of the fascist dictatorship and the end of the unjust social system.

The day will come when the forces of the national democratic movement in the urban centers will conjoin with those in the rural areas in the strategic offensive to wipe out the final strongholds of counterrevolution and win total victory.

The only solution to the ever worsening political and economic crisis of the ruling system is the revolutionary struggle and victory of the Filipino people under the leadership of the proletariat through a correct revolutionary party.

Unite to overthrow the fascist dictatorship of the US-Marcos clique!

Carry forward the struggle for national liberation and democracy against US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism!

Long live the Filipino working class!

Long live the Filipino people!

Long live the working class and all peoples of the world!

On Political Refugees and Other Displaced People

November 5, 2001

First, may I express warmest greetings of solidarity to all the organizers and participants of the International Migrant Conference on Labor-Export and Forced Migration Amidst Globalization.

I am glad to know that the conference is in support of the International League of Peoples' Struggle, with regard to its concern over the rights and welfare of migrant workers and refugees displaced by imperialism and local reactionaries.

I am pleased and honored to be invited as a panel speaker on political refugees and other displaced people within the thematic frame of "rallying global strength and solidarity of migrants, refugees and displaced people in resisting neoliberal globalization".

It is timely to discuss the issue of refugees and other displaced people for at least two reasons. We do so by way of celebrating the 50th anniversary of the 1951 Refugee Convention and raising our vigilance and militancy against the depredations caused by neoliberal globalization.

Definition of terms

Let us define some terms by way of clarifying the core and context of our discussion. Let us start with the definition of the term refugee.

According to the 1951 Refugee Convention, a refugee is a person who "owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country." (Article IA).

The foregoing definition refers to the clear case of the refugee who is outside the country of his nationality and seeks refuge and protection in another country. Such a displaced person is a refugee under the explicit founding mandate of the office of the UN High Commissioner on Refugees and may seek protection as a refugee as member of a group or individually, up to the point of applying for asylum in a country that is a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol.

The process of forced displacement or refugee-ization of people, especially in large numbers, starts with such phenomena as wars of aggression, counterrevolutionary military campaigns of suppression, civil war, communal or ethnic conflicts, grabbing and plunder of land and other natural resources by the imperialists and the local reactionaries, environmental disasters and various forms of political persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality and membership in a particular social group or political opinion.

Internal refugees or internally displaced people emerge first before there can be any significant number of people who leave their country as refugees, usually for adjoining or nearby countries. Of course, there are also refugees who can fly over several countries or sail far in order to reach another country where they seek asylum.

Regional instruments such as the 1969 Organization of African Unity Refugee Convention and the 1984 Cartagena Declaration have expanded the mandate of the UNHCR to cover "persons who have fled because of war or civil conflict", supplementing and augmenting the definition of refugee by the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol.

The scope of our concern in this panel includes the internally displaced people, the refugees who may or may not apply for political asylum in other countries and the refugees who seek political asylum under the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol.

The magnitude of the problem

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees reports that it is concerned in the current year with 21.8 million people who are subdivided into the following categories: refugees, 12 million (55 percent); returned refugees, 800 thousand (4 percent); internally displaced people (IDP), 6 million (27 percent), returned IDP, 400 thousand (2 percent) and others, 1.7 million (8 percent).

When the UNHCR speaks of the people of its concern, it refers only to those displaced people and refugees who are within the reach of its limited personnel and budget and whose existence can no longer be denied or

understated by any state that wishes to make them invisible.

The World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance has higher estimates of the forced displacement of people on a global scale. These run as follows: 50 million people have been displaced, with 14 million as refugees and further with 25 to 30 million displaced within their own countries. This means one refugee for every 120 persons worldwide.

In my view, the number of internally displaced people and cross-border refugees is far more than the UNHCR or even the aforementioned world conference can ascertain. Those seriously concerned with this issue can make their own investigation and survey as well as look further into those made by nongovernmental entities truly concerned with displaced people.

Reactionary states characteristically deny or understate the phenomenon of displaced people within their borders because they wish to cover up their responsibility for the displacement. I remember the time when the Marcos dictatorship suppressed the report of the Philippine National Red Cross to the International Committee of the Red Cross stating the figure of 4.5 million internal refugees in the Philippines during the early 1980s.

Since then, the post-Marcos regimes have exerted all efforts to obscure the existence of internal refugees in the Philippines due to counterrevolutionary military campaigns of suppression and the grabbing of land and other natural resources under various pretexts of "development" by the multinational firms and the local reactionaries.

At least 98 percent of the displaced people in the world may be categorized as internally displaced people and cross-border refugees in adjoining or nearby countries. The UNHCR gives the figure of 914,100 asylum seekers currently. This is a mere 1.8 percent of the 50 million displaced people estimated by the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance.

Only a very small number of displaced people seek asylum in the industrial capitalist countries. They are usually the most educated among the millions of refugees who get stuck in other underdeveloped countries. The asylum seekers are magnified in the public consciousness by the bourgeois mass media in connection with the drive of the industrial capitalist countries, to tighten admission rules against them, whip up public prejudice against them and discourage them from seeking asylum.

According to the UNHCR, at the end of 2000, Asia hosted the largest refugee population (44.6 percent), followed by Africa (30 percent), Europe (19.3 percent), North America (5.2 percent), Oceania (0.6 percent) and Latin America and the Caribbean (0.3 percent). Not accounted for in the foregoing figures are the persistent 3.8 million Palestinian refugees who are under the mandate of the UN Relief and Works Agency, instead of the UNHCR.

In the last ten years, the imperialist countries have drawn refugees from the countries or areas targeted by US and NATO wars of aggression. These include Iraq during the Gulf war, Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo in the Balkan wars and once again Afghanistan in the current US war of aggression.

The imperialist states often use the promise of refuge to attract turncoats from adversary states. But in fact, they merely offer "temporary protection" en masse to the refugees and avoid obligations under the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol. The refugees are sent back to their countries of origin as soon as the imperialist states arbitrarily claim that such countries have become "normal" and "democratic".

The root cause of forced displacement

In the entire history of mankind, the largest displacement of people has occurred in the last one hundred years as a result of inter-imperialist global wars, wars of aggression against the oppressed peoples, civil wars and conflicts due to racial, religious, ethnic and other differences.

The root cause of forced displacement of people is the exploitation and oppression conducted by monopoly capitalism and its local reactionary agents. The hand of imperialism is easiest to discern in the inter-imperialist wars and wars of aggression which have caused the largest displacement of people.

But civil wars and ethnic conflicts have arisen in connection with severe conditions of imperialist exploitation. The imperialists push reactionary states into bankruptcy through superprofit-taking and mounting foreign debt burden. Under such circumstances, the local reactionary forces become degraded and desperate and compete for power in a violent manner and in the language of ethnic, religious and racial prejudice.

We have witnessed in the last decade the massacres and displacement of people in Rwanda, Burundi, Sierra Leone and other African countries, in Algeria, in Afghanistan in the course of factional struggles and in former Yugoslavia in the course of ethnic and religious conflicts.

Under the conditions of neoliberal globalization, we are confronted by the escalation of imperialist wars of

aggression, civil wars and ethnic conflicts and various forms of persecution that result in massacres and massive displacement of people from their homes and land. The worst that can come is an inter-imperialist war.

The people of the world are being crushed by liberalization, privatization and deregulation pushed by the imperialist and client states, by the multinational firms and by the multilateral agencies like the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and WTO. In this connection, the imperialists are hell-bent on waging wars of aggression and instigating counterrevolutionary violence to impose their will on the people of the world and suppress the people who want revolution, nations that want liberation and countries that want independence.

The crisis of the world capitalist system has reached such a point that the imperialist powers are increasingly launching wars of aggression to retain or gain positions of strength, fields of investment, sources of raw materials and markets. At the same time, they continue to instigate and manipulate ethnic conflicts and other localized forms of conflict in order to deflect the people from the revolutionary road and make way for increasing imperialist dominance.

Irony of ironies from the cruelty of imperialism

Even as monopoly capitalism or imperialism, assisted by local reactionary forces, is the root cause of the forced displacement of the people in their tens of millions, the imperialist states have decreased their token show of concern for the refugees and other displaced people. The UN agencies concerned with refugees are getting less financial contributions from the imperialist countries.

When political refugees find their way into the imperialist countries in order to seek asylum, they are faced with increasing obstacles that run counter to the humane spirit and letter of the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol.

Such obstacles have increased during the last ten years because the imperialist countries no longer find as much need for accommodating refugees as during the Cold War. There was then the main objective of attracting refugees from socialist and anti-imperialist countries and there was a secondary objective of keeping as refugees those fleeing from persecution by anticommunist regimes so that such refugees would not lose their loyalty to the world capitalist system.

Right now, the imperialist states are now worried about being swamped by refugees from the increased number of countries under conditions of war and political turmoil, in both third world and former Soviet-bloc countries. The glaring imperialist policy is to discourage and prevent refugees from seeking asylum in the industrial capitalist countries.

The imperialist states are promoting racism in the treatment of refugees and asylum seekers. They have tightened their entry and admission policies. They are narrowing the interpretation and application of the 1951 Refugee Convention. They are shamelessly detaining and maltreating asylum seekers.

Racist and xenophobic portrayal of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants run rampant in the bourgeois media. These are depicted as criminal, fraudulent and parasitic. Bourgeois politicians and bureaucrats use the anti-refugee and anti-migrant sentiments for political gain.

Hysteria against refugees, asylum seekers and migrants is being fomented. It has resulted in violent racist attacks against them. Social and economic discrimination is commonplace. Asylum seekers, refugees and migrants have increasing difficulties with regard to access to housing, education, health care, employment, social welfare and other basic rights.

The monopoly bourgeoisie and its apologists are waging a systematic campaign to obscure the exploitation and oppression of the working class by monopoly capitalism. They obscure the root cause of social conflict and tensions in imperialist countries by putting the blame on the migrants and refugees.

They make the third world countries appear as taking away industries and jobs from the imperialist countries and at the same time blame the migrants, refugees and asylum seekers for coming over to the imperialist countries to take jobs away directly from local workers.

In fact, it is the imperialist powers that have inflicted further economic and social ruin on the underdeveloped countries of the third world as well as on the retrogressive countries that were previously ruled by the revisionists. Thus, people are driven to migrate to the imperialist countries to take bottom jobs, with low wages and with democratic rights flagrantly laid aside and violated.

The Sison asylum case

The organizers of the conference have requested me to make a brief report on my asylum case for the purpose

of drawing up a resolution on it. Thank you for your concern and for the prospective resolution.

The Dutch courts have repeatedly recognized me as a political refugee. The Raad van State (Council of State, the highest administrative court) did so in 1992 and again in 1995. The Aliens' Court and the Law Unity Chamber also did so in 1996 and 1997.

As a recognized political refugee, I enjoy the right of non-refoulement under the 1957 Refugee Convention. I also enjoy the protection of Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights, which prohibits the return of an asylum seeker to his country of origin where he/she is likely to be tortured or subjected to inhumane and degrading treatment.

In 1997, no less than the Dutch justice ministry yielded to the aforesaid decisions of the Dutch courts by conceding that I am indeed a political refugee but argued that recognition does not mean admission as refugee to the Netherlands. The Legal Unity Chamber in 1997 agreed with the Dutch justice ministry on this hair-splitting between recognition and admission as refugee.

Consequently, I filed an appeal to the European Court of Human Rights in early 1998. My appeal is grounded on the established jurisprudence in said court that when a person enjoys the protection of Article 3 of the European Convention he is entitled to the protection of the entire European Convention (right of residence, right to work, family reunion, etc.).

There is also the related jurisprudence that in dealing with the asylum case of a recognized political refugee, the state can no longer weigh the balance between the rights of the state and those of the individual in order to deny the application for asylum. That is because the state, even after granting asylum to the alien, has all the capability to deal with any prospective criminal wrongdoing, if any, of the political refugee.

The office of the UN High Commissioner on Refugees, Amnesty International, major social, lawyers', refugee and human rights organizations in The Netherlands, Europe and the whole world and outstanding authorities on refugee law have supported me in my struggle for asylum.

But the Dutch state, through its justice ministry, has used every trick within its means to serialize its arguments against my application for asylum and prevent my legal admission to the Netherlands. In open court, it has stated that, in obedience to the advice of US authorities, it has not granted me admission to the Netherlands. It has admitted and has even put forward as a legal argument that to deny me asylum is to maintain its credibility to its allies. A reliable source has also revealed that the secret dossiers against me have been supplied by US intelligence agencies.

The US and Dutch intelligence agencies in 1991 went so far as to approach a Filipino asylum seeker, Nathan Quimpo, for him to make intelligence reports on me in exchange for a rapid approval of his asylum application, a trip to the United States and initial monthly salary of US\$1,500. The Dutch authorities have included articles of Quimpo among the dossiers against me.

My case is supposed to be decided by the European Court of Human Rights within five years from 1998 to 2003. According to my counsel, Prof. G.J.H. van Hoof, the court in the current year has already asked the Dutch government to reply to my appeal.

The case is quite significant and consequential to asylum seekers in general, with regard to the issue of political refuge. If I win my case in the European Court of Human Rights, the conventions on refugees and human rights are reaffirmed and become more clearly beneficial to refugees and other people. If the opposite occurs, then it would serve to further encourage the tightening of laws and regulations against refugees and asylum seekers.

Anything is possible in imperialist countries under circumstances of rising anti-migrant and anti-refugee sentiments incited by the state authorities, the bourgeois politicians and mass media. The climate is growing ever worse as the US and other imperialist powers whip up the "anti-terrorist" hysteria in order to make further attacks on the democratic rights of the people and their militants and to obscure the fact that the imperialist powers commit the worst acts of terrorism. Your resolution of support is therefore urgent.

What is to be done

It is necessary to develop a common analysis of forced displacement of people as refugees and to look into the role of governments and international institutions in this regard.

A rising common understanding of the problem and a clear knowledge of friends and foes can start you well on the road of struggle. I hope that I have contributed some useful information and ideas or have somehow reinforced your stock of knowledge about imperialism and the local reactionaries as being responsible for the forced

displacement of the people, especially under the present conditions of neoliberal globalization.

This conference should be able to discern, define and generate actions among its current and prospective participants against human rights violations committed against migrants, immigrants, refugees and displaced people.

I support the urgent call for international cooperation to all concerned people's organizations, institutions and other positive forces to pursue common strategies of resistance, programs of action and specific courses of action against the worsening problems of labor export and forced migrations.

**Keynote Address to the 4th Congress
of Migrante International
December 27, 2005**

I am deeply pleased and highly honored by your invitation for me to keynote the 4th Congress of Migrante International. This is an occasion for me to express my solidarity to the leaders and members of Migrante International and to congratulate you for your achievements since the previous congress.

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

Filipino migrants and Migrante International

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

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

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

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

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

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

Without the foreign exchange remittances of the Filipino migrants, the reactionary government would have nothing with which to guarantee additional foreign loans, to pay for consumer imports and dissemble the bankrupt condition of the Philippine economy. The reactionary government also obtains more than PhP13 billion from the migrants through various fees, including birth certificate, NBI clearance, OWWA membership, Medicare, Overseas Employment Certificate, Artist Accreditation, passport and renewals.

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

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

The global and domestic crisis

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Trends in overseas employment

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

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

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

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

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

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

What is to be done

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

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

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

Your chapters abroad would grow stronger if in the motherland the family members of Filipino migrants are also organized into chapters. Your chapters in the Philippines can become effective in developing the mass base and influence for defending the rights and interests of the Filipino migrants. They must press the reactionary government to cease and desist from serving the interests of foreign governments and employers against the rights and interests of Filipino migrants. Migrante International must have its own base in the Philippines for undertaking campaigns against the wrong policies and practices of the reactionary government. It must also prepare for the 2007 elections.

As chairperson of the International Coordinating Committee of the International League of Peoples' Struggle, I call on Migrante International to play a key role in the ILPS Study Commission that deals with migrant workers and

to avail of the founding assembly of the International Migrant Alliance in October 2006 to engage the most significant and largest organizations of migrant workers from various countries. I hope that Migrante International on its own account and in cooperation with other organizations tackle the GATS/Mode 4 problem posed by the WTO.

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

Long live Migrante International!

Long live all migrants and their families!

Long live the Filipino people!

Thank you.

Keynote Address to the 9th National Congress of Kilusang Mayo Uno

April 12-14, 2007

May I extend my warmest greetings of solidarity to the 9th National Congress of the May 1st Movement (Kilusang Mayo Uno or KMU), to the national leadership and membership of KMU, and to all delegations, leaders and representatives of member unions, federations and mass organizations of the urban poor and the transport sector, from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao.

This is a very important gathering which assesses the work of your central union during the last four years and plans for the next four years. You will also elect the new National Executive Committee and officials of the KMU.

Thus, you will be able to renew your resolve and strength to promote and advance genuine unionism and working class leadership in the struggle of the Filipino people for national freedom and democracy against the imperialists and the local reactionaries.

Your congress theme is correct: Dare to expand, arduously consolidate and further strengthen yourselves in the intensifying fight of the workers' and the people against the enemy, which is the US-Arroyo regime. To help you accomplish your purpose and your tasks well, I will try to shed light on the world and local situations.

World situation

At present, all the major contradictions in the world are intensifying, between the imperialists and the exploited and oppressed peoples, between the imperialists and several states asserting national independence, among the imperialists themselves, and between the big bourgeoisie and the working class. In the whole world, the working class and all the people are fighting imperialism and all reaction.

This is the truth, contrary to the lie bandied around by imperialists and their lackeys that the historic struggle between the working class and the bourgeoisie has disappeared and that the victory of capitalism and the sham bourgeois-liberal democracy has become permanent in the wake of the betrayal of socialism by the revisionists and the full restoration of capitalism in countries where they have reigned.

The imperialists led by the US have launched an economic-social offensive on the basis of false premises. They have imposed the "neoliberal or free market globalization" policy to trample on the national and economic sovereignty of underdeveloped countries and unleash imperialist greed. This is in the name of the liberalization of monopoly capital and trade, privatization to place public assets in the hands of the imperialists, and deregulation for laying aside the rights, protection and benefits of the workers, women, and children and for destroying their environment.

Within a short time, the crisis of the world capitalist system has further intensified. In their greed, the imperialists themselves have narrowed and destroyed the market in the whole world through ruthless and unbridled exploitation and plunder of the earnings of the toiling masses, especially in the more numerous underdeveloped countries. The crisis of overproduction is due to the rapid accumulation of capital in the hands of a few and the diminution of the earnings of the people and the spread of unemployment.

The imperialists and their lackeys conjure the illusion that the economy of the world and that of different countries is still growing through finance capital expansion through the printing and circulation of currencies and through internal and external loans. But in the real economy, production is falling and unemployment is rising.

Based on ILO data, the number of unemployed has ballooned from 140 million in 1997 to 186 million or 6.2 percent of the world labor force in 2003. Nearly 1.3 billion people or more than one-third (1/3) of the labor force are unemployed or underemployed. This has been brought about by the market constriction for all types of basic industrial, agricultural and high-tech products.

The crisis of production leads to financial crisis. In the attempt of the US to solve its economic and financial crisis, it raises military production, launches wars of aggression and spawns state terrorism. The US also gives free rein to housing loans as well as loans for the consumption of mainly imported goods.

However, high-tech military production can create only a few jobs. And up to now, the US has failed in its plan to earn superprofits from complete control of Iraq's oil production in the face of the Iraqi people's fierce resistance. Furthermore, there is a limit to easy loans for consumption especially if the goods are imported.

US budget and trade deficits have ballooned rapidly. The total outstanding US public debt at present is US\$8.9 trillion (see the US Treasury website <http://www.treasurydirect.gov/NP/BPD/Login?application> as of April 5, 2007) and the annual debt service which amounts to almost half-a-trillion weighs heavily on the economy.

At present, the US economy is sluggish and wobbly. The whole world economy is affected. As before. There is global depression especially in underdeveloped countries which have long been devastated by the overproduction of raw materials and semimanufactures.

The soil is fertile worldwide for building revolutionary workers' parties and spreading further the revolutionary mass movements. In different countries, whether imperialist or not, there is an upsurge in workers' strikes and mass protests against suppression of rights, unemployment, the disintegration of social benefits, racism, discrimination and repression.

Struggles against imperialist aggression and intervention continue. Most outstanding is the struggle of the Iraqi people. The US has failed to fully appropriate Iraqi oil and make a big profit from it, in exchange for the expenditure of hundreds of billions of dollars, hundreds of thousands of lives of the Iraqi people and scores of thousands of US casualties (dead and wounded). Having put itself in a quagmire in Iraq, US has unwittingly reduced its attention to and control of even the greater part of the Middle East, Central Asia, South Asia, Latin America and Africa.

All forms of struggle for national and social liberation are resolutely advancing. There are prospects for the further advance of people's war for national freedom and democracy in South Asia, especially in India. It is probable that it will also emerge in Indonesia. In China today, the spirit of following Comrade Mao's teachings, repudiating the traitors and restoring socialism by any necessary means is gaining ground.

The Philippine situation

The semicolonial condition of Philippine society has further deteriorated and deepened under the Arroyo regime. The Arroyo regime collaborates with the US and other imperialists in violating the national independence of the Filipino people. It is totally subservient to the policy dictates of the imperialists. Its puppetry knows no bounds.

An increasing number of people of the world detest this regime for its extremely brutal and flagrant violations of human rights under its "all-out war" policy and in accordance with US President Bush's global war of terror. The intense exploitation and plunder of the Filipino people by the imperialists and the Arroyo clique under the "neoliberal globalization" policy has also been exposed to the whole world.

The Arroyo regime shamelessly denies the need for national industrialization and land reform. Hence, the semifeudal economy of the Philippines continues to worsen and to aggravate further. Rather than develop, the economy further retrogresses. It continues to depend on the production and export of raw materials and a few semi-manufactures. Due to the global overproduction of such products, the Philippines earns less even as it exports more.

Under the "neoliberal globalization" policy, there is a surfeit of imported industrial and agricultural products. Our rice production has been destroyed and we have become the number one rice importer in Asia. Orders of multinational corporations even for the production of semimanufactures for the consumption of imperialist nations have declined, having moved to China and India. The Philippines has become a mere subcontractor to subcontractors.

Due to unemployment or insufficient income in the Philippines, more than 3,000 workers, mostly women, go abroad each day to work there even if it means deprivation of rights and far lower salaries compared to those of the workers in the host nations. Already, nine million or 10 percent of the population are OFWs who remit about US\$14-15 billion to the national economy. However, almost their entire earnings are used to cover family consumption expenses as well as loans payment. Ultimately, their hard-earned dollars are accumulated in the hands of big compradors.

The entire economy and reactionary government are bankrupt. Trade and government budget deficits are constantly increasing. To cover up the deficits, the Arroyo regime incurs increasing local and foreign debts. Its accumulated foreign debt as of June 2006 was US\$60.5 billion while its local public debt was PhP2.17 trillion as of February 2006.

The government is directly responsible for more than PhP3.9 trillion or 67 percent of the PhP6 trillion total debt. The regime imposes more and higher taxes despite economic bankruptcy and collapse just to make sure that debts are paid. It further impoverishes and makes life difficult for the Filipino people who are suffering from the high rate of unemployment and inadequate incomes.

Of all puppet presidents, Gloria M. Arroyo is the worst in incurring debts, plundering and being extravagant.

Under the Arroyo regime, the debt service has ballooned from the usual US\$3.9 billion or 7.7 percent of the GDP each year from 1981-2000 to US\$9.6 billion or 11.8 percent of the GDP each year from 2001-2006. At the same time, the annual budget percentage allotted to social services like education, health, social security and employment has taken a plunge.

By its gargantuan borrowings, the regime conjures the illusion of a growing GDP and a prospering economy. In reality, the loan interests and amortizations grow bigger each year. They comprise the biggest government expenditure. The expenditures for the military, police, intelligence expenses other instruments of repression run second. On the other hand, allotments for education, health and other so-called social services are constantly decreased.

The accumulated number of those who are unemployed and underemployed is staggering. They constitute more than 45 percent of the labor force. The toiling masses who are employed earn very little. The minimum daily wage (PhP350) is not even a half of PhP766 (in NCR) which, the government itself says, is needed by an ordinary family to live decently.

More than 80 percent of the population live on US\$2 only or even less. A majority earn far less than the minimum needed for food alone. Sixty-seven percent (67 percent) of the population go hungry. Millions of children suffer from malnutrition. The prices of goods and basic services (transportation, electricity, water, etc.) are constantly rising. As inflation soars, the demand for a PhP125-increase in the minimum wage is left behind.

The regime knows nothing about addressing the poverty and needs of the toiling masses other than the use of violence to suppress them. Naked force is used by the military and police to suppress legal protests and strikes. Assassinations, abductions, torture and other forms of brutality against the leaders and activists among the toiling masses are increasingly perpetrated. The reactionary military and police launch campaigns of suppression in urban poor, peasant and national minority communities. The people's livelihood is destroyed and they are evicted from their homes so that the corporations and corrupt bureaucrats can grab their land.

The ever worsening oppression and exploitation of the toiling masses push them to fight further, using various forms of struggle for their national and democratic rights. Under these circumstances, more and more toiling masses decide to go to the countryside and join the people's army to advance the new democratic revolution under the leadership of the working class and through people's war.

The workers and peasants are the most oppressed in present-day society. They serve as the foundation of the revolutionary movement and the national united front. The urban petty-bourgeoisie may join them in a progressive alliance because the former is also an oppressed lot. The national front may be further broadened when the middle bourgeoisie is won over to join a patriotic alliance. The broadest alliance may be built when temporary and unstable allies from the ranks of the reactionaries join as well.

United front policy and tactics may be employed to mobilize the greatest number of organized forces and masses to weaken, isolate and defeat the worst reactionaries whom we consider our enemy, such as the Arroyo clique. The toiling masses, progressives and patriots must take advantage of the rifts among the reactionaries in society, inside the bureaucracy and within the military and police forces.

Until now, the Arroyo regime has been able to prevent the ouster of the fake president through legal mass actions. But it fears that in the coming May elections the opposition will win enough congressional seats to impeach Gloria M. Arroyo as well as enough senators to convict her.

Thus, the regime will surely cheat and employ violence to prevent the victory of the opposition. The regime is also preparing to use the Anti-Terror Law which takes effect in July to suppress the revolutionary forces and the legal opposition. The conflict between the Filipino people and the enemy regime will intensify.

Tasks of the KMU

Kilusang Mayo Uno must seize every hour and every day to expand, consolidate and strengthen itself. This is necessary in the intensifying struggle of the working class and the Filipino people to defend their national and democratic rights, to defeat the Arroyo regime and advance the new democratic revolution.

Agitation-propaganda work or agitprop and information campaigns on issues for expansion purposes must be further improved. Social investigation through discussions in small meetings must be held around factories or in workers' and urban poor communities. These must result in big marches, protest rallies or widespread strikes whenever necessary. Marches, protest rallies and strikes are also methods for accelerated and widespread raising of consciousness.

To consolidate the unions, federations and other types of workers' organizations, the courses on genuine unionism, on the national and democratic movement of the Filipino people, and on the revolutionary movement of the working class must be undertaken. Through these, you can ensure that the level of education and political consciousness of the workers will be raised. You can also ensure the development of steadfast unionists imbued with the conscious discipline of the working class.

There's no sense engaging in agitprop and education unless these produce even more unions and federations with the KMU as its center, or further strengthen the current member unions and federations of the KMU. With the worsening socioeconomic crisis, existing unions and workers without unions are heavily pressured, attacked and threatened by the reactionary government and the capitalists.

The prevailing situation must give rise to more conscientious organizational work and consolidation of those workers who are already organized. The basic organization of the workers is the local union or the company-wide union. It is also necessary to build and maintain federations which are based on industry, territory industry or peculiar history. Cooperatives must also be formed as well as mechanisms to accommodate those who are laid off. Always ensure that funds are allotted for strikes, legal defense, education, training and other activities.

Launch campaigns for the internal consolidation of the unions and federations of the KMU through education and organizing work (expansion of each union's membership and increasing the number of unions) and for upholding the rights and interests of the working class, the Filipino people and the international proletariat and all the people in the world.

You can undertake effective mobilizations if you are well-grounded on diligent, thorough and solid organizing work among the masses. The masses will respond to and follow your calls and invitations to gatherings if your line is acceptable and the size of your organization and past mobilizations is respectable.

During mobilizations, you can build different forms of alliances and do expansion work among the workers, all the toiling masses, progressives and patriots and other forces that wish to fight the enemy Arroyo regime and its imperialist masters.

Long live the Kilusang Mayo Uno!

Long live the working class and the Filipino people!

Long live the working class of the world!

Tasks and Prospects of the Workers of the World amid the Global Financial and Economic Crisis

Keynote to the 25th International Solidarity Affair

May 4, 2009

On behalf of the International Coordinating Committee and member-organizations of the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS), I convey warmest greetings of solidarity to the Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) and to all the delegations to the 25th KMU International Solidarity Affair (ISA).

We salute and congratulate the KMU for successfully holding the ISA every year since 1984 by gathering workers, trade unions, labor rights advocates, friends and supporters of the working class in Asia and the Pacific, Africa, Europe, North and Latin America.

We appreciate the institutionalization of the ISA as as a venue for exchanging experiences and ideas and for developing cooperation and mutual support in campaigns for decent wages and labor rights against the exploitative and oppressive policies of monopoly capitalism and its agencies, like the IMF, World Bank and WTO .

We commend the KMU for having established the ISA under the harsh conditions of the US-directed Marcos fascist dictatorship. Precisely because of such conditions, the KMU organized the ISA in order to gather support from the workers of the world for the KMU and Filipino workers that the fascist regime was subjecting to the worst barbarities. But over the years the ISA has become a means of developing well-rounded international solidarity and cooperation among the workers of the world.

We join you in celebrating the 25 years of ISA and all the efforts of KMU and its partners in other countries in upholding, defending and promoting international solidarity of the workers for their rights and interests against imperialism and all reaction. It is fitting and proper that the theme for this year's affair is the fighting slogan: Resist Imperialist Crisis, Plunder and War."

I am pleased and honored to be able to contribute today to the development of the theme by discussing the topic assigned to me: the tasks and prospects of the workers of the world amidst the global financial and economic crisis. I am grateful that one speaker is assigned to dissect the global financial and economic crisis and another to present the intensifying militarism, fascism and war engendered by imperialism. I presume that their presentations lay the basis for my topic.

Need for a revolutionary party of the working class

Let me start my presentation by agreeing with the view that the essential task of raising the level of the international labor movement consists of advancing from making economic demands and protesting imperialist plunder and war to confronting the No.1 imperialist and terrorist power and developing unity, cooperation and coordination among the workers of the world in exposing and opposing imperialism.

An important requisite for such advance is to build a broad anti-imperialist united front of trade unions that oppose monopoly capitalism as the common enemy of the proletariat and all the oppressed peoples and nations. In this regard, you must foster common understanding and practical cooperation among trade unions around the world in order to intensify the campaigns against imperialist plunder and war and to strengthen the anti-imperialist movements in our respective countries and globally.

It is of great importance and urgent necessity that ISA serves as an instrument for developing the anti-imperialist position, carrying forward the victories in the international workers' movement against imperialism, fortifying the resolve to resist the chronic and worsening crisis of the world capitalist system and fostering the revolutionary aspirations of the working class for socialism.

I understand that, In keeping with the character of the KMU as a labor center and the ISA as a gathering of trade unionists, you do not spell out and dwell on the need for a revolutionary party of the proletariat and the task of building it. Let me have the honor and privilege of discussing these matters, relating the trade union movement to the party of the working class but without suggesting any change in the non-party or mass character of the KMU and ISA.

From being a class in itself that arises from the need of the bourgeoisie to purchase and exploit labor power in industrial production, the working class becomes class conscious and coheres as a class for itself: at first in

struggles for better wage and living conditions through the trade union movement and eventually in struggles for the conquest of political power through the revolutionary party of the proletariat. Such a party is needed to lead the trade union movement and other anti-imperialist mass movements in realizing the historic mission of the working class to build socialism and defeat imperialism and ultimately to bring humankind to the threshold of communism.

The revolutionary party of the proletariat is needed to struggle for such immediate demands as full employment, decent wages, social security, health protection and trade union rights, expose and oppose the root causes of poverty, racism, chauvinism, repression, aggression and environmental degradation and improve the economic, social, political, cultural and environmental conditions of the working class and the broad masses of the people in the direction of revolutionary change for socialism. The trade union movement weakens and the conditions of the working class deteriorate when the revolutionary party of the proletariat weakens, is co-opted by the bourgeoisie or does not exist at all.

When we speak of the revolutionary party of the proletariat, we mean a party that truly belongs to the working class as the most productive and most progressive political force and aims for the realization of the historic mission of the working class to build socialism. It is a party that rejects confinement within the capitalist system as a permanent condition. It is determined to replace capitalism with socialism, to make the radical rupture with the exploitative tradition of private ownership of the means of production, to defeat monopoly capitalism and bring humankind to the threshold of a world without any exploiting class.

Definitely, we do not need a bourgeois laborite party, a social democratic party, a revisionist “communist” party nor any other brand of party that seeks to perpetuate the capitalist system and serves the narrow interests of imperialism and reaction. Neither do we need any party that proclaims itself the revolutionary party of the proletariat but does not arouse, organize and mobilize the workers and other toiling people for the fundamental social transformation. We need a party of the working class that leads the broad masses of the people in the new democratic revolution with a socialist perspective in certain countries and the socialist revolution in other countries.

Together with the rest of the people, the working class and its revolutionary party must carry out the new democratic revolution in countries, which are in dire need of national liberation and democracy and of national industrialization and land reform. In the industrial capitalist countries, they must pursue the line of socialist revolution and be ready to fight for democracy against the use of chauvinism, racism, fascism and imperialist war by the monopoly bourgeoisie to suppress and derail the revolutionary movement for socialism.

The revolutionary party of the proletariat is an indispensable instrument for waging the people's struggles for immediate basic social reforms and for the long-term goal of building socialism. It concentrates the revolutionary ideas and political will of the working class as the leading class and charts the strategy and tactics for defeating the imperialists and reactionaries and for establishing the worker state or the worker-peasant state, as the circumstances require. It is not enough to have trade unions and other forms of mass organizations that amount to mere pressure groups within the confines of the exploitative ruling system.

In recent decades the monopoly bourgeoisie and the imperialist powers headed by the US have been successful in their anti-communist crusade and class struggle against socialism and the working class because of the emergence and growth of modern revisionism within the ruling communist and workers' parties, since the late 1950s in the case of the Soviet Union and since the late 1970s in the case of China. Together with other anti-worker currents, modern revisionism has resulted in the restoration of capitalism in socialist countries and has undermined and derailed the international working class movement for socialism.

Gladdened by the revisionist betrayal of socialism and the peaceful restoration of capitalism in socialist countries, the US and its imperialist allies have been emboldened to adopt since 1979 and thereabouts what has come to be known as the policy of “neoliberal globalization”. They have decked out this policy as a solution to the problem of stagflation which they claim results from the stifling of the free market by state intervention and working class demands. They have used the policy to unleash an ideological, political and socioeconomic counteroffensive against the working class and the socialist cause.

They have obfuscated the extraction of surplus value and the maximization of private profit as the cause of the crisis of overproduction and the over-accumulation of capital in the hands of the monopoly bourgeoisie. Instead, they have put the blame on the working class for supposedly jacking up wage levels and social spending by government as the cause of stagflation and they have interpreted the capitalist restoration and economic decline in

the revisionist-ruled states as the invalidation of socialism and the justification for the “free market” within every country and on a global scale.

Under the policy of “neoliberal globalization”, the imperialists and the reactionaries throughout the world have carried out a vicious class struggle against the working class. By various means within their power, they have pushed down the wage levels and cut back on government social spending. They have curtailed the trade union and other democratic rights of the workers. They have used the brute force of the state to suppress strikes and other concerted actions of the workers. They have also used the schools, the mass media, churches, think tanks and other weapons of mass deception to propagate the dogma of the “free market”, to discredit the socialist cause and the working class movement and to undermine the class consciousness of the workers themselves.

They have accelerated the concentration of both productive and finance capital in the hands of the monopoly bourgeoisie and have in the process inflicted the most intolerable forms of exploitation and oppression on the working people. But they have repeatedly outwitted themselves by pressing down the incomes of the working people and thus causing the crisis of overproduction. They have further outwitted themselves by generating ever bigger financial bubbles one after another under the illusion that the unbridled creation of fictitious capital can counter the tendency of the profit rate to fall upon the expansion of capitalist commodity production.

Right now, they cannot solve the crisis because they are obsessed with their neoliberal bias and know no bounds for bailing out the finance oligarchy and for imposing further financial burdens on the working people. They miss out on the need to undertake measures to stimulate demand and production by providing temporary jobs and other forms of relief to the working people on a timely and adequate basis.

We are in the situation of the worst global financial and economic crisis since the Great Depression. In fact, we are already in a global state of depression and are moving towards the Greater Depression. The working class and the broad masses of the people are faced with the challenges of understanding the history and current severity of the crisis, carrying out protests against the imperialists and reactionaries and making demands for countering the crisis, adopting relief measures and reforms and, in the course of all these, aiming for the lasting solutions through revolutionary mass movement and social revolution.

The task of building the revolutionary party of the working class

The international workers movement and the international communist movement have weakened as a result of the growth of modern revisionism and the eventual full restoration of capitalism in the revisionist-ruled countries and the ruthless assaults on the democratic rights, wage levels and social benefits of the workers by the imperialist states and the monopoly bourgeoisie under the policy of “neoliberal globalization” and the slogan of “free market”.

Trade unions have weakened or dissolved as a result of the ruthless class war waged against the working class by the monopoly bourgeoisie in combination with the labor aristocracy, the reformists and the revisionists. Communist and workers parties afflicted by modern revisionism lost membership and political following, every time that they moved further to the Right. Since the 1989-91 period when the revisionist regimes disintegrated and the Soviet Union collapsed, the revisionist parties have either dissolved themselves or moved further to the Right and constituted themselves as “left social democratic” or neorevisionist parties.

The World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) was once the largest international labor center even after the formation of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) and also even after the splits related to the Sino-Soviet ideological debate (i.e. between Marxism-Leninism and modern revisionism). But it has declined drastically since the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the Soviet bloc regimes. Many of its constituent unions have gone over to its former Cold War rival, the ICFTU. The WFTU still maintains a structure of several trade union internationals along defined industrial lines but focuses now on organizing regional federations of unions in the third world.

At the moment, there is neither a socialist state nor any communist or workers' party that serves as the widely accepted and effective rallying point for either the international communist movement or the international workers' movement. However, there are communist or workers parties related to various traditions and currents traceable to the ideological debates in the international communist movement since the 1960s around the issue of Marxism-Leninism and modern revisionism. Such parties belong to various groupings that hold periodic conferences or seminars which adopt resolutions on various issues by consensus.

There is nothing like the Third Communist International, with the Bolshevik party as the most respected party

and with congresses and an executive committee that made decisions to guide or direct communist and workers' parties on a global scale. Since the dissolution of the Comintern in 1943, the principles of equality, independence, consensus, cooperation and mutual support have at best guided the relations among communist and workers' parties. Such principles have been underscored among parties that have opposed the line of modern revisionism spread by the Soviet party since 1956.

As of now, it may be said that there is an international communist movement insofar as there are communist and workers' parties that are engaged in revolutionary struggle in their respective countries under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism and in accordance with the concrete analysis of concrete conditions, that consider their efforts and accomplishments as contributions to the advance of the world proletarian revolution and that are ever willing to engage in common undertakings with comradely parties abroad in order to fight and defeat imperialism and all reaction.

The main task of the proletarian revolutionaries in every country is to build the revolutionary party of the working class. The parties that arise in various countries are the building blocks of the international communist movement. This movement shall rise to a new and higher level of development as a result of victories in the revolutionary struggle in various countries. Holding international conferences, seminars and forums among parties in order to exchange experiences and ideas, develop common understanding, make resolutions by consensus and agree on practical cooperation takes a secondary position to the revolutionary struggles of the communist parties in their respective countries.

The first among the tasks in building the revolutionary party of the working class is ideological building. Without a revolutionary theory, there can be no revolutionary movement and there can be no revolutionary party leading it. The theory of Marxism-Leninism is the accumulation of ideas and experiences of the international workers' and communist movement. It is the highest level so far achieved in developing the revolutionary consciousness of the working class. There is an element of modesty in calling Marxism-Leninism a theory because it is in fact a science that has revealed the laws of motion in capitalism and socialism and has repeatedly guided successful revolutionary practice.

The purpose of studying Marxism-Leninism in the course of ideological building is to apply the theory in understanding the history and current social circumstances and in carrying out revolution by the working class and the rest of the people. The theory encompasses the philosophy of dialectical and historical materialism, the political economy of capitalism and socialism, the role of classes in state and revolution, the strategy and tactics of the revolution and the history of the international communist movement.

It is not enough though to have a few party cadres and members with a high level of revolutionary consciousness and theoretical knowledge. The working class party needs to become a political force, capable of leading the broad masses of the people and gaining their participation and support in waging various forms of struggle and eventually in taking political power, which is indispensable for effecting social revolution. In this regard, it is necessary for the working class party to undertake social investigation and class analysis in order to grasp the basic character of society and to draw and carry out the corresponding general political line for waging the revolution.

Let us consider three clearly defined types of societies. If the society is semicolonial and semifeudal, the general line of the new democratic revolution needs to be carried out. If the society is industrial capitalist, the general line of socialist revolution needs to be carried out. If the society is already socialist, the general line is to carry out socialist revolution and construction for a whole historical epoch and continue the revolution under proletarian dictatorship in order to combat revisionism, prevent the restoration of capitalism and consolidate socialism.

In building the working class party politically, it is necessary to take the mass line, which is to learn from the masses what are their conditions, needs and demands and to rely on them and trust them in mustering their own strength and undertaking the actions for achieving basic social reforms and social revolution. The cadres and members of the party must maintain intimate relations with the masses and must work resolutely and militantly to arouse, organize and mobilize them.

The party must build the trade unions and other mass organizations of the working people, women, youth, the professionals and other sectors of society. It must generate the mass movement through political campaigns on the most urgent as well as long term social issues. It must engage in alliances in order to amplify the strength and influence of the progressive forces and isolate and defeat the enemy of the people at every given time. In waging

legal forms of struggle, the party can develop forms of self-defense against state violence. In resisting extreme oppression or a war of aggression, the party can build a people's army as well as organs of political power for the purpose of social revolution.

To be able to carry out its gigantic political tasks, the working class party must build its own organizational strength. It is guided by the principle of democratic centralism. Democratic discussions are freely undertaken in the organizations and organs of the party. Decisions are made either by majority vote or consensus. The decision of a higher organ prevails over that of the lower organ because of the representation of a bigger number of party members and because of the need to concentrate and unify the will of the party for the purpose of social revolution.

The party needs to maintain and develop its working class character. It must recruit members mainly from the working class and require all recruits from the working people and the intelligentsia to take the stand, viewpoint and method of the working class, to cast away the anti-worker and anti-socialist influences of the bourgeoisie and adhere to the principles, line and policies of the party. The party must be deeply rooted among the masses, draw its members from the ranks of militants in the mass movement and must expand and deepen its organization on a nationwide scale.

Prospects of the international working class movement

Since the imposition of the policy of "neoliberal globalization", the current grave crisis of the world capitalist system has been in the making for three decades through the recurrence and cumulative aggravation of the crisis of overproduction and over-accumulation of capital in the hands of the finance oligarchy in the US and other imperialist countries. The greed and violence of the monopoly bourgeoisie prevent the solution of the crisis in the short term or in the middle term.

The crisis will worsen and deepen for a long while. It is causing multi-polarization of the imperialist powers and the intensification of the struggle for a redivision of the world. The intensification of economic competition and political rivalry among the imperialist powers will cause more social and political turmoil. It portends more imperialist wars of aggression despite all the current hype by the leaders of the imperialist countries to unite in solving the crisis in a peaceful and non-protectionist way.

The crisis escalates the exploitation and oppression of the proletariat and people of the world. Thus, social discontent and unrest is spreading and intensifying. Their suffering impel the broad masses of the people to fight back. The crisis makes the conditions favorable for the upsurge of the revolutionary mass movement against imperialism and all reaction and for national liberation, democracy and socialism.

The prolonged duration and worsening of the crisis provide the progressive forces of the proletariat and people of the world the time and opportunity to arise and strengthen themselves ideologically, politically and organizationally. The progressive legal mass movements will certainly flourish on a global scale. The armed revolutionary movements will grow in strength where they already exist. They are bound to break out in more countries and in more global regions as the imperialists and the reactionaries become more rapacious and more violent than ever before.

The international workers' movement will certainly gain strength as the workers in both developed and underdeveloped countries fight for their rights and interests as a class and combine with the rest of the people in fighting for the common good against monopoly capitalism. They will raise high the banner of proletarian internationalism as they increase common understanding, international cooperation and mutual support and as they struggle against the monopoly bourgeoisie, the labor aristocracy and the currents of opportunism, reformism and revisionism.

The broad anti-imperialist movement of the people of the world will make great advances. The achievements already made by anti-imperialist and democratic formations like the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS) will become greater. Like the ISA, the ILPS is a non-party or mass formation but certainly it recognizes the important role of the revolutionary parties of the proletariat. The anti-imperialist organizations and movements of the people will grow within particular countries and at the international level. The ILPS is prepared to strengthen its own forces as well to have broad alliance and cooperation with other forces.

Within a particular country, the progressive workers movement can become strong only when the revolutionary party of the working class leads the proletariat and the people. Such a party can become strong only if it bases itself on the strength of the progressive trade union movement and other mass movements. Also within a

country, the broad anti-imperialist movement can become strong only when the revolutionary party of the working class leads the broad masses of the people. Such a party can become strong only if it is based on the broad anti-imperialist movement of the people.

The international movement of trade unions can become strong only if there is a strong international movement of communist and workers' parties. The international communist movement can become strong only if it is based on a strong international workers' movement. The broad anti-imperialist movement can become strong worldwide only if there is a strong international communist movement. Such an international movement of communist and workers' parties can become strong only if it is based on a strong anti-imperialist movement of people's organizations on a global scale.

The international communist movement will definitely become far stronger than now if once more a country of strategic importance or several countries would become socialist through revolutions led by communist and workers' parties. Before then the communist and workers parties can comprise the international communist movement only as they study the theory of Marxism-Leninism and apply this in their respective countries and as they develop common understanding and practical relations with other revolutionary parties of the proletariat in accordance with the principles of equality, independence, cooperation and mutual support.

Workers of all countries, unite!

Long live the International Solidarity Affair!

Down with imperialism and all reaction!

Fight for national liberation, democracy and socialism!

Long live proletarian internationalism!

Uphold and Advance the Rights of Migrants and Refugees

**Message of Solidarity to the Second International Assembly of Migrants and Refugees, Athens, Greece, November
1-4, 2009**

On behalf of the International Coordinating Committee and all member-organizations of the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS), I convey warmest greetings of solidarity to all the distinguished guests and participants in the Second International Assembly of Migrants and Refugees (IAMR).

We congratulate the International Migrants Alliance (IMA), Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants, IBON International, Migrante International, Migrante Europe, ATIK-Germany, Union of Working People of Greece, the Network of Migrants and Refugees Social Support and other entities for their successful cooperation in bringing about this assembly.

In accordance with its Charter, the ILPS resolutely and vigorously joins and supports all endeavors to uphold, defend and promote the rights and welfare of migrants and refugees along the line of anti-imperialist and democratic struggle. Thus, the ILPS, its Commission No. 16 and its member-organizations concerned with migrants and refugees have consistently acted to bring about the founding of the IMA in Hongkong and the holding of the First IAMR in Manila last year and now the Second IAMR.

As in your previous assembly, you confront the government-led Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) and the Civil Society Organizations (CSO) meeting. You continue to expose migration as the result and furtherance of super-exploitation and underdevelopment in impoverished countries and you oppose the prettification of migration as an instrument of development under the auspices of the US-dictated policy of neoliberal globalization.

It is necessary to present the worsening situation of the migrant workers and refugees and to underscore the issues arising from their plight and just demand for the respect and promotion of their rights and welfare and for the protection of the most vulnerable among them, the undocumented migrant workers and refugees.

We welcome and endorse the theme of your assembly, uphold and advance the rights of migrants and refugees against exploitation, war and discriminatory laws, amidst the global economic crisis! Oppose fortress Europe and the EU Return Directive! We are confident that with determination and hard work you can accomplish all the objectives of the assembly.

In bringing to the fore the urgent issues and challenges facing migrants and refugees all over the world, you must take the anti-imperialist and democratic line in laying bare the exploitativeness and oppressiveness of the world capitalist system and in setting forth your tasks.

Greed, plunder, deceit and violence characterize the entire history of capitalism and monopoly capitalism and are on the rampage with flimsy disguise in the current global economic crisis, the worst since the Great Depression. You must consider the impact of this crisis on migrants and on the women migrant workers.

The odds against them are tremendous and greater challenges are ahead of them because the crisis is sure to worsen further. The migrants, refugees and their advocates must be prepared for greater struggles ahead. The imperialist powers headed by the US have failed to solve the crisis but have instead aggravated it by using public money to bail out and raise the profits of the banks and the big corporations but not to revive the real economy and improve the employment situation. The recovery touted by the imperialists has been aptly called jobless recovery.

Labor rights, especially those of migrant labor, have been eroded and will continue to be eroded. Relations of migrants with unions and social movements are being assailed. The rights of refugees are being violated and their plight is worsening. The undocumented migrant workers are being criminalized in fortress Europe. The monopoly bourgeoisie is unleashing their special operatives to whip up racism, discrimination, xenophobia and fascism. These evil trends are emboldened under the US-directed global war of terror. State repression and fascist attacks are on the rise.

The GFMD is a tool of monopoly capitalist deception. It is staged by the imperialist states and their puppet states to glorify the exploitation of migrant labor and the practice of modern slavery. These so-called receiving and

sending states persist in peddling the myth of free market globalization and subject the working people and the unemployed intelligentsia to conditions that compel them to migrate, cheapen their labor and deprive them of their rights so as to permit their utmost exploitation.

The global phenomenon of large-scale displacement of people, migrant workers and refugees is a recurrence, extension and magnification of the dispossession and displacement of people in the primitive accumulation of capital in the history of capitalism but this time without the possibility of the underdeveloped countries developing into industrialized ones.

In previous decades, the earnings of the migrant workers have been used merely to cover trade deficits and support government and private consumption spending in the puppet states and fuel profit making by foreign and comprador corporations. In the current crisis, the migrant workers are worse off as they are being laid off, receive less real income, are further discriminated against and scapegoated for the crisis of the monopoly capitalist system and the rising unemployment and worsening conditions of the host people.

After benefiting for so long from the labor of migrants and refugees, the European Union is imposing a growing number of draconian laws and measures against them. The most notorious of these is the EU Return Directive. In this regard, you must challenge the claims of the EU to being an open and humanist society.

It is an urgent task for you to expand and strengthen the International Migrants Alliance (IMA) as a militant and progressive alliance of organizations of migrants and refugees, and advocates of migrants' rights. You must struggle for the political empowerment of the migrants and refugees. They must participate in confronting and overcoming policies and practices inimical to them.

You must develop a broad international advocacy network that will continuously hold states and official multilateral bodies accountable for problems, issues and concerns affecting migrants and refugees. You must be critical of the policies and actions of the United Nations and other international official bodies that are contrary to or fail to uphold and advance the rights and welfare of migrants and refugees.

You must adopt and carry out a program of action and campaigns around general and specific issues on migrants rights and welfare. You must draw lessons from your experience and build on successful campaigns for the rights and welfare of migrants and refugees. You must develop an educational program of action to increase your capabilities to arouse, organize and mobilize migrants, refugees and advocates.

We stand with you and support you in defending and advancing the democratic and basic human rights of migrants and refugees, in opposing GFMD and the malevolent forces behind it, in fighting for national development against foreign exploitation, unemployment and poverty, in demanding the creation of jobs at home and the end of forced migration and in resisting the EU Return Directive and all other oppressive laws.

We are with you in calling for the revival of the real economy through full employment and better incomes of the working people and not through the mere bailout of the banks and giant corporations, in rallying the migrants, advocates and all working people against oppression and exploitation and in building the people's international solidarity against the imperialist system and its rapacious policy of neoliberal globalization

We are confident that the plenary discussions, workshops, street mobilizations, bazaar, cultural solidarity activities, networking and most especially sharing of experiences and action plans during the Second IAMR will be enlightening, instructive and enjoyable for the migrants, refugees and advocates in attendance. We hope that through the Second IAMR you will be able to renew your resolve and reinvigorate yourselves to fight for the rights and welfare of the migrants and refugees.

INTENSIFY THE STRUGGLES OF THE PROLETARIAT AND PEOPLES AGAINST IMPERIALISM AND REACTION

May 1, 2010

On this glorious day of the international proletariat, we, the International League of Peoples' Struggle, join the workers and peoples of the world in celebrating their struggles, sacrifices and victories. It is of the greatest importance to raise the banner of proletarian unity and struggle against exploitation and oppression by imperialism and all reaction. Once again, we renew our resolve to dismantle the monopoly capitalist system and replace it with a just, democratic and peaceful new world in which socialism prevails.

Crisis of global capitalism continues to worsen

The enemies of the working class and the oppressed peoples do not cease to demonstrate their contempt for the masses with their lies and their violence. The mouthpieces of the monopoly bourgeoisie are busy proclaiming the end of the global economic and financial crisis, and celebrating the so-called beginnings of recovery. Not only is this claim of recovery patently false, it actually signals a heightened offensive against the workers and peoples of the world.

Bourgeois economists are prating about rising GDP figures, rallies in the stock market, the "stabilization" of the financial system, increasing bank profits and more business activity. In reality, the so-called recovery is artificial and temporary as it is solely reliant on trillions of dollars handed out by the state to the biggest banks and failing conglomerates as bailout money. This is the largest-ever simultaneous raid of public treasuries by the wealthiest stratum of the capitalist class which uses the money to rake in more profits from speculative investments.

Conditions in the real economy remain grim, especially in terms of rising unemployment and the dismal living conditions of the working masses. Tens of millions have lost their jobs or livelihoods since 2008 when the worst crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s erupted in the heartland of the global capitalist system. Millions more have been kept employed but on a part-time basis, with lower wages and ready to be axed at the bosses' say so. In the US alone, millions of families are set to lose their homes in the coming year. The monopoly bourgeoisie is seizing on mass unemployment and profound social insecurity to cut costs, take back hard-won workers' benefits and boost profits.

In the underdeveloped countries, the social consequences have been more devastating to those economies most deeply penetrated by international monopoly capital as foreign investments, credit, so-called aid, export revenues and remittances have fallen along with the economies of the advanced capitalist countries. Chronic economic depression is compounded by the multiple crises generated by the monopoly capitalist system including the food, water and ecological crises.

While the masses face a bleak future, the managers of finance oligarchy responsible for the crisis continue to raise their share of the loot. The top 25 managers of US hedge funds took home a record US\$25.33 billion in 2009—greater than the GDP of about 100 nations combined. They "earned" these obscene sums not from production but from mere speculation, specifically by correctly betting that the US government under Obama would shore up Wall Street at virtually any cost.

Obama certainly did not disappoint his financiers. Not only has he continued to funnel trillions to the finance sector, his administration has also scuttled any attempt to apply restraints on the predatory operations of finance capital, despite calls even from reform-minded bourgeois economists. He is generating the biggest kind of bubble in the form of public debt and is engaged in deficit spending that promotes monopoly profit-taking but not employment and economic recovery.

He has also indulged the military-industrial complex with the biggest war budget in US history since World War II, even adjusted for inflation. The US is building more bases and upgrading its military facilities all over the world to secure its control over strategic resources (such as oil and gas in West and Central Asia, and West and Central Africa); encircle potential rival powers, particularly China and Russia; and attack or intervene in regions where US interests are being challenged (such as in Latin America, Pakistan, Iran, and Korea.). It is also paying out billions to US monopoly firms to supply and service US bases overseas and "reconstruct" the civilian

infrastructure destroyed by US invasions in Iraq and Afghanistan.

All this generosity to the most parasitic and brutal fraction of the big bourgeoisie has resulted in the rapid increase in public deficits and debts in all the major economies. The Bank for International Settlements estimates that the debt-to-GDP ratios of the G-7 countries are likely to shoot up to between 150 and 300 percent within the next decade. Hence the executives of the monopoly bourgeoisie are preparing a new assault on the working masses in their own countries and against Third World peoples in order to squeeze out more surplus value.

The Obama administration has for instance frozen discretionary social spending, laid off thousands of teachers and public sector employees, and is getting ready to further whittle down Medicare and Social Security. Leaders of the Group of 20 are now talking about "deficit containment" and "returning to a normal policy stance" even amidst an ocean of unemployed and dispossessed masses. By this they mean withdrawing stimulus measures, imposing fiscal austerity and new taxes in order to raise revenues needed to cover the bailouts handed over to the finance oligarchy. This translates to wholesale job cuts particularly in the public sector, and slashing education, health, housing and other social and welfare programs. This is what all this talk of "recovery" means for the working masses.

The International Monetary Fund is again stepping in to impose devastating austerity measures and wage cuts not just in debt-stricken Third World countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America but now also in Eastern Europe and the less advanced capitalist countries such as Greece. In countries that have managed to steer clear of the IMF by relying on private capital markets, international finance capital still issues decrees through ratings agencies such as Moody's and Standard and Poor. Countries that refuse to reduce their fiscal deficits through cutbacks in social services, lay-offs and more regressive taxes are punished by poor ratings and higher interest rates.

Even then, there remains the threat of widespread defaults and financial meltdown in the near future. In fact, these are inevitable because the response of the ruling class to the crisis—intensified exploitation of the working masses, over-accumulation of capital, debt-driven spending, and financialization—actually aggravates the basic conditions which lead to crises. The expected bursting of the public debt bubble will have far worse consequences than the bursting of previous bubbles.

While continuing to rave about the free market masquerade of monopoly capitalism, the US is now desperately carrying out a protectionist policy and trying to reduce its external deficits through cutting imports and more aggressive export promotion. Obama recently launched the National Export Initiative which aims to double US exports in five years. The US can therefore be expected to become even more aggressive in prying open foreign markets, enforcing its "property rights" overseas while restricting the entry of imports. This is sure to exacerbate trade frictions between the US and its commercial competitors as well as intensify inter-imperialist rivalry for plundering the Third World.

In the face of the economic crisis and challenges to its hegemony, US imperialism is escalating militarism, state terrorism and wars of aggression. The biggest armed conflicts and greatest instability are happening in regions where US intervention is most extensive—West, Central and South Asia, and West and Central Africa. These are also the regions with the greatest concentration of strategic resources, foremost of which is oil, the control of which is an explicit aim of US military policy since the 1950s.

The US occupation of Iraq has entered its seventh year with no end in sight, contrary to Obama's promise to end US combat mission in Iraq by Aug. 31, 2010. The US is ramping up its war in Afghanistan by sending 30,000 additional troops plus tens of thousands of private contractors, using the country as a laboratory for new US weaponry and combat tactics, such as the use of drone attacks. It has entered into a new nuclear agreement with India to support the latter's military upgrading and keep the Pakistan-China alliance in check.

The US continues to use the US-Zionist alliance to terrorize the entire Middle East and to seize the oil and other natural resources. US support for Israeli aggression against the Palestinian people has resulted in the most atrocious war crimes and human rights violations by Israeli Zionism and in the humanitarian crisis such as that in Gaza.

In Africa, the US has fortified its military presence by creating the African Command or Africom, and has increased arms sales, military aid and training provided to a number of African countries, particularly in the oil and mineral-rich countries.

The US has also recently sealed a deal to use seven military bases in Colombia for 10 years to use as its staging ground for intervention within the country and expand its "expeditionary warfare capability" throughout the

region, particularly against "anti-US governments" identified by the Pentagon such as Venezuela, Cuba and Bolivia. In Honduras, the US-inspired coup d'etat that deposed elected President Manuel Zelaya will mark its one-year anniversary on June 28, 2010 as rumours of other possible coups spread in Ecuador, Paraguay, Venezuela (and possibly in other countries that have rejected the increasingly discredited Washington Consensus). Hugo Chavez, in particular, is the object of vitriolic propaganda in the monopoly capitalist media—which is possibly a precursor to and justification for destabilization or even direct aggression against Venezuela. Even the recent humanitarian disaster in Haiti is used by the US to extend direct military control over the Haitian people and their economy.

In the whole East Asia, the US continues to apply on China a policy of engagement and containment and is increasingly exerting economic and political pressures. It is exerting more of such pressures on Democratic People's Republic of Korea. In the Philippines, the continued presence of US troops and military facilities and the continued supply of military aid underwrite the government's vicious counterinsurgency program which targets both armed and unarmed civilians alike and props up the corrupt and fascist puppet Arroyo government.

US military aggression and intervention throughout the world is resulting in massive civilian deaths, destruction of vital infrastructure, trampling of national cultures, pillaging of natural resources, massive displacement and other gross human rights violations, spread of hunger and disease.

The proletariat and peoples of world resist

The worsening conditions of global economic and financial crisis and the escalation of imperialist plunder and wars of aggression are inciting the proletariat and peoples of the world to wage various forms of struggle.

Workers of the world are confronted not only by individual capitalist bosses extracting surplus value in particular workplaces. The monopoly bourgeoisie is attacking the working masses by using the entire coercive apparatus of the state in the imperialist countries and in the imperialist-dominated countries. The workers and peoples of the world are aware that they cannot simply bargain for higher wages and benefits. They are desirous of wresting political power from their oppressors and use state power to uphold their rights and interests.

In various countries, large-scale protests mainly against governments' responses to the crisis are breaking out and catching international attention. Greece was recently rocked and brought to a standstill by strikes and other forms of actions that oppose government plans to cut down on social spending and raise taxes to address foreign debt and mounting deficit. Farmers' tractors were used to block roads; ferries were left tied up at the ports; hospitals, schools and other public services were shut down; and even news broadcasts were suspended as hundreds of thousands joined militant protests. The workers and people of Greece are saying "no" to government efforts to make them pay for decades of misuse of government funds for political patronage, corruption and consumption through debt financing.

In France, hundreds of thousands also joined protests against the Sarkozy regime's plan to overhaul the national pension system by cutting pension and raising the retirement age in an attempt to solve the country's deficit. Organizers of the protests also raised demands for job security, better working conditions and higher wages. In all countries of Europe, especially in Portugal, Ireland, Iceland, Greece and Spain, the level of social discontent and protest is rising because of the increasing rate of unemployment, the erosion of social benefits and the deterioration of living conditions.

In the US, the workers and immigrants undertook strikes and protest rallies. Hundreds of thousands of students and faculty launched protests against cuts in the education budget and increases in tuition. They were expressing outrage at the Obama regime's policy of bailing out banks and huge corporations and of pouring money into the war in Iraq and Afghanistan to the detriment of education and other social services.

Despite US imperialism's sabotage attempts, the governments of Cuba, Venezuela, Bolivia, and North Korea are vocal in asserting national sovereignty and opposing imperialism's dictates to their countries and the world. Their popular leaders declare that their countries are waging revolution for socialism. Their governments have been able to cushion the worst effects of the current crisis on the workers and peoples, and have even improved the standard of living in their respective countries. They are now mobilizing workers and peoples to change the socioeconomic structures. Cuba, Venezuela, Bolivia are active in encouraging their fellow Latin American countries to enhance economic cooperation in that region.

In Iraq and Afghanistan, the armed resistance of the workers and peoples against direct US colonial rule and for national liberation are dealing severe military and political blows on the military might of US imperialism. The

imposition by force of US-backed puppet governments in these countries has only intensified the workers and peoples' anger at US imperialism.

The armed resistance in these countries is encouraging the American workers and peoples' condemnation of their government's continuing war of aggression. It is also showing to the workers and peoples of the world that US military might can be resisted and put to shame, and that direct US occupation and colonial rule must be opposed at all costs.

There are proletarian parties in Asia, Latin America and Asia that are waging or are preparing to wage revolutionary armed struggle. The workers and peoples of the Philippines, India, Turkey, Congo, Niger Delta, Peru and Colombia are waging people's wars for national liberation and democracy. They are persevering in the face of various campaigns of suppression by regimes that are supported by US imperialism under the pretext of the latter's so-called "global war on terror." In the Philippines, the revolutionary movement is aiming for a qualitative leap from strategic defensive to strategic stalemate in five years, by taking advantage of the intensifying global and national crises and building on current strengths and experiences.

In India and Nepal, revolutionary armed movements led by proletarian revolutionary parties continue to advance with the support of the workers and peoples in these countries. The revolutionary movement in India is steadily gaining strength, forcing the prime minister to say that "We are losing the war with the Maoists". After overthrowing the monarchy and achieving great successes in the legal militant struggles and elections, the revolutionary movement in Nepal is now gearing for the seizure of state power to defend national independence and build socialism.

After two decades of blabbering about the "end of history," the imperialists and their paid propagandists are being put to shame by the perseverance of ordinary workers and people in revolutionary struggle in order to collectively and militantly make history, and to put an end to such a backward and moribund system as imperialism.

All the struggles of the workers and peoples against imperialism and reaction are contributory to the relentless advance towards a new and better world of national independence, democracy, development, social justice and peace. We call on the workers and peoples of the world to intensify their struggles against imperialist plunder and wars of aggression and open the way to socialism!

Defend the Rights of Migrants and Refugees and Demand the Liberation and Development of all Countries

November 6-10, 2010

As chairperson of the International League of Peoples' Struggle, I wish to convey to all the participants and distinguished guests of the Third International Assembly of Migrants and Refugees (IAMR) the warmest greetings of solidarity from our League. This assembly responds to certain concerns of our League, such as those on national and social liberation, development, human rights and of course migrants and refugees.

We wish to congratulate and thank all the convenors of the assembly for their success in preparing and organizing this assembly. We are deeply pleased that some member-organizations of our League have exerted their best efforts and cooperated with other organizations to realize this assembly. The convenors are listed in the information material already distributed.

We are very thankful to the host organizations for having worked so hard to prepare and organize not only the Third IAMR but also such related events as the International Tribunal of Conscience, the round table on social movements and the People's Caravan to Guadalajara for a mini-IAMR and tribunal to hear the cases of the braceros and further to Puerto Vallarta to confront the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD). Our League is proud of being the partner of the Movimiento Migrante Mesoamerica in sponsoring the round-table on social movements.

We congratulate the host organizations of this assembly for the success of the International Tribunal of Conscience on human rights violations. These crimes have been perpetrated by a combination of corrupt bureaucrats, drug lords and military and involve the abduction, torture and murder of so many migrant workers from various countries in Latin America. It is fine that the tribunal is going to submit the verdict to the assembly.

We welcome and endorse the theme of the assembly: Defend the rights of migrants and refugees against anti-migrant policies! Development for the people, not for corporate interests! Create jobs, root out the causes of poverty! Oppose militarization of borders in the region! No to NAFTA, CAFTA and all anti-people trade agreements and policies! We agree with the objectives of the Third IAMR. It is of high importance that you further expose and oppose GFMD as a tool of neoliberal economic policy; denounce and repudiate the US-led NAFTA and the militarization of borders in the region; mobilize the mass following of migrant and grassroots organizations, institutions and individuals in resisting GFMD; and seek the support of independent-minded governments, especially in the Latin American region, in exposing and opposing GFMD.

You must create a platform for a global campaign to further expose and oppose the pro-migrant pretensions of the GFMD; gather the broadest support for the Third IAMR from the media, progressive forces and respected personages; expand and strengthen the International Migrants' Alliance (IMA); and develop solidarity relations and cooperation of the IMA with all interested entities in Latin America.

We are highly gratified that since its inception the assembly has confronted the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) in the sharpest of terms. It has debunked the GFMD's false claims of advocacy for migrants and its deceptive assumption of the "mutually beneficial relationship" between migration and development.

The GFMD is a propaganda mechanism controlled by imperialist and puppet states. It makes migration a topic for periodic palaver among representatives of such states, big business interests and imperialist-lining?? academic institutions and non-governmental organizations and excludes the migrants themselves.

The fact is glossed over that migration is the consequence of exploitation and oppression of the people by foreign monopolies and local exploiting classes. The sending countries are characteristically afflicted with poverty and underdevelopment. The states of both the sending and receiving countries have no interest in development but in the further exploitation of cheap migrant labor.

The GFMD is dishing out a big lie when it claims that its purpose is to identify practical and feasible ways to strengthen the supposedly mutually beneficial relationship between migration and development. GFMD is merely an instrument for justifying the massive export of cheap labor to the imperialist countries under the policy of neoliberal globalization.

The First IAMR in 2008 in the Philippines exposed the imperialist design of promoting migration under the neoliberal economic policy and demanded that the voice of the migrants themselves must be heard. The Second IAMR criticized the European Union Return Directive of threatening the arrest, detention and deportation for the dual purpose of further depriving the migrants of their rights and further cheapening their labor under the sign-board of Fortress Europe.

As the Third IAMR is now being held in Mexico, the US-instigated policy of neoliberal globalization has become ever more bankrupt and the world capitalist system is in deeper depression. The prescriptions for liberalization, privatization and deregulation under the Washington Consensus have been totally discredited. Nonetheless, the rulers of the imperialist states and their client-states cling on to them.

This global depression persists due to the basic workings of the capitalist system and the abuses of finance capital under the neoliberal policy. The public debt bubble has arisen because public funds and tax cuts have been used to bail out the big banks and the big corporations, improve their balance sheets and now and then revive the financial markets but definitely not to stimulate production and generate employment.

The global financial and economic crisis is generating social and political disorder. Having coupled the neoliberal economic policy with the policy of global war on terror, the US and other imperialist powers use the terrorism scare and other reactionary currents to justify the rise of military production and expenditures, state terrorism, the global deployment of US military forces, US military intervention and wars of aggression like those in Iraq and Afghanistan. The imperialists are systematically manipulating chauvinism, racism, ethnic conflicts and religious bigotry and other reactionary currents.

Under the current economic and political conditions in the world capitalist system, the socioeconomic misery and political turmoil in many underdeveloped countries drive many people to become migrants and refugees. And yet in the imperialist countries, employment has decreased due to the economic crisis and the migrants and refugees are being scapegoated as the cause of the crisis and unemployment.

The monopoly bourgeoisie and its worst political agents are systematically generating hostility towards migrants and refugees in order to cover up the real cause of the crisis and combat the rise of the progressive, anti-imperialist and democratic forces. At the moment, there is an intense tug of war going on in the mass media, elections and politics in general between the forces of the Right and the Left concerning the issue of migrants and refugees in the imperialist countries.

Following the baton of its imperialist masters, the Global Forum on Migration and Development continues to draw a glossy picture of the world under the policy of neoliberal globalization. The central theme of the 4th GFMD in Mexico is "Partnerships for Migration and Development: Shared Prosperity — Shared Responsibility." What prosperity? The GFMD continues to peddle the lie that it promotes a multilateral partnership of the exploiters and the exploited migrants as a key tool for managing migration and pursuing development and reduction of poverty and inequality through migration.

The GFMD slurs over the fact that the global depression hits both the imperialist and dominated countries. It echoes the line of the World Bank that the remittances of migrants will remain more resilient than private investment flows and will become an even more important source of external financing in many underdeveloped countries. The drive therefore is to facilitate migration and remittances. Nothing is said about facing up to the negative impact and consequences of the worsening global economic crisis to the migrants.

The IAMR stands for the rights and interests of the migrants as it opposes the line of the GFMD. As in its First and Second assemblies, the Third assembly of the IAMR correctly assails the lies peddled by the GFMD that migration promotes development and that the remittances of migrants help the underdeveloped economies to develop. It exposes the fact that the remittances are prey to the profit-making of bank monopolies and are merely used to cover consumption-driven deficits of the state and pay for the mounting debt burden.

The vain attempts of the GFMD to misrepresent the global situation and the status of the migrants and mislead the migrants are actually a prod for the IAMR to clarify the situation and issues and what is to be done in order to uphold, defend and promote the rights and interests of the migrants and refugees. The imperialist use of the GFMD should serve to push the migrants and refugees to unite and struggle against the policy of neoliberal globalization and against their victimization and violations of their rights.

We expect that the Third IAMR will systematically discuss a wide range of topics and issues affecting the migrants and refugees, such as the global economic and financial crisis, free trade agreements, labor export policies,

remittances, so-called immigration reform, low compensation and lack of basic rights, domestic work, militarization of borders, undocumented workers, trafficking of migrants (especially women and children), biases against political refugees, unfair contracts for seafarers, lack or inadequacy of health and social services, extortionate exactions by governments, recruiting agencies and crime syndicates, social and family costs of migration, family reunification, rape and assaults by employers, disappearance of migrants in transit, forced employment in war zones, and so on.

It is appropriate to convoke the third assembly of the IAMR in Mexico not only because it is where the 4th GFMD is being held. There are several highly significant reasons. Mexico is where we see the failure of the grandiloquent promises of development and better life through the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). It is the largest source of migrant labor for North America, with 10 percent of its population having emigrated. It is a transit country for all migrants coming from Central and South America.

The US has subordinated Mexico to the Plan Mexico or Merida Initiative, as the security complement for NAFTA. Mexico is where we see one of the world's most militarized borders, in particular with the US. It is a bulwark of US-led militarization in Latin America. The US is using Mexico to reassert and strengthen its hegemony over the entire region through regional, subregional and bilateral trade agreements and through the deployment of US military bases, promoting repression and provoking armed conflicts.

The US has always coveted Latin America and the Caribbean as a rich source of natural resources. It is also a major source of foreign labor in the world. The volume of its migrants ranks second to those from Europe and Central Asia. It accounts for at least 15.5 percent of the 214 million migrants and refugees. The neoliberal policies, militarization, armed conflicts, and other problems in this region have caused high rates of unemployment, displacement and poverty and have forced many people to migrate in search of jobs.

The people of Mexico and the rest of Latin America resist the impositions of the US. A militant anti-imperialist and democratic mass movement is growing steadily in Mexico. Patriotic and progressive mass movements and governments assertive of national independence and social justice have appeared conspicuously in Latin America. All of them actively oppose the imperialist neoliberal policies of the US.

We are confident that the deliberations and resolutions of the Third IAMR and the round-table discussion on social movements in Asia and Latin America and their successes and challenges would bring about a higher level of common understanding about the problems and possible solutions related to migrants and refugees. We anticipate that a higher level of determination is attained to form or strengthen the necessary organizations and mechanisms for mobilizing the migrants and refugees and the rest of the people in campaigns on urgent issues and, in the long term, to advance the movements for national liberation, democracy, social justice, development, peace and international solidarity.

May I take the opportunity to invite participating organizations in the Third IAMR that have not yet joined the International League of Peoples' Struggle to become member-organizations and to send delegations to the Fourth International Assembly which shall be held in Manila in July 2011. This will be a significant occasion for ventilating further and carrying forward the resolutions of the IAMR. It will afford you the chance to focus once more on the concern for migrants and refugees, relate it to the other concerns of our League and develop relations with delegations from various continents.

Strengthen the Ranks of Migrant Workers in South Korea

**Message of solidarity to the Katipunan
ng Samahang Manggagawa sa Korea, February 4, 2011**

The International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS) conveys its warmest and most militant greetings of solidarity to the members and officers of the Katipunan ng Samahang Manggagawa sa Korea (Alliance of Workers' Associations in Korea-KASAMMAKO) on the occasion of your 13th anniversary with the apt theme "Strengthen and expand our organizations and families in advancing genuine change in Filipino society."

As the foremost progressive alliance of Filipino organizations in South Korea, KASAMMAKO has led the movement of Filipino migrants towards victories for the rights and well-being of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs). KASAMMAKO has shown that even under extreme conditions of frequent and vicious crackdown operations by the Korean authorities, the migrant's movement can be established and can flourish. Even more importantly, you have shown that under such conditions, the need to arouse, organize and mobilize migrants becomes even more paramount.

We salute you for your continuing efforts to strengthen the movement of migrant workers of different nationalities to face the intensifying attacks of the South Korean government on the rights of all foreign workers. The support that KASAMMAKO has generated from local trade unions and organizations played a vital role in resisting violations of the rights of migrants.

For the past 13 years, KASAMMAKO has also been very active in contributing to the struggles of the Filipino people by mobilizing Filipino migrants on national issues and generating solidarity, especially on the issues of worker's rights and against extrajudicial killings of activists in the Philippines. Reciprocally, KASAMMAKO performs its internationalist duty by supporting the various issues that concern the Korean people. The work you do and the victories you have achieved serve as inspiration to other migrants and people struggling for rights and fundamental social change.

As imperialist crisis rages and plunder of the world intensifies, the plight of Filipino migrant workers in South Korea will continue to worsen. The attacks on the rights of migrants especially the undocumented migrant workers will continue. Undocumented migrant workers are among the first to be blamed for the economic problems that plague countries like South Korea that play host to hundreds of thousands of migrants. They are made as scapegoats for various problems—even including rising criminality—to curb the tide of the host people's discontent.

Meanwhile, the Philippine government cannot be relied on to defend nor protect OFWs as its only interest lies on how the labor export program can keep the economy afloat and diffuse the social unrest brewing from the widespread poverty and massive dislocation of the people.

We are confident that KASAMMAKO will remain steadfast in its determination and drive to expand and strengthen the ranks of the migrant workers in South Korea. We know you will further build on the gains you have achieved and the lessons you have learned to pursue the struggle for migrant's rights, contribute to the Filipino people's movement for genuine social change and stand with the people of South Korea and the rest of the world in resisting imperialist exploitation, oppression and aggression.

KASAMMAKO has blazed the trail for the militant struggle of OFWs in South Korea. We know that you shall continue on this path and achieve more victories in the future.

Long live KASAMMAKO!

Long live the migrant workers!

Long live international solidarity!

***The Current Imperialist Crisis
and the Peoples' Struggles: Tasks of Filipino Workers in Concert with the Workers of the
World***

**Keynote address to the 10th National Congress of Kilusang Mayo Uno, Teachers' Camp, Baguio City
March 16, 2011**

On behalf of the International League of Peoples' Struggle, I convey warmest greetings of solidarity to the Kilusang Mayo Uno on the occasion of your 10th National Congress. We congratulate you for having achieved great victories and for standing as the genuine and most progressive labor center in the Philippines. We welcome your resolve to hold fast to the lessons of KMU's three decades, to boldly expand and consolidate your ranks and to advance the struggle for genuine land reform and national industrialization to a new and higher level.

We are confident that by reviewing your work in the last three years you can evaluate your strengths and weaknesses, and formulate a General Plan and Program for 2011-2013. You can also study collectively the various issues affecting workers nationwide and worldwide.

We join you in paying special tribute to the late KMU Chairperson Emeritus and Anakpawis Representative Crispin "Ka Bel" Beltran, KMU Secretary-General Wilson Baldonaza, KMU Federation Affairs Officer Douglas Dumanon, and PISTON-KMU President Emeritus Medardo Roda. Their exemplary lives of service to the proletariat and the people continue to inspire us.

I thank you for inviting me as the keynote speaker at so important a milestone as your 10th National Congress. It is my honor and privilege to discuss the present crisis of imperialism and the struggles of the people in various countries and clarify the tasks of Filipino workers in solidarity with the international working class movement.

Present crisis of imperialism

In the course of more than three decades, the imperialist powers headed by the US and their puppet regimes have carried out the US-dictated neoliberal policy of globalization in order to attack the democratic rights of the working class, press down the wage level, erode the hard-won social benefits and cut back on government spending for social services.

They have claimed that so-called wage inflation and social spending by government caused the phenomenon of stagflation in the 1970s by reducing the amount of capital available for expanding production and employment. Thus, they have devised the neoliberal policy to put more capital and profit opportunities in the hands of the monopoly bourgeoisie and the financial oligarchy through tax cuts, trade and investment liberalization, privatization of public resources, deregulation and the denationalization of client economies.

They have obscured the real causes of the growing crisis of overproduction and recurrent recessions in the 1970s, such as the reconstruction and growth of the economies devastated by World War II and the demand-pull inflation due to the runaway US government spending for the arms and space race, overseas military bases and wars of aggression in Korea and Indochina.

In the system of imperialism, the monopoly bourgeoisie always strives to maximize profits by raising constant capital for equipment and raw materials and reducing the wage fund for buying labor power. The fall in the income of the workers lessens their ability to buy their own products. Thus, the crisis of relative overproduction arises. To counter this and the tendency of the profit rate to fall in the real economy, the monopoly bourgeoisie tries to make bigger profits and accumulate capital more rapidly in the financial markets through speculation and overvaluation of assets with the use of fictitious capital.

In their homegrounds, the US and other imperialists have also drawn sections of the working class into borrowing sprees for consumption, for buying shares of stocks in the period of the high-tech bubble from 1995 to 2000 and acquiring houses on mortgage at eventually unaffordable interest rates in the period of the housing bubble from 2002 to 2006, leading to the economic and financial crisis that broke out in 2008. In some of the underdeveloped countries, which export cheap raw materials and some semi-manufactures, foreign debt (in ever mounting levels) has been used to finance booms in private construction, import-dependent consumerism and widening trade and budgetary deficits.

The neoliberal policy of globalization has resulted in the gravest economic and financial crisis since the Great

Depression. Public money has been used to bail out the very malefactors that have caused the crisis, such as the financial oligarchy and the corporations in the military-industrial complex in the US and elsewhere. There is no economic recovery in terms of expanding production and employment. The recovery is in the books of the banks, in certain major corporations and in the financial markets.

The International Labor Organization reports, even with understated figures, that real wages have plunged, while global unemployment has stood at an all-time high, with little hope of returning to pre-crisis levels in the near future. In contrast, American and European corporations appear to have bounced back and are logging record-high profits this soon since the crisis. For instance, in the third quarter of 2010, American business collectively reported a record-high US\$1.66 trillion in profits.

Even public money that is supposed to generate production and employment must pass through the hands of private corporations which make book profits by cutting labor costs in line with the neoliberal policy which shuns the Keynesian policy of mass employment under the direct auspices of the state and gives all the leeway to the private corporations to acquire more assets and make profits in the so-called free market. The persistence of the neoliberal policy is protracting the conditions of global depression.

The recent turn of events in the global crisis is the adoption of austerity measures by imperialist and puppet governments in the face of the rapidly growing public deficits and public debt to bail out the crisis makers and maintain government operations at higher cost. Government employees are being laid off in great numbers and their salaries and pensions are being eroded. Education, health and other public services are deteriorating while becoming expensive to the people.

Since last year, governments across Europe have announced upwards of US\$200 billion in public spending cuts over the next two to four years—cuts that amount to public sector layoffs, pay cuts, and caps on benefits—alongside draconian labor reforms that aim to curtail workers' collective bargaining rights. We see the same policy running in state and local governments in the United States. Wealth and power are being further redistributed upwards.

Whatever meager incomes workers are left with are being eaten away by the spiraling rise of energy and food prices. Recently, these have climbed dangerously close to the peaks reached during the shock of 2008. Crude oil is again trading over US\$100 per barrel, while the price of internationally traded cereals is at its highest since July 2008. Surging prices of basic commodities are mercilessly battering the workers even before they can recover from the previous round of mass layoffs and inflation and the previous fuel and food crisis.

The resistance of the people

The neoliberal policy has impoverished the toiling masses of workers and peasants through the worst forms of exploitation enforced by state terrorism. The resultant global crisis involves high rates of unemployment and soaring prices of oil, food and other basic commodities. It is wreaking havoc on the lives of the people all over the world in an unprecedented way. Thus, the suffering people are rising up on a wide scale against their oppressors and exploiters in various developed and underdeveloped countries and entire global regions, such as currently in Latin America, South Asia, North Africa and the Middle East.

The mass uprisings of unarmed people are releasing a tremendous amount of revolutionary energy for the formation and strengthening of revolutionary parties of the proletariat, people's organizations, mass movements and armed revolutions for national liberation, democracy and socialism. The long-running mass movements of the toiling masses and the armed revolutionary movements for national liberation and democracy can expect to grow in strength and advance as the global crisis protracts, worsens and deepens.

The proletariat and people in the imperialist countries have been victimized by the neoliberal policy of globalization. They have launched mass protests and general strikes against the worsening conditions of unemployment, homelessness and loss of social benefits. The monopoly bourgeoisie has increasing difficulties in obscuring the root causes of the crisis in the capitalist system and trying to deceive and divide the people with the reactionary currents of chauvinism, racism, fascism and war hysteria. In one summit after another from year to year, the rulers of the imperialist countries and major less developed countries have exposed their inability to solve the grave economic, social and political problems spawned by the neoliberal policy of globalization. In endless series of conferences, the IMF, World Bank, WTO and other multilateral agencies have failed to offer any solution to the crisis. By and large, the imperialist powers are still united against the oppressed people and nations and vent their aggressiveness on national liberation movements and countries assertive of independence.

But they are increasingly competing and contending for a re-division of the world. The protracted crisis carries the threat of fascism and further wars instigated by the imperialists. At the same time, it is inciting the people to engage in militant mass actions and in revolutionary struggles for national and social liberation.

The role of K MU

It is the task of the K MU to carry forward the struggle of the working class and the broad masses of the people for national liberation and democracy in the Philippines against the US-Aquino regime and the entire ruling system. We must confront and oppose the continuing subservience of the reactionary government under Aquino to the US and its policy dictates. The so-called development plan of the regime is governed by the US policy of neoliberal globalization.

The so-called internal peace and security plan, Oplan Bayanihan, is a continuation of Oplan Bantay Laya and is guided by the US Counter-insurgency Guide and the US global war of terror. You must be resolved to oppose all these policies and plans which are aimed at exploiting and oppressing the working class and the entire Filipino people.

You must do everything possible to arouse, organize and mobilize the people in order to assert their national sovereignty, expand democracy, promote economic development through land reform and national industrialization, raise employment and improve the people's livelihood, make science and technology serve development and the people, realize social justice and achieve a just and lasting peace.

We are deeply pleased that K MU is prepared to take on the challenge of our time. It is correct that you call for bolder expansion and the steady consolidation of your mass membership and for the relentless mobilization of the Filipino workers and people for the cause of national and social liberation. Your victories in the Philippines constitute a contribution to the struggle of peoples of the world for a new, just and better world.

By becoming strong, you are in a position to take initiatives or participate in international activities in which you cooperate with the workers and people of other countries in opposing the neoliberal economic policy, the attacks on workers' rights, the cheapening of labor, widespread unemployment and austerity measures and demanding what needs to be done in order to fight exploitation and oppression and achieve social justice and fundamental social change.

We are aware of how much K MU has succeeded in developing fraternal relations with other labor organizations abroad and how much effort it has exerted in maintaining and promoting the International Solidarity Affair. We urge you to consider how to revitalize and expand this. You must give priority to communicating and cooperating with the labor unions and other worker organizations that are active abroad in waging anti-imperialist and democratic mass struggles.

We have always highly appreciated the role of the K MU within the frame of the ILPS. We are happy to know that the 10th National Congress is a preparation for the 4th International Assembly of the ILPS. We hope that you can contribute greatly to the success of the assembly and the work of the commission concerned with labor.

We are confident that your Congress will be a resounding success. We congratulate in advance the new set of K MU national officers to be elected by the congress. We wish all the delegations, the member unions and allied unions of Kilusang Mayo Uno to win ever greater victories in all the years to come.

Long live the Kilusang Mayo Uno!

Long live the class leadership of the working class!

Long live the broad masses of the Filipino people!

Carry forward the national democratic movement!

Strengthen solidarity with the workers and peoples of the world!

Uphold the Rights of Migrant Workers, Resist Imperialist Attacks and Win Greater Victories

Message to the 2nd General Assembly of the International Migrants' Alliance, Manila, Philippines July 3, 2011

As chairperson of the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS), I convey warmest greetings of solidarity from the League to the International Migrants' Alliance (IMA) and all its member-organizations on the occasion of its 2nd General Assembly.

We are glad that your assembly is a major event in the International Festival for People's Rights and Struggle (IFPRS), which is supportive of the Fourth International Assembly of the ILPS.

We highly appreciate the purposiveness of the theme of your assembly: Strengthen and Expand our Movement! Migrants, Resist Intensified Imperialist Attacks! Achieve Victories in our Struggle!

We are confident that your assembly can lay the basis for realizing your purposes by assessing the past three years of your alliance, formally accepting new members, planning work for the next three years and electing new members in your International Coordinating Body.

We have full trust in the ability of the alliance, its member-organizations and the solidarity organizations in host countries to strengthen themselves politically and organizationally, engage in mass struggles against imperialist attacks and win still greater victories.

The large-scale migration of workers, now more than 214 million, to more developed countries has been the consequence of imperialist exploitation under the policy of neoliberal globalization. Workers are driven to migrate from their countries by poverty, underdevelopment and lack of employment. Oppression has also generated large numbers of political refugees.

The more developed countries are the destination of more than 60 percent of the migrant workers, almost half of whom are women, who provide cheap labor for menial jobs, allow the workers of the host countries to take comparatively higher-paying jobs and help to improve their quality of life.

But the governments of the more developed countries, in collaboration with the countries of origin, keep the migrant workers deprived of the basic democratic rights of workers and even of the most basic human rights. They delayed and diluted the formulation of the UN International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of Migrant Workers and Members of their Families.

This convention is a comprehensive international treaty regarding the protection of migrant workers' rights. It aims to uphold human rights and protect migrant workers and members of their families and serve as a guide and standard for the promotion of the rights of migrant workers. It does not create new rights for migrant workers but draws from previous human rights instruments of the UN and other major relevant documents of the International Labor Organization.

It seeks to guarantee a minimum standard of protection to all migrants, ensuring freedom from discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, sex, religion or any other status, in all aspects of work, including hiring, conditions of work and promotion, access to housing, health care and basic services. It aims for equality of treatment, and the same working conditions for migrants and nationals. It also recognizes the right of migrant workers to join labor unions like the nationals.

It seeks to ensure freedom from arbitrary expulsion from the host country and protection from violence, physical injury, threats and intimidation by public officials or by private individuals, groups or institutions. It recognizes that legal migrants have the legitimacy to claim more rights than undocumented migrants, but it requires respect for the fundamental human rights of undocumented migrants.

It also proposes actions to counter and eliminate clandestine movements of migrant workers, through information campaigns against illegal or irregular migration, and through sanctions against trafficking and employers of undocumented migrants.

After the Convention was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1990, it took 13 years to come into force through ratification as a treaty primarily by 20 underdeveloped countries from which migrant workers originate. To this date, the Western developed countries that benefit most from migrant workers have not ratified the

Convention on the specious argument that this would limit their control over immigration, especially in relation to the right of family reunification and the provision of social services, despite the fact that the Convention makes countervailing assurances conceding and bending to the prerogative of the state to make its immigration policy and law.

The countries in Europe and North America, where the overwhelming majority of migrant workers live, still refuse to ratify the Convention. Other major hosts of migrant workers, like Australia, the Arab states of the Persian Gulf and India have also refused to ratify the Convention. Thus, the Committee on Migrant Workers (CMW), which monitors implementation of the convention, has been hampered or even rendered impotent.

But even as the Convention is not effective in many countries where the migrant workers are, the IMA can use it as a basis for drawing up a checklist of rights which need to be upheld, defended and protected. The checklist of rights can inspire and guide the actions for asserting, exercising and realizing these rights.

Of the highest importance is your resolve to be ever vigilant and militant in the face of the worsening crisis of the world capitalist system. We can anticipate the escalation of exploitation and oppression of migrant workers by the imperialist countries as well as by the reactionary rulers of the underdeveloped countries from which the migrant workers come.

The global economy continues to be in a state of protracted depression because the imperialist powers cling to the US-directed policy of neoliberal globalization. The big banks and favored corporations that caused the abrupt plunge of the global economy in 2008 are causing another abrupt and more disastrous plunge.

They have been rewarded with public funds to improve their books of accounts and have not expanded production and employment. At the same time, they have continued to extract superprofits by pressing down the incomes of the working people and inflate the value of corporate assets through speculation and manipulation of the financial markets.

Huge public deficits have occurred due to the bailout money given to the banks and corporations, the tax exemptions and reductions that these enjoy, the stagnation of the economy and the enlargement of expenditures for military production and wars of aggression as in Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya.

The public deficits have resulted in the public debt bubble, which is now the biggest financial bubble, and is now bursting in both the developed and underdeveloped countries. The imperialist powers and puppet governments are resorting to austerity measures by cutting back on social services, health insurance and pensions. They are further shifting the burden of the crisis to the toiling masses and even to the middle class.

Worse times are already conspicuous and ever worse ones are in the offing. In the underdeveloped countries from which the migrant workers originate, the economic depression means far more unemployment than ever before. The reactionary rulers urge the unemployed to seek employment abroad and extort from them higher fees for all sorts of reasons. And yet in the destination or host countries, the social, economic and political conditions are deteriorating and becoming ever harsher for migrant workers.

In the imperialist countries, rates of unemployment are rising and are resulting in currents of chauvinism, racism, religious bigotry and fascism against migrant workers. In certain trading centers, like Hong Kong, Singapore and Dubai, the economic downturn is also generating reactionary currents. In oil producing countries, as in the Middle East and North Africa, social turbulence and political turmoil have arisen, forcing the exit of the migrant workers or subjecting them to harsh and hazardous conditions.

IMA, its member-organizations and solidarity partner organizations are more than ever before needed to uphold, protect and promote the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the migrant workers in the host countries. They must stand up against the increasingly harsh laws and reactionary currents against the migrant workers. They must demand that the sending governments fulfil their obligations. They must resist the impositions by sending governments of exorbitant fees on migrant workers.

They must demand that reasonable fees collected from them be used for their benefit. They must demand that sending governments protect the migrant workers from the unjust laws and rules in the host countries and be prepared to evacuate the migrants when necessary.

The foreign exchange earnings of the migrant workers must contribute to the development of their homeland so that workers would find local employment and not be separated from their beloved families. The home governments must cease to use the foreign exchange merely to feed the profit-making of the imperialist and big comprador firms and service the ever growing foreign debt.

As the crisis of the world capitalist system worsens and the global depression protracts, job opportunities abroad for migrant workers will decrease and the working and living conditions there will deteriorate. Reactionary movements are also scapegoating the migrant workers for the economic crisis and making the host countries inhospitable to them. Reactionary laws and regulations are being adopted and implemented to pressure, hamper and reduce migrant workers.

It is therefore necessary for the people to demand real economic development and employment in their underdeveloped countries. The limits and difficulties of depending on the export of men and women to provide cheap labor are already starkly clear. The broad masses of the people must struggle to end the conditions that deprive them of real development and employment and force many of them to become migrant workers and suffer separation from their beloved families.

We are confident that your assembly will be successful in taking stock of your current strength, learning lessons from your experience and setting forth the tasks for further strengthening your alliance and movement, for waging struggles for the rights and interests of the migrant workers and winning victories for their benefit as well as for joining and supporting the struggles of the people in your respective homelands for national and social liberation, democracy, development and just peace.

December 14, 2011

On behalf of the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS), I wish to express warmest greetings of solidarity to the overseas Filipino workers, their families and advocates that constitute Migrante International as a global alliance and as a volunteer organization founded in 1996.

We address our message to the more than 90 member-organizations of Migrante International in more than 22 countries, to its local organizations in the Philippines and to the Home Office consisting of committed and competent volunteer network of former OFWs, their families and advocates from various walks of life.

We share your joy in celebrating 15 years of struggles and victories in the service of Filipino migrant workers and their families along a patriotic and democratic line. The Filipino migrant workers have excelled in organizing themselves to confront the problems in their plight and to fight resolutely and militantly for their rights and welfare. They have thus formed Migrante International and its chapters as their bulwarks.

The congress gives you the opportunity to reinvigorate your unity and militancy and to sum up and analyze your experience, identify your strengths and weakness and set forth the tasks for continuing and bringing the struggle to a new and higher level. We congratulate in advance all the recipients of Gawad Migrante for rendering outstanding service. We also happily look forward to your rally celebrating the International Migrants' Day.

More than ever before Migrante International and its chapters are needed because migrant workers and their families are increasingly being squeezed by two pincers, namely, the crisis of the world capitalist system and the crisis of the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system.

The neoliberal policy of pseudo-free market globalization has brought about a crisis of the world capitalist system that is as bad as the Great Depression and, in certain respects, far worse. Host economies of migrant workers are afflicted by stagnant or negative rates of growth, high rates of unemployment, rising prices of basic goods and services and reduced government spending for social services and benefits.

The US and other advanced capitalist countries have spent public money heavily to bail out the big banks and corporations that in the first place caused the economic and financial crisis and continue to give tax cuts and other benefits to corporations and the wealthy. Now faced by a crisis of public deficits and public debt, they are adopting austerity measures at the expense of the working people.

The worsening economic and social conditions in the host countries of migrant workers tend to further tighten and restrict the entry of migrant workers. They may not suddenly stop the entry of the migrant workers completely, because countries with aging populations and stagnant population growth rates need immigrants and migrant workers to keep the economy going, but certainly those allowed entry are vulnerable to worse wage and living conditions and violations of their democratic rights.

The worsening economic and social conditions also lead to political conditions and legislation and law enforcement that are increasingly unfavorable to migrant workers. The monopoly bourgeoisie and financial oligarchy encourage right-wing parties and movements to grow. These in turn generate a political and social climate unfriendly to immigrants and migrant workers as they obfuscate and conceal the roots of the crisis in the internal laws of motion of capitalism by whipping up chauvinism, racial discrimination, religious bigotry and war hysteria.

In certain capitalist countries, the working class, youth and other people are launching mass protests against imperialism and finance monopoly capitalism. In the Middle East and North Africa, the people have been rising up to demand democracy against authoritarian governments and the imperialist powers are trying to redirect the course of events in their favor. At certain times in certain countries, evacuations of migrant workers have occurred.

It is necessary for Migrante International to become ever more vigilant and militant in defending the rights and welfare of the migrant workers and in developing solidarity relations with the workers and people of the host countries and with various enlightened forces and institutions.

You must demand that the payments that migrant workers make to the reactionary state must not be misused and malversed but used to help the migrant workers, especially when they suffer violations of contract and rights, maltreatment, injury or death, false accusations and trafficking and the effects of social disorder and wars. At the

same time, you must avail of the aid and mutual support made possible by the anti-imperialist solidarity of workers and peoples.

It is ironical that while the crisis of global capitalism works against the rights and interests of the migrant workers in the host countries, its ruinous impact on the underdeveloped countries like the Philippines from which the migrant workers come puts more people out of work and thus increases unemployed people driven to seek employment abroad. The vicious circle continues in an even more vicious way, as both the crisis of global capitalism and the crisis of the Philippine ruling system worsen.

Concretely, the crisis of global capitalism has resulted in reduced orders for the kind of exports that the Philippines produces, i.e., raw materials and semi-manufactures, in soaring costs of imported fuel and consumer goods, in the bursting of the private construction boom, in decreased remittances by overseas contract workers and in higher costs of debt service and accessing new foreign loans.

The Philippine reactionary state has grievously continued and deepened the agrarian, semifeudal and underdeveloped character of the economy. It has failed to use the large foreign exchange earnings of the migrant workers in past decades to acquire capital goods for the national industrialization of the Philippines but has used such earnings to finance the luxury importations of the big compradors and landlords and the proliferation of shopping malls selling imported goods.

The growing ranks of the unemployed and underemployed in the Philippines are now caught between the hard rock of underdevelopment, economic depression and the ever-worsening conditions of poverty in the Philippines and deep blue sea of worsening conditions of economic stagnation and rising unemployment abroad.

It is necessary for the Migrante International not only to look after the rights and interests of the migrant workers abroad and the families they leave behind in the Philippines but also to demand the assertion of national independence, empowerment of the working people and economic development through land reform and national industrialization so that Filipinos do not have to leave their families and their country at great social and psychological cost and face the rigors, difficulties and uncertainties abroad.

Given the choice and opportunity, Filipinos will always choose to stay in their own country to help in the development of a just and progressive economy and to stay with their own families and take care of their own children instead of serving as domestic helpers, caregivers and nannies abroad. The reactionary puppet state and the exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords are culpable for the sad plight of the migrant workers. It is necessary for the Migrante International to fight for national independence, democracy, industrial development, social justice and international solidarity for peace.

Message of Solidarity to Migrante Australia on Its Second General Assembly

January 27, 2012

On behalf of the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS), I express warmest greetings of solidarity to the officers and member-organizations of Migrante Australia on its Second General Assembly.

We appreciate the aptness and timeliness of your conference theme: Boldly advance migrants' rights and welfare and build a strong Filipino movement in Australia!

It is of urgent necessity that you aim to strengthen your alliance, expand and further consolidate your work among the Filipino migrants through united and coordinated actions.

You can anticipate bigger problems and bigger challenges as a result of the rapidly worsening crisis in the Philippines and the whole world. You must strengthen your ranks and develop closer solidarity relations with the host people and progressive forces.

We are hopeful that through the conference you can deepen your understanding of the Philippine socio-economic and political conditions which cause Filipinos to migrate to Australia and other countries.

The semicolonial and semifeudal character of Philippine society means the constant oppression and exploitation of the Filipino people by the imperialists and the local reactionary classes of big compradors and landlords.

The conditions of chronic crisis, underdevelopment and widespread poverty persist. There is no industrial development to provide jobs to the ever-growing labor force. Thus, many people leave their families to work abroad.

But right now, the crisis of the world capitalist system is worsening at an accelerated rate. The economic and political conditions can become more difficult for the Filipino migrant workers. Thus, more than ever there is an urgent need for them to unite and fight for their rights and interests.

We urge you to exchange information and experiences about organizing work among your member-organizations and develop a comprehensive and profound knowledge of the situation of Filipino migrants in the whole of Australia.

We are confident that you further learn the skills for arousing, organizing and mobilizing the Filipino migrants and their friends and that you reaffirm and resolve to implement the GPOA 2012-2114.

You must hone your ability to evaluate and raise higher your consciousness, your organizing capabilities and your militancy in order to prepare and strengthen yourselves in carrying out your tasks.

We wish you the utmost success in your conference. May this lead to greater successes in your work and struggles to uphold, defend and advance the rights and welfare of the Filipino migrant workers in Australia.

Expand and Consolidate the Anakpawis Partylist

Message on its 4th National Convention, April 26, 2012

I convey patriotic and militant greetings to the leaders and members of Anakpawis Partylist on its 4th national convention. This gathering of hundreds of delegates representing the working people in various regions, provinces, cities and municipalities is gratifying.

The growth in strength of your party is noticeable. I salute all of you for all your past achievements and your preparations through this convention to further strengthen your party for the coming elections next year and the entire scope of your program for the next five years.

Your convention is a good opportunity for you to sum up your experiences, learn lessons and set the new tasks for your advance towards a higher level of unity and capability. Your theme is timely and appropriate: Working People, Advance and Strengthen Yourselves, Serve, and Triumph!

Your party plays a very important role. You represent the working people—workers, peasants and fisherfolk—who comprise the majority of the population and you strive to express their demands and aspirations through the mass movement and electoral struggle and through having representatives inside Congress.

It is a big anomaly that the big compradors and landlords who comprise a minuscule minority of the population (less than one percent) have the bigger number of representatives in Congress and other branches of government. Nevertheless, even if the maximum number of representatives your party can have in Congress is limited to three, having a voice there is significant as these can cooperate with other nationalist and progressive representatives.

It is good that the voice of the working people breaks the silence or lies of the reactionary representatives regarding the fundamental rights and welfare of the working people and the entire Filipino people. The working people should use the opportunity to criticize the attack dogs of US imperialism and the representative of the exploiting classes in their own backyard that is the Congress.

The representatives of your party should struggle with the enemies of the people inside Congress and more importantly outside through campaigns and other actions regarding important issues. Inside Congress, there are limitations on the representatives of the working people. But outside of Congress, the opportunities are wider and greater to fight for the national and democratic rights of the working people and the Filipino people.

Your convention is a good opportunity to clarify the present situation. The crisis of the global capitalist system and the local ruling system is grave and intensifying. The crisis buffets the working people and the middle social strata with widespread unemployment, landlessness and homelessness, falling profits, rising prices of basic goods and services and other manifestations of widening and deepening poverty and difficulty in life.

Under the neoliberal policy of the imperialist globalization, the extraction of profit and the accumulation of capital in the hands of the monopoly bourgeoisie is accelerating the decline of wages and cutbacks in social services. Every occurrence of the crisis of overproduction is covered by huge debts and the monopoly bourgeoisie and financial oligarch further earn huge profits.

Eventually, the huge loans to the corporations and consumers in the imperialist countries fail to work. Production falls and unemployment increases. The state extends big loans to the banks and corporations. But this does not revive the economy because these loans are prioritized to cover previous loans. Now, the imperialist states themselves have been hit by a grave financial crisis.

The situation in backward, agrarian and semifeudal countries like the Philippines is even worse. The imperialists pass on to them the burden of the crisis. The exports of raw materials and semi-manufactures (assembly of electronic semi-conductors and others) decline. Even overseas employment starts to fall. Unemployment and decline in wages is now widespread, while the rise in the price of oil and other basic goods and services are increasing rapidly.

The present Noyoy Aquino regime is no different or even worse than the Arroyo regime in exploiting and impoverishing the working people. It worships the neoliberal policy and rejects the policy of national independence, national industrialization and land reform. The bureaucrat capitalists led by Aquino are exceedingly corrupt. They are in cahoots with the imperialists, the big compradors and the landlords in exploiting the workers and peasants.

Aquino has said there will be no poor if there is no corruption. He slaps himself. The number of the poor increases and it is true that the corruption of the Aquino regime is increasing and spreading. The Aquino and Cojuangco families and their few collaborators monopolize infrastructure and energy projects, land-grabbing and mining concessions. For the longest time, they insist on the price of 10 billion pesos for Hacienda Luisita. The coco levy funds extorted by Marcos and Danding Cojuangco are being denied to the coconut farmers.

The Aquino regime is no different or is even worse than the Arroyo regime in oppressing and violating human rights. The Aquino regime tolerates the illegal detention, torture and extrajudicial killings committed by the Arroyo regime through Oplan Bayanihan and new crimes are being committed through Oplan Bayanihan. Up to now more than 350 political prisoners languish in jail, while Aquino has long ago released the more than 400 military prisoners.

The Aquino regime does not respect the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Philippines. It follows subserviently the orders of the US imperialists and submits to the increase of US military forces, their free use of the land, air and marine areas of the Philippines. The US and the Aquino regime collude in increasing the number of military exercises and in baiting China and the DPRK thus giving the US the reason to use the Philippines as a launching pad for maintaining US hegemony in East Asia.

I am aware that your party needs correct and clear direction not only for the next elections in 2013 but also for the entire period from 2012 to 2016. You need a program that covers the next five years and that lays down the policies and forms of action to implement the program.

Among the policies should be the promotion of national sovereignty and independence, expansion of democracy by empowering the working people, the development of the Philippine economy through national industrialization and genuine land reform, the promotion of patriotic, scientific and pro-working people culture and education; and an independent and peaceful foreign policy.

These policies should be disseminated and implemented by means of campaigns and informative activities and political education that expands and consolidates your own organization as a party and through mass mobilizations on burning issues. In connection with information and political education, there should be researches and pamphlets on long-term and immediate issues, a dynamic website, audio-visual materials that easily explain the party and its issues, and frequent seminars and forums in institutions, places of work and especially in communities.

Regarding organization, you should be prompt in recruiting members and in building chapters and leading committees. Study sessions and convention on various levels is part of consolidation. Consolidation work is also expansion if you are able to attract those interested. Consolidation work is also expansion because it is through these that members and leaders are honed in organization work.

Regarding mass mobilizations, you should have militant mass actions on burning issues to mobilize your membership, their friends and relatives, colleagues at work and neighbors. The policy of uniting the ranks should be adopted. You should have relations of mutual help and benefit.

I am confident that you will win more and bigger victories strengthening your party and implementing your program for the next five years and that your party will play a big role in advancing the movement for national liberation, democracy, social justice and all-round development.

Long live the Anakpawis Partylist!

Long live the workers and peasants!

Long live the Filipino people!

Intensify the Struggle Against Imperialism, Advance and Call for Radical Social Change

May 1, 2012

We, the International League of Peoples' Struggle, join the workers of the world in celebrating the day in their honor, express our militant solidarity with them and support their struggle against imperialism, the biggest cause of the suffering of the toiling masses. The current severe crisis of the world capitalist system is worsening the exploitation and oppression of the people.

We raise our fists in salute to the workers and peoples of the world. We applaud them for waging militant collective struggle against the ill effects of the crisis, for raising their consciousness about the root causes of the crisis and for sharpening their will to fight in order to overthrow the imperialist system.

We pay tribute to the countless martyrs of the international working-class movement. Their struggles, sacrifices and successes continue to inspire us in fighting for the rights and welfare of the workers and the people and for radical social change. They continue to motivate us to think bigger, dream higher, and work harder for genuine fundamental social change.

The severe economic and financial crisis that has become manifest since 2008 in the global centers of capitalism has resulted in a global depression. The imperialist powers have not found a way out of the crisis because they cling to the neoliberal economic policy of monopolistic greed, which has, in the first place caused the crisis. As a result, the workers and peoples of the world, especially in underdeveloped countries, are suffering rising levels of unemployment, sinking incomes, soaring prices and widespread poverty.

In imperialist countries, the bailouts given to the big financial institutions and favored corporations, the tax cuts, subsidies and overpriced contracts for monopoly firms and the wanton spending on the military and bureaucracy have resulted in huge deficits and debts for the governments. In order to pass the burden of the crisis on to the backs of the workers and the people, brutal austerity measures have been adopted and implemented.

In underdeveloped countries, extreme hunger and poverty among workers and the people continue to mount. Exports of raw materials and semi-manufactures are decreasing. The reduced demand from the developed countries has aggravated the long-standing overproduction of such goods. International credit, foreign investments, and the demand for migrant workers are all decreasing.

The imperialists are stepping up war production and unleashing wars of aggression in an attempt to spur production through the military-industrial complex and expand economic territory abroad. As a result, all kinds of contradictions are sharpening and the whole world is in a state of turbulence. State fascism is being unleashed against workers' and people's protests in both developed and underdeveloped countries, while wars of aggression are being unleashed by the imperialist powers against countries assertive of their independence.

Even as it faces severe fiscal constraints and even as it remains mired in its wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya, the US is trying to expand its military presence in the Asia-Pacific region avowedly to encircle and contain China as a potential imperialist rival with growing economic and military power. It is using one-sided treaties with its puppet governments in order to increase military forces in the region. It follows the same pattern of engaging in military intervention in other regions.

The bleak economic and political landscape is being lit up by the flames of revolutionary resistance and by the red flags of the protest actions of the workers and peoples of the world, who are now incited by the governments' austerity measures to rise in opposition. The forces of anti-imperialism, people's democracy and socialism are rising to the occasion by raising consciousness on the basis of the burning issues of the day, expanding their ranks, and promoting revolutionary alternatives.

We are calling on the workers and peoples of the world to intensify our struggles against imperialism. Let us take the governments of our respective countries to task for implementing neoliberal policies. Let us deepen our understanding of the root causes of the present crisis, the alternatives to this rotten kind of society, and the various forms of struggle needed for revolutionary social change.

We are calling on all progressive, anti-imperialist and socialist-oriented workers' and people's organizations to take advantage of the rare opportunity being provided to us by the current global depression. Let us aggressively arouse, organize, and mobilize workers and the rest of the people for genuine radical social change.

Let us continuously expand and consolidate our ranks in order to effectively fight and eventually defeat imperialism and its reactionary stooges. Let us make sure that this crisis, which is leading to greater barbarism on the

part of imperialism and its allies, will give birth to a fundamentally new society where freedom, democracy, social justice, all-round development and peace reign.

Greeting the 2nd National Council Meeting of the KMU 10th Congress

June 7, 2012

On behalf of the ILPS, I convey heartfelt greetings and solidarity with the Kilusang Mayo Uno [May First Movement] on the occasion of the 2nd National Council Meeting under the 10th Congress.

We are happy with having more than 40 members of the National Council and the attendance of union leaders of the KMU in Caraga during the opening of the meeting. We praise the zeal and effectiveness of the KMU-Caraga chapter in preparing for the meeting.

We are confident that the meeting will be successful in analyzing the national situation, summing up the struggles of the workers and setting forth the general tasks of the trade union movement.

The special report of Southern Tagalog is important, regarding the two-tiered system and the depredations of Oplan Bayanihan. The Aquino regime and the military forces are making the said region as the laboratory of new schemes of exploitation of the people and suppression of the patriotic and progressive movement.

We await the report of the regions, federations and mass organization regarding their actions during the past year. Based on the reports and suggestions, you will be able to plan for campaigns and mass struggles regarding important issues.

It is fitting that we honor our dear martyr, Comrade Joel Ascutia, former leader of PISTON in Bicol who decided to serve in the countryside and offered his life for the welfare of the people. His contribution and sacrifices for the people are part of the advance of the revolutionary movement and inspire all of us.

We have great confidence that the Kilusang Mayo Uno will be further strengthened as a result of the discussions and resolutions of your meeting. We are certain that you will raise the level of your revolutionary fighting spirit and capability in order to advance the trade union movement and the struggle of the Filipino people for national liberation and democracy against US imperialism and its reactionary minions.

On behalf of the International League of Peoples' Struggle I greet and join the National Federation of Labor Unions (NAFLU)-KMU on its 55th anniversary and National Convention on July 25-27. I have always felt close to your federation since my association with the late Ka Bert Olalia in the Workers' Party, the Malayang Samahan ng mga Magsasaka (Free Peasants' Association), the Socialist Party of the Philippines and the mass protest actions in the 1960s.

I also associated with Ka Lando in important KMU activities and in the preparation and establishment of Partido ng Bayan (People's Party) in 1986. He became chairman of the party until he was abducted, tortured and killed during the first Aquino regime. For a long time, I have been following the brilliant record of NAFLU. I am glad that NAFLU is among the ILPS member organizations.

I salute the leaders and members of NAFLU for their victories in the labor movement and the Filipino people's national democratic movement. Your convention is an opportunity to sum up your experience, draw lessons and define the tasks to further raise your spirit to struggle for the rights and interests of workers and to further strengthen your organization and capability to mobilize members and allies.

I agree and support your goals set forth by the theme of your convention: Oppose labor contractualization, boldly expand and strengthen your ranks! Further advance the struggle for substantial wage increases, national industrialization and genuine land reform!

The workers and the people now suffer extreme difficulties. Unemployment is widespread and dismissals continue. Contractualization is imposed on those who are still employed or are getting employed. Wages are extremely low and far from the level of adequate and decent living. At the same time, prices of basic goods and services needed by the working people ceaselessly rise.

You must arouse, organize and mobilize the workers to oppose the painful and intensifying exploitation and to assert their own rights and those of the entire people. You must denounce and fight the foreign monopoly capitalists and their big comprador and landlord cohorts. Only when these are defeated can true freedom and prosperity be achieved through national industrialization and land reform.

It is in the nature of the imperialists and the local exploitative classes to exploit the working classes and generate economic crisis. However, the neoliberal policy has further accelerated and intensified exploitation of the working masses. It has imposed flexibilization and contractualization of labor, liberalization of trade and investment, privatization of state enterprises and resources, deregulation against workers, children, women and the environment and denationalization of the economy.

The evil consequences of neoliberalism are not only worse exploitation, unemployment, poverty and continuing economic backwardness but also intensification of oppression through state violence and terrorism to suppress non-armed mass protest actions and the armed struggle that has grown stronger due to incessant exploitation and oppression.

Our struggle become more effective, strong and militant when we know the forces that exploit and oppress the workers and the broad masses of the people. The Aquino regime is a puppet of the imperialists and the chief representative of the big compradors and landlords. We must fight and overthrow this regime towards weakening and overthrowing the entire semicolonial and semifeudal system.

I am confident that your convention will bear a General Program of Action and resolutions responding to the conditions of the workers and the country; and advancing the objectives and goals of your federation, the working class and the Filipino people. Elect to your leadership genuine leaders of the workers—who in practice are the bravest, strongest, most persistent and most effective. Beforehand, I extend my congratulations to those whom you will elect.

NAFLU-KMU must fight for the immediate needs of the workers and the people. At the same time, you must perform the long-term task of fighting to attain a bright future for the people—national independence, genuine democracy, social justice, national industrialization and land reform, and strong solidarity with the peoples of the world.

In the long run, we shall achieve socialism, a just society led by the working class. This was the dream and desire of Ka Lando and Ka Bert that the Filipino working classes and people must achieve, following the victory of the new democratic revolution.

Message of Solidarity to UNIFIL- Migrante-HK on its 13th Congress

November 11, 2012

We, the International League of Peoples' Struggle, convey our warmest greetings of solidarity to the officers and members of the UNIFIL-Migrante-HK on the occasion of its 13th Congress.

We congratulate you for all the achievements that you have scored since the last congress in arousing, organizing and mobilizing the migrant workers and their supporters in Hong Kong in order to uphold, defend and advance the rights and interests of migrant workers in Hong Kong.

Your congress provides you the opportunity to sharpen your understanding of the situation in Hong Kong, assess and evaluate your experience, enhance your strengths and overcome weaknesses and difficulties and adopt the tasks and methods for further strengthening your organization.

We are confident that your congress will make clear how to realize the objectives as expressed by the theme, "Strengthen UNIFIL-Migrante-HK! Broaden the ranks of the progressive migrant movement! Advance the national democratic aspirations of the Filipino migrants and people!"

The imperialist states and the monopoly bourgeoisie in the centers of global capitalism are responsible for the current crisis of global capitalism by knowing no bounds for exploiting the working people, extracting superprofits and over-accumulating capital under the auspices of the neoliberal economic policy.

They cannot solve the crisis but are aggravating it by clinging to the same policy and acting further to exploit the people. They continue to over-accumulate capital and press down wages and cut back on social services through austerity measures. They whip up reactionary currents, including prejudices against migrant workers. They step up war production and unleash wars of aggression.

The worsening crisis of global capitalism will generate problems for the migrant workers, further challenge and put your organization to the test and provide opportunities for strengthening and expanding your membership among the Filipino migrant workers and developing further relations of solidarity and cooperation with migrant workers from other countries.

You have been forced to take jobs abroad because of the lack of industrial development and scarcity of employment in the Philippines. And yet the foreign exchange that you earn is not used to promote national industrialization and land reform but is captured by the big compradors and the reactionary government for anti-industrial purposes. The reactionary government exacts great amounts of fees but does not render the services it promises.

It is of great importance that you uphold national democratic aspirations and strive to participate in the struggle of the entire Filipino people for national independence, democracy, national industrialization and land reform and social justice. Even as you are abroad, there are many ways by which you can contribute to the realization of your aspirations.

The International League of Peoples' Struggle is always proud of having the UNIFIL-Migrante-HK as a member-organization. It is an exemplary and outstanding organization in serving the Filipino migrant workers in HK, in playing a key role in the Migrante International and in building the International Migrants' Alliance.

It has provided important and indispensable support to the ILPS in the preparation and holding of the Third International Assembly in Hong Kong and the Fourth International Assembly in Manila. We take this opportunity in expressing our gratitude.

Long live UNIFIL-Migrante-HK!

Carry forward the struggle of the Filipino migrant workers in Hong Kong!

Long live the struggle of the Filipino people for national and social liberation!

Intensify the struggle against austerity measures, against imperialism and all reactionaries!

Uphold, Defend and Advance the Rights of Migrant Workers

Message to the International Migrants Tribunal

November 28, 2012

We, the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS), are elated that the International Migrants Tribunal is undertaking the highly important task of trying the case filed by Migrante International, Gabriela, Asosiasi Tenaga Kerja Indonesia (ATKI-Indonesia), Caravan, Voice Refugee Forum and Movimiento Migrante Mesoamericano, on behalf of all the migrants workers in the world, against the Global Forum on Migration and Development and the heads of state involved.

We express appreciation to the prominent individuals who have agreed to serve as judges, to those who act as prosecutors, to those who are witnesses and to all the delegations from organizations that are concerned with migration, especially the promotion of migrants' rights and welfare. We are proud to be one of the co-organizers of the two-day trial, along with the International Migrants' Alliance (IMA), the International Women's Alliance (IWA) and the Asia-Pacific Mission for Migrants (APMM). Inasmuch as this political event is being held in Manila, we have directed the ILPS-Philippine chapter to provide the utmost support and assistance within its ability.

The migrant workers comprise a significant productive force in the world. They are the most exploited and oppressed workers in the developed countries. They receive the lowest level of wages and are deprived of the rights and standard wage and living conditions of workers in the host countries. The imperialist powers have designed the overall neoliberal policy on migrant workers: to use them at the least cost in order to aid production and improve the quality of life in the developed host countries and to use their earnings to fund the consumption-oriented economies of their underdeveloped home countries.

It is necessary and important for the ILPS, the entire anti-imperialist movement and the people of the world to pay close attention to the plight and just cause of the migrant workers. In this regard, we must persevere in confronting the GFMD and the heads of state that are active in it and hold them responsible for pursuing and carrying out the neoliberal economic policy on migration and for committing grievous wrongs and injustices against the millions of migrant workers and their families.

Altogether the GFMD and the states have adopted migration policies in line with the neoliberal agenda of generating and exploiting cheap and pliant labor for export and effecting modern-day slavery. Migrant workers are the result of underdevelopment and the lack of jobs in the sending countries.

But the hard-earned foreign exchange earnings of migrant workers are sucked up by governments that extort exorbitant fees and various private exploiters (recruiting agencies, remittance centers, banks, marketing companies, and so on) and are used for anti-industrial purposes that aggravate and deepen underdevelopment. And yet the GFMD harps on the lie that migration leads to development.

Both the sending and receiving states connive in exploiting the migrant workers and violating their political, economic, social and cultural rights. The migrant workers are subjected to low wages, substandard working conditions, limited benefits, discrimination and insecurity. Immigration laws are biased for facilitating the criminalization of migrant workers and for inflicting on them violent and inhuman treatment.

Women migrant workers are oppressed. They are made vulnerable to gender-based violence and other forms of abuse. There are no effective mechanisms in place to protect the migrant workers from falling victims to human traffickers and organized crime syndicates which intimidate and kill their prey.

But on a far wider scale, especially because of the crisis of global capitalism, reactionary currents of xenophobia, racial discrimination and religious bigotry are rising in a futile attempt of the big bourgeoisie and its political and media agents to conceal the roots of the crisis. Imperialist wars of aggression and armed counterrevolutions in a number of countries have caused displacement and grave difficulties for migrant workers. And the governments and international agencies concerned have not provided timely and sufficient protection to the migrant workers.

The trial must uphold the rights of the migrant workers, hold the culprits to account and condemn the acts and omissions in violation of such rights enshrined in the following legal instruments: 1) Universal Declaration of Human Rights; 2) International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; 3) International Covenant on

Civil and Political Rights; 4) International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; 5) Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; 6) Convention on the Rights of the Child; 7) International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families; 8) The Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol; 9) Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; 10) European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and its protocols; 11) ILO Migration for Employment Convention (Revised); and 12) ILO Convention on Decent Work for Domestic Workers (C189).

We wish that the trial achieve the utmost success in exposing the wrongs and injustices done to the migrant workers, in upholding their rights and in rendering them justice. We are confident that the judges will render a judgment that shall be effective in enlightening the people about the plight of migrant workers and promoting their just cause.

We are also confident that the prosecutors and witnesses will present clearly the wrongs and injustices done to the migrant workers and provide the strong basis for a clear judgment. Thus, the trial will succeed in highlighting the resistance of the migrant workers against the violations of their rights and in inspiring the migrant workers, their direct supporters and the entire people to raise the struggle to a new and higher level for upholding, defending and advancing the rights of migrant workers.

Fight for Workers' Rights and Strengthen the Trade Unions

Message to the Mindanao Workers' Summit,

Davao City April 25-26, 2013

First of all, I thank the officers of the Nonoy Librado Development Foundation, Inc. for inviting me as the Chairperson of the International League of People's Struggle (ILPS) to deliver a message of solidarity to the Mindanao Workers' Summit. We welcome your project, Workers' Rights are Human Rights: Strengthening Trade Unions to Advance Fundamental Freedoms in Mindanao.

We of the ILPS commend the foundation for having successfully engaged in education, research, networking and policy advocacy in order to uphold, protect and promote the rights and welfare of workers. With your achievements, you have done well in drawing inspiration from Nonoy Librado's legacy of courageous and relentless advocacy of workers' rights.

We express warmest greetings of solidarity to all the participants in the Mindanao Workers' Summit. We are aware that you come from various companies and workplaces in Mindanao. We wish you the utmost success in sharing your situations and experiences with regard to trade union work and human rights, in learning both positive and negative lessons and in drawing up recommendations and resolutions.

We highly appreciate the tasks that you are committed to perform in the summit. We know that the workers of Mindanao are undergoing terrible suffering from both the deterioration of wage and living conditions and the brutal use of armed force by the state and private companies in order to suppress trade unions and violate workers' rights. All these grave problems put the workers in Mindanao in an ever more vicious circle of exploitation and oppression.

The unraveling of the neoliberal economic policy globally and domestically has brought about a protracted and rapidly worsening crisis in Mindanao. This is wreaking havoc on the lives of the broad masses of the people, especially the workers and peasants. The high rate of unemployment, the reduced incomes, the rising costs of basic goods and services, the heavier tax burden, deterioration of social services and the breakdown of electric power facilities are aggravating the conditions of poverty and misery.

The US-Aquino regime is a fanatic of neoliberalism and does not care about national independence, human rights and the long-desired goal of national industrialization and genuine land reform. It gives free rein to the superprofit-taking by the US and other foreign corporations and the big comprador-landlords. It allows these malefactors to grab the land and all natural resources in connection with their plantations, mining, logging, bio-fuel production and sheer real estate speculation.

The export-oriented plantations and biofuel production have taken away huge areas of land from the production of food staples. Logging for export has destroyed the forest cover which used to protect Mindanao from typhoons, flooding and drought. Mining involves the export of mineral ores and runs counter to the national aspiration for industrial development. It also destroys the environment and agriculture, poisoning the rivers, accelerating siltation and causing landslides and floods.

The US-Aquino regime collaborates closely with the US and other foreign corporations and the local big compradors and landlords in exploiting the workers and peasants. Oplan Bayanihan gives them all out military, police and paramilitary protection in combination with the private security guards. The regime systematically employs violence and engages in human rights violations in attempts to intimidate workers and prevent them from having real trade unions and asserting their rights.

In representation of the people and revolutionary forces, the National Democratic Front of the Philippines has engaged the Philippine reactionary government in peace negotiations in accordance with The Hague Joint Declaration of 1992. It has gone so far as to offer an immediate truce and alliance on the basis of a general declaration of common intent to realize national independence and economic development through national industrialization and genuine land reform.

But the US-Aquino regime is obsessed with seeking the capitulation and pacification of the revolutionary movement of the people and with avoiding serious negotiations on social, economic and political reforms. It refuses to address the roots of the armed conflict and lay the basis for a just and lasting peace on the basis of

comprehensive agreements on the aforesaid reforms.

The regime is a shameless puppet of US imperialism. It has adopted Oplan Bayanihan in accordance with the US Counterinsurgency Guide. It has allowed the US military forces to establish forward stations in Mindanao and elsewhere in the Philippines and to increase interventionist operations under various pretexts. It is already preparing public opinion for the return of US military bases. It collaborates with the US in stirring up troubles in East Asia in order to justify the further entrenchment of US military forces in the Philippines and other countries in East Asia.

We hope that our observations can help the summit participants in understanding the socioeconomic, political and military context in which the workers of Mindanao are being subjected to the escalation of of exploitation and oppression. You can best discuss in detail the conditions that are adverse to the workers of Mindanao, make the necessary conclusions and define the tasks of fighting for their rights and welfare, strengthening the trade union movement, opposing human rights violations and demanding justice for the victims, be they individuals, organizations and entire communities.

Your summit opens the door to more work in arousing, organizing and mobilizing the workers and their supporters in Mindanao. We wish you ever greater victories in this regard. We are confident that your resolute and militant work among the workers will lead to better conditions for them and will contribute to the advance of the people's movement for realizing national independence, democracy, social justice and all-round development.

Defend Migrant and Refugee Rights against Exploitation and Oppression

Statement on the Fourth International Assembly of Migrants and Refugees, New York City, October 2-4, 2013

We, the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS), convey to all the participants and guests of the Fourth International Assembly of Migrants and Refugees (IAMR4) the warmest greetings of solidarity. We congratulate the International Migrants' Alliance and the other IAMR4 convenors for successfully organizing the assembly.

The ILPS is proud to be among the convenors. We are gratified that the assembly addresses our concerns about the plight and problems of migrants and refugees; upholds, defends and promote their rights; and advocates national and social liberation and genuine development. We appreciate the significant advances that have been achieved in the struggle for the rights and welfare of the migrants and refugees and in the effort to gain broad support for them. We share a deep sense of fulfillment with the significant growth of the IAMR from its first, second and third assemblies in 2008, 2009, and 2010 respectively.

We commend the planning, preparations, and all efforts to realize the twelve workshops of the IAMR4 on October 3 and October 4. It is fine that these tackle the most urgent major issues related to migration, population movement and development. It is necessary that you discuss the following: debunking development myths about labor export policies and remittances; the impact of forced migration on women and children; neoliberal policies affecting the rights of domestic workers and caregivers; the impact of global integration of nursing and caregiving; impact of economic agreements on migrants and ecology; the criminalization and struggle of undocumented workers and their families; the struggle of marriage migrants; labor trafficking; militarization of borders; and problems and rights of refugees.

We are pleased that you have lined up events to enhance the IAMR4, such as the candlelight vigil on October 1 regarding the United Nations High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development (UN HLD), a dialogue with country official missions on October 2, and the momentous Million Migrants Mobilizing Worldwide (3MW), which is coordinated globally on the eve of the UN HLD. Also of major political significance are the two scheduled march-rallies, one on October 3 from Times Square to Dag Hammarskjold Plaza, and the other on October 5 in Brooklyn Borough, which will raise the banner of genuine immigration reform in the US.

It is significant that the venue of IAMR4 is in New York City and that you are holding the assembly in parallel to the United Nations High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development. This underscores the just demands of the IAMR, and enables its participants to directly confront and challenge the UN HLD, the UN leaders and member-states on the question of migration in relation to development.

We have repeatedly pointed out that migration is the consequence of the imperialist plunder of the underdeveloped countries. The underdevelopment, the lack of jobs and poverty compel the people to seek jobs abroad. But their foreign exchange remittances are captured by the imperialists and the big compradors to further aggravate and deepen the condition of underdevelopment and mass poverty. Imperialism has further placed an oppressive yoke and harness on immigration, and has increasingly turned it into a highly exploitative neoliberal mechanism for squeezing the most out of labor mobility.

The IAMR4 and its related events are an excellent opportunity for leaders and representatives of migrant and refugee organizations from the various global regions to develop solidarity relations and cooperation with US-based migrant and refugee organizations, progressive forces in the labor and women's movement, human rights advocates, and other interested entities.

The ILPS supports the IAMR4 aim of further raising the demands of migrants and refugees, engaging them and their organizations in the striving to realize these longstanding demands and challenging the imperialist powers which are responsible for exploitative and oppressive policies. The workshops, dialogues, and the march-rallies are excellent vehicles to bring into sharp public focus the debates on the United States' Comprehensive Immigration Reform and on Canada's Temporary Foreign Workers Program.

We support the continuing global campaign, led by the International Migrants' Alliance (IMA) and other IAMR participants, to further expose and oppose the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) for its false claims of advocacy for migrants and its deceptive neoliberal notion of migration and development. The IAMR must take particular note that the GFMD is attempting to repackage the same discredited notions by riding on the

framework of the post-2015 UN Development Agenda to show that migration could play a role as “an enabler for sustainable, human development” or somehow alleviate the crisis.

The IAMR must closely monitor the efforts of big business, as represented by the World Economic Forum (WEF) and its Global Agenda Council on Migration (GACM), to predetermine and dominate the policy discussions on migration and development within the halls of the UN, especially during the current HLD.

The WEF-GACM has submitted its own White Paper to the HLD, in which it reiterates the basic neoliberal premise of maximizing the labor mobility needs of business in advanced capitalist countries while paying lip service to migrant rights and the supposed positive effects of labor migration on the development of sending countries. Alarmingly, the GACM White Paper also dwells extensively on policy principles that will effectively legitimize the widespread practice of tying down migrant labor to temporary employment contracts and their “safe and orderly return” in the guise of “protecting the domestic labor force from unfair competition.”

Despite the attempt to paint a rosy picture of migration, the fact remains that it is the consequence of longstanding underdevelopment and rampant poverty in the sending countries, and has become a systematic mechanism for the massive export of cheap labor to the imperialist countries under the policy of neoliberal globalization. In a vicious cycle, the sending country suffers more underdevelopment due to the aggravation of import-dependent consumption and due to labor disruptions and distortions, including the long-term impacts of brain drain among its skilled labor and professional corps. Grave social problems also arise due to disruptions in family and community life.

Contrary to claims that remittances help a sending country’s economy to develop, they are in fact constantly preyed on by the imperialists and the big compradors and by the sending-country government to finance import-dependent consumption, cover trade deficits and pay for the mounting debt burden.

Meanwhile, the global depression persists with its concomitant problems of stagnant production, worsening unemployment and various kinds of temporary and precarious employment and underemployment. These in turn further aggravate the situation of both migrant work force and the labor force of the host countries. The capitalist system cannot solve the depression because of its own fundamental nature, which generates the crisis of overproduction and leads to the extreme abuses of finance capital under the neoliberal policy.

Conditions of global economic and financial crisis continually causes social and political disorder, imperialist intervention and wars of aggression as well as proxy wars in countries and entire regions. The climate crisis continues to generate extreme weather events and longer-term environmental degradation such as desertification and water inundation. These conditions further fuel more forced migration and create more displaced populations. Meanwhile, in the imperialist countries, migrants and refugees face hostile treatment and made scapegoats for the worsening crisis and unemployment, and yet they are expected to bear the yoke of slave labor until they are no longer viable and forcibly shipped back to their home countries.

We are confident that the IAMR⁴ undertake full and serious deliberations on the issues of migrants and refugees, and produce resolutions that will guide the work of participating organizations in coming years. We expect that the assembly will serve to strengthen migrant and refugee organizations, various types of support groups and networks, and mechanisms for mobilizing the migrants and refugees and the rest of the people.

We are hopeful that between now and the next IAMR, migrants and refugees in their great numbers throughout the world become even better organized, overcome the most urgent obstacles that hinder political action, and join the rest of the people both in their home and host countries in campaigns on urgent issues and in the general movement for national liberation, for democracy and development, for social justice, peace and international solidarity.

Teachers of the World on the March

Statement on the wave of teachers' strikes

and the World Teacher's Day

October 5, 2013

On the occasion of World Teacher's Day, the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS) extends its staunch and vigorous support to the hundreds of thousands of teachers in various countries who have been waging strikes for their economic rights, free quality education and academic freedom in the past several months. We cite the exceptionally militant mass struggles of the teachers of Mexico, Brazil, Paraguay, Kenya, Nigeria, Swaziland, Uganda, India, Greece, United Kingdom, Australia, the US and other countries from June 2013 onwards.

In Mexico, up to 70,000 teachers launched a two-month-long strike from early August to late September to protest the Peña Nieto government's educational reform program, which the teachers reject because they are being unfairly penalized for the low quality of education and also because they see the program as a neoliberal push to weaken teachers' union rights and gradually privatize the public educational system. The reform program, passed in December 2012, imposes mandatory performance exams and tighter discipline on teachers, who may then be denied raises and promotions or even fired en masse if their work is deemed substandard.

The striking teachers, who were led by the National Coordination of Education Workers (CNTE) and the Oaxaca locals of the umbrella National Union of Education Workers (SNTE), showed a high level of mass militancy by sustaining their strike for weeks, marching in their thousands to Mexico City, holding huge demonstrations together with students and other working people in 26 out of 31 provinces, staking a 40,000-strong camp-out at the capital's Zócalo (central plaza), resisting violent police dispersal operations, and organizing a series of popular teachers' summits to consolidate their unity.

In Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, thousands of schoolteachers demanding higher salaries have been on strike for nearly two months now, and clashes between strikers and police undertaking brutal dispersal operations have broken out in recent days. The teachers' union and City Hall remain deadlocked as the strikers reject Mayor Edoardo Paes' measly salary proposals. Teachers in Sao Paulo and other Brazilian cities also participated en masse in the massive nationwide demonstrations earlier in July-August.

In Paraguay, teachers also participated in mass protests just this early October to oppose salary cuts due to absences during an earlier strike in July-August that the government had declared illegal. An earlier teacher's strike demanded a higher retirement plan. The low salaries and inadequate pensions have served to lower the standard of education and this is now used as pretext for the privatization of public schools.

As in Latin America, the continent of Africa has also been rocked by teachers' strikes in past months. Still on-going after three months is the nationwide strike of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) in Nigeria, while the country's National Union of Teachers are poised to go on a sympathy strike to break the deadlock. The ASUU's demands include earned allowances and increases in the capital expenditure to universities.

The 200,000-strong Kenya National Union of Teachers won a tactical victory in its nationwide teachers strike, which started on June 25 and ended on July 17 after a new salary package was struck with the government. The struggle continues as the government has declared the strike illegal and has undertaken reprisal measures against the union.

During the same period, some 30 percent to 50 percent of schools in Swaziland were also paralyzed by teachers' strikes, with the 9,000-strong Swaziland National Association of Teachers demanding a 4.5 percent increase to stave off the effects of inflation, while the national government refused to entertain any wage hikes. In September, primary and secondary school teachers in Uganda's state-owned schools also waged a two-week nationwide strike to pursue their demand for salary increases.

In Greece, already hobbled by the Troika's austerity measures, the Federation of Secondary Education State School Teachers (OLME) and four other public-sector unions under ADEDY (representing 800,000 civil service workers) launched a nationwide "rolling strike" from September 16 to 20, and launched another 48-hour general strike until September 26.

OLME protested the massive layoff of teachers in secondary education (20 percent reduction since June);

closure or merger of 2,500 primary and secondary schools; suspension of 2,500 vocational teachers; compulsory transfer of 5,000 teachers; a new law that will turn senior high schools (lyceums) into hellish exam marathons that will cause huge dropouts; and deep cuts in public spending on education.

Even as we mark World Teacher’s Day, teachers’ unions are launching regional strikes in different areas of Great Britain to protest the UK government’s shift from a national pay framework for teachers and the introduction of the more repressive and anti-union performance-related pay. There are also recently concluded, ongoing, or still-unfolding teachers’ mass struggles — many of them in the form of strikes — in Australia, United States, and several countries in Asia.

As the global capitalist system curtails workers’ rights from all sides, it erodes teachers’ rights to decent salaries, benefits, and tenure, and undermines their academic freedom. Anti-social fiscal priorities result in excessive tuition increases and inadequate services. The attacks on educators’ rights and impacts of the global crisis create domino effects on the entire educational system — deteriorating quality of education and school facilities, lower enrollment and higher dropout rates, and other distortions that aggravate inequalities in educational services — which invariably affect n the students and the broad masses of the people.

Throughout the world, teachers are waging their economic struggles in the general context of the people’s political struggles against oppression and exploitation. Increasingly, teachers and their organizations become part of social movements that sharply oppose their governments’ role in implementing neoliberal policies of the imperialist powers, in protecting the interests of their own exploiting classes, and in defaulting on their duty to uphold their people’s economic, political, social and cultural rights—including the right to universal access to education and to academic freedom.

The ILPS fully supports teachers and educators all over the world in their struggle for education rights, against state abandonment, against privatization and commercialization of education, and against ideas and research directed against the people. We welcome the fact that in recent years, teachers and other education workers have shown increased mass militancy in fighting for their sectoral rights and in reasserting their multifaceted role as a component of the broad people’s movement against imperialism.

The ILPS encourages teachers’ and other academe-based organizations to join country-level chapters of the League and to contribute to the activities of its Commission on Concern 11, which is focused on the rights of teachers, researchers, and other education personnel.

The ILPS and its member organizations support teachers and directly participate in campaigns and programs for basic reforms that ensure the universal availability of quality education at all levels, and that enhances the role of education in advancing the interests of the broad masses, not those of the imperialists and and oppressive and exploitative classes. In a truly democratic environment, teachers and educators can freely exercise their vocation and passion to educate the greatest number of students without fear or insecurity over their economic well-being.

December 26, 2013

For a long time, since the emergence of the working class in some industries in the second half of the 19th century, we can celebrate many victories of this class stemming from their work, struggle and sacrifices. However due to the limited time in this forum, I can only narrate briefly the development of the working class.

My advice to all who would like to further study the history of the working class democracy is for them to read my article on it in the book *Struggle for National Democracy*, Manila, Amado V. Hernandez Foundation, 2001, p.89-104; and also its link with the Communist International in the development of the Communist Party in the book *Crisis of Imperialism and People's Resistance*, Aklat ng Bayan, 2009, p.236-59.

Short history of the working class

The industrial workers started from the status of individuals offering their labor power to capitalists that bought this at values pressed down and thus increase their profit.

The payment or wage set by the capitalist is a small part of the entire value of the commodity created by the workers. A far greater part of the value of the newly created commodity is appropriated by the capitalist to extract profit and pay the land rent and interest on bank loans.

To fight for the improvement of their wage and living conditions in an organized way, the workers learned to form unions for economic struggle at the beginning of the 20th century. In 1930, they reached the stage of forming a party upholding the leadership of the working class and aiming to change the ruling social system through political struggle against the exploitative capitalist class.

This was the Communist Party of the Philippine Islands. It did not take long before the US colonial government suppressed this Party. It was made illegal on the accusation of sedition and its leaders punished. The Party operated secretly and the related unions took caution. However, the Socialist Party operated legally based on the masses of peasants and farmworkers. The Communist Party was made legal in 1937 when the Commonwealth government due to the need for the popular front against fascism. The US government acceded.

In 1938, the Communist Party and the Socialist Party merged. This strengthened the basic alliance of the working class and the peasantry. With the Japanese fascist aggression in 1941-42, the merger party formed the Anti-Japanese People's Army (Hukbong Bayan Laban sa Hapon /Hukbalahap) on March 29 1942. The inter-imperialist war became a good opportunity for strengthening the workers' party, the people's army and the mass organizations and organs of political power. However, the merger party leadership committed a series of serious errors

The Right opportunist line of retreat for defense was implemented. The squadrons were divided up into small teams thus slowing the advance of the people's army. This was followed by the line of friendly welcome for the return of US imperialism for this to fulfill the promise of granting independence to the Philippines. This was indeed granted but it was fake; the Philippines was made a neocolony and US dominance over the puppet government remained in the economic, political, military and cultural fields.

The US and its puppets violently took back the lands of the landlords from the peasants who took these over during the war. The masses wished to rebel. However, the leaders of the party rode on this by implementing the "Left" opportunist line of all-out offensive against the enemy to win victory merely within two months; failing to take into account the necessity of protracted people's war that attends not only to military offensives but also to the agrarian revolution and building the mass base in the countryside.

After the series of people's army offensives in August 1949, the enemy countered with offensives in the countryside and the city. The people's army camps in the Sierra Madre were isolated and the party leadership in Manila was captured in October. The armed struggle took a slide until the enemy broke its spine. The leadership that took over from the previous one carried a Right opportunist line that resulted in its orders to liquidate the people's army in 1955 and the Party branches and organs under a hiding Party general secretary in 1957.

Independently of the old party, the proletarian revolutionaries started to form study groups on Marxism-Leninism in 1959 and undertake propaganda and mass actions among the students and workers. In 1961, they launched a huge mass action against anticommunism. In 1962, a few of them joined the old party. They discovered that the Party had no branches and organs. Nonetheless, I was immediately included in ten executive

committee, which was considered as the seed for renewed party building.

The proletarian revolutionaries were the ones who produced new cadres and members for the old party and the mass organizations of workers, peasants, and youth. Within the expanded executive committee, conflict developed between the proletarian revolutionaries and the revisionists; and both sides expelled each other in 1966. In May 1967, the proletarian revolutionaries issued a declaration expelling the revisionists.

Victories of the working class in leading the Philippine revolution

The separation of the proletarian revolutionaries from the revisionist party was a big victory for the working class movement. A thoroughgoing rectification movement was undertaken to criticize and repudiate new revisionism and subjectivist and opportunist errors of the revisionists since the latter part of 1942. Today we call this the First Great Rectification Movement. It emphasized the building of the revolutionary party, the people's army and the revolutionary united front. It opened the way for the reestablishment of the Communist Party of the Philippines guided by Marxism-Leninism-Maoism on December 26, 1968.

Simultaneous to the rectification movement was the framing of the Constitution of the Communist Party of the Philippines and the Program for a People's Democratic Revolution. The writing of the book *Philippine Society and Revolution* followed in 1969. These documents clarified and set the leadership of the working class in the Philippine revolution in the current period. The theory of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism was applied on the history and circumstances of the Filipino people. The Party proved itself as the advance detachment of the working class and as the most productive and progressive class in society.

The Party set the general line of people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war. Its objective is to win and complete the struggle for national liberation and democracy against US imperialism and the ruling classes of big compradors and landlords. Thus, would the semicolonial and semifeudal conditions be ended and the road to socialist revolution and construction be opened. At every opportunity and in various ways, the Party and other revolutionary forces aroused, organized and mobilized the broad masses of the people.

The Party successfully exercised the leadership of the working class in the democratic revolution in firm alliance with the peasantry through the revolutionary armed struggle, implementation of genuine land reform and expansion and consolidation of the mass base in the countryside. Under the leadership of the working class and its party, the New People's Army grew in number and strength from almost nothing and from being weak in 1969. The agrarian revolution in two stages (minimum and maximum) was undertaken.

With the leadership of the working class through the Party, the National Democratic Front (NDF) was established in 1973. It is a framework for uniting the organizations of the working class and peasantry with various organizations of the urban petty bourgeoisie and the multisectoral organizations of the people. While the NDF is a united front of progressive forces, it is always open to patriotic alliance with the national or middle bourgeoisie. It is also prepared to go into temporary and unstable alliance with parts of the reactionary classes to hasten the isolation and defeat of the enemy, the worst reactionaries.

The working class and its Party are able to advance the revolution by carrying out the program for national liberation and democracy of the toiling masses, genuine land reform and national industrialization; social justice; national, scientific and mass culture; proletarian internationalism and solidarity with peoples of all countries. This is the program of the Filipino people against the enemy state that is the instrument of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

The ruling classes still prevail through violence and deception; and the support of US imperialism. Marcos imposed fascist dictatorship in the country for a long time. But the revolutionary movement further strengthened itself. The Filipino working classes and people prevailed upon and overthrew the dictatorship. Regimes pretending to be democratic but in fact similar to the Marcos regime followed. They continue to use violence against the toiling masses. In spite of all these, the people's revolutionary movement continued to grow under the leadership of the working class guided by Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. At another turn in 2001, one regime was overthrown and the succeeding regime was almost overthrown.

In the years 1989-91, the revisionist ruled countries ran into trouble. These countries became openly and thoroughly capitalist and the Soviet Union collapsed. The imperialists and their puppets gloated that socialism was dead and the revolutionary movement in the Philippines would also wither away supposedly due to lack of support from abroad. The Philippine revolutionaries laughed off the claims of the counterrevolutionaries; for the fact is the CPP was reestablished and remained firm on the line of struggle against imperialism, revisionism and

reaction. The revolutionary movement is deeply rooted among the toiling masses and remain seriously in their struggle.

The Right and “Left” opportunists also attempted to liquidate the Party and the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism. They secretly attempted to do so since 1988 at exposed themselves completely from 1992 onward. As early as 1980, they united on the subjectivist position that the Philippines is no longer semifeudal supposedly because fascist Marcos had industrialized it. They committed grievous errors in line throughout the decade of the 1980s. The “Left” opportunists sought to “regularize” the people’s army and follow urban insurrectionism, contrary to the line of protracted people’s war. The Right opportunists sought to liquidate the leadership of the working class and to simply ride on the line of the anti-Marcos reactionaries. The Party launched the Second Great Rectification Movement in 1992. It fought for the line of people’s democratic revolution through protracted people’s war. It defeated the subjectivists and opportunists. Eventually the most rabid among them exposed themselves as agents of counterrevolution and the reactionary parties.

In 45 years of revolutionary struggle under working class leadership. The Party strengthened itself ideologically, politically and organizationally. From 80 members and candidate members in 1968, the Party today counts more than a hundred thousand members covering almost all provinces and is deeply rooted among the toiling masses. The New People’s Army from a few Red fighters with nine automatic rifles and 26 inferior guns has grown to thousands of Red fighters armed with powerful guns and is supported by tens of thousands of militia forces and hundreds of thousands self-defense unit membership. The NPA today cover more than 110 guerrilla fronts covering wide swathes of 71 provinces.

The NDF is led by the working class through its Party. It ranges over 17 revolutionary forces. These include the Party, the New People’s Army, the Revolutionary Council of Trade Unions, National Association of Peasants, Kabataang Makabayan (Patriotic Youth), Cordillera People’s Democratic Front, Christians for National Liberation, Association of Patriotic Teachers, Patriotic Government Employees, Patriotic Health Association, League of Scientists for the People, Federation of Labor Organizations, Council of Lawyers for the People, Moro Revolutionary Organization for Liberation, Revolutionary Organization of Lumads, and Compatriots.

The People’s Democratic Government exists in all guerrilla fronts. It is the totality of local organs of democratic power. It is led by the Party and the working class. It is supported by mass organizations of workers, peasants, women, youth, cultural activists and children. Assisting the local organs of democratic power are the committees on organization, education, land reform, production, health, defense, culture and others. The committees ensure that tasks and campaigns are launched for the welfare of the people.

Currently, the Party is pursuing the plan to advance the people’s war from the strategic defensive towards the strategic stalemate. It is carrying out the political, military and socioeconomic requirements such as: expanding Party membership to 250,000; increasing Red fighters to 25,000, increasing guerrilla fronts to 180; and the number of mass organization membership into millions upon millions with bigger numbers of the masses covered by the organs of democratic power; implementation of the agrarian revolution and improvements on production, livelihood, health and culture.

Favorable conditions for the advance of the Philippine revolution

The crisis of the world capitalist system protracts and worsens. Proven totally bankrupt is the neoliberal economic policy that sped up the accumulation of capital in the hands of the monopoly bourgeoisie and its financial oligarchy. The imperialist powers cannot solve the crisis of overproduction and overaccumulation of capital because they refuse to get rid of the neoliberal policy and because they continue to grab huge profits by passing on the burden of the intensifying crisis on to the toiling classes and the third world countries.

Depression is deepening throughout the world. The degree of exploitation and oppression continues to escalate. The suffering of the toiling people and the middle social strata continues to intensify. The people’s suffering is a bad thing. But this is what moves them to fight their exploiters and oppressors. The ruling classes are themselves pushing the toilers to wage revolutions.

Now, we can say that the crisis favorable for the revolution. Explosions of mass protests and strikes are widening and more frequent, the anti-imperialist and socialist movement is being enlivened and the numbers of those desiring revolution, especially in underdeveloped and poor countries, are increasing. The imperialists and their puppets can no longer boast that revolution and socialism are dead as a result of their claimed effective cure—that is the neoliberal policy—to economic and social problems.

Focusing on the Philippines, income from exports of raw materials and semimanufactures are down, while expenses for imports of manufactures and semimanufactures are up. Mining and other extractive industries proliferate but the real quantity of the minerals mined is not revealed and smuggled out. The government budget and external trade deficits are increasing, thus the debt burden is also increasing. Taxes and the price of social services are rising. But these come with the wastage and embezzlement of the people's national wealth in nonproductive and ineffective programs and projects, in corruption through the pork barrel system, in huge military spending and growing debt interest and amortization.

Despite all these, the Aquino regime boasts of growth in the Philippine economy. But the supposed economic growth come from so-called hot money or portfolio investments that come and go to and from the stock market and the money markets and pushes speculation in private construction and consumerism among the tiny upper rung of the population. Due to the absence of genuine land reform and national industrialization, the Philippines remain underdeveloped and poor. Unemployment, wage decreases and rising prices of basic commodities and services are worsening rapidly.

Due to the global capitalist crisis, there is a big employment downturn for migrant labor in other countries. The permanent crisis of the Philippines has worsened due to the global capitalist crisis. The ground for revolution is certainly growing ever more fertile in the Philippines. The organized forces of the revolution need only excel at strengthening themselves and fighting imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat-capitalism. The Filipino people are very capable of winning the national-democratic stage of the Philippine revolution with the leadership of the working class. Thus, the socialist revolution can follow when the working class hold state power and much more capable of leading the Filipino people in socialist revolution and construction.

Author's Preface (to Building Strength through Struggle)

I thank the editors of *Building Strength through Struggle* for putting together the major documents that I drafted and finalized for the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines and the articles that I wrote as Chairman of said committee in the period between the formal declaration of martial law on September 21, 1972 and my capture on November 10, 1977.

Building Strength through Struggle contains the most significant documents and articles on the Filipino people's struggle against the Marcos fascist dictatorship during its first five years of existence. These expose clearly the character and stratagems of the dictatorship and define the revolutionary course of action, including the establishment of the people's democratic government, the leadership of the working class, the protracted people's war and the development of the mass movement.

To this day, the "Guide for Establishing the People's Democratic Government," "Special Characteristics of our People's War," "Our Urgent Tasks" and "Elaboration on the 10-Point Program of the National Democratic Front" are highly instructive to the revolutionary forces and people. These historic documents reinforced the earlier foundation documents in guiding the people's democratic revolution and countering various trends of subjectivism and opportunism in the 1980s.

From 1970 onwards, Party cadres and members were provided with theoretical education, politico-military training and experience in mass work and combat in Isabela and other provinces of northeast Luzon. They were subsequently deployed to other regions. The suspension of the writ of habeas corpus in 1971 and the declaration of martial law in 1972 forced many urban-based Party members and mass activists to go underground. They were deployed to various regions.

When the Plenum of the Party Central Committee was held in December 1975, the reports showed that the CPP, NPA, the organs of political power and mass organizations of the revolutionary movement had already spread to all regions of the Philippines, except the Moro provinces. The Plenum inspired the regional Party committees and regional commands of the NPA to expand the mass base and create more guerrilla fronts.

The rapidly growing strength and advance of the revolutionary movement can be traced by reading the annual anniversary statements of the CPP Central Committee on the work of the entire Party and New People's Army and can also be seen in the periodic assessments critical of the policies and actions of the Marcos fascist regime and laying bare its growing isolation and weakness.

However, in accordance with the law of development, the revolutionary movement could not and did not advance on a straight line. It had to confront and solve problems arising from the ferocity of the attacks of the fascist dictatorship and from the major and minor errors and shortcomings within the CPP organs and units. Some of my writings in the book criticize certain major errors and show how these were resolved.

In developing the united front against the fascist dictatorship, we adhered to the line of unity and struggle and thus we maintained independence and initiative. We were critical of the anti-Marcos reactionaries for always putting their hopes on the US to junk Marcos and the revival of the 1935 constitution of the reactionary government. We were strongly supportive of the Moro people's right to national self-determination and were thus critical of the Moro National Liberation Front for yielding to the sovereign pretensions and processes of the fascist dictatorship in the Tripoli Agreement of 1976.

After more than five years of fascist dictatorship, especially after my capture in 1977, Marcos deluded himself into thinking that he had stabilized his rule because he was still commanding the forces of the armed counter-revolution and because he was propped up by US military and economic assistance due to the US military bases as well as by the seemingly endless flow of foreign loans under the auspices of the IMF and World Bank.

But in fact the revolutionary movement had taken deep roots nationwide under the guidance of the Program for a People's Democratic Revolution along the anti-fascist, anti-feudal and anti-imperialist line. It challenged not only the autocratic regime but the entire ruling system of big compradors, landlords and the puppet politicians servile to US imperialism.

This book aims to provide readers with a comprehensive and profound understanding of the perseverance, resilience and rapid development of the revolutionary movement. It shows the oppressive and exploitative

conditions that generated the people's resistance and more importantly the principles and processes of building strength through revolutionary struggle.

Some documents give a sense of the status of the world anti-imperialist and communist movement at the time, such as the following: "Statement of the Communist Party of the Philippines on the Agreement Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Vietnam," "A Diplomatic Victory of the People's Republic of China: A Victory of the Philippine Revolutionary Struggle," "Tribute to the Great Communist Mao Zedong" and "The October Revolution Sixty Years Ago Established the First Workers' State."

May this preface spark the interest of readers in knowing how the revolutionary forces of the Filipino people withstood the ferocious attacks of the Marcos fascist dictatorship, how they ultimately caused its downfall and why to this day they persevere in revolutionary struggle against the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system that pretends to be democratic and yet is extremely servile to foreign interests but extremely exploitative, corrupt, brutal and mendacious to the people.

Jose Maria Sison
Utrecht, The Netherlands
October 25, 2013

Celebrate your Victories

Solidarity with PAMANTIK-KMU

May 1, 2014

I heartily extend militant greetings of solidarity to the Pagkakaisa ng mga Manggagawa sa Timog Katagalugan [Workers' Unity in Southern Tagalog] – Kilusang Mayo Uno (PAMANTIK-KMU) in the celebration of the 111th anniversary of the International Labor Day on May 1 by the workers in Southern Tagalog and other regions.

It is an occasion to celebrate your victories from the founding of PAMANTIK-KMU in 1984. Your celebrations must be substantial, militant and joyful. Look back on the struggles, sacrifices and victories in education, organization and mobilization in connection with promoting, defending and advancing the rights and welfare of the working class.

I salute PAMANTIK-KMU for being the broadest alliance of trade unions, associations and federations. I commend your efforts at arousing, organizing and mobilizing the workers to advance the struggle for just wages, security of tenure, human and trade union rights. Let us give our highest respect and honor to our martyrs and heroes. They are our most powerful inspiration.

In the spirit of proletarian internationalism it is right for you to highlight the contributions of the five great teachers of the struggle of the worker's movement in the country and the whole world. They shed light on the path of revolution led by the working class. You must place all your efforts and struggles within the framework of the new democratic revolution and the world proletarian-socialist revolution. It is not enough to confine yourselves to strive after economic benefits in the trade union movement. In the long-term, the proletarian class must seize political power and carry out continuing revolution.

You are once again faced by a regime that is an utter puppet of US imperialism, exploitative, corrupt, oppressive and deceitful. Again you have the determination to oust this regime. We recall and salute PAMANTIK-KMU for serving as the regional center for the worker's movement in Southern Tagalog at the height of the repression during the time of the US-Marcos dictatorship. Again you will play an important role in isolating and defeating the current evil Aquino regime, which is the instrument of the US and big compradors and landlords.

I am certain that you will reap more and greater victories in the struggles ahead within the framework of the trade union movement, the new democratic revolution and in upholding the world proletarian-socialist revolution against imperialism, revisionism and reaction!

Long live PAMANTIK-KMU!

Long live the working class!

Long live the Filipino people!

The Myth of Migration for Development

**Keynote Speech at the Discussion/Speak Out for Development Justice and Protest Mobilization vs. Migration for Development,
in Stockholm, Sweden, May 13-15, 2014**

On behalf of the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS), I extend my most militant greetings of solidarity to all the participants of the counter-event organized by the International Migrants Alliance to the 7th Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) being held in Stockholm. I wish your conference and protest mobilization the utmost success.

When the first GFMD was held in Brussels in 2007, it was described as “an informal multilateral and state-led multi-stakeholder process ... to identify practical and feasible ways to strengthen the mutually beneficial relationship between migration and development.”

Its main objectives were described as the following: 1) the management of migration in sending and receiving countries to maximize “opportunities” and minimize “risks”; 2) to use remittances from migrants for development, and; 3) the establishment of policies and partnerships between countries to achieve the goal of making migration work for development.

At that time, we said that the agenda of the GFMD was clear proof that the promise of development under neoliberal globalization had failed and that the intent of the monopoly capitalist countries and their institutions was mainly to exploit the migration phenomenon, the lucrative labor export programs of underdeveloped countries and migrant remittances to salvage or prop up collapsing economies, especially of semicolonies and dependent countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Seven years of experience with the GFMD have proven us correct. Migrant workers comprise a significant productive force in the world. But they are the most exploited and oppressed workers in the developed countries. They receive the lowest level of wages and are deprived of the rights, standard wage and living conditions of workers in the host countries.

The imperialist powers have designed the over-all neoliberal policy on migrant workers: on the one hand, to use them at the least cost in order to aid production and improve the quality of life in the developed host countries and on the other, to use their earnings to fund the consumption-oriented and import-dependent economies of their underdeveloped home countries.

This neoliberal policy of generating and exploiting cheap and pliant labor for export and effecting modern-day slavery has been the guiding principle of the GFMD since its inception. This is because the GFMD is another of the many multilateral institutions dominated by the imperialist countries and used to implement the neoliberal policy under the Washington Consensus of the IMF, World Bank and WTO.

Migrant workers are the result of underdevelopment and the lack of jobs in the sending countries. But the hard-earned foreign exchange earnings of migrant workers are sucked up by governments that extort exorbitant fees and by various domestic and foreign private exploiters (recruiting agencies, remittance centers, banks, marketing companies, and so on).

The remittances of migrant workers are used for merely covering the perennial balance of payments deficits and for anti-industrial purposes and import-dependent consumerism of the exploiting classes and corrupt bureaucrat. The misuse of the foreign exchange earned by the migrant workers has served to aggravate and further deepen underdevelopment. And yet the GFMD harps on the lie that migration leads to development.

Both the sending and receiving states connive in exploiting the migrant workers and violating their political, economic, social and cultural rights. The migrant workers are subjected to low wages, substandard working conditions, limited benefits, discrimination and insecurity.

Women migrant workers are oppressed. They are made vulnerable to gender-based violence and other forms of abuse. No effective mechanisms are in place to protect the migrant workers from falling victims to human traffickers and organized crime syndicates.

Immigration laws are biased for facilitating the criminalization of migrant workers and for inflicting on them violent and inhuman treatment.

In Europe, the EU Return Directive has encouraged governments to implement anti-migrant laws and measures. Thirteen million irregular migrants are targeted for deportation. FRONTEX has been set up to coordinate the efforts of governments to harass and arbitrarily expel migrants and compel them to accept even lower wages in the informal economy.

Right-wing parties have stirred up anti-migrant hysteria blaming migrant workers for supposedly stealing the jobs from the local population. As a result, migrants have been subjected to verbal abuse and even to physical attacks by right-wing thugs.

It is necessary and important for the democratic and anti-imperialist movement and the people of the world to pay close attention to the plight and just cause of the migrant workers.

In this regard, we must persevere in confronting the GFMD and the heads of state that are active in this cabal and hold them responsible for pursuing and carrying out the neoliberal economic policy on migration and for committing grievous wrongs and injustices against the millions of migrant workers and their families.

We in ILPS fully support the International Migrants Alliance (IMA) in all its efforts to address the problems of migrants in the face of the current global economic and financial crisis and stagnation that has led to the further intensification of exploitation and oppression of migrant workers.

We commend the IMA for consistently defending the rights of migrants and refugees. IMA is active in assisting migrants of different nationalities to form their own organizations. These migrants organizations are developing solidarity with progressive organizations and institutions of the host peoples who are supportive of the cause of migrants and refugees.

We congratulate the IMA for organizing this counter-event to the 7th GFMD in Stockholm. We wish you great success in this event and in future struggles in defending and promoting the rights and welfare of migrant workers.

The Importance of Advancing the National-Democratic Agenda for the Interest of the Working Class

**Speech to the 9th Regional Congress of PAMANTIK,
July 14, 2014**

Beloved comrades in the struggle! The International League of Peoples' Struggle sincerely expresses its solidarity with the Pagkakaisa ng Manggagawa sa Timog Katagalugan [Workers' Unity in Southern Tagalog]-Kilusang Mayo Uno (PAMANTIK-KMU) on the occasion of its 9th Congress.

We admire the victories of PAMANTIK-KMU as the vanguard of genuine, militant and anti-imperialist unionism. Your successes in educating, organizing and mobilizing the workers in advancing their struggle for a just wage, job security and respect for workers and human rights are praiseworthy.

We greatly believe that your fighting spirit will grow further, your organization gain further strength and your struggle further advance. In this congress, you will be able to link the workers' situation in the region to that on the national and global scale, sum-up your accumulated strength and experience, strengthen your leadership and overall ranks and set the tasks for your further advance.

I thank you for inviting me to discuss "The Importance of Advancing the National-Democratic Agenda for the Interest of the Working Class."

It is an honor and an important task to discuss this topic. The national democratic program covers the tactical and strategic needs of the working class in the economic and political fields.

Economic victories can be further achieved if the ranks of the working class gain further strength in the political arena. Economic victories are lost when patriotic and progressive work weakens in the political arena. Correct political leadership and action are decisive.

Addressing the needs of the working class

To advance the national-democratic agenda is to address immediately the needs and interests of the working class. The conditions of the working class and the Filipino people will worsen further and they lose all hope of escaping poverty if they do not resist US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. These are the roots of exploitation and oppression in our country.

You have to fight the enemy in order to uphold your dignity, your rights and interests. US imperialism and the local reactionary regime of big compradors and landlords continue to conspire in intensifying exploitation and oppression. As the crisis they have created worsens, the more they extract superprofits from the working class and the Filipino people and employ violence against the toiling masses.

Since its brutal conquest of the Philippines, US imperialism has continued to impose its policies on the Filipino people in order to dominate, exploit and oppress them. From the time of the overtly colonial regime in 1902 to the current semicolonial regime, the US has deprived the Filipino people of complete national independence and has dictated the nature and course of the economy, politics, culture and military.

The biggest objective of US monopoly capitalism is to amass superprofits in the Philippines through direct and indirect investments. To weaken the Philippines economically and politically, they maintain the feudal and semifeudal system of exploitation. And their main instruments are the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords. In turn, the latter smoothly choose their political agents in all levels of the political system.

The Filipino people have long desired both genuine land reform and national industrialization. But in the selfish view of the imperialists and local reactionaries, it is easier to extract high rates and quantities of exploitation if poverty and exploitation and widespread, wages are low and the Philippines' natural resources are laid bare to plunder by imperialist corporations and their cohorts.

Under neoliberal economic policy, the concentration of capital in the hands of the imperialists has accelerated and worsened through liberalization, privatization, deregulation and denationalization. As imperialist agents, the big compradors and landlords also rapidly enrich themselves in terms of capital and land. Their politicians likewise indulge themselves in bureaucrat capitalism, by using their positions in the reactionary government to amass wealth.

Poverty among the people is spreading and intensifying because of unemployment, low incomes and

skyrocketing prices of goods and services. It is but right for the people to fight for their rights to live decently and take action to advance their interests. But the powers that be respond violently to mass actions engendered by crisis and the worsening poverty in the cities and countryside.

The US-Aquino regime mercilessly launched brutal military campaigns against the revolutionary forces and the people. Through the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement, the US has been openly building military bases in the Philippines.

The regime claims that the US provides protection to the Philippines, but it has long been pretending to be benevolent and is friendlier with China than the Philippines. The regime makes a show of fighting China, but it connives with big Chinese capitalists in construction, trading, semi-manufacturing and mining.

The Aquino regime is an out and out puppet of US imperialism and is brazenly exploitative, corrupt and brutal in violating human rights. The president who claims to be clean and on the righteous path has been proven to be a shameless thief. Thus, there is a movement to oust him and his cohorts. The ouster of a corrupt and brutal regime is just one step in further strengthening the national democratic movement towards the overthrow of the entire semicolonial and semifeudal system.

Advancing working class leadership

The working class must engage in struggle not only because it has to fight exploitation and oppression. The national-democratic revolution must be implemented through the leadership of the working class. The revolution cannot win without the leadership of the working class through the Communist Party of the Philippines.

If we analyze current Philippine society, the working class is the most productive and most progressive class. It is the class that has the capability of fulfilling the objective of ending the domination of imperialism, attaining national independence and embark on national industrialization. It is the class that is most resolute in ending feudal and semifeudal exploitation through genuine land reform.

For the first time in the history of the world and the Philippines, there is a class that has the desire and the ability to overthrow all exploiting classes and liberate all exploited classes in society. It bears the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and applied it to Philippine history and conditions through the general line of national democratic revolution.

The line of national liberation and democracy first emerged during the 1896 revolution against Spanish colonialism the feudalism of the friars. The liberal bourgeois leadership was able to defeat the old colonialism of Spain. But it was unable to overcome US imperialism's superior military strength and liberal-democratic deception.

Until now, the urban petty bourgeoisie has revolutionary potential. But it has been proven that it cannot fully resist modern imperialism or monopoly capitalism. It is the working class that has the ideological, political and organizational capability to continue the national democratic revolution to a new level in the time of imperialism and proletarian revolutions. It is the class that has a revolutionary theory, Party and political line.

The working class can lead the revolution well because it is guided by Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and it implements the line of people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war. With the working class are the peasants who are also part of the toiling masses and comprise the majority of the people. The petty bourgeoisie and the middle bourgeoisie are allies of the toiling masses in the united front. They take advantage of conflicts among the reactionary cliques of the exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords.

The objective of the working class and the Filipino people is to achieve complete national independence by eliminating and ending the domination of US imperialism over the economy, politics, the military and culture and in dictating policies to the local ruling classes. The toiling masses will attain democratic power and rights through the national liberation of the Filipino people.

The objective of the working class is to attain social liberation. There will be an end to the power of the local reactionary classes to exploit the toiling masses. The monopoly capitalists will lose their power to exploit the toiling masses. There will be national industrialization. Landlords will likewise lose their power to own vast tracts of land. Genuine land reform will be complete.

A national, scientific and mass-oriented cultural and educational system will flourish and proliferate. The public educational system will expand and more people will be able to finish school in order to be of service to the people's economic, social, political and cultural development. In the spirit of proletarian internationalism and anti-imperialist solidarity, the working class and the people will unite with all possible forces in the world for

peace and development. With the victory of the democratic revolution in the Philippines, the socialist perspective of the Philippine revolution can be accomplished. The working class and the Filipino people will have the strength to move forward to the socialist stage of the Philippine revolution. This can be done because the working class is the vanguard class. Through its Party, it can lead the people's democratic state system, the people's army and all cadres and people in all fields of social endeavor.

- Long live PAMANTIK-KMU!
- Long live the working class and the Filipino people!
- Long live the Philippine revolution!

Fight Commercialization and Enslavement, Strengthen Migrante International

Message to the 7th Congress of Migrante International

December 16, 2014

The international leadership and all the member-organizations of the International League of Peoples' Struggle extend their most heartfelt greetings and militant solidarity to Migrante International on its 7th Congress. We admire your victories and want you to reap more successes based on your current strength and your summing-up and planning in this congress.

Your congress theme of "Fight Commercialization and Enslavement of Filipinos Overseas and their Families! Merge the Growing Filipino Migrant Movement with the People's Surge for Genuine Change" is most important and timely.

It is but fitting for Migrante International to persevere in arousing, organizing and mobilizing Filipino migrant workers to fight against oppression and exploitation and defend and advance their rights and welfare and to promote genuine change and development in the Philippines so that they work in their own country instead of leaving the country and be separated from their families.

Because of the absence of development in the Philippine economy through genuine land reform and national industrialization, millions of our countrymen are forced to work in other countries. It is the Aquino regime's policy to intensify and accelerate the commercialization and enslavement of Filipinos overseas. It is proof that unemployment has worsened and incomes have been plummeting in the country.

The regime boasts of growing foreign exchange remittances from migrant workers, whose level has reached US\$28 billion and about 8.7 percent of the Gross National Product (GNP). This is bigger than the share of traditional agricultural exports. On the whole, the foreign exchange remittances support the families of migrant workers.

After exchanging them for pesos, it is the banks, big compradors and corrupt officials with foreign exchange accounts who benefit from the foreign exchange income of migrants. It is used not for economic development but for perpetuating the system of consumption that is dependent on importing finished goods, debt, stealing and profligacy.

The regime is lying through its teeth when it says that the economy is rapidly growing and there is "reverse migration" or mass repatriation of migrant workers. The GNP growth these past years is due to so-called "hot money" or portfolio investments entering the stock market, bond market and money market that do not create enterprises of employment but earn profits merely through speculation and is easily gone, just as what is happening now.

The reactionary government extracts huge amounts from the migrant workers. Through Administrative Order 31, the Aquino regime has tightened and raised fees under OWWA, Pag-ibig, Philhealth, the Department of Foreign Affairs, airport and other agencies. But government services and benefits given to migrant workers in case of accidents, illness and death and other hazards while they are on contract or no longer on contract are nonexistent or very limited.

The government does not defend and protect the rights and welfare of migrant workers. The Aquino regime turns a deaf ear to demands for it to tell receiving governments to respect migrant workers' rights. The regime has not implemented the Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act (RA 10022, amended by RA 8042), Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act (RA 9208) and Overseas Absentee Voting Act (RA 9189).

It provides little or no assistance to migrant workers when they become victims of violence, rape and murder, when their contracts are violated and they are arbitrarily terminated and when they are massively displaced due to war, disorder, restrictions or calamities. Whether work contracts end normally or abnormally, there is no clear and comprehensive plan to reintegrate returning migrant workers.

The effectiveness of your previous efforts to organize Filipino migrant workers and their families in the Philippines can be seen in the fact that you have 30 chapters overseas and 21 chapters in the Philippines. We hope that based on the reports of global coordinators and chapter delegations as well as your congress discussions, you will be able to set the tasks and methods of work to raise your work and struggle to a new and higher level.

Migrante International enjoys tremendous potential in terms of its work, struggle and further victories because some 12 to 15 percent (12 to 15 million if you include the undocumented) of the Philippine population or at least 24 percent of the labor force of around 62 million is abroad. An estimated 30 to 40 percent of Filipinos are dependent on the incomes of migrant workers. Most migrant workers are domestic workers or cleaners in homes and offices, hotel and restaurant staff, health workers in hospitals, caregivers, skilled and unskilled workers in factories, construction and engineering projects and crew members in ships. They come from various parts of the Philippines.

Filipino migrant workers are in more than 200 countries and territories in all continents (Asia, Australia, North America, South America, Africa and Europe). They are most concentrated in the United States (3.5 million); Saudi Arabia (1.8 million); and Canada (639,686). They are also concentrated in the United Arab Emirates, Australia, Qatar, Malaysia, Japan, United Kingdom, Hong Kong and Singapore.

If you can effectively cover the concentrations of migrant workers, you can have the strength and skills to reach those in other countries. You will also find it easier to establish links with migrant workers aboard ships if you can establish centers that serve as offices, stores and lounges all rolled in one in the major ports. It would also be well to have organizations of families of migrant workers in the Philippines and places where migrants can socialize or relax before leaving or upon their return.

We have high regard for Migrante International and we consider it one of the major ILPS member-organizations. We are deeply grateful to Migrante International for assisting the ILPS attain global scope and increasing our worker membership. Your organization is likewise decisive in the ILPS commission for upholding the interests of migrant workers in various underdeveloped countries and in establishing the International Assembly of Migrants and Refugees.

Long live Migrante International!

Long live the migrant workers!

Long live the Filipino people!

Message to the 31st International Solidarity Affair and to Kilusang Mayo Uno on its 35th Anniversary

May 1, 2015

In representation of the International League of Peoples' Struggle, I convey warmest greetings of solidarity to all the participants of the 31st International Solidarity Affair. I also take the opportunity to congratulate the host, the Kilusang Mayo Uno, for having served as the genuine labor center in the Philippines in the last 35 years, for having waged struggles in defense of workers' rights and for having won brilliant victories.

We in the ILPS highly appreciate the contributions of KMU to the ILPS as a whole and to Commission No. 5. The KMU has served as the lead organization in the commission and has played a key role in the establishment of WORKINS and the issuance of statements on outstanding labor issues in the world. The ISA and WORKINS are complementary instruments of the international proletariat.

We wholeheartedly agree with the theme of the ISA: Workers and Peoples Unite: Fight Neoliberal Attacks on Wages and Trade Union Rights! The largest monopoly capitalists based in the imperialist countries and their subalterns on a global scale make their superprofits by extracting the surplus value from the working class.

Under neoliberalism, the accumulation of private capital is aided and accelerated by the wage cuts, low tax rates for the corporations and the wealthy, the liberalization of investments and trade, the privatization of public assets, the deregulation of social and environment restrictions, and the denationalization of economies that are underdeveloped but rich with natural resources like the Philippines.

The monopoly bourgeoisie mercilessly impose wage cuts, cutbacks on social benefits, job insecurity through contractualization and flexibilization of labor, and repression of the right to organize unions. The crisis of overproduction has recurred worse than the previous one. The expansion of money supply and credit has only served to bail out and fatten the financial markets but not to revive production and employment. Thus, the global crisis and depression have persisted.

Finance capitalism has been used to generate one financial bubble after another, which has burst one after the other in due course. It has hastened the overvaluation of the assets of the big bourgeoisie. To protect these from the threat of inflation, the bourgeois state adopts austerity measures at the expense of the working people and repressive measures to counter their protests and demands. It is widely known that merely one percent of the population own most of the world's wealth, while they impoverish the rest.

The bourgeois state also engages in frenzied borrowing and has already generated the biggest kind of bubble that will be far more destructive than the previous types of bubbles. The irrationality of the capitalist system is manifested in the huge tax cuts for the big bourgeoisie, the graft and corruption that characterize the transactions of the state, the mounting debt service and ever rising military expenditures, while the social benefits are cut down for the working people who pay the most tax in the form of the withholding tax and the indirect taxes incorporated in the price of basic commodities.

The workers and peoples of the world must unite to fight for their rights and their welfare. They must aim for a fundamentally new and better world of people's democracy and socialism against imperialism and reaction. All of them are suffering from escalating exploitation and oppression as a result of the ever worsening crises of the world capitalist system. The majority of the people suffer rising unemployment, underemployment and ever declining incomes and the so-called middle class is shrinking even in the imperialist countries.

The social conditions are far worse in the underdeveloped countries and are resulting in wider mass protests, armed conflicts of various sorts and revolutionary resistance. The imperialist powers find it easy to interfere in said countries and to unleash wars of aggression against them. They settle their contradictions at the expense of the people in the underdeveloped countries, but now they are increasingly forming blocs against each other, as the crisis of their own making drives them to struggle for a redivision of the world.

It is fine that the 31st ISA is providing its participants with an exposure program and a forum to inform them regarding the neoliberal attacks on wages and trade union rights in the Philippines. Thus, the international delegates can observe the situation and struggles of the Filipino workers, and they can exchange experiences in the spirit of mutual learning for the purpose of raising the level of struggle in various countries and the level of

international solidarity.

The estimated population of the Philippines is now 107 million. The work force is 64 percent of the population. The overwhelming majority of the people are under feudal and semifeudal exploitation. They earn an average of less than 2 US dollars a day. The 12 million overseas contract workers represent some 20 percent of the work force and show that the Philippine economy cannot employ them for the country's own benefit and development and cannot keep them from separating from their families.

Philippine government statistics are notorious for understating unemployment and underemployment figures, which anomalously show that the work force in the Philippines is enjoying employment comparable to that in many developed countries or even better than that in several developed countries. Many of those considered employed do household chores for their own families, are casuals or odd jobbers in the service, agricultural and industrial sectors of the economy or have stopped looking for work and are excluded from accounting by random samplers of the government.

Among those employed, there is a wide gap between the minimum wage and the basic cost of living. Metro Manila is supposed to offer the highest minimum wage in the country, which is PhP466 or US\$10.50 per working day. But the amount needed daily by an average family to live decently is estimated to be PhP1,086 or US\$24.50 in August 2014. In the provinces, the daily minimum wage is far lower than the cost of living.

Under the banner of the Kilusang Mayo Uno, public sector workers have been outstanding in launching campaigns to demand a national minimum wage of PhP16,000 or US\$363 and the banning of contractual employment. The campaigns seek to unite all workers in pushing back the neoliberal attacks on the minimum wage and bring the minimum wage to the level of adequate and dignified subsistence of the worker's family.

The extreme exploitation of the workers in the Philippines is made possible by the repression of workers' rights, particularly in the form of harassment and retrenchment of union officials, filing of trumped-up charges, violent dispersal of strikes, and murder and enforced disappearance of trade-union organizers and mass activists.

The use of state terrorism in favor of foreign monopoly enterprises, big compradors and landlords against the workers and peasants has served to strengthen the will of the people to resist through every possible legal means. Thus, the KMU and other mass organizations have been established and have won brilliant victories in arousing, organizing and mobilizing the people to fight for their national democratic rights.

But the use of state terrorism has also made legal political activity impossible for an increasing number of people, and has driven them to join the armed revolution. The people's war has resulted in the establishment of the people's democratic government under the leadership of the revolutionary party of the proletariat. This government has an ever growing people's army and mass organizations for the basic exploited classes and other patriotic and progressive sectors.

Where it is strong, the armed revolutionary movement has been able to stop the worst forms of exploitation and oppression, and has made possible better working and living conditions for the industrial and farm workers. It has undertaken land reform for the benefit of the peasants and has carried out various social programs for the benefit of entire communities of the working people.

The social programs involve public education, self-organization, raising production, health and sanitation, self-defense, cultural upliftment, and settlement of disputes among the people. Through their revolutionary education and social practice, the people learn to fight for and realize a truly independent, democratic, socially just, progressive and peaceful Philippines liberated from imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

Intensify the Struggle for Workers' Rights, Strengthen the Anti-Imperialist and Democratic Movement!

May 1, 2015

On International Workers' Day, the International League of Peoples' Struggle gives its clenched fist salute to the workers of the world and their genuine unions and labor organizations. We applaud their struggle for higher wages, job security and the free exercise of trade union rights as well as their democratic struggle against imperialism and its reactionary allies the world over.

We remember and celebrate the workers' heroic struggle for an eight-hour workday in 1886. Prior to 1886, the bourgeoisie sought to intensify the exploitation of workers by making them work for 10, 12 or even 16 hours long. As the strain of inhumanly long working hours became more unbearable and as the living conditions of the working class worsened, the demand for a significant reduction of hours became more pronounced.

The workers emerged victorious after many huge protests and after many workers sacrificed their lives. This is proof that the bourgeoisie will always resist workers' demands and that workers must wage fierce battles in order to win their rights.

Throughout the history of the militant workers movement, workers of the world have achieved many victories in advancing their rights and interests. Through various forms of mass actions, oftentimes met with brutal repression by the state and big capitalist firms, they have won respect for their rights, obtained social benefits and pressured governments to codify these rights and benefits in laws and conventions.

These hard-won victories of the workers of the world and the labor movement are facing renewed attacks from the state and capital. Neoliberal policies implemented since the late 1970s and early 1980s have pressed down workers' wages through various means in order to allow monopoly capitalists to rake in huge and increasing profits despite the intensification of the crisis of overproduction endemic to the world capitalist system.

The global economic and financial crisis that broke out in 2007- 2008 was the result of neoliberal policy with its concomitants of wage reduction and social cutbacks, low tax rates for the corporations and the wealthy, investment and trade liberalization, privatization of public assets, deregulation of social and environmental restrictions and denationalization of underdeveloped economies.

Instead of recognizing the cause and consequences, the bourgeoisie has used the crisis as an opportunity to further concentrate wealth and resources into the hands of monopoly capitalists.

Currently, US imperialism and the transnational corporations are actively pushing new free trade agreements that openly disregard international labor rights conventions, while ensuring greater incentives, privileges and protection for capitalists.

The new trade agreements will drive a race to the bottom as governments adopt austerity measures at the expense of the working people, cutting down wages, eliminating job security through labor flexibilization and short-term contracts, attacking workers rights to unionize and strike and undermining the bargaining power of workers' unions in the name of competition and attracting investments.

In response to this situation, the workers and peoples of the world have been waging various forms of collective action and militant struggle. In Greece, Spain and other countries in Europe, workers and people are taking a stand and voting against austerity measures imposed by the troika of the European Commission, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund. The strikes mounted locally and across Europe between 2012 and 2015 are some of the biggest since neoliberal policies were introduced.

In the US, the Occupy protests exposed the gross inequality between the 99 percent people and 1 percent oligarchy and the crimes of the financial oligarchs responsible for the global economic and financial crisis that broke out in 2007-2008. Of late, protests are centering on the racist violence inflicted by the police against African-Americans. Low-wage workers in McDonald's and Walmart are also intensifying their protests for an increase in wages which have been stagnant since the 1970s.

The workers and peoples in various Arab countries have overthrown openly authoritarian governments. The strikes of the workers of countries like Egypt have proven to be one of the key factors in the Arab Spring. Unfortunately the absence of genuine communist and workers' parties outside of the revisionist mold has resulted in the

re-ascendant conflict of Islamic reactionaries and bourgeois military cliques. The US, the NATO and Israel have also taken the opportunity to bring down the Gaddafi government, unleash counterrevolution in Syria and fielded the Islamic state to wreak havoc in both Iraq and Syria.

The workers and peoples of Asian countries have shown their renewed vigor for mass action. Cambodian workers successfully mounted nationwide strikes and high-impact campaigns centered on wages. They are paving the way for the creation of a broad people's movement. Workers in the Philippines and Indonesia have also held various protests for higher wages and against contractual employment.

In 2014 and this year, workers of South Korea launched several strikes aimed at the Park Geun-hye government which wants to railroad retrogressive labor market reforms and is launching a crackdown against trade unions and activists. For years, there have been many spontaneous workers' strikes in China. In the last seven years, the number of strikes has further increased and their demands are taking on a more political character against the monopoly capitalist state masquerading as socialist and the ruling party which is actually a phoney communist party.

The miners of South Africa launched militant protests for higher wages and better working conditions. Despite the massacre inflicted on them by the government, they remain undaunted and continue to struggle for workers' rights. The workers and people of South America continue to support governments that are critical of the US and provide ramparts to the all-out implementation of neoliberal economic policies in the region.

In view of all the foregoing, we call on the workers of the world to further intensify their struggle for higher wages, job security, and the free exercise of their trade-union rights. We call on them to intensify the democratic struggle against imperialism and reaction which are behind the vicious and worsening attacks on workers' rights.

We call on the workers of the world to fight for higher wages, which have been pressed down and have been lagging behind the increase in the cost of living. They should struggle for job security, which has been eroded for decades and is being destroyed at a rapid rate by the big capitalists. They should unite and fight, build more and stronger unions, and defend existing unions against capitalists' attempts to destroy these either through frontal attacks or cooptation.

They should unmask the lie that higher wages and improvements in working and living conditions of workers go against generating employment. They should do away with the obscene lie that gains of the working people of the world, who create social wealth, are the ones responsible for the crisis, and that the monopoly capitalists who promote plunder and war are the ones who generate economic growth.

We call on the workers and peoples of the world to firm up their unity and advance their struggle for democratic rights and for better working and living conditions against the escalating exploitation and oppression being inflicted on them by the world capitalist system. They should struggle against worsening imperialist plunder and war.

Most important of all, they must heighten their consciousness and organized strength to fight and defeat the global and national systems of exploitation and oppression as well as the grave damage done to the environment by monopoly capitalism.

They must fight for a new and better world in which the working class can fulfill its historic mission of building socialism. They must fight for a society in which the conditions of greater freedom, democracy, social justice, development, cultural progress, peace and international solidarity can be realized.

Message to the Third National Congress of Federation of Independent Trade Unions (GSBI)

May 23, 2015

The International Coordinating Committee and the entirety of the International League of People's Struggle (ILPS) wish to convey warmest greetings of solidarity to Gabungan Serikat Buruh Independent (GSBI) and the delegates now convened to hold the Third National Congress. We congratulate the GSBI for its success in organizing this congress.

We salute the GSBI for all its efforts and achievements as the national trade union serving as the center of workers' struggle. It has stood out as an independent, open, militant, patriotic, democratic and responsible labor center since its establishment on 21st of March 1999, in Jakarta, Indonesia. We are therefore proud of the GSBI as a member-organization of the ILPS.

We highly appreciate the fact that the components of GSBI took part and became tested and tempered in the struggle to overthrow the Suharto fascist military ruling clique and thereafter became determined to become a strong labor center in the face of the power and wealth of the comprador big bourgeoisie and the landlord class, the persistence of the agents of fascist dictatorship and the rampage of neocolonialism and neoliberalism.

We welcome as highly significant and acutely urgent the thematic call of the Congress: "Rise, Unite to Build and Strengthen GSBI as a Genuine Trade Union for the Workers' Prosperity and Indonesian Sovereignty." We consider as absolutely necessary for the Indonesian working class to have a strong united trade union movement in order to fight for the national and democratic rights and interests of the Indonesian people and improve the working and living conditions of the workers.

The best guarantee for the advance of the people's struggle for national and social liberation is to uphold the leadership of the working class through its revolutionary party and a strong and militant trade union movement. The working class is the most progressive productive and political force, capable of leading the new democratic revolution and proceeding to the socialist revolution.

Indonesia continues to be dominated today by the forces of foreign monopoly capitalism which wantonly plunder the natural resources and ruin the environment, conjure the illusion of development through unproductive and consumption-oriented activities and extract superprofits from direct and indirect investments. The rampage of neocolonialism and neoliberalism is possible only because the US and other imperialists are assisted by the local exploiting classes.

The crisis of the world capitalist system as well as the crisis of the local ruling system is ever worsening. The imperialists and their local reactionary agents are escalating the exploitation and oppression of the people as they pass on the burden of crisis to the people, especially the toiling masses of workers and peasants. The people can lift themselves from their suffering through resolute and militant resistance against their oppressors and exploiters.

We are confident that the congress will be able to consolidate the GSBI by summing up and evaluating its experience, strengthening its unity and fighting spirit and spelling out the tasks for further strengthening the organization, multiplying its achievements and producing more leaders in the course of struggle to defend the rights and interests of workers and the entire people.

Indonesia is a huge country with a huge population. It has a high potential for fulfilling social needs and all-round development and contributing significantly to the all-round progress of the peoples of the world. The Indonesian people, especially the toiling masses of workers and peasants, can realize such potential.

They can do so by asserting national sovereignty and independence, empowering themselves through the exercise of their own democratic rights, developing their economy through national industrialization and land reform, achieving social justice, promoting their patriotic and progressive culture and engaging in anti-imperialist solidarity with the peoples of the world.

The most powerful enemy of the Indonesian working class and the people is US imperialism. It masterminded the 1965-66 massacres in order to overthrow the Sukarno government, suppress the patriotic and progressive forces and install the Suharto fascist military dictatorship. To this day, it continues to impose neocolonial and neoliberal dictates on Indonesia.

The GSBI must build a strong trade union movement and cooperate with other forces in order to fight and prevail over US imperialism within Indonesia. But it must also link up with the international trade union movement and the broad masses of the people abroad and join the common struggle against US imperialism, its allies and puppets. It must undertake annually an International Solidarity Affair similar to that done by the Kilusang Mayo Uno in the Philippines.

It must establish and develop relations of solidarity with the member-organizations of ILPS and with the unions within the framework of the Workers' International Struggle Initiatives (WORKINS), which have been formed under ILPS Commission no. 5 on Workers' Concerns. It must seek out the trade unions and people's organizations that are truly anti-imperialist and democratic and are at best under the leadership of genuine revolutionary parties of the working class in various countries.

We, the International League of People's Struggle, wish the utmost success of the Third National Congress of GSPI. We hope that this congress opens the way wider for greater victories of the Indonesian working class and the broad masses in the struggle for national and social liberation along the anti-imperialist and democratic line. We look forward to GSBI contributing the most it can in building the international solidarity of the working class and humankind.

Long live GSBI!

Long live the working class in Indonesia!

Long live the Indonesian people!

Keynote Address to the 11th National Congress of Kilusang Mayo Uno

August 27, 2015

Colleagues and friends, we in the International Coordinating Committee and entirety of the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS) express our most militant greetings and solidarity with the Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) on the occasion of its 11th National Congress. As always, we are proud of the KMU as the center of genuine trade unionism in the Philippines and as one of the most important member-organizations of the ILPS in the international working class movement.

This is a time for you and us to celebrate your victories since your last congress. It is also a time for you to understand further the international and national context of your movement, sum up your experience and learn both positive and negative lessons; and put forward the tasks for raising the struggle to a new and higher level and achieve greater victories.

I am highly honored and deeply pleased that I am entrusted with the task of presenting the international and national situation and the consequent tasks of the working class and the KMU. I am guided by the theme that you have defined: Intensify the struggle against the neoliberal attacks on the workers and the people! Carry forward genuine, militant and patriotic unionism! Advance the national democratic struggle with a socialist perspective!

International situation: neoliberalism, crisis, wars and people's struggle

The neoliberal economic policy has been pushed by the US since 1979 and carried out in earnest in the US and abroad since the Reagan regime. It is based on the malicious anti-working class lie that the cause of stagflation was wage inflation and big government spending for social services. It obscures the fact that in the capitalist system the extraction of high profits by reducing real wages while raising production causes the crisis of overproduction, which is variably called stagnation, recession and depression, according to the degree of severity of the crisis.

It also obscures the fact that high spending for bureaucratic corruption, military production, deployment of overseas bases and wars of aggression generates inflation. Furthermore, it obscures the fact that the attempts of the capitalist state to use finance capitalism, like printing money, expansion of credit and invention of so many kinds of financial products, appear at first to buoy up the economy, deliver more profits to the capitalists and raise the value of their assets. But ultimately, the financial bubbles burst and the real economy suffers in terms of production breakdown and massive unemployment.

On the basis of anti-worker and anti-social premises, the neoliberal policy accelerates and aggravates the process of extracting profits from the surplus capital created by labor. The monopoly bourgeoisie uses various methods to compel the workers to accept lower real wages. It adopts higher technology to reduce the work force. It uses mass unemployment in order to play off the unemployed against the employed. It increases the short-term contractuels, casuals, apprentices and the like to cut the number of workers with tenure. It uses the state to adopt policies and use coercive actions to violate the basic democratic rights and trade union rights of the workers.

It is a big lie for the monopoly capitalists to claim that economic and social matters are decided by the so-called free market. There is no free market under monopoly capitalism. The monopoly capitalists decide matters by using their economic power as well as their state power to undermine and suppress the working class and to provide more benefits to the capitalist corporations through investment and trade liberalization, privatization of public assets, deregulation of social and environmental restrictions and the denationalization of the less developed and underdeveloped economies.

The international bourgeoisie, from the monopolies based in the industrial capitalist countries to the big compradors in the underdeveloped countries, continue to cling to the neoliberal economic policy dictated by US imperialism and its allies in the G-7 and such multilateral agencies as the IMF, World Bank and the WTO. Thus, global capitalism continues to lurch from one crisis to ever worse ones. The world is still in the throes of the crisis and depression that burst out in 2008. We are now witnessing another worse crisis unfolding.

The unbridled printing of money and rapid expansion of credit, without the corresponding expansion of production and employment, have long burdened private households, corporations and governments with unrepayable debts. Whenever there is monetary expansion, the money goes mainly to the financial markets and

bureaucratic-military spending. But when austerity measures are adopted supposedly to rein in government spending and cut down the public deficit and public debt, social benefits and social services (especially for education, health, housing and so on) are cut down, government employment is reduced and production and employment in general are adversely affected.

An economic and financial crisis worse than 2008 is already being manifested by the bursting of bubbles in public debt as in Greece, the bond market in Japan and the stock markets in China and 22 other countries; to cite just a few symptoms. A big financial explosion is expected to burst either in China or the US or in both, and once more cause an unprecedented global economic crisis. Every capitalist state in the world today is sitting on a huge public debt bomb. China and the US are being anticipated to trigger the big explosion. China has abused public borrowing since 2008 by six times more than the US to keep on financing private and public construction and make up for the drastic fall in exports.

The integration of China and Russia in the capitalist world poses a problem to US imperialism and its erstwhile Cold War allies in economic, financial, political and military terms. The crisis of overproduction is intensifying economic and financial contradictions among the capitalist powers. China and Russia have formed the BRICS economic bloc, together with Brazil, India and South Africa; and the BRICS Development Bank to assert economic independence. China has also established the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank to assume the lead role in constructing a new Silk Road interlinking China and Russia as well as all of Asia and Europe.

China and Russia continue to develop the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) as a collective security organization. This was formed in reaction to the US propensity to unleash wars of aggression in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union and to expand NATO operations to the borders of Russia, to the Balkans, Central Asia and the Middle East. Not satisfied with the quagmires into which it has already put itself in these regions, the US is making provocations against Russia by using their neofascist stooges in the Ukraine and is making the so-called strategic pivot to Asia to contain China and boost pro-US forces within it. It is now taking advantage of China's claim over 90 per cent of South China Sea, thus grabbing the exclusive economic zones and extended continental shelves of the Philippines and other Southeast Asian countries, in order to entrench US military forces, principally in the Philippines.

The US and other imperialist countries have been able to override contradictions among themselves and as well as within their respective borders since the end of World War II by shifting the burden of crisis to the oppressed peoples and nations in the underdeveloped countries. But now with China and Russia being among the capitalist powers, economic competition and political rivalry among such powers are intensifying. Too many capitalist vultures are competing to feast on the blood of the working people, causing ever worsening economic and financial crisis and driving the the US and NATO war machines to become more aggressive in maintaining and expanding economic territory.

The economic and social conditions of the proletariat and people in the developed countries have deteriorated from decade to decade since the adoption of the neoliberal economic policy. Many of them are already living practically under the same conditions as the working people in the third world countries. But even while they are in much-worsened conditions and mass movements arise among them against issues of oppression and exploitation, there is still the need to build genuine revolutionary parties of the proletariat that must set the effective general line of revolutionary struggle for socialism; arouse the masses of workers and the people; organize the progressive trade unions and other people's organizations; and mobilize the people.

In the underdeveloped countries, some genuine revolutionary parties of the proletariat are leading the working class, the peasantry and the urban petty bourgeoisie along the general line of people's democratic revolution against foreign monopoly capitalism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. They are the torch bearers of the anti-imperialist and democratic movement and the world proletarian revolution. They are the path breakers of revolutionary resistance in a world beset by extreme oppression and exploitation, state terrorism and war of aggression; and about to break out in revolutionary resistance on an unprecedented scale.

Philippine situation: puppet rulers, deepening underdevelopment, crisis and revolution

Since the 1980s, one puppet regime after another has accepted the neoliberal dictates of US imperialism. The first Aquino regime carried over from the Marcos fascist regime all the anti-labor decrees, pushed trade and investment liberalization, accepted all the odious foreign loans incurred by the Marcos regime and abused local public borrowing for the government budget.

Under the flag of neoliberalism, the Ramos regime proceeded to take a huge amount of commercial loans and portfolio investments, sped up the privatization of major public assets to cover the public deficit, removing nationality restrictions on mining, banking, wholesale and retail trade and other types of enterprises; and sponsored the private construction boom that collapsed in the Asian financial crisis of 1997.

The Estrada regime was bound by the neoliberal economic policy and was also restricted by the consequences of the 1997 crisis. Its idea of development was reviving the private fortunes of the Marcos cronies and promoting gambling with loans from the social insurance system.

The Arroyo regime was vociferous in following the neoliberal economic policy and went so far as to badmouth the workers as “economic terrorists” for exercising their democratic trade union rights. It gained more financial leeway as the US shifted from the bursting of the high tech bubble to the making of the mortgage bubble.

It also promoted big comprador relations with China, semimanufacturing semiconductors for the final Chinese reassembly platform, collaborating with Chinese public and private corporations in graft-ridden energy, transport and infrastructure projects; and opening up the Philippine economy to Chinese mining, plantations, real estate, supermarkets, finance and exploration of the mineral resources under the West Philippine Sea. When the mortgage meltdown occurred in 2008, the Philippine export of low-value-added semiconductors started to fall drastically. The Philippines was once more in a grave financial crisis.

As during previous regimes, there has been no real economic development through national industrialization and genuine land reform during the Aquino regime. The semifeudal economy remains consumption-led and dependent on imported manufactures and undervalued raw material exports and is overburdened by government and foreign trade deficits and by local and foreign debt. The export of women and men for work abroad, the business call centers and the private construction boom dependent on foreign debts and foreign supplies do not spell economic development.

But the Aquino regime claims a growth rate of 7 percent or thereabouts. This is nothing but the statistical growth of consumption, government spending and non-industrial investments. This kind of growth does not mean real lasting economic development. It has been sustained by an extraordinary amount of portfolio investments going to the stock market and other financial markets. It gives high profits to foreign companies and to big compradors that are billionaires and are outstanding in the Forbes list of magnates. It does not create the most needed manufacturing plants and does not generate jobs.

The country remains semifeudal and pre-industrial. The unemployment rate of 7 percent is a big lie. The government economists and statisticians invent employment figures by doing random surveys, asking people whether they had worked one hour the previous week or they had done chores in their household. They keep out of the reckoning the unemployed who have given up looking for work. The figure of 12 million overseas contract workers is a categorical measure of about 20 per cent of the work force that cannot be employed in the Philippines. The unemployment rate far exceeds the government figures of unemployed and underemployed combined.

The reactionary government keeps on throwing statistical lies at the working class and the public about the adequacy of wages for an average household to subsist. It always opposes demands for a minimum wage for an adequate and decent level of family subsistence. And it gives all the leeway for the capitalist employers to chop up their employees into a diminishing group of regulars and an ever increasing groups of short-term contractuels or temporaries, part-timers, casuals and apprentices.

All of these are in accordance with the neoliberal economic policy of using the state to squeeze the working class and to provide all means and opportunities for the capitalist employers to extract profits.

Why the large flow of portfolio investments to the Philippines during most years of the Aquino regime? It is connected with the US scheme of using the Aquino regime to either destroy or cripple the armed revolutionary movement of the Filipino people. The US strategy planners have calculated to realize its counterrevolutionary objective by crediting the regime with economic growth and good governance and efficient delivery of services, allowing the distribution of dole outs to communities within the people’s democratic government, prolonging the ceasefire agreement with the MILF though false promises of Bangsamoro autonomy and other benefits; and unleashing the military and police dogs of Oplan Bayanihan to attack the revolutionary forces and people.

The US-Aquino scheme is futile and self-defeating. There can be no economic development without genuine land reform and national industrialization. “Good” governance and efficient delivery of social services are impossible while bureaucratic and military corruption and the gross violations of human rights run rampant. The general

line of people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war has enabled the revolutionary forces and people to build a strong people's army in Mindanao and on a nationwide scale. If the enemy attack escalates against it in Eastern Mindanao, the NPA is capable of fighting there and encourages the NPA in other parts of Mindanao and in Luzon and the Visayas to fight against reduced strength of the enemy.

The US and the local reactionary classes of big compradors and landlords are mortally afraid of the armed revolutionary movement and even of the legal anti-imperialist and democratic forces. They are aware of their vulnerabilities amidst the worsening crisis of the world capitalist system and the domestic ruling system. They violently oppose the people's demands for full national independence, the democratic empowerment of the toiling masses, economic development through land reform and national industrialization, social justice, a patriotic and progressive culture and the anti-imperialist and democratic solidarity of all peoples of the world.

One reactionary regime after another has refused to come to terms with the people's demands and has failed to fully avail of peace negotiations as a way of addressing the roots of the armed conflict and laying the basis for a just and lasting peace. The further degeneration of the ruling system can be seen in the failure of the major political parties and presidential candidates to offer a comprehensive program of national independence and development the Filipino people and the patriotic and progressive forces. The contest seems to be about personal popularity rating, closeness to those who control and pre-program the automated electoral system, access to the largest campaign contributors and ability to manipulate the mass media.

Oppression and exploitation are escalating in the Philippines as the imperialist powers and the local exploiting classes keep on imposing the neoliberal liberal economic policy on the people. As one more economic and financial crisis is growing, even as the previous one is still wreaking havoc on the lives of the people, we must gear up for intensified resistance. We must cease to suffer and convert our suffering to an irresistible force to defeat our enemy and brings about a fundamentally new and better world of socialism.

Tasks of the working class and the Kilusang Mayo Uno!

We, the ILPS, urge you to intensify the struggle against the neoliberal economic policy and the purveyors of this policy. You must uphold, defend and advance basic democratic rights of the working class, especially the right to a true, militant and patriotic unionism. You must carry forward the national democratic struggle with a socialist perspective. In this regard, we must uphold the leadership of the working class.

You must fight the neoliberal attacks by the reactionary government and the big capitalists on your wages, jobs and rights. You must arouse the class consciousness and revolutionary spirit of the workers. You must organize them as genuine, militant and patriotic unions. You must mobilize them to advance the trade union movement and the strike movement fight for higher wages, protect their jobs and uphold their rights as well as to develop political strength for the achievement of immediate aims of the working class and the ultimate aim of socialism.

We, the ILPS, endorse and support your determination:

1. To wage a campaign for raising the wage on a national scale, on the scale of enterprises and other levels and for establishing a just minimum wage.
2. To wage a campaign against contractualization and for declaring this as a crime to be prohibited.
3. To arouse, organize and mobilize the contractual workers.
4. To study promptly the neoliberal attacks on the workers and the labor movement and the ways of combating such attacks.
5. To engage in political education concerning the semicolonial and semifeudal system in the Philippines, imperialism on a world scale and related matters.
6. Combat the economistic tendency and invigorate the participation of unions in arousing, organizing and mobilizing the workers.
7. Grasp the methods of secret and yet rapid organizing.
8. Organize the communities in the vicinity of the enterprises.
9. Unite with the workers inside and outside the country and the progressive organizations of various classes and sectors.
10. Keep in mind that the class struggle of the proletariat and the monopoly capitalists is long and arduous, with twists and turns and ups and down, but the ultimate outcome is the victory of the proletariat and socialism.

Long live Kilusang Mayo Uno!

Long live the working class!

Long live the Filipino people!

Make ACT Stronger and more Effective

Message of Solidarity to Alliance of Concerned Teachers on Its 14th National Congress, September 12, 2015

As Chairperson of the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS), I wish to convey the warmest greetings of solidarity of the International Coordinating Committee and entirety of the ILPS to the national officers and general membership of the Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT) on its 14th National Congress.

We are proud of having the ACT as an ILPS member-organization. You have brilliantly and successfully upheld, defended and advanced the rights and interests of educators and education workers in the Philippines. You have served well your constituency and the entire Filipino people.

We congratulate you for all your achievements in being at the forefront of the Filipino people's struggle for a genuine education that is patriotic and progressive and in advocating and campaigning for the fulfillment of the economic and political rights of the educators and education workers. We are deeply pleased with your outstanding participation in the protest action against the lies of the US-Aquino regime in SONA 2015.

With your resolute struggle, you have gained the trust and confidence of the public school teachers and succeeded in organizing them as public sector unions. We applaud the nationwide membership of the ACT for launching different forms of mass actions to demand the immediate increase in the entry pay and monthly salaries of teaching and nonteaching personnel in the Department of Education.

We fully support the thematic call of your Congress: *Ibayong palawakin at palakasin ang ating hanay! Ipagtanggol at ipaglaban ang ating kabuhayan, karapatan at kalayaan!* (Expand further and strengthen our ranks! Defend and fight for our livelihood, rights and freedom!)

You must be steadfast and militant in the face of the ever worsening crisis of global capitalism and the local ruling system of big compradors and landlords. These malignant forces keep on escalating the exploitation and oppression of the people. You must and you can muster the unity and strength to pursue your noble mission of teaching the children and youth and preparing them for the challenges in a semicolonial and semifeudal society.

You have a lot of hard work and struggle ahead of you in order to raise the salaries and living conditions of teachers and non-teaching personnel in schools. The salaries and social benefits are still inadequate for families, thus compelling quite a number of teachers and education workers to engage in sideline ways of augmenting their income.

The K-12 program is being imposed at great cost without the solution of the accumulated problems of inadequate personnel and low salaries and the lack of classrooms and study materials. It is disrupting the school system and is promoting a kind of educational content that does away with Philippine history, national language and culture and that favors subservience to the neoliberal policy of imperialist globalization and disdains patriotism and economic development through national industrialization and land reform.

Under the auspices of the US-designed Oplan Bayanihan, military forces are occupying schools, converting them into barracks, terrorizing the children and depriving them of education. In the hinterlands where the indigenous people live and where the reactionary government has not built the schools, the military forces are killing and terrorizing the teachers and the communities and destroying the schools built by religious organizations and philanthropic foundations.

We must condemn the most recent acts of barbarism of the Aquino regime and its military and paramilitary minions who murdered Emerito Samarca, executive director of the Alternative Learning Center for Agriculture and Development, Inc. (ALCADEV), Dionel Campos, chairperson of MAPASU (Persevering Struggle for Future Manobo Generations), and his cousin Aurelio Bello Sinzo in Han-ayan, Lianga, Surigao del Sur.

Benigno Aquino III takes after his mother in puppetry to the US, in unleashing US-designed military campaign plans like Lambat Bitag and Bayanihan, in using paramilitary groups like Alsa Masa and Magahat Bagani, and in carrying out the US-dictated neoliberal economic policy. The dictator Marcos and the pseudo-democrat Aquinos are no different from each other as corrupt high bureaucrats and as big comprador-landlord exploiters and oppressors of the people.

They only differ in self-presentation and style. Marcos engaged in corruption and atrocities in a blatantly

fascist regime. The Aquinos have done so by masquerading as clean, honest and kind democrats even while they are scandalously surrounded by the most corrupt and brutal assistants. The Filipino people must do everything possible and necessary to end the ruling system of big compradors and landlords, no matter how long it takes.

We are confident that your Congress will consolidate your ranks, draw lessons from your experience and set forth the tasks to make ACT stronger and more effective in fighting for the rights and welfare of educators and education personnel and in promoting the patriotic, scientific, progressive and pro-people type of education that can guide the children and youth in the making of a new Philippines, that is truly independent, democratic, socially just, developed, prosperous and peaceful.

Long live the Alliance of Concerned Teachers!

Long live the teachers and other school employees!

Long live the Filipino people!

Solidarity Message to PISTON on its 5th Congress

September 25, 2015

We in the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS) extend our greetings and solidarity to the Pinagkaisang Samahan ng mga Tsuper Nationwide (PISTON) on its 5th Congress. We salute you for all your efforts, sacrifices and victories in the past five years.

We are proud of PISTON as a member-organization of ILPS. It follows the anti-imperialist and democratic line. It upholds and fights for the rights and interests of the drivers, small operators and all the people in the Philippines against the oil monopoly cartels and the puppet government.

We agree with your theme: Dare to expand, arouse, organize and mobilize among the ranks of drivers, workers and the people for the national democratic struggle with a socialist perspective! Militantly struggle for economic and political rights! Fight the corrupt, puppet, brutal and oppressive Aquino regime and prepare for the struggle against the continuing neoliberal attacks of monopoly capitalism!

The exploited and oppressed masses cannot rely on anyone but on their own action. It is right that you intensify your efforts to expand, arouse, organize among the ranks of drivers, workers and the people within the framework of the national democratic struggle towards the socialist future. You must wage militant struggle for economic and political rights.

You must continue the struggle against the corrupt, puppet, exploitative, brutal and deceitful Aquino regime. It is the implementor of the neoliberal policy dictated by US imperialism. This policy by design reduces the income of the toiling masses and paves the way for the plunder of our labor power and natural resources. It accelerates the outflow of superprofits to the capitalist monopolies. It is the cause of the frequently recurrent and worsening economic crisis. It gives free rein to oil price increases as a means of squeezing superprofits from the drivers and the Filipino people.

It is good that following your Congress, PISTON Partylist will hold its 2nd Convention and prepare for its participation in the coming elections in 2016. It is correct to use every opportunity to advance the rights and interests of the drivers, workers and the people. At the same time, we must remember that the mass movement cannot limit itself to the processes that are overwhelmingly controlled and dominated by the politicians of the exploiting classes and their imperialist patrons.

Even during the electoral campaign, the mass movement which includes PISTON is free to act on important issues. This would help the electoral campaigns of the patriotic and progressive Partylists. In the Philippines today, various forms of struggle, legal and armed, are being waged simultaneously. These various forms are not contradictory but complementary, even as the people's war is the most effective weapon in overthrowing the old and building the new.

We in the International League of Peoples' Struggle look forward to PISTON greatly strengthening itself as a result of its 5th Congress. In summing up your experience, you will draw the positive and negative lessons, base yourselves on your current strength and define the tasks for advancing and raising your struggle to a higher level. We are confident that you will use your Congress as the key to your further advance.

Long live Pinagkaisang Samahan ng mga Tsuper Nationwide (PISTON)!

Struggle against the oppression and exploitation of the imperialists and their stooges!

Long live the national democratic movement of the Filipino people!

Strengthen the Working Class Leadership and the Struggle for Socialism amidst Worsening Economic and Social Crises, State Terrorism and Aggressive Wars

STATEMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL WORKERS' DAY, MAY 1, 2016

We, the International League of People's Struggle (ILPS), raise our clenched fists to salute the workers and peoples of the world celebrating 130 years of International Workers' Day.

On this day, we recall and celebrate the victories of the labor movement in fighting for the eight-hour workday, higher wages, better working conditions and social transformation. We pay tribute to the pioneers and martyrs of the labor movement and we draw inspiration from their commitment, courage, and perseverance as we seek to boldly expand and strengthen the working-class movement and heighten its revolutionary consciousness and militancy.

It has been 130 years since the workers' protest at Haymarket Square in Chicago, USA. This signal event in working-class history teaches us many lessons that are valuable to this day: Capitalists, especially the big bourgeoisie, will not recognize the workers' role in production, basic needs and dignity in order to increase their profits. Governments are in the service of the capitalist class and will use its repressive apparatus to uphold capitalist interests. Workers need to unite and fight in order to attain victories in improving their working and living conditions. They are able to raise their working-class consciousness and militancy in the course of class struggle against the bourgeoisie.

At the same time, we express our indignation that the victories of the labor movement have through decades been taken back by the monopoly capitalists, big comprador capitalists, and all reactionaries especially with the onset of their neoliberal attacks on workers and the labor movement. We heighten our resolve to regain and further build the strength of the labor movement in order to reclaim our victories and advance the fight for greater freedom, democracy and socialism. We intensify our commitment to confront the present situation and challenges facing the labor movement through the standpoint, viewpoint and method bequeathed to us by the history of working-class struggles.

Worsening economic crisis

The imperialist system is sinking deeper into the quagmire of economic crisis. The measures that it is taking to extricate itself from this quagmire amounts to mere floundering in the course of sinking deeper in crisis.

The global financial and economic crisis which erupted in 2007-2008 has persisted and is causing the rapid deterioration of the situation of workers both in advanced capitalist countries and underdeveloped countries. Even bourgeois economists and financial analysts now acknowledge that the global economy has not really recovered and instead has entered a third wave of the global financial crisis.

The first wave was triggered by the 2007 sub-prime mortgage crisis in the US that led to the near collapse of the global banking system in 2008. Central banks of the imperialist countries responded by rescuing the big banks and corporations of the finance oligarchy with the use of public money. This further widened fiscal deficits and raised the levels of public debt in the advanced capitalist countries. While this temporarily succeeded in protecting the balance sheets and assets of big financial institutions and corporations, it quickly led to a sovereign debt crisis centered in the Eurozone.

This second wave of the global financial crisis plunged the less developed countries of Europe—Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain—into severe recessions and saw the near collapse of the European Monetary Union in 2012. It has also prompted governments across the continent to impose harsh austerity measures and dismantle labor rights to the detriment of workers and impoverished people.

Now the third wave of the crisis is centered in the so-called "emerging economies" with the end of debt-driven growth in China, the end of the commodities boom for raw material exporting countries such as Brazil and South Africa, and massive capital flight from developing countries as a whole.

The results of the measures taken in relation to the crisis are paving the way to greater and more dangerous convulsions. Bank bailouts and the ultra-loose monetary policy adopted by the imperialist central banks have put more money in the hands of the financial oligarchy but has inflated global debt by US\$57 trillion in just eight years from 2007. Global debt is now over US\$200 trillion and growing at a much faster pace than global GDP. This

unrepayable debt is the ticking time bomb that is inevitably going to explode and plunge the world into another and more severe financial seizure.

Meanwhile, the richest 62 monopoly capitalists in the world have increased their stock of wealth by US\$542 billion since 2010 while the most exploited 3.6 billion people have lost US\$1 trillion over the same period. The official figures show joblessness is at an all time high of 200 million people globally, with another 3 million expected to join the ranks of the unemployed over the next two years.

Among those employed, precarious conditions of work are now the norm even in the biggest and wealthiest monopoly firms. For instance, only 6 percent of the total workforce of the top 50 global corporations are recognized as direct employees while the rest are hired as short-term contractual workers or informal workers. More workers are also forced to seek employment abroad, adding to the 150 million global migrant workforce. Monopoly capitalists are dismantling workers' rights previously won through the heroic struggles of the labor movement, including the right to a living wage, social benefits, job security, the eight-hour workday, and safe working conditions.

Never satisfied, the monopoly bourgeoisie is carrying out a new wave of neoliberal offensives aiming to increase profits amidst crisis conditions. They are implementing more severe austerity measures and labor flexibilization; privatizing the public sector and the commons most prominently in the form of land grabs; deepening the denationalization and compradorization of third world economies by extending the global supply chains of their monopoly firms; and strengthening protections for monopoly-capitalist property and profits, especially by extending intellectual property rights over technologies and knowledge.

They are rewriting international and national legal systems and regulations through new trade and investment agreements such as the Transpacific Partnership Agreement, Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, and Economic Partnership Agreements. They are institutionalizing mechanisms for Investor-State Dispute Settlement that grants de facto veto power to multinational corporations over regulations or reforms that governments might adopt under increasing popular pressures for immediate relief and reforms amidst the crisis.

All these can only be expected to further impoverish the toiling masses of the world, increase the concentration and over-accumulation of capital in the hands of the monopoly bourgeoisie, and exacerbate the crisis of overproduction that neoliberalism was intended to resolve in the first place.

More repression and wars

This neoliberal offensive of the monopoly capitalists is of necessity combined with the brutal suppression of all working people deemed as potential threat to the further accumulation of wealth and power by the ruling classes. Repressive laws and regulations are being enforced everywhere with the avowed aim of attracting more capitalist investments. States are further intensifying their crackdown on trade unions and people's movements demanding higher wages, better working conditions, social services and government accountability.

There has been a steep increase in the number of arbitrary arrests and detentions of workers for exercising their democratic rights. In Europe and elsewhere, activists have been arrested or subjected to criminal charges for opposing austerity measures through strikes and protests. Critics of corporate or government abuses are threatened with physical assault, death, and placed under surveillance. States are also filing trumped-up criminal charges against political activists. Women activists face gender-based threats and abuse.

In many countries, fundamental rights, such as freedom of assembly, association and expression are curtailed under the guise of countering terrorism, counterinsurgency or protecting national security. This is particularly prevalent in underdeveloped countries where land and resources are being seized by energy companies, extractive industries, large-scale agriculture and property developers.

These activities are often financed and promoted by imperialist financial institutions such as the World Bank. They are also backed up by state security forces and paramilitary groups—with guidance and support from the US military. As a result, human rights groups have documented the rise in the number of extra-judicial killings and disappearances of activists, organizers, mass leaders and journalists in such countries as the Philippines, Honduras, Colombia, Brazil and elsewhere. Many of the victims are from the labor movement.

Monopoly capitalists are united in their interest to exploit and oppress the people especially in the neo-colonies. But they are also in constant economic, geopolitical and military competition with one another, especially as the worsening global crises underscore the finiteness of the world's labor, resources and markets compared to the insatiable drive of monopoly capitalists to profit and accumulate capital. Hence the struggle between

the imperialist countries to secure their share of the bounty is becoming ever more acute.

Since the start of the US-led War of Terror in 2001, US imperialism has instigated, led and/or supported “regime change” in numerous countries including Afghanistan, Iraq, Haiti, Somalia, Honduras, Libya, Ukraine and now Syria in order to install governments that would help secure US interests. Since 2011, the US has been trying to orchestrate the ouster of the Assad government in Syria, using proxies—Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey—to finance and arm numerous anti-Assad Jihadist groups, among them Daesh, Al Nusra and Al Qaeda. But this has been stymied by the support of Russia and Iran for the Assad government.

The US war for oil in the Middle East/West Asia has resulted in the massacre of millions of people in the region. It has destroyed the local economy, social infrastructure, and cultural heritage of the people in these countries, and has forced more than five million people to seek refuge abroad in 2015 alone.

In waging these wars of aggression, thousands of young Americans— especially people of color and the unemployed—have been sacrificed in the interest of the big bourgeoisie. Moreover, the US spent an estimated US\$3 trillion for the war on Iraq alone, excluding another trillion dollars for the medical and other costs of the returned soldiers, while denying needed social services in health and education for working people in the US.

European NATO allies are now suffering the blowback from their support of these US wars of aggression in the Middle-East/West Asia with the terrorist bombings in Paris and Brussels that have victimized civilians and created an atmosphere of terror among the people. The ongoing refugee crisis — the worst in human history — is now overwhelming European governments and giving rise to xenophobia, bigotry, racism and fascism that is exposing migrant workers and minority groups to the most vicious attacks by the most reactionary elements in society.

Intensifying workers' and peoples' resistance

Imperialist neoliberal policies are intensifying the exploitation and oppression of working people, creating objective conditions for the people to fight back. The ongoing and emerging struggles, though scattered and short lived in many cases, are important for building resistance against the global capitalist system.

In Europe, workers and the people have conducted large mass actions against austerity programs which have been escalated, especially in Greece, Spain, and the UK. Millions of workers have taken part in these protest actions demanding a stop to government cutbacks in spending on social welfare and public services, higher wages for working families, protection of trade union organizing and bargaining rights. In Greece they are demanding freedom from debt bondage to the EU banks and other instruments of imperialist globalization. Tens of thousands of people marched in the streets of Brussels, Madrid, Helsinki, Warsaw, Prague, Berlin, Munich, Paris and other European cities last year to oppose the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) between the EU and the US.

In France, workers and youth are currently leading militant street demonstrations against the Hollande government's draft labor bill that would weaken the right to bargain collectively, worsen working conditions, and extend working time. They have also been doing nightly sit-ins, nuit debout, occupying public squares to address a host of other grievances, including rising inequality, housing evictions, billionaires' tax evasion, the state of emergency and security crackdown in the wake of last year's bombings; climate change, etc.

In North America, private and public sector workers, migrants, women, youth and people of color have conducted protests against austerity measures, racist violence and exploitation of working people. Workers are finding ways to conduct widespread protests against the worst anti-labor practices such as the coordinated days of action of workers against Walmart, the “Fight for 15” campaign of low-wage workers in the service industry, the recent strike of tens of thousands of workers in Verizon in the US, and strikes of Canadian workers in the health sector.

In Australia, former Prime Minister Abbott was ousted after carrying the most vicious neoliberal attack against the workers and the people. The monopoly bourgeoisie and their parties are determined to break the power of unions in Australia, and workers and people are preparing to fight renewed attacks.

In Asia, although sporadic, protests and strikes against multinational corporations and governments have been increasing and maturing towards organized resistance against neoliberal policies, state repression, and the monopoly capitalist system itself. Workers' strikes are on the rise in China in recent years, including massive strikes against multinational corporations. In India, over 100 million workers participated in a one-day strike against the neoliberal policies of the Modi government last September. Workers in the country have continued to gather in huge numbers. This month in Bangalore, thousands of garment workers, mostly women, came out of

the factories to protest the governments' policy on social security and blockaded highways.

Indonesia and Cambodia are some of the countries where workers have mounted nationwide actions for wages, and have won significant increases in the last few years. Their struggles have gained global attention and significance because they have linked their campaigns to global value chains of multinational corporations, and more importantly, because they have displayed the power of workers to win gains through collective action and defy the race to the bottom. Both countries are now facing battles against labor reforms which aim to curtail their right to organize and bargain collectively.

In South Africa and Senegal, workers and people are resisting the privatization drive and fighting courageously to improve wages and living standards. In Nigeria, workers and people are opposing the price increase of basic commodities like petrol. In Burkina Faso, protesters took to the streets to topple the three-decade-old dictatorship. In both countries, anger is growing against the militarism and terrorism backed or instigated by US imperialism. Throughout the African continent, there are a growing number of protests and other people's actions demanding respect for human rights and calling for an end to racism, fundamentalism, terrorist violence, and ethnic genocide.

In Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador, Brazil and elsewhere the economic slowdown resulting from the end of the commodities boom is now being exploited by the persistent big comprador-landlord oligarchs and rabid US puppets to reverse social gains achieved under progressive governments. But the struggles of workers and peoples across Latin America and Caribbean countries are strengthened by decades of resistance against these same local elites and US imperialism. Workers and social movements are condemning and opposing US intervention and destabilization attempts in Paraguay, Honduras, Venezuela and other countries in the region.

Peoples' anger against the US runs wide and deep in Iraq, Syria, Libya, Afghanistan and throughout West Asia where the worst crimes against humanity have been committed by US imperialism and its allies in recent decades. The struggles of the Palestinian, Kurdish and other peoples for national and social liberation are heroic examples of people's resistance in this region. They are showing the path of people's resistance against US imperialism and against the violence spread in the regions by US-backed terrorist groups. National and cross-border alliances sometimes involve tactics responsive to complex and fluid situations.

Elsewhere progressive and revolutionary movements are also waging struggles for national liberation and democracy, the ground for which is made fertile by intensified neoliberalism, repression, militarism, imperialist rivalry and wars of aggression.

We are confident that the people's resistance will rise higher as the crisis of global capitalism worsens and inflicts intolerable suffering on the people. The level of resistance that has already emerged signals more widespread and more intense struggles of the working class and the people. The plunderous neoliberal policy and the aggressive wars of monopoly capitalism have caused unprecedented social devastation and will generate people's resistance on an unprecedentedly wider and more intense scale.

As the imperialist system descends further into barbarism, we recall the great Vladimir Lenin's call on the workers of the world 100 years ago to refuse to fight the wars of the imperialists and to transform wars against countries—in which workers are pitted against each other—into proletarian wars against their respective bourgeoisies.

Workers and unions everywhere must link their struggles to one another and to a broader resistance movement against monopoly capitalism, neoliberalism, state terror and imperialist wars. They must maximize opportunities to arouse, organize and mobilize amidst the worsening global crisis, inter-imperialist contradictions, and win immediate and long-lasting gains for all working and oppressed peoples.

Workers, peasants, migrants, indigenous people, women, youth, must link arms and raise their various struggles against the global capitalist system itself. Only the struggle against imperialism and for socialism will truly end capitalist crises and imperialist wars; liberate the masses from exploitation and oppression; and realize greater freedom, democracy, social justice, all-round development and lasting peace.

May Day Message to Central Luzon Workers

May 1, 2016

I am honored and glad to have been invited by the Nagkakaisang Manggagawa ng Tarlac (United Workers of Tarlac) and BAYAN-Tarlac to give a message this May First and meet via teleconference the workers of Central Luzon who have gathered in Tarlac and Angeles City through the assistance of Workers' Alliance-Region 3 and BAYAN-Central Luzon.

Our discussion is a relevant celebration of International Workers Day. Our topic for discussion is of utmost importance. We must address and counter the policy of neoliberalism, struggle against its evil consequences on the working masses and look to the bright future of the struggle of the working class and the Filipino people.

The chronic crisis of the semifeudal economy that has beset neocolonialism or imperialist control through direct investments and debt has been further worsened by neoliberal policy which brazenly expands the superprofits of foreign monopoly capitalists through the reduction of wages, the removal of social services, the liberalization of investments and trade, the privatization of state assets, deregulation and denationalization.

Neoliberal policy has caused the stunting of the economy, high unemployment rates, widespread poverty and the grave impoverishment of the working masses and the entire people. Their daily lives are fraught with suffering such as low wages and lack of job security, especially in the face of widespread short-term contractualization, lack of health services, housing and others, high prices of commodities, high taxes and political repression.

In the face of such a situation, the working masses must rise up and struggle, not just for their daily needs, but more so for the struggle of the entire class and people against imperialism and the local reactionary big compradors and big landlords in order to attain national freedom and democracy for the people and open the gates towards socialism.

More than 150 Million Workers Join General Strike in India

September 8, 2016

Ten Indian trade union centers launched a general strike of more than 150 million workers on September 2, 2016. This is one of the biggest strikes in the entire history of humankind. Tens of millions of public sector workers shut down major parts of the Indian economy to protest Prime Minister Narendra Modi's neoliberal economic plans.

Modi provoked the strike by pushing for increased foreign investment and privatization of some state-run industries and by spreading fears that these policies would bring down both wages and employment. Before the strike occurred, the government offered concessions in a futile attempt to dampen it, like raising the minimum wage for some non-skilled workers and unfreezing some public employee bonuses. The unions gave the government a list of demands, including the increase of the minimum wage to 18,000 rupees.

The Indian working class has always opposed the neoliberal policy regime of liberalization, privatization and globalization since its adoption by the government in 1991. The Indians workers have carried out 16 general strikes against it. The 17th general strike was anticipated to be even bigger than the previous one in 2015, which saw participation from nearly 150 million workers, in view of the aggravated labor policies of the Narendra Modi-led NDA government.

All central trade unions, except the RSS-backed Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS), united with independent national federations of workers in banks, insurance, telecom and state and central government departments to protest what they call the "anti-worker, anti-people policies of the government pushing the lives of the working people at large as well as the national economy to the path of disaster."

The trade unions and the more than 150 million participants in the general strike demanded the following:

1. That the government take urgent measures to contain price rise by making the public distribution system more efficient and banning speculative trade in the commodity market. Prices of essential commodities had been soaring in the country for an already extended period.
2. That concrete measures be taken to generate employment. India had failed to deliver a significant increase in the number of jobs in the past few decades, especially during the 25 years of neoliberal economic reforms. The National Sample Survey Office data on jobs in 2011 showed that between 2004 and 2010, only 1 million jobs were added every year, while the economy grew on average 8.43 percent annually.
3. That strict enforcement of all basic labor laws be strictly enforced, without any exception or exemption and stringent measures to punish those who violate these rules. The government had diluted key labor regulations such as the Factories Act of 1948 and the Shops and Establishments Act, giving more powers to employers and making employees vulnerable to exploitation. Universal social security benefits must be adopted and implemented.
4. That a minimum wage of not less than Rs.18,000 or US\$271 per month with provisions of indexation (for unskilled workers). The Minimum Wages Act 1948 requires the government to review wages every five years but the review is rarely undertaken. The farm sector saw its last review in 2005; sweeping and cleaning in 2008, and construction in 2009. India's informal work sector is facing a crisis today with hire-and-fire policies making jobs extremely precarious.
5. That a pension of not less than Rs.3,000 a month be adopted for the entire working population, including the unorganized-sector workers. Hence, the unions demanded the government to initiate policies to stop short-term contractualization in permanent/perennial work and payment of the same wage and benefits for contract workers as that of regular workers for "the same and similar work." They also demanded removal of all ceilings on payment and eligibility of bonus and provident fund and increase in the amount of gratuity.
6. That the government to stop disinvestment in Central and State public sector companies. The government is privatizing even profit-making companies, not just the loss-making ones as promised, endangering the jobs of millions of workers and even undermining the foundations of the economy in favor of "private monopoly capital." They also demanded that no foreign direct investment shall be allowed in strategic and vitally important sectors such as the railways, defense and other strategic sectors.

7. That no unilateral amendment to labor laws be made. Most of the critical labor regulations initiated by the NDA in the recent past were taken unilaterally, without the government consulting with any of the trade unions.

The unions declared that it was a 'make-or-break' moment in history for them and that the general strike is their effective weapon.

Message of Solidarity to Migrante International on Celebrating 20 Years of Struggle and Service

December 18, 2016

As a compatriot and chairperson of the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS), I am happy to extend solidarity to Migrante International in celebrating its 20th year of struggle and service to migrant workers and their families. I greet all its chapters outside and inside the Philippines.

I am grateful for the launch of the JMS Academy. This is a great honor. I am hopeful that many migrant workers would be able to study and train in this Academy and grasp the situation of the Philippines and the world and excel in raising the consciousness, organization and mobilization of migrant workers and their families.

It is correct and appropriate to celebrate the 20 years of struggle and service of Migrante International. We must expose and oppose the four-decade bankruptcy of the labor export policy and other neoliberal attacks against Filipino workers inside and outside the country. We must boldly expand ranks of migrants and their families in order to advance the struggle for national democracy.

The current situation is favorable for uniting the widest range of the sector for our national-democratic aspirations. The issues of the sector, including the issues and mass struggles of the Filipino workers inside and abroad are intensifying. The ground is more fertile for advancing the struggle through campaigns and mass actions. Thus, bigger victories would be won and the struggle for genuine change would be advanced.

Since assuming the presidency, Duterte has uttered daring words that he is the first Left president, that he would fight for the rights of the people and the workers and change national and social conditions. But no steps have been taken to realize the promises of national industrialization, genuine land reform, improvement of wages, increase in employment and respect for people's rights. The new regime is still unable to show any measure to stop forced migration and family separation.

Duterte's "war against drugs," Oplan Tokhang, is the most infamous of his policies. The principal targets are neither the big drug lords nor their accomplices among officers from the level of generals and governors and higher but suspected street pushers and addicts and poor urban communities. Thousands of these pitiful people have been killed. Even in the countryside, Oplan Tokhang is being used as a pretext for the military to encroach on the territories of the people's revolutionary government and sow terror among the peasants, communities and people.

Until now, the Duterte regime has no clear and solid actions regarding "endo", wage increase, agrarian reform and social services. The president makes daily pronouncements withdrawing his uttered promises. The scandal of thousands and thousands of Filipino overseas workers being harassed in Saudi Arabia and the inability of the new regime to help them in any way cannot be covered up.

Even amidst the intensifying world crisis of capitalism, migration restrictions and expanding wars, the number of our compatriots being forced to leave the country is increasing due to lack of regular employment and sufficient wages in the Philippines. Duterte's bureaucracy has done nothing to develop the economy. It has merely continued the neoliberal policies pursued by Aquino.

Corruption continues in government. Bureaucrats profit by conniving with the imperialists, big compradors and landlords. It is not surprising that Aquino, Butch Abad and other yellow leaders are still free despite the fact that they are the ringleaders of massive corruption. Until now, Duterte has no clear and stable program to develop the economy through national industrialization and genuine agrarian reform.

While Aquino and Arroyo are free despite the gravity of their crime of corruption, more than 400 political prisoners remain in prison even if the people have widely petitioned for their release. The Duterte regime insists that it would free the prisoners if the NDFP agrees to an indefinite bilateral ceasefire agreement which is a sign of surrender, pacification and negation of the agreed substantive agenda of the peace talks.

Even while a unilateral ceasefire is in place, the military continues to trespass on and occupy Lumad and other communities, harass, arrest and file trumped-up criminal charges against activists. These are part of the AFP and PNP's violation of the unilateral ceasefire and in pursuit of Oplan Bayanihan. It is malicious to continue Oplan Bayanihan which was earlier imposed and implemented by the US on the Aquino regime.

However, we wish to indicate to the Duterte regime that the NDFP genuinely desires a just and lasting peace, the release of political prisoners through amnesty, a bilateral ceasefire agreement, an agreement on national industrialization and genuine agrarian reform and a federal system as long as it will end political dynasties and provide adequate resources for the planned development of the economy.

The Duterte regime must continue to be challenged to end neoliberal policy for the development of a sovereign economy and the conservation of national patrimony and achieve an independent foreign policy. Unequal agreements such as the Mutual Defense Pact, VFA and EDCA must be abrogated. Balikatan exercises and provocations in neighboring countries must cease.

We must continue to challenge the Duterte regime to make true its pronouncement to stop the labor export policy (LEP) during its term. Expose LEP bankruptcy over the past four decades. Scrap laws and anti-migrant policies – RA 8042, which was amended by RA 10022, OWWA Charter Law, extortion from migrants, budget cuts for services and others implemented by DFA, DOLE, POEA and OWWA agencies. Out a stop to the growing number of cases of distressed OFWs whose human rights are being violated.

We in the ILPS have great confidence that you will be able to fulfill all the tasks to expand and consolidate Migrante International. We wish you success in fulfilling the 11 points you have set in the conduct of your actions and struggles for the immediate and long-term interest of the migrant workers and their families. Eventually, Filipino workers should be able to work in the Philippines with their families and their countrymen because a developing and prosperous economy will be existing within the framework of the new democratic system.

Long live Migrante International!

Long live the migrant workers and their families!

Long live the Filipino people!

Solidarity with People's Camp of AMGL, Farmworkers and other Poor Population in the Countryside with the People's Camp Out of AMGL, Farm Workers and other Rural Poor

December 19, 2016

As Chief Political Consultant of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP), I extend my militant and patriotic greetings and solidarity to AMGL and farmworkers, including other rural poor who today suffer worsening conditions of poverty.

We unite and support your launching of People's Camp Out "Knocking at the Heart and Taking Refuge — The Grief of having no Means of Livelihood and Suffering Hunger" from 19 to 21 of December. The attention of the whole nation must be called to your situation. The broad masses will surely understand your suffering and organizations and institutions will support you.

It is heart-rending that the periods of hardship or famine have intensified and lengthened because even during harvest time you have nothing to reap. Your livelihood is grabbed by greedy landlords-traders-usurers who own and/or operate harvesters. It is terrible that what used to be worked on by 20 farmworkers per hectare is now worked on only by three — an operator, the sack-holder for the threshed palay and the sack-sealer.

Its painful result is the widespread joblessness of farm workers most of whom are landless poor peasants. Even the gleaners of leftover grains have nothing to get and have no livelihood.

It is madness to to import and increase harvesters in an agrarian and semifeudal economy with no developed industries to which those rendered jobless in the countryside can shift. Because of their savagery and greed, the landlord-traders-usurers do not realize they are playing with the fire of the revolution as they force the jobless and the hungry to rise up.

From the point of view of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines and based on the program of the people's democratic revolution, genuine agrarian reform and national industrialization must go hand-in-hand. These two are the means by which to provide employment to what we call the surplus population in the countryside.

Land in the hands of the landlords must be distributed free to landless peasants. The best time to mechanize agriculture is when it is related to the peasants' cooperativization. The machines (tractors, seeding machines, irrigation pumps, harvesters, mills, warehouses and motor vehicles) are products of national industrialization.

In the current peace negotiations between the Duterte government and the NDFP, the drafting of the Comprehensive Agreement on Social and Economic Reforms is on the table. It is fine if patriotic and progressive elements from both parties cooperate on genuine agrarian reform and national industrialization and overcome the pro-imperialists and reactionaries who follow the neoliberal policies inside the Duterte government. It is fine if on the issue of land reform Ka Paeng Mariano and the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) could join in the research and drafting of the agreement.

I hope that the People's Camp Out will be successful, realize its stated objectives and reap bountiful support from the ranks of peasants and all sectors of society.

Long live AMGL!

Long live the peasants and farmworkers!

Uphold genuine land reform and national industrialization!

More victories of the Filipino people for national and social liberation!

Toiling Masses of Workers and Peasants, Unite! Fight and Defeat US Imperialism and its Stooges

Message to the Kilusang Mayo Uno, Workers and other People in Mass Protest on International Labor Day 2017

May 1, 2017

As Chairperson of the International Coordinating Committee, I convey warmest greetings of solidarity of the International League of Peoples' Struggle to our esteemed member-organization Kilusang Mayo Uno and all the workers and people participating in your mass protest to celebrate the 114th International Day of Labor. We appreciate that on this day you are also celebrating the forthcoming 100th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution. The ILPS has chosen the Philippines as the launching base of the international campaign to celebrate the October Revolution with many types of activities until November 7.

We agree with and support your theme: "Workers and all toiling masses, unite! Fight imperialist control and plunder of the country's wealth! Carry forward the national democratic struggle with a socialist perspective!" We welcome the focus of your protest on the fight against the escalating imperialist neoliberal attacks on workers and entire people. We agree with your urgent calls for the end of "contractualization," promulgation of the national minimum wage, free public housing, free distribution of land and a just and lasting peace that is the result of addressing the roots of the current civil war with basic social, economic, political and constitutional reforms.

You have a comprehensive and profound view of the problems in a semicolonial and semifeudal system ruled by the big compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists who follow the baton of US imperialism. We are pleased that you exercise the right to assemble and speak out your grievances and demands. When there is a coalition or alliance with a certain administration, there must be unity and struggle among allies for achieving national independence, democracy, social justice, economic development and any goal that serves the people. The need for independence, initiative and vigilance on the part of the national democratic movement is greater when this is faced with an "inclusive" administration that is a mix of the Left, Center and Right, still in the process of unfolding itself fully and therefore inconsistent in its positions and actions from one issue to another.

US imperialism has been the chief instigator of the neoliberal economic policy on a global scale. The twisted logic of this policy is to promote production and employment by letting the capitalist make more profits and accumulate capital for reinvestment by pressing down the wage level, cutting back on social services, cutting down corporate taxes and personal income tax of the wealthy, liberalizing trade and investments, privatizing public assets, getting rid of regulations that protect labor, women, children and the environment and denationalizing underdeveloped economies.

In maximizing profit by minimizing the wages for the working class, the capitalist class causes the crisis of overproduction. The market shrinks because of the depressed purchasing power of the mass of workers and other people as consumers. Under the neoliberal policy, the government and its favored big corporations can tide themselves over economic busts by availing of public funds and credit abusively as if without limits. Thus, the economic and financial crisis recurs, worsens and protracts like the global depression, which started with the mortgage meltdown in the US and other developed countries in 2007-2008.

Economic and financial crises generate mass protests and inflame the class struggle between the proletariat and the monopoly bourgeoisie. The revolutionary parties and trade unions of the workers expose the root cause of the crisis in the system of exploitation. But the big bourgeoisie unleashes all kinds of propaganda to obscure its culpability. Worst of all, it uses state terrorism to suppress the anti-imperialist and democratic movement, steps up war production to increase the GDP and unleashes wars of aggression to replace and build up stocks of weapons.

We are talking about the US and its NATO allies. These are killing and injuring millions of people, destroying means of livelihood and the social infrastructure and displacing millions of people in one country after another. And as the refugees flood Europe as a result of the wars of aggression, they are refused refuge by the European governments and the ultra-reactionary parties. But US imperialism, the No. 1 cause of the wars of aggression and displacement of people, admits the least number of refugees and employs harsh measures not only against them but also against recent immigrants. The super-terrorist that explodes and threatens to explode super big bombs

spreads the fear of terrorist groups or cells (often created by the US intelligence services) as pretext for its own state terrorism.

The strategic decline of the US is accelerating as a result of the high costs of its persistent economic and financial crisis and its wars of aggression. There are already manifestations of a sharpening class struggle between labor and capital in the US even as this is still relatively subdued by the still considerable economic and military power. US imperialism is despised on the widest scale among the oppressed peoples and nations. The addition of China and Russia to the ranks of capitalist powers has intensified the inter-imperialist contradictions and the drive to redivide the world. In the meantime, the US has already descended from the peak of being sole superpower and has to take into account the increasingly multipolar world.

The workers and oppressed peoples and nations have suffered most from the conditions of the economic crisis and depression, the escalation of exploitation and oppression, state terrorism and the wars of aggression. To stop their suffering and aspire for a better and brighter future, they must wage various forms of revolutionary struggle. The workers of the world must unite and build revolutionary trade unions and parties of their class to wage class struggle against imperialism and all reaction and lead the anti-imperialist and democratic struggle of the broad masses of the people. The class struggle must be coordinated with the revolutionary struggle of the oppressed peoples and nations for national and social liberation in a common effort to create the conditions for a socialist future.

Long live the Kilusang Mayo Uno!

Long live the proletariat and entire Filipino people!

Fight US imperialism and its local stooges!

Advance the national democratic revolution with the socialist perspective!

Long live the legacy of the Great October Socialist Revolution!

Fight for Genuine Land Reform and for the Sugar Workers' Rights and Welfare

Message to the Congress of Reestablishment of National Federation of Sugar Workers-FGT

June 24, 2017

I firmly unite and warmly greet the launch of the Reestablishment Congress of the National Federation of Sugar Workers (NFSW-FGT) with its theme of "Consolidate and Expand NFSW as the national federation of sugar workers. Fight for genuine land reform, and for sugar workers' rights and welfare!"

The NFSW-FGT Re-establishment Congress is an important occasion in order to reorganize the NFSW, set the objectives and program of action for establishing this as a national federation of sugar farm workers. Your Congress at a time of intense neoliberal attack on labor, agriculture and the entire economy.

On your reestablishment of NFSW-FGT, it is good to recall its important lessons and history as the militant union of sugar farm workers that germinated and grew roots in Negros Island where the worst conditions of feudal and semifeudal exploitation existed. These lessons are important for the new NFSW members and leaders.

NFSW was established in La Carlota City by activist clerics and religious from the Jesuit Congregation, who firmly united with the people in upholding social justice. Among its founders was Comrade Louie Jalandoni, who at that time was a priest at the Social Action Director of the Bacolod Diocese, together with Fr. Hector Mauri and Fr. Edgar Saguinsin. Also important was the role played by Bishop Antonio Fortich, then bishop of Bacolod in the formation of NFSW. Bishop Fortich said, "I support NFSW because they are organized."

The following year the NFSW led the historic sugar farmworkers' strike at Hacienda Tuburda in La Carlota to demand wage increases and workers' benefits. The plantation owners did not comply and fired all the NFSW worker-members. When Ferdinand Marcos declared martial law, the NFSW workers and unionists were arrested. And even during the period of martial law, organizing continued to advance despite the incidents of arrest involving NFSW leaders and sugar farm workers, as in the case of Sitio Malingid in 1978. Many of them joined the New People's Army which established the revolutionary movement in Negros Island.

In that decade, the Philippines was the world's 10th biggest producer of sugar and nine out of every 100 Filipinos worked in the sugar industry. More than 93 percent of more than half a million sugar workers were farm workers. In the study then made by the Association of Major Religious Superiors in 83 haciendas in Negros, more than half or 58 percent did not receive the minimum agricultural wage and 80 percent did not receive any benefit.

Due to these conditions, many sugar farm workers were attracted to NFSW and eventually became the best organizers. Comrade Serge Cherniguin who resigned from his job as an hacienda administrator to become a full-time organizer among the ranks of the sugar farm workers.

The establishment of NFSW then was not easy. It went through many hardships and trials and at the same time attend to the increasing tasks and work needed. NFSW acted firmly during the time that the sugar industry in the country was declining in the decade of the 1960s and 70s due to the global crisis of sugar overproduction and due to the greed and speculation of Marcos and Benedicto.

NFSW effectively used the formation of Basic Christian Communities or BCC in the method of arousing, organizing and mobilizing, which further exposed the oppression of the people of Negros, especially the sacadas and dumaans, in the hands of the big sugar hacenderos.

NFSW upheld the rights of the workers in the sugarfields and sugar centrals and fought feudalism, insufficient wages, landlessness of the peasants and farm workers, exploitation and cruelty of the landlords or sugar barons such as the Benedictos, Yulos, Coscuellas, Cojuangcos, Montelibanos and others, to the workers in sugar farms and the sugar centrals.

The azucareras and mills or the Sugar Centrals were divided among Jose Yulo of Canlubang, the Lopezes of Pasumil, the Cojuangcos of the Central Azucarera de Tarlac, the Osorios of Victorias Milling Company, the Ledesmas of San Carlos, while the Silay-Hawaiian, Central Bais in Negros Oriental and Central San Pedro in Batangas were controlled by foreigners there.

The country's economy and politics was in grave crisis at that time and the Marcos dictatorship further

worsened the conditions of the people. NFSW was gradually formed as the most militant workers' federation in the nation. It went with the national workers' strikes started by the La Tondeña strike in 1974-75. NFSW was recognized as the leading union of the sugar cane workers until it reached more than 30,000 in the whole of Negros at the start of the 1980s. NFSW leaders and members were among those who established Kilusang Mayo Uno. (KMU).

NFSW continued to expose and fight the anti-worker Labor Law and to defend the sugar farm workers' rights who were gravely affected by the crisis in the sugar industry. The azucareras closed. Plenty of strikes and sugar farm and hacienda workers' actions were launched.

NFSW contributed a great deal to the people's struggles against and in removing the Marcos dictatorship. The state labeled the church people and NFSW unionists as "communists". The Escalante Massacre of 1985 was one of the brutal retaliation made by the state and the landlords against the powerful struggle of the peasants and workers.

When the world sugar industry fell in the mid-1980s, hundreds of thousands of sugar farm workers lost their jobs. The sugar mills closed. Millions of people in Negros further suffered and went hungry. NFSW lost a large number of its membership. Instead of its determination being broken, NFSW responded to these conditions and moved to save the people from hunger.

NFSW pushed on the landlords the farm lot program and campaigned for the cultivation of empty land for planting crops to feed the workers who lost their jobs in the plantations and sugar mills. Four thousand hectares of land were planted to corn, camote and other food crops. This was opposed by the landlords, although this was only one percent of the total land area of Negros. The NFSW membership again rose and before the end of the 1980s, it had 85,000 members.

These lessons served to guide the revitalization of NFSW until it spread nationwide. It is the task of NFSW to organize the largest number of sugar farm and mill workers concentrated in haciendas, sugar plantations and mills all over the country. Reach out to the more than 600,000 sugar farm workers in the entire country. Among these are those in Luzon, Panay, Eastern and Central Visayas, Negros and Mindanao. Organize also the sacadas who are the most exploited among those in the sugar plantations.

Persevere fully in upholding the labor rights of sugar farm and mill workers—the right to wages, benefits, unionization, and other democratic rights. Combat the pakyaw system that increase the suffering of farm workers, especially during the tiempo muerte or off-milling season. Oppose Sugar Block Farming as a method of concentrating in the hands of a few landlords the sugar farms and relegate the peasants to such exploitative schemes as joint ventures and contract growing. Push and campaign for the restoration of the multi-billion Social Amelioration Program to benefit the workers and their families.

At the same time, unite firmly with the militant peasant movement in the struggle for genuine land reform at the break up of the large haciendas and land monopoly of the few. Many of these large haciendas are in the region of Negros, including the so-called ECJ hacienda that occupies 6,000 hectares.

It would be fine for NFSW also to carry the 12-point calls formulated at the National Sugar Summit of the Union of Agricultural Workers in 2016. Continue to challenge the Duterte administration to respond to this concrete call of the sugar farm and mill workers.

We wish success to the NFSW Congress and its advance as the national federation of sugar workers!

Long live the National Federation of Sugar Workers!

Long live the sugar farm and mill workers!

Solidarity with the Filipino Domestic Workers Association on its 4th Founding Anniversary

London, United Kingdom, October 8, 2017

I extend my heartfelt greetings and solidarity on the occasion of the fourth founding anniversary of your organization. I am with you in spirit as you celebrate your victories in promoting, defending and advancing the rights and welfare of domestic workers.

Your theme is correct: "Reaffirm our victories. Strengthen the ranks of women migrants in the United Kingdom!" You have achieved your victories because of your unity of thought and sentiment, organization and action.

Because of your victories, you will have stronger unity and be better able to achieve even more victories. Through your brilliant example, you have proven that your unity is effective and successful. You must excel further in drawing in, organizing and mobilizing domestic workers.

It is but right for you to organize more members among the ranks of migrant women. Highlight the intelligence and fighting spirit of women heroes like Gabriela Silang, Teresa Magbanua, Lorena Barros and Maita Gomez whose names have been etched in the history of our Motherland.

As the chronic Philippine crisis worsens, more Filipino women look for work abroad. It is an important duty to fight for their rights and welfare because the crisis of the world capitalist system is likewise chronic and worsening and exploitation and oppression are intensifying, especially under neoliberal policy.

At all times, we must always focus our attention on our country, know what its basic problems are and do whatever we can for our compatriots who are exerting effort and struggling to change the oppressive and exploitative ruling system. We cannot hope for significant change to come from groups of politicians who serve as agents of foreign monopolies and the exploiting classes.

The US-Duterte regime has bared its evil character as a puppet of the imperialists and instrument of the big compradors and landlords. This regime likes to use brutal and bloody means to terrorize the people, especially the poor and those deprived of livelihood, liberty and justice.

Currently, there is a surging movement of the toiling masses and a broad united front against the US-Duterte regime. We must directly support the toiling masses and the patriotic and progressive forces. We rely on them foremost to attain the national and social liberation of our country.

Long live the Filipino Domestic Workers Association!

Fight for their rights and welfare!

Long live the patriotic and progressive forces!

Advance the movement for national freedom and democracy!

Long live the Filipino people!

Consolidate Your Ranks and Advance the National Democratic Struggle

Greetings to PAMANTIK-KMU on its 10th Congress

Cabuyao City, Laguna, October 12-13, 2017

I am pleased to convey liberating and militant greetings to the Workers Unity of Southern Tagalog-May First Movement (PAMANTIK-KMU) on the occasion of its 10th Congress. I am happy that the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the October Revolution is part of your program.

Your rich experience and your victories in the struggle to defend the workers' democratic rights, uphold genuine, militant, and anti-imperialist unionism and achieve genuine freedom, national sovereignty and full democracy are admirable.

We all take pride that PAMANTIK-KMU has fulfilled its mandate to be the regional union center of Southern Tagalog since its establishment on March 29, 1985. In the current Congress, you can sum up your experiences and draw lessons to clarify your tasks and advance the struggle to new and higher levels.

I am sure you will elect an experienced, competent and wise leadership that relies on the membership in implementing your program. The theme of your Congress is correct and timely: "Further consolidate our ranks! Reject legalism, economism and conservatism in the labor movement! Expose and combat the fascist and neoliberal attacks of the US-Duterte regime! Further advance the national democratic struggle with a socialist perspective! "

We must strengthen our ranks through consolidation and expansion and through militant struggles and broad united front against the puppet, cruel, neoliberal and corrupt US-Duterte regime and the entire ruling system of big compradors and landlords in order to advance the national democratic revolution and onward to socialism.

Use legal methods of struggle, but do not indulge in legalism. Fight for immediate economic demands such as a fair wages and regular employment, but use all methods in the political struggle. Repudiate conservatism and be militant, creative and daring in struggle.

We now face a de facto fascist dictatorship. Ruthless in its use of violence and intimidation in confronting the patriotic and democratic forces. The regime controls the so-called super-majority in Congress and majority in the Supreme Court. Deceptive in its use of fake statements and promises without any intention of fulfillment. Brutal in using state terrorism against the poor and against revolutionaries.

The Duterte regime is determined to implement and formalize the fascist dictatorship. He has already obtained from the Supreme Court the dismissal of plunder cases against Gloria Macapagal Arroyo and other allies and the confirmation of his martial law proclamation in Mindanao, and he can use this as the basis for the proclamation of martial law nationwide. He can also obtain from Congress and the planned Constitutional Assembly the "federal" system of the state as a pretext for a fascist dictatorship.

Prior to the Constitutional Assembly, he has already obtained from Congress the postponement of the election of barangay councils and youth councils. Thus he will have the privilege of selecting officials of the barangay and youth councils to control the "ratification" of the new constitution. Added control over the masses are the Movement for Change, Masa Masid and Citizens National Guard.

The Inter-Agency Legal Action Group (IALAG) has been reestablished in the form of the Inter-Agency Committee on Legal Action (IACLA) to use in accusing the enemies of the regime of trumped up crimes and to cover up the killings and forced disappearances committed by the military and the police. The killings under Oplan Tokhang will be expanded and the prize per head for every person killed raised from 50 thousand pesos to 100,000 pesos.

In the last election, Duterte said he would push for industrialization to develop the Philippines and so that there would be no need for workers to leave the country to find employment. Later on, he also said that he would build industries on an island in the Philippines for foreign enterprises and he would kill KMU unionists should they unionize.

Duterte also pledged to stop the endo or contractualization system of less than six months. When he came to power what he wanted to impose on the working class was worse than endo, the extension of time or increasing work quota. The promise of industrialization got buried in another promise of wanton construction of

infrastructure projects dependent on huge Chinese loans. These loans will be bloated by overpricing of supplies and the entry of Chinese contractors and workers into the Philippines. Because the expected US\$167 billion loan would not be paid, the traitorous Duterte regime has put on stake the oil and gas deposits in the West Philippine Sea worth trillions of dollars.

As NDFP Chief Political Consultant in the peace talks, I witnessed Duterte's deceit against the revolutionary movement. On May 16, 2016, he promised the amnesty and release of more than 400 political prisoners in compliance with the GRP-NDFP Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law. In less than a month, he reneged on his promise and said political prisoners would not be released until the end of peace negotiations.

Just as Duterte took office as president, it was already noticeable that his economic team members are rabid pushers of US neoliberalism. Thus Duterte's economic policies are no different from those of Aquino which are contrary to national industrialization and genuine land reform. Duterte's national security team are rabid pro-imperialists and anti-communists. Duterte follows their advice to sabotage the peace negotiations with the NDFP because this is the order of their imperialist masters from Washington.

Duterte did not listen to the People's Agenda presented by BAYAN. Also when reminded that if he really wanted an independent foreign policy, he should dismantle the treaties, agreements and arrangements that bind the Philippines as a client or subservient state to the US and other imperialist countries. It turns out that what Duterte wants is not a truly independent policy but more imperialist masters.

Duterte's appointment of some patriotic and progressive in his Cabinet was only a temporary deception. He has no interest in an effective connection of the Department of Agrarian Reform under Ka Paeng Mariano to the promise of agrarian reform through the Comprehensive Agreement on Social and Economic Reforms. In fact, Duterte is a double faced tool of his landgrabbing fellow oligarchs in Mindanao—plantations, logging and mining owners destroying the livelihood of the poor, and the environment.

In the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations, we noticed the worsening demands of the US-Duterte regime. First, it reneged on the promise of amnesty and release of more than 400 political prisoners. Second, it wanted to put ahead of all issues the issue of long-term ceasefire for GRP to get the surrender and pacification of the revolutionary movement. It turns out that the regime has no interest in social, economic and political reforms to solve the root causes of the civil war.

However, the GRP and the NDFP still tried a temporary ceasefire that lasted for more than five months from August 2016 to February 2017. We saw that from the start of Duterte's presidency he wanted to fool the revolutionary movement. He continued Aquino's Oplan Bayanihan until the end of 2016 and as early as January, launched Oplan Kapayapaan. The military offensives against the revolutionary movement continue nationwide.

Duterte wanted to tie down the revolutionary movement to a ceasefire while the AFP, PNP and paramilitary forces are free to attack the revolutionary forces and the communities. Whenever Duterte throws a tantrum against the NPA, he brutally orders bombings and other offensives against communities.

Duterte committed excessive provocations when he proclaimed martial law throughout Mindanao and ordered the destruction of Marawi City. It turned out that the NPA and other revolutionary forces are the target of the regime in the greater parts of Mindanao. Defense secretary Lorenzana and AFP chief of staff Año themselves said the NPA are targets.

Duterte also repeatedly threatens to proclaim martial law nationwide. This is how the revolutionary movement ascertained that the Duterte regime has no interest in peace negotiations but rather in the military suppression of revolutionaries and others opposed to it. The revolutionary forces also saw Duterte's scheme of merging martial law with the methods of Oplan Tokhang and Oplan Dobo Reload to launch massacres against the revolutionary forces and the communities.

Duterte wrongly thought that he has already terrorized the Filipino people with his fake war on illegal drugs. But here is where the regime experienced its first big defeat. The problem of illegal drugs was not solved, but even expanded in the three or six month and even in the one year extension on his promise to solve the drug problem. The problem worsened because Duterte's son is the biggest drug smuggler and drug lord in the Philippines. Duterte himself is the number one protector of big drug lords and the number one drug addict by his use of the drug fentanyl.

Not only did Duterte fail in the promise to end the problem in a short time through violence but he also

exposed himself as the No.1 inciter and commander of mass killings of suspected drug addicts and pushers. Duterte gained worldwide notoriety as a rabid killer while the number of drug users even increased from 1.8 million during the Aquino regime to seven million under Duterte, according to foreign secretary Cayetano.

Duterte's second mistake was the policy to reject negotiations with the Maute and Abu Sayyaf groups that wanted to talk. Duterte simply decided to bomb and raze Marawi City with the help of US imperialist troops. He thought that the Bangsamoro and the Filipino people would be terrified and that he would have the basis to impose martial law on the Philippines whenever wanted. Duterte's third mistake is the three-time withdrawal from the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations and evident exertions to suppress and end the revolutionary movement through sheer violence. This is Duterte's biggest mistake: conducting three wars simultaneously. These are generating the growing protest actions of a broad united front.

Duterte will not last long in power under conditions of intensifying socioeconomic crisis, the drop in the people's employment and income, the increased taxes, rising prices of goods, lack of social services, increasing funds for the military and police, corrupt bureaucrat capitalists like Duterte, and foreign enterprises and banks that always draws superprofits and interests.

The so-called opinion poll surveys on trust and satisfaction of Duterte is falling fast because of his policy of violence and corruption, blatant lying and intimidation. His space for maneuvering is narrowing due to the grave crisis of the local ruling system and the world capitalist system.

Conditions in the Philippines are becoming more difficult. These bode heightened oppression and exploitation of the Filipino people. But the same also incite them to fight for their national and democratic rights and interests. The ILPS expects that as a result of your Congress, the leadership and membership of PAMANTIK would be strengthened to advance the national democratic movement towards socialism.

Long live PAMANTIK-KMU!

Long live the national democratic movement!

Long live the Filipino people!

Advance Migrante-Philippines and Migrante-Youth

Solidarity Message, December 8, 2017

In the name of the International League of Peoples' Struggle, I gladly extend militant greetings and solidarity to the Executive Committee of Migrante International, the leadership and membership and the guests on the founding assembly of Migrante-Philippines and the debut of Migrante-Youth at the Bantayog ng mga Bayani Theater in Quezon City, Metro Manila, this December 8-9.

The theme laid for the delegates and representatives from the provinces, regions and cities in the whole country to the assembly of the new Migrante chapter are very timely and important: Advance Migrante-Philippines! Further expand and spread out to the entire archipelago! Consolidate your strength for continuous advance and struggle! Closely unite with, and contribute to, the strengthening of the worker' movement, youth movement and the entire national democratic movement!

It is fine that you have established Migrante-Philippines as a strong and wide foundation for Migrante International in the entire archipelago. Consolidate the strength of the families and communities of migrant workers that you have already reached and further expand to reach those waiting for your organizers and educators. Take advantage of the opportunity to increase your chapters and form the necessary levels of leadership. Participate and contribute to the further strengthening of the workers movement, youth movement, women's movement and the entire national-democratic movement.

The crisis of the backward, agrarian and semifeudal Philippine economy. Duterte's promises of industrial development so that there would be enough jobs in the country and people are no longer forced to leave for abroad due to lack of job, are all lies. Even before the Duterte regime started, the pro-US oligarchy had designated the neoliberal economic policy. In the course of the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations, the regime clearly did not like the policy of national industrialization and land reform that the NDFP upholds. But the government and the big compradors use this to import finished products and add to new loans to cover trade deficits. In various forms of fees for documents, and other reasons, the reactionary government milks the migrant workers through the POEA, OWWA and other agencies although these do not help them defend their rights and help with their other various needs.

The regime continues the system of importing finished products and exporting raw materials, semi-manufactures and workers at low wages and without strong protection for their democratic rights in the global market. The regime always intentionally devalue wages through endo or short-term contractualization and other methods. Thus, poverty and unemployment intensify and the workers are forced to look for work abroad at very low wages. The regime do not also give help and protection to the workers exploited and abused or removed from work because of the worsening crisis of the country of migration.

Since Duterte became president, his main preoccupation has been how he can fool and use the military, police and paramilitary forces to terrorize the Filipino people, concentrate all powers in his hands and establish a fascist dictatorship under the guise of a bogus federal form of government. He first implemented his mass killing campaign of tens of thousands of suspected drug addicts and pushers by police-created death squads. At the same time, it turns out that the big druglords like Peter Lim and his own son and son-in-law are involved in the smuggling and distribution of illegal drugs.

Duterte pushed the Maute group to enter Marawi City and used this opportunity to order the reactionary military to fight and bomb and raze the entire city of Marawi to the ground only to demonstrate to the whole nation that he is strong and he can use excessive violence. He also used this an opportunity for declaring martial law in the whole of Mindanao and regard the NPA and other revolutionary forces as targets.

Since he became president, Duterte declared an all-out war policy against the armed revolutionary movement of the Filipino people under the CPP leadership. At first he hid under the pretext of continuing Aquino's Oplan Bayanihan until the end of 2016. Afterwards, he started his own Oplan Kapayapaan at the beginning of 2017. Duterte only pretended to want negotiations. But even with a ceasefire in place, the offensives of his military, police and military forces continued against the revolutionary forces and the people. In talking with the NDFP, his

negotiators always put forward the issue of prolonged ceasefire more than any substantive agreement on the reforms demanded by the people.

Now, Duterte has been loudly saying that he wants war instead of peace negotiations and he has issued a proclamation labeling the CPP and NPA as terrorist and also label as terrorist any legal organization or individual suspected of supporting and supplying those labeled as terrorist. Duterte has also started to order the military, police and paramilitary forces to kidnap, torture and murder suspected revolutionaries or those suspected of relating to the latter among the ranks of the people, the indigenous, legal organizations and social activists.

At first, Duterte pretended he would remove the Philippines from US domination. Eventually, it appeared that he wanted only to multiply semicolonial masters among the big capitalist and imperialist powers and give the Philippines to them as sphere of influence. He only wants to have many sources of arms and loans for mortgaging our country. Thus the treaties, agreements and arrangements putting the Philippines under the US as principal semicolonial master continue. And thus, the uneven relations with US allies such as Japan and Australia also continue.

Duterte also expects Chinese loans for building railways and other infrastructure projects but he has also surrendered to China the West Philippine Sea and the exclusive economic zone and extended continental shelf won by the Philippines on the basis of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) at the Permanent Arbitration Commission in The Hague. Duterte has been trying to draw the other ASEAN member-states to bow to the illegal reclamation at excessive Chinese claim over the South Sea.

I have high confidence that Migrante-Philippines and Migrante-Youth can strengthen themselves and serve the masses of migrant workers, their families and communities. In taking on these tasks, you should study the crisis of the ruling system in the Philippines and the global capitalist system, know the trends and problems and ensure that you strengthen your organization and the entire national democratic movement through political education, recruitment of many members and organizing militant chapters.

Long live Migrante-Philippines and Migrante-Youth!

Long live Migrante International! Long live all migrant workers!

Long live the Filipino people!

JV Asks JMS: On the Continuing Relevance of Labor Day to the Situation of the Filipino Masses

April 26, 2018

JV1: What are the main issues faced by the workers in the Philippines?

JMS: In a semicolonial and semifeudal system prevailing in the Philippines, the working class is confronted with issues and problems resulting from the domination of foreign monopoly capitalism and the local exploiting classes of big compradors, landlords and corrupt bureaucrats. These deny the toiling masses of democracy and social justice. The working class confronts today the US imperialist-imposed neoliberal policy on the Philippines that breeds mass unemployment, short-term contractualization, low wages, skyrocketing prices of basic goods and services, and lack of social services. The working class suffer from problems brought about by raising the profits of the foreign and local capitalists.

JV2.: What is your view of the Duterte government's vacillations with regard to fulfilling its promise to end labor contractualization and also the effects of the "Build, Build, Build" projects and the TRAIN Law on the workers? As it did not fulfill this and other promises, why did the national democratic movement not denounce it in the past two years despite your belief that this government's 10-point socioeconomic program is no different from those of previous governments? How big a factor is the worsening situation of the Filipino masses in the intensifying social and political polarization, especially on the temporary unity of movements with various orientations and lines; conservative, liberal and progressive?

JMS: It has become clear that Duterte is anti-worker and a liar with regard to his promise to end contractualization once he became president. In addition, he uses the Build, Build, Build projects to justify the TRAIN Law to raise taxes and the prices of basic goods and services.

The national democratic movement has promptly denounced and opposed the broken promises and increased suffering inflicted on the people by the Duterte regime. BAYAN was prompt in criticizing Duterte's neoliberal 10-point program announced by his economic team in May 2016 before he was sworn in as president.

In the legal democratic movement, it is all right for the struggle to take the form of a combination of raising demands and petitions with those in power. There are differences between the legal and armed forms of struggle.

The worsening in the situation and suffering of the Filipino masses is rapid. As a result, the social polarization is also rapid; and this pushes progressives, liberals and conservatives into a broad united front to fight, isolate and defeat the ultra-reactionary Duterte regime.

JV3.: Can you please summarize the long history of the spontaneous and organized rising of the Filipino working class along the national and democratic line? Can you also explain the response of the Church to the continuing struggle of the working class according to its social teachings in relation to social justice and the long history of its involvement in the different aspects of the life of the ordinary Filipino? What is the relevance of the general program of the national democratic movement and the social teachings of the Church in relation to social justice and human rights, especially to the workers as a whole?

JMS: When the old democratic revolution ripened in the last decade of the 19th century, the patriotic and class sentiment against Spanish colonialism had already arisen among the workers. Thus, the actions of workers like Andres Bonifacio and among the guilds of workers at the harbors, warehouses, tabacaleras (cigar and cigarette factories), printing presses and other firms became prominent.

In January 1902, the Union Obrera Democratica (UOD) was formed to gather the patriotic industrial unions that had been organized earlier. When May 1, 1903 came, a big gathering of workers celebrated the International Labor Day. This was the first celebration of May 1 as Labor Day in the Philippines. The continued development of modern unionism in the Philippines followed.

The recognized founder of UOD, Isabelo de los Reyes, was also the founder of Iglesia Filipina Independiente (IFI). The IFI was supportive of the labor movement. The priests and churchgoers of IFI came from the Catholic Church. But the Catholic Church remained reactionary in relation to the labor movement. At the initiative of the Jesuits, studies were conducted at the Ateneo de Manila in the decade of the 1930s on the Pope's social encyclicals that advocated a regressive, anti-Bolshevik and anti-socialist concept of social justice. Among the Spanish Dominican friars, were many who sympathized with Franco's fascism that crushed the labor movement in Spain.

In the 1950s, in conjunction with the suppression of the Communist Party and People's Liberation Army and the anti-communist witch hunt during the Cold War, American Jesuits set up the Institute of Social Order in an attempt to seize the initiative among the workers. In this climate, they succeeded in setting up the Federation of Free Workers.

In the 1960s, the Second Vatican Council emerged and gave birth to a relatively progressive wave among the priests and nuns in the Catholic Church. From this wave arose the seminal elements of Christians for National Liberation (CNL) in 1969. From then on, the CNL made moderate advances until this accelerated because of Marcos' imposition of fascist dictatorship in the Philippines.

The CNL played a big role in fighting the violations of human rights and in advocating for the movement for national and social liberation. Today, CNL has grown big and strong throughout the Philippines. Here, Catholics, IFI and Protestants are together. They are determined to fight the actions of Duterte and his minions in violating human rights and their cursing and abuse of religious and church people.

JV4.: What is the importance for the workers of the efforts to revive the peace negotiations between the government and the NDFP?

JMS: The efforts to revive the peace negotiations between the GRP and NDFP is important for the workers and the people. But we should not place too much hope on these talks because Duterte's mind and posturing is quick to change and it is not yet clear if he has abandoned his malicious ambition to impose a fascist dictatorship in the Philippines under the banner of a fake federalism. Duterte's ruling clique is composed of extremely brutal and greedy people.

JV5.: Can the Filipino workers hope for something in the preparations for the coming barangay elections and the early preparations of politicians whether of PDP-LABAN or the Liberal Party for the national elections in 2019 with regard to supporting candidates who take up the issues of the workers? What are the challenges and prospects for the workers in connection with efforts to revive the peace talks and early preparations for the 2019 national elections?

JMS: We should not put hope on the elections of the ruling system to change the system of oppression and exploitation. Contrary to the hope that the elections in 2016 would result in a good president, it is clear that Duterte is only good at making promises and tricks.

Nevertheless, legal processes like elections and peace talks are opportunities for presenting programs and issues important for the working class and other oppressed and exploited classes and sectors.

Let us strive to propagate the national and democratic consciousness and help the advance of patriotic and progressive parties and candidates in elections. The peace talks is also an opportunity to propagate the NDFP Program for a people's democratic revolution, raise the consciousness of the Filipino people and expand their revolutionary forces.

The working class and the Filipino people must rely on their own efforts in fighting against the imperialists and the local exploiting classes and for liberation from their oppression and exploitation. If the Filipino people are steadfast and militant in fighting under the leadership of the working class and its revolutionary Party, the revolution will surely advance to complete the democratic revolution and move on to socialist revolution and construction.

Celebrate the International Day of Labor and the 200th Birth Anniversary of Karl Marx

May 1, 2018

Warmest greetings of solidarity! The International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS) stands with our member-organization, Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU), and the broad masses of workers and people celebrating the International Day of Labor and joining the mass protests this May 1.

This day closely precedes the 200th birth anniversary of Karl Marx on May 5. The ILPS recognizes that there is no more fitting tribute to Marx, the great thinker and founder of the theory and practice of proletarian revolution, than to adopt a theme from his great work, the *Communist Manifesto*: "Workers of the world, unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains."

The strong internationalist theme is demanded by the major problems that confront and inflict grave suffering on the workers of the world, including those of the Philippines. These include unemployment and underemployment, job insecurity, low wages, repression of unions, and the lack of social services such as housing and public transportation.

They arise from the profit-taking nature of capitalism at the expense of the working class, especially under the current imperialist neoliberal policies. Indeed, workers of the world must unite to fight their class exploiters and oppressors.

In the Philippines, the blatant use of fascist policy and tactics against workers is a direct response to the successful, widespread working class movement fighting to uphold workers' rights. We support your main calls for the junking of contractualization, for a national minimum wage, for better public services, and for a just and lasting peace in the context of the ongoing war between the reactionary government and the revolutionary forces of the people.

Indeed, with these clear goals, KMU has succeeded in building a historic alliance with other labor organizations in the country, as workers unite in the face of the Duterte regime's neoliberal attacks on labor rights and welfare. KMU must maintain its independence and initiative while leading the fight against the tyrannical regime.

KMU has always been at the forefront of the campaigns of the labor sector in the Philippines, because of its capacity for sharp, thorough, and incisive analysis of workers' issues in the national and international setting. KMU fulfills a crucial role in leading the struggles of Filipino workers, who have labored under the yoke of the semifeudal and semicolonial system.

Today, that struggle is intensifying against the anti-people, anti-worker regime of Duterte and his ruling clique of landlords, big compradors, and bureaucrat capitalists, including the still politically-active families of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos and the plunderer Gloria M. Arroyo.

This Labor Day, Filipino workers' condemnation of the Duterte regime's neoliberal economic policies aligns with the worldwide workers' movement against imperialism. It has been a decade since the 2008 global financial crisis, yet workers still suffer from its lasting impact, and the crisis of overproduction and excessive public debt continues to worsen and deepen.

Capitalists have developed an arsenal of ways and means to keep maximizing profits at the expense of the laboring people. Around the world, exploitation persists, as evident in the pervasiveness of cheap labor, austerity measures, higher taxes for the poor; and tax cuts for the corporations and the rich, the privatization of public assets and services and inhumane working conditions.

Meanwhile, as workers and other oppressed people suffer from the unresolved economic downturn, giant corporations and governments of imperialists and imperialist allies survive through self-serving mechanisms such as state-funded bailouts, credits, and public funding; blatant graft and corruption; and one-sided public-private partnerships.

The nonstop accumulation of capital in the hands of the ruling class is flagrant in the Philippines and the whole world. In the National Capital Region, the current daily minimum wage is less than half of the estimated family living wage.

The gap is widened as the Duterte regime railroads laws designed to benefit the ruling classes while adding to the burdens of the poor, such as the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN) law, which increases

taxes on basic goods and services and bring about rising prices for the toiling masses, while lowering the import costs of luxury goods.

Duterte and his cronies maintain and aggravate the harsh social and economic conditions of the people primarily through state terrorism and active black propaganda campaign against social activists and other critics of his administration.

These strategies of the oppressive rulers are nothing new. As seen in the recent unwarranted attacks on Palestine and Syria, the US and its imperialist allies continue to wage outright wars of aggression in order to feed the greed of the military-industrial complex, while raising the public debt and destroying the lives in great numbers and the physical and social infrastructure of their “enemy” countries.

But even in a world beset by a sharp rise in state terrorist tactics, Duterte is unusually notorious. His multiple wars against his own people, from a drug war targeting the poor to a war against revolutionaries, have resulted in tens of thousands of deaths in only two years. His death toll is unprecedented even in comparison to Marcos. In the labor sector, 29 have been killed since Duterte came into power in 2016.

To suppress the legal political activities and clearly legitimate dissent against his ultra-reactionary policies and actions, Duterte has increased military expenditures and used the military, police and paramilitary for selfish criminal purposes. He repeatedly goads, rewards and supports the military, police and paramilitary to carry out mass killings and other atrocities.

The Duterte administration has also made frenzied efforts to generate and spread fake news, intended to mislead the masses and deflect public anger against his government. This is particularly obvious in Duterte’s pretense at being opposed to contractualization, as he signs executive orders riddled with loopholes instead of working with the labor sector to end contractualization once and for all. He has recently exposed himself totally as being for contractualization.

This year, the need for workers to organize and oppose imperialism on a local and global scale is stronger than ever. Some 170 years ago, Marx reminded proletarian revolutionaries: “You have a world to win.” Workers in the Philippines and around the world should unite in fighting oppression and exploitation.

We join the revolutionary struggle of all oppressed peoples to build a society characterized, not by inequality and mass suffering, but by freedom from imperialism and local reaction, by democracy, economic development, cultural progress and social justice for the people towards the goal of socialism.

Long live Kilusang Mayo Uno!

Long live the working class and the Filipino people!

Fight imperialism, feudalism, and bureaucrat capitalism!

Long live the great legacy of Marx!

Advance the world proletarian-socialist revolution!

Challenges and Prospects of Filipino Educators

Message to the 15th National Congress of the Alliance of Concerned Teachers-Philippines

September 13, 2018

On behalf of the entire International League of Peoples' Struggle, I convey warmest greetings of solidarity to the Alliance of Concerned Teachers-Philippines (ACT) and to all delegates of your 15th National Congress. We congratulate you for gathering more than 300 regional, provincial and city leaders of ACT and its affiliate organizations. They signify the growing strength and capabilities of your alliance.

We wish you utmost success in realizing the objectives of your congress, such as the assessment of the activities and programs of ACT from 2015 to 2018, the election of new members of your National Council and National Executive Committee, the gathering of reports from your regional unions and affiliate organizations on the state of the entire education sector and organizational status, issues and concerns pertaining to working conditions, and adoption of your General Plan of Action for 2018 to 2021.

We appreciate highly your theme and battlecry, "Unite and Fight for Wages, Jobs and Rights! Fight for Education and Society that is Free, Democratic, Progressive and Peaceful." In this connection, we wish to share with you our view of the challenges and prospects for Filipino educators in the context of the political and economic situation of the Filipino people.

Challenges

Like the entire Filipino people, you are once more challenged by the accelerated worsening of the chronic crisis of the ruling system of big compradors and landlords and corrupt officials who are shamelessly servile to the dictates of foreign monopoly capitalism and are extremely oppressive and exploitative of the people. You are confronted and challenged most by a tyrannical regime that is obsessed with using the brute force of state terrorism and that is wallowing in unbridled corruption and plunging the country into a more severe and deeper crisis.

Duterte is obsessed with establishing a fascist dictatorship under the pretext of charter change to federalism. In this regard, he worships and adores the despicable cruel and corrupt rule of Marcos. His highest priority is to boost public spending for the military and police forces in terms of personnel compensation, operation and equipment acquisitions from abroad. Thus the budgetary appropriation for education, health and other social services have been severely cut back.

What is misrepresented as economic development is infrastructure building that favors the big compradors, landlords and their foreign partners in the local production of raw materials and semi-manufactures for export in exchange for manufactured imports and that puts the Philippines in debt bondage to the imperialist powers. The shallow and absurd spiel is being made that the infrastructure boosts tourism, attracts foreign interest in the sale of Filipino labor, tour facilities, local ecosystems and other natural resources and rakes in more foreign exchange.

As in the time of the Marcos fascist regime, overpriced infrastructure projects yield superprofits to the big foreign and domestic contractors and huge bribes to the highest bureaucrats. In his own diabolic way, Duterte is treasonously giving up to China the sovereign rights of the Filipino people over the trillions of dollars worth oil, gas and other natural resources under the West Philippine Sea under the guise of a joint development agreement in exchange for a few billion dollars worth of overpriced infrastructure projects and onerous loans.

The tax burden has been increased at the expense of the consuming public, causing the spiraling prices of basic goods and services at an accelerated inflation rate, in order to raise tax revenues to feed bureaucratic corruption and the build-up of the apparatuses of repression, cover the widening budgetary and trade deficits, and service the growing amount of loans from foreign creditors. The value of the peso is sinking as the balance of payments deteriorates.

Domestic and borrowed resources are being used to close the possibility of economic development through national industrialization and genuine and to perpetuate the semicolonial and semifeudal system of the big comprador-land-lord oligarchy subservient to US imperialism and other foreign monopoly capitalist powers.

The Duterte regime has terminated the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations not only to scapegoat the CPP and NPA for the purpose of proclaiming martial law nationwide but also to block the NDFP's proposals for basic social, economic and political reforms to address the roots of the armed conflict and lay the basis for a just and lasting

peace.

As matters stand, the Duterte regime has a cruel sense of priorities by giving the ordinary soldiers and policemen the minimum salary of 29,800 pesos a month, plus the cash rewards for the abduction, torture and murder of drug suspects under Oplan Tokhang and Oplan Double Barrel, and of rebel suspects under Oplan Kapayapaan.

In sharp contrast, teachers receive a monthly salary of 20,179 pesos and nurses an average of 13,500 pesos. The drastic reduction of budget appropriations for education, health and other social services means that the underpaid personnel must demand better working and living conditions amidst the soaring prices of basic goods and services.

It is a matter of socioeconomic and political right that you must have decent working and living conditions. You must therefore engage in both economic and political struggle, especially because you are confronted by a regime that violates human rights in a comprehensive way, including civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights.

Purely economic struggle within the confines of the bureaucratic channels or even within the tripartite mechanism of the ruling system is not enough. Most important of all, you must wage a political struggle to arouse, organize and mobilize your unions and alliance in concert with the other democratic forces of the people in order to do away with the oppressive and exploitative policies and practices of the current regime and the entire unjust ruling system.

Teachers, especially when well-organized, can significantly contribute to promoting the rights and welfare of members not only of their own sector but also those of other sectors that you naturally reach and interact with inside the schools and in communities around the schools. These include the student youth, the parents, the non-academic personnel and the down-trodden classes in both urban and rural communities, who are the worst victimized by the multiple attacks of this unjust system and its current fascist regime.

Nationwide, the teachers' movement is rightfully viewed as a trustworthy and strong carrier of public opinion. Many of you have good access to institutions as well as counter-institutions in education, media and culture. Many of you have relatives overseas, and in fact a big number of teachers seek work abroad, and are thus active in correcting misconceptions and fake news about Philippine affairs. You can use this power not just to expose wrongdoing and deception by big and petty tyrants, but to amplify the people's grievances, conscientize the public into action, and further the cause of basic social, economic and political reforms.

It is absolutely correct for you to demand and fight for the type of education that is national, scientific and pro-people in character and for a society that is truly free, democratic, progressive and peaceful. Respect and just compensation for the educators must be realized upon the growth in strength and advance of the national democratic mass movement and at best in the foreseeable future, upon the rise of the democratic power of the working people.

Prospects

At this very moment, Duterte's scheme of fascist terror, mass murder and mass intimidation is being totally discredited. Duterte is now regarded by the people as the supreme new lord of illegal drugs, crime and corruption. The mayor of Cebu City has dared to expose Duterte as the biggest protector of the illegal drug trade.

The problem of illegal drugs has become more rampant because Duterte's war on drugs is merely aimed at protecting and favoring the drug empire in which his compadre Peter Lim and his son Paolo Duterte are involved. Indeed, Duterte has practically become the supreme drug lord.

Criminality has become worse because Duterte has turned the military and police into his private armies and has made their officers his accomplices in mass murder and other crimes and has corrupted them with cash rewards and promotions in rank. Criminals in authority are far worse than ordinary criminals because they enjoy presidential protection, impunity and government facilities. Thus, the people are further driven to seek justice through the mass movement and the revolutionary process.

Corruption is far worse than ever before from the level of the president and his cabinet to every lower level of government. The regime has systematically used mass murder and mass intimidation to dissuade the people from airing their grievances. But the organized forces of the national democratic movement and the broad masses of the people are fighting back and are succeeding to expose the crimes of the regime and prepare for its ouster.

The people understand very well that Duterte's scheme of charter change to federalism is a cover for fascist dictatorship and that federalism is an expensive project to centralize all powers in the hands of a fascist overlord

who handpicks his subalterns from among the dynasties and warlords at the regional, provincial and municipal levels.

In recent months, it has become obvious that the regime cannot get from the Senate the necessary majority needed to form a constitutional assembly. Thus, it is plotting to proclaim martial law nationwide and declare a pseudo-revolutionary government in advance of the 2019 midterm elections. Martial rule is aimed at fixing the said elections if still to be held and the charter change for pseudo-federalism.

But the US-Duterte regime is already isolated and hated by the people. The people hold the regime responsible for the tyranny and economic suffering that are afflicting them. The more it resorts to state terrorism, the more it will incite the people to rise in revolt. The social and economic conditions cannot be expected to improve because the crisis trend in the domestic and global economy is relentlessly worsening even without the aggravation done by Duterte.

A broad united front of patriotic and progressive forces has arisen to defy and fight this cruel and corrupt regime and has made its opening salvo last July 23, with the United People's SONA challenging Duterte's SONA. We look forward to far bigger manifestations of people's strength on September 21 and beyond.

From month to month, the broad masses of the people are expected to rise up against the US-Duterte regime. It is expected that when enough millions of people have been mobilized nationwide, enough military and police officers will emerge to withdraw support from the regime.

It has been proven and demonstrated before that the legal democratic mass movement can oust cruel and corrupt regimes like those of Marcos and Estrada. But in any case, the armed revolutionary mass movement keeps on growing to support the broad united front and the legal mass movement and ensure that the people have the revolutionary forces to rely on in the long run.

We hope that our view on the political and economic situation can shed light on the challenges and prospects that the ACT and the entire teachers' movement face. May our view help in clarifying the situation and defining the tasks to achieve your immediate and long-term goals.

Lessons in the Advance of the Labor Movement as Guide to Further Expansion and Strengthening

Keynote to the 12th National Congress of Kilusang Mayo Uno, Teachers' Camp, Baguio City, October 21, 2018

I am honored and delighted to be your keynote speaker on the occasion of your 12th National Congress. I congratulate you and the Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) for your achievements since your last Congress.

I am confident that in summing up your experience and drawing lessons during the last three years, you will be able to tighten your unity as the genuine, fighting and militant center of the workers' movement and achieve greater victories in expanding and strengthening the KMU as you struggle against the escalating neoliberal and fascist attacks of the US-Duterte regime and advance the national democratic struggle of the people.

On the current situation

You have no choice but to stand up and fight back in greater and more militant numbers. Globally and domestically, the neoliberal attacks continue to press down wages, impose short term contractualization through hiring agencies, block job security, deprive you of the minimum daily wage level to assure all workers of decent and healthy subsistence, cut back hard-won social benefits (including health insurance, pension, housing, unemployment relief and others), reduce social services and curtail all the economic, social, political, civil and cultural rights that have been won by the working class in centuries of struggle in terms of national legislation and international labor standards.

You must also confront and fight the fascist attacks being unleashed to intensify exploitation and oppression. State terrorism is being used to force you to accept the unjust exploitative impositions of the state and the capitalist employers and perpetuate the unfair working and living conditions of the working class. The workers and their movement are being systematically weakened and dis-empowered through the denial of their most basic civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. The same state instruments of terror that oppress you as a class — the laws, courts, and armed forces — also grind down the unemployed and underemployed semi-proletariat and other people in the same urban communities you live in as well as in the vast rural areas where many of you came from.

The organized workers movement is more urgently needed than ever. Capitalist exploitation is getting worse. Labor productivity in the country's industrial sector increased 52 percent between 2001 and 2017 but capitalists made sure that all of this and more goes to them as profits by reducing the daily industrial wage to PhP388 in 2017 which is even 5.5 percent lower in real terms than in 2001. As it is, over seven out of ten (70.1 percent) families earn below the family living wage for minimum decent living.

The country's unemployment crisis is unprecedented and disguised only by the State's statistical trickery. There were at least 4.6 million unemployed Filipinos last year aside from around seven million under-employed meaning some 12 million Filipinos or over one in four of the labor force are out of work or looking looking for more work.

The real unemployment rate has risen under neoliberalism from the 1980s and has remained at well over 10 percent for the last decade. Unemployment is worst among youth 15-24 years old and is at least double the national average. The number of workers in short-term, seasonal and casual work has bloated under neoliberalism including nearly four out of 10 (35.3 percent) industrial workers as of 2017.

This domestic crisis of joblessness does not even count the millions of Filipinos forced overseas for work. For many years now, more Filipinos leave to find work abroad than new jobs are created locally — more so in 2017 when employment actually contracted by 663,000 from the year before.

The actual high rate of unemployment and the absence of a national minimum wage level of PhP750-800 daily (demanded by KMU and other workers' organizations as of May 2018) for the employed have exposed the working class and the rest of the people to the ravaging effects of soaring prices of basic goods and services. The rising inflation rate is due to the drive of the US-Duterte regime to raise tax revenues at the expense of ordinary consumers for the purpose of increasing appropriations for the military and police, debt service and for covering budgetary and trade deficits.

In line with the theme of your Congress, "Expand and Strengthen the Workers' Movement towards the advance

of the national democratic struggle of the entire people”, let me discuss the lessons from the advance of the labor movement in the Philippines and the world as guide to the further expansion and strengthening of the workers’ movement in the next three years.

Emergence and advance of the labor movement

I shall cover the subject at a quick pace and in a summary way. The labor movement has strengthened itself and advanced through class struggle in the ideological, political and organizational fields. It can take advantage of the various contradictions in capitalist society and the conflicts among imperialist powers. It suffers setbacks when the working class lacks a revolutionary party with the correct stand, viewpoint and method of thinking and acting.

For the industrial capitalist class to emerge, it had to acquire the industrial sites, the equipment, raw materials and credit for establishing the factories or the industrial plants. The equipment and raw materials are the product of previous use of labor power but such congealed or dead labor cannot by themselves produce new material values, without further use of living labor power.

Thus the capitalist class created the industrial proletariat in greater number as the economy and society became increasingly capitalist in character, especially after the bourgeoisie seized power from the feudalists through the bourgeois democratic revolution. It needed the working class to create the surplus value or the unpaid labor in order to extract the profits, the bank interest and rent.

The industrial workers arose at first as a class in itself, unconscious of what to do to relieve itself of extremely long hours of work, as much as 16 or even more hours in most of 19th century. The industrial workers became a class for itself when this became conscious of the need to struggle for shorter working hours, higher wages and better working and living conditions. In becoming a class for itself, the industrial proletariat engaged in organizing in trade unions for economic struggle. Subsequently, it formed political parties to engage in political struggle within capitalist society. As a class for itself, it became conscious of and driven by the need to wage class struggle in order to obtain not only immediate economic concessions from the capitalist class but also in the long run to gain political power and build socialism.

For the industrial working class to pursue class struggle against the capitalist class and clarify the correct path to socialism, Marxism provided the ideological, political and organizational lines of class struggle. By the last decade of the 19th century, it became the main trend in the working class movement in Europe. By the end of the 19th century working hours had been reduced to 10 hours or thereabouts. In the early 20th century, the working class won the 8-hour working day in the world capitalist system as a result of the well-organized and sustained campaigns of the working class parties and trade unions.

The trade union movement and the Communist Party in the Philippines

The influence of the European working class movement reached the Philippines through Isabelo de los Reyes, who brought with him from Europe the works of Marx, the anarcho syndicalists and socialists to the Philippines, and established the Union Obrera Democratica in 1902. This launched the modern trade union movement for replacing the gremios (guilds) as the organization of workers.

Modern imperialism or monopoly capitalism became dominant in capitalist countries before the end of the 19th century. As a modern imperialist power, the US engaged Spanish colonialism in a war in 1898 to grab the Philippines and other colonies of the latter and pretended to befriend the leaders of the Philippine revolution. Eventually the US unleashed a war of aggression against the Filipino people, lasting from 1899 to 1914 and killing 1.5 million Filipinos.

Marxism developed to Leninism in response to modern imperialism. Driven by the crisis of over-production, the imperialist powers engaged in economic and political conflicts that led to the first inter-imperialist war, World War I. This became the occasion for the rise of the first socialist state established by the working class, together with the peasants, in Russia and what would be the entire Soviet Union in 1917.

The salvos of the Great October Socialist Revolution immediately reached the working class movement in the Philippines. But it would only be in 1930 that the Communist Party of the Philippine Islands (CPPI) would be established by Crisanto Evangelista on the basis of a growing trade union movement spearheaded by the Congreso Obrero de Filipinas. The CPPI was soon suppressed by the US colonial government but it was able to survive and develop underground until it was legalized in 1936 on account of the anti-fascist campaign of the US against the Axis powers. In 1938, the CPPI and Socialist Party of the Philippines formed the Merger Party of the Communist and Socialist Parties.

The general crisis of capitalism resulted in one more inter-imperialist war, World War II. The Merger Party led the formation of the Peoples Army against Japan on March 29, 1942 in order to combat the Japanese fascist

invasion and occupation. It gained ample opportunity to do revolutionary work among the peasants and the entire people of Central Luzon and to fight the foreign aggressor and gain political power in the region.

By granting nominal independence to the Philippines, US imperialism converted it to a semicolonial and semifeudal status from 1946 onwards. The errors of Right and "Left" opportunism committed by the Lava brothers limited and prevented the further advance of the Philippine revolutionary movement. The backbone of the armed revolution and the Congress of Labor Organizations were destroyed as a result of the enemy crackdown from 1949 to 1952.

Peaking of proletarian power and start of modern revisionism

On the world stage, the communist and working class movements could declare in 1956 that one-third of humanity was already under proletarian governance through socialist states and peoples democracies. However, in the Soviet Union, the scourge of modern revisionism would begin to undermine and destroy Soviet socialism as early as 1956. At the same time, US imperialism waged a rabidly anti-communist crusade in the Cold War, unleashed wars of aggression and military intervention, applied neocolonialism to keep the oppressed peoples in chains and propped up repressive puppet regimes.

Independent of the nearly extinct Merger Party of the Communist and Socialist Parties, proletarian revolutionaries arose from 1959 onwards to revive the national democratic movement among the youth, workers, peasants and other sectors. The Kabataang Makabayan, Lapiang Manggagawa and Malayang Samahan ng mga Magsasaka (MASAKA-Olalia) arose and grew in strength prominently. By December 26, 1968, the proletarian revolutionaries were able to reestablish the Communist Party of the Philippines under the theoretical guidance of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.

The US imperialists tried to use the Marcos puppet regime to destroy the CPP and the growing revolutionary movement by declaring martial law and establishing a fascist dictatorship in 1972. The legal democratic forces based in the urban areas had to go underground but eventually bounced back with great vigor, especially from 1981 onwards as the Marcos fascist dictatorship weakened and became isolated. The people's war led by the CPP thrived instead of being suppressed. As early as 1974, the trade unions were able to carry out a nationwide strike in more than 300 work places, starting with the historic La Tondeña Strike that organized hundreds of workers, youth and students. On May 1, 1980, Kilusang Mayo Uno emerged to resume and coordinate the trade union struggle more comprehensively nationwide.

The great Mao Zedong put forward his theory of continuing revolution under proletarian dictatorship through the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976, in order to combat modern revisionism, prevent the restoration of capitalism and consolidate socialism. But eventually, after his death, the Dengist restoration and counterrevolution succeeded in reversing the proletarian revolutionary line of Mao and in integrating China into the world capitalist system starting in 1978.

Neoliberalism and the US as sole superpower

Since the 1980s, the US and its imperialist allies has been using neoliberalism to deny the labor theory of value and the truth that the working class is the producer of social wealth and to misrepresent and glorify the parasitic capitalist class as the creator of wealth and jobs. This ideology of unbridled capitalist greed was spread and turned into policy against the working class throughout the world, in the capitalist countries, developing countries and revisionist-ruled countries.

In the years 1989-91, Russia and China became fully capitalist as did the other Soviet Republics and East European satellites that rapidly and fully reintegrated themselves into the world capitalist system. US imperialism emerged as the unchallenged winner in its Cold War with the Soviet Union. But it undermined itself and accelerated its strategic decline by giving China manufacturing and global market concessions and by engaging in many costly wars of aggression, especially in the Middle East, Africa and former Yugoslavia.

Since the global financial crisis of 2008, which was ignited by the US mortgage meltdown, the imperialist powers and the IMF, World Bank and WTO have failed to solve the problem of prolonged stagnation and depression. This has led to intensifying contradictions among the imperialist powers, between the imperialist powers and the oppressed peoples and nations, between the imperialist powers and independent-minded states and between labor and capital in the imperialist countries.

With the worsening of the aforementioned contradictions, the working class and the rest of the people suffer the worsening crisis conditions and the increased frequency of wars. At the same time, they are compelled to fight for

their rights and interests against the imperialist powers and all reactionary states. Great working class and popular movements are arising to oppose imperialist domination and the various reactionary currents, which are mainly fascist in character.

In transition to great resurgence of proletarian revolution

As chairperson of the ILPS, I am glad to declare that the international broad united front against imperialism has been steadily growing in the past decade, and that national chapters and member-organizations and chapters of the ILPS have been consistently in the forefront. The KMU has had a rich experience in running the International Solidarity Affair for many years as well as in participating in the ILPS since its founding in 2001. KMU's prospects for achieving greater victories in expanding and strengthening itself and in the national democratic struggle of the Filipino people includes a potentially bigger role to play in the international united front.

At the core of the broad anti-imperialist movement, we can observe more clearly than ever before that we are now in the process of transition to the resurgence of the working class movement and the world proletarian revolution. In more and more countries, there is serious and organized re-invigoration of theoretical study and practical application of Marxism, Leninism and Maoism in the working class movement and people's revolutionary struggles led by Maoist parties.

The CPP, which celebrates its 50th founding anniversary this year, stands out today as the torch bearer of the world proletarian revolution in ideological, political and organizational terms. It has defended and further developed the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism- Maoism against imperialism, revisionism and reaction. It leads a growing people's army and revolutionary united front of the people. And it has a solid organization bound by the principle of democratic centralism and based on the revolutionary mass organizations. It has extensive relations of proletarian internationalism with communist and working class parties and of anti-imperialist solidarity with the peoples of the world.

All these growing subjective factors are reinforced by the sharpening basic contradictions in the world today which increasingly favor the resurgence of the working class movement and proletarian revolution. These give a clearer internationalist framework for the Filipino working class to lead, at the head of the Filipino people by, in defining and achieving revolutionary tasks, in surmounting all difficulties and challenges, and in contributing to the historic mission of the world proletariat in emancipating itself and the entire humanity from the scourge of capitalism and imperialism and building a brighter and better future in socialism.

Long live the Kilusang Mayo Uno!

Expand and Strengthen the Workers' Movement!

Advance the national democratic struggle of the Filipino people!

Carry forward the red banner of proletarian internationalism!

Long live the world proletarian revolution!

Crisis, Plunder and War: Imperialist Agenda on Migration

(An Overview of the Current International Situation and How It Impacts and Drives Forced Migration)

Keynote speech to the 4th General Assembly of the International Migrants Alliance in Mexico City, November 5, 2018

Dear fellow activists and friends, thank you for inviting me to give the keynote speech to the 4th General Assembly of the International Migrants Alliance (IMA). I convey warmest greetings of solidarity from the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS) to the IMA and the representatives of grassroots organizations of migrants, immigrants and refugees, as well as advocates of their rights and well-being from Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Pacific, the United States, Canada, and Europe.

We in the ILPS welcome the assembly's highlighting of the 10 years of the IMA's banner of unity and solidarity among peoples displaced internationally by imperialist neoliberal globalization policies and war. The theme of the assembly is highly significant and timely: "March onwards to a world without forced migration: Migrants, refugees and peoples of the world unite and fight capitalist exploitation, plunder and war! Forge the strongest solidarity with the host people in effectively fighting imperialism!"

In consonance with your theme, I wish to discuss my assigned topic "Crisis, Plunder and War: Imperialist Agenda on Migration" as an overview of the current international situation and how it impacts and drives forced migration. I intend to be descriptive and provide you with the framework and some insights for your own discussion and planning.

I appreciate that you provide me as major points of reference such terms as "crisis, plunder and war". These terms refer clearly to social disasters for which the imperialists and their local reactionary allies in the underdeveloped countries are responsible. I shall deal with these terms to define the causes and driving factors of forced migration. But I shall also refer to the natural disasters that are induced and whose effects are aggravated by the imperialists and the local reactionaries because they do not care about the exploited and impoverished people who are vulnerable to such disasters.

The International Organization of Migration defines forced migration as "a migratory movement in which an element of coercion exists, including threats to life and livelihood, whether arising from natural or man-made causes (e.g., movements of refugees and internally displaced persons as well as people displaced by natural or environmental disasters, chemical or nuclear disasters, famine, or development projects)". According to UN DESA, two thirds of global refugees and in similar situations live in the Global South and only one-third find their way to the Global North.

The report of the UN Refugee Agency in its annual Global Trends study is shocking enough that 68.5 million people had been driven from their homes across the world as of the end of 2017. But the figure is easily much larger if the internally displaced people and the people who have sought refuge in neighboring countries are fully counted. Nevertheless, Global Trends reports that fully 85 percent of displaced people in developing countries remain in neighboring countries. They are desperately poor and receive little or no assistance from any government or international agency.

Crisis in underdeveloped countries

The general run of so-called developing countries are actually underdeveloped, agrarian, semifeudal and pre-industrial. They are impoverished, have high rates of unemployment and are in chronic crisis. They are dependent on the production of raw materials and some semi-manufactures for export, whose earnings are never enough to pay for the manufactured imports. They suffer from chronic trade and budgetary deficits. They have to resort to local and foreign borrowing to keep government running, pay for the amortization of the accumulated debt and finance the capital repatriation and profit remittances of the transnational corporations.

The chronic economic and financial crisis, which has been aggravated by the neoliberal policy regime, drives the growing surplus population to run after dwindling farm jobs in the rural areas and odd jobs in the urban areas. This is the kind of internal displacement of people from their homes that is not covered by the surveys of UN agencies and the NGOs. The unemployed who have finished at least high school education and have a viable amount of English can seek overseas migrant work. But even the unemployed who belong to the middle class and

have some years or degrees at university level also apply for overseas contract work.

The lack of industrial development and the export of raw materials are the basic cause of the high rate of unemployment causing domestic migration from one part of the countryside to another part or to city slums as well as the export of cheap labor as contract workers or undocumented workers. The element of coercion is not apparent as in the case of refugees due to political persecution, internal armed conflict and wars of aggression. But certainly there is the element of compulsion due to the need for economic survival.

The Philippines is an outstanding case in which more than ten percent (10 to 12 million) of its 107 million population are compelled to take employment abroad. This is more than 25 percent of the Philippine labor force of 44.1 million. The export of cheap Philippine labor, with a high proportion of women is subject to the high psychological and social costs of separation from families, unjust exactions by government and recruitment agencies, over-qualification for menial, dirty and dangerous jobs and lack or insufficiency of legal protection for their basic democratic rights and welfare.

The chronic crisis of the domestic semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system is always prone to aggravation by the ever worsening crisis of the world capitalist system. Since the Asian financial crisis of 1977, the Philippines has suffered sharp falls in the prices of raw materials and semi-manufactures and has thereby been further driven to export cheap labor in order to augment foreign loans and foreign direct investments and cope with the perennial balance of payments problem. Since the financial crisis of 2008, the demand for the types of products the Philippines exports has lessened drastically in the course of the stagnation and depression of the world market.

Like the rest of migrant workers from various developing countries, the Filipino migrant workers face the worsening economic and political crisis in the host countries. Most host countries are afflicted by stagnant economies and high levels of public debt. The reactionary currents of fascism, chauvinism, racism and religious bigotry are rising to prejudice the rights and welfare of migrant workers. But there are also progressive forces among the host people that are in solidarity with such organizations as IMA and its component organizations.

Plunder by the imperialists and their local reactionary accomplices

In the era of modern imperialism or monopoly capitalism, the imperialist states and their banks and corporations have exported surplus capital in the form of loans and direct investments to the underdeveloped countries, be they colonies, semicolonies and dependent states. When the imperialists and their puppets speak of development, they mean improving the infrastructure (the roads, bridges and ports) to facilitate the trade between the raw material exports and manufactured imports. They also build hydro-electric dams to generate electricity and provide irrigation to the farms mainly of landlords and agri-corporations. They do not mean industrial development to lift the captive country from the conditions of underdevelopment, class exploitation and mass poverty.

Under the neoliberal policy regime, private construction has been favored to promote and accelerate consumption and the service sector that are dependent on manufactured imports and foreign loans. It has not led to the production of steel and other metals, machine tools and other products that spell industrialization of an underdeveloped country. In any case, the development of the infrastructure has accelerated the expansion of mining, logging and plantation operations of foreign corporations and their big comprador, landlord and bureaucrat accomplices. Their operations have resulted in the grabbing of the land from the indigenous people and the poor peasant settlers and the destruction of the environment with various disastrous consequences to agriculture, husbandry, fisheries and forestry.

Foreign-financed dam projects have resulted in the outright displacement of entire communities, their graveyards and other cultural stakes. The displaced communities usually receive token governmental compensation and assistance for the destruction of their homes and means of livelihood. Deforestation has resulted in disastrous cycles of flooding and droughts and the disappearance of water sheds and cover from typhoons. Open-pit mining has permanently ruined the landscape and has produced heavy outflows of cyanide and other chemicals to poison marine life in the rivers and damage agriculture of the indigenous people and poor peasants. The mono-crop plantations for export grab the land and the pesticides they use ruin the crops in nearby farms.

Since the 1980s under the neoliberal policy regime favoring private construction for the higher comfort of the upper classes and higher-paid salariat, the real estate firms have built shopping malls, residential subdivisions, high-rise condominiums, plush hotels, golf courses and beach resorts and have increasingly resulted in land grabbing and the eviction of both urban and rural poor. Relative to the rapid growth of population, the land devoted to the production of food staples as well as for prospective land reform synchronized with industrial development

has been drastically reduced.

By the very expansion of the mining, logging and plantation operations of the foreign and local corporations and the building of hydro-electric dams, the indigenous peoples have lost their land, forest and marine resources in violation of their right to self-determination and their right to ancestral domain. So do their peasant brothers and sisters suffer from land dispossession in adjoining rural areas. In areas around or close to transportation hubs, the poor residents are also being evicted.

All the people who are forcibly evicted suffer grievously from pseudo-development, sometimes called "development aggression". When they protest against their dispossession of homes and land and assert their rights, they are accused of being rebels and insurgents in a vain attempt of puppet authorities to isolate and attack them brutally. It is important that the grassroots organizations of IMA in the underdeveloped countries stand and fight for the rights and welfare of the people subjected to displacement in their own countries by programs and projects of pseudo-development.

Wars as a cause of displacing people

In the long history of mankind, wars are the biggest cause of people's forced migration and displacement. In recent history, inter-imperialist wars like World War I and World War II resulted in massive destruction of lives and property and forced migrations of people. In the course of the Cold War, the wars of aggression unleashed by US imperialism such as those in Korea and Indochina, were hugely deadly and destructive and caused massive forced migrations.

After the Cold War ended, the US took advantage of the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union in order to carry out a series of aggressive wars in the former Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Sudan, Somalia and Syria. The US, Israel and the NATO are culpable for the destruction of millions of lives and social infrastructure, religious strife, ethnic cleansing, displacement of people within and across nearby countries in Central Asia, South Asia, Middle East and Africa and the forced migration of displaced people to Western Europe. Certain governments aligned to the US like those of Israel, Saudi Arabia and Myanmar have also carried out offensives to force the migration or flight of the Palestinian, Zaidi (Houthi) and Rohingya peoples, respectively.

The forced migration of people have also been caused by repressive puppet regimes that become fascist and engage in campaigns of political persecution and wage civil wars against the people and/or against minority nationalities. Most forced migrations are within the country or across a neighboring country. Even after the peace agreement between the Philippine reactionary government and the Moro National Liberation Front, hundreds of thousands of Tausugs from Sulu remain in Sabah because they have no more land and means of livelihood to return to.

Only a relatively few displaced people manage to travel far and become asylum seekers in the developed or advanced capitalist countries, headed by US imperialism, which in fact is the biggest cause of forced migration of peoples. In recent decades, the flow of displaced people from Africa, Middle East and Central Asia to Europe have been frequent news in the Western press. But never has it been mentioned adequately that they are the victims of the wars of aggression, military intervention and plunder by the NATO countries headed by US imperialism.

We in the ILPS salute IMA for standing up and fighting for the rights and interests of the people who become displaced in their country as a result of the economic and political crisis of the ruling system, as a result of plunder and dispossession by foreign and local corporations and by wars of aggression, military intervention and domestic armed conflict or civil wars. We support all your efforts to extend moral and material assistance to all victims of forced migration and to build solidarity among them and with all peoples who adhere to the principle of national self-determination, democracy, equality, social justice and intercultural and international solidarity.

Long live the International Migrants Alliance!

Defend and promote the rights and welfare of the migrants and refugees!

Long live international solidarity of migrants, refugees and host peoples!

November 7, 2018

Joyful greetings to Kalipunan ng Damayang Mahihirap (Mutual Help Association of the Poor)! Two decades of struggle for wages, jobs, housing, social service and human rights. Two decades of serving as the militant center of urban poor in the entire country and enlightening millions of the poor so as to achieve national democracy and socialism.

Militant history of KADAMAY

Even before KADAMAY was established, the urban poor had already shown a significant role in the mass movement, especially during the time of the Marcos dictatorship. Organizing among the urban poor allowed a base for many wanted organizers during the Marcos fascist martial law. These communities became a source of many mass activists who joined and mobilized tens of thousands to topple Marcos.

From 1975, poor Filipinos suffered the violence of demolitions brought about by Presidential Decree 722 or the Anti-squatting Law. The residents were violently dispersed and pushed into the mire of poverty.

However, at the same time, the struggle to defend homes flared up from attack by the state. Unfortunately some organizations turned to reformism and collaboration to get concessions from the government; instead of raising the consciousness of the masses while fully exposing the injustice while gaining the sympathy of the public.

I think this is what KADAMAY has shown in its history and it is but fitting to honor. The key and keen analysis is to correctly lead the struggle and interest of the masses, while taking a strong stand against reformism, collaboration and Right opportunism.

Exploitative and repressive Duterte regime

Under the US-Duterte regime, the semicolonial and semifeudal society is deeply steeped in crisis. The country's economy has been brought to the peak of enslavement while the cronies, associates and foreign capitalists from the US and China are being benefited.

The mass movement must confront the double burden of TRAIN law and Build, Build, Build (BBB). Until now, the mantra of the Duterte economic managers is that TRAIN will bear good long-term results for the economy. BBB in particular is being drummed up by the regime as the solution to the continuous market price rises of basic necessities.

In fact, it is the biggest cause of the soaring prices of basic goods and services, and the impoverishment of the Filipino masses because it is to them that the tax burden is passed on from the corporations and the rich. Simultaneous inflation, joblessness, and depressed wages are their lot. Such is the cruelty of the violence of daily exploitation.

The implementation of BBB is an order of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. It will be implemented by the regime for the country to be able to get loans and continue the vicious exploitative cycle of tying the Philippines to the imperialist powers.

Competition and rivalry are intensifying among the imperialists but they still unite on exploiting underdeveloped countries like the Philippines under the neoliberal police regime. They are all offering loans to the Philippines to boost sales of their surplus manufactures and earn superprofits from bloated prices of building infrastructure projects with high-interest loans.

The government lacks resources for implementing. Thus it is falling all over itself in seeking foreign loans from Japan, South Korea, US and EU. The Duterte regime now cling to loans from China and contracts from Chinese corporations, in exchange for the treasonous mortgaging of the natural wealth in the West Philippine Sea and other areas in our country.

Chinese loans per se have the highest interest rates and on top contracts, equipment and materials from China for these projects are overpriced. About 60 to 79 percent of the workers are from China. It is not true that BBB generates huge employment for Filipinos. Unemployment, depressed wages and rising prices will worsen.

Billions of funds are collected from taxes to further pour funds into anti-people projects and enable Duterte to boast of false development. At the same time, the growing expenses for the military and police strengthen the

brutal iron hand against the working masses in the entire country. But the provisions for such social services as education, health and housing have been drastically reduced. The urban poor are not only being pushed to the edge of death and hunger but are also being killed en masse. Duterte's hold on the majority of the members of the ruling class is relatively weak. The struggle and competition among the various factions of the ruling class are obvious. Thus Duterte collaborates with the worst plunderers in the country such as the Marcoses and Gloria Macapagal Arroyo.

Simultaneous to this is the cultivation of the PNP and AFP, the mad dogs being used to suppress his critics and stop any opposition. In exchange, the reactionary army and police are given the license to launch all-out war against the people for the benefit of the rotten ruling system of big compradors, landlords and corrupt bureaucrats.

The rewards are gross for those in the top brass and rank and file of the police and military for undertaking mass murder, illegal arrests, bombing, forced mass evacuation, land and house grabbing and other fascist attacks.

Since the beginning, the urban poor have been the Duterte regime's target in his so-called war against drugs. Shortly after, his entire scheme has been exposed as a war against the poor. It is a policy that he cannot release because it serves his own pretentious, greedy and fascist agenda.

In fact, the regime is terrified by the growing number of poor Filipinos who are intensely angry at Duterte. He will do everything to prop up efforts to overturn the negative public perception in a futile bid to wreck the unity of the poor. New tactics are being added to the existing mass killings, widespread arrests and mass intimidation.

In the past year, KADAMAY remained firm and once again showed its correct analysis and method for advancing the national democratic struggle. When it launched the occupation of abandoned housing, it exposed the ceaseless state corruption. The government was forced to the wall and put on the defensive.

The people's struggle is decisive

Above all, KADAMAY proved that the leadership and success of the mass movement do not depend on any reactionary state policy. In fact, it is the struggle of the masses that is decisive in the course of politics. And at the higher level it is also the crusher of any fang being shown to us by the enemy.

This is the lesson that should not be forgotten and should be further practiced at various times throughout the country. We push the reactionary government to follow the reasonable demands of the people for decent housing and future. We prove to the masses that we are capable of winning and it is just for them to trust us in acting together and in guiding the entire national democratic movement.

That is certainly only the first in what will be a series of victories. KADAMAY has an important role to play in ousting Duterte. The communities have the worst accumulated forms of fascist and economic attack on the people.

When the poor-mocking arrogance of the big bourgeoisie is overwhelmed and the supporters of the working class struggle, we shall see the extraordinary unity and strength of the people. KADAMAY has sufficient strength and experience for applying the national democratic class analysis to reach, transform and direct the anger of the masses, especially the working class and semi-proletariat against the reactionary state.

This means that the eruption of many more local struggles would lead to steps taking national form in uniting the broad anti-Duterte front. Furthermore it is the most effective way for increasing and training mass activists and organizers nationwide; and advance the mass movement toward complete victory of the national democratic revolution and the start of the socialist future.

Long live KADAMAY!

Long live the national democratic struggle!

Overthrow imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat-capitalism!

Expand, Strengthen and Consolidate the Progressive Movement of Overseas Filipino Workers in Hong Kong

Message to the 16th Congress of United Filipinos in Hong Kong-Migrante-HK

November 25, 2018

We in the International League of Peoples' Struggle extend our deep solidarity with the United Filipinos in Hong Kong-Migrante-HK on its 16th Congress.

We salute you for your accumulated victories since your 15th Congress. We have full confidence that you would sum up your experience, rely on your victories and strengths, overcome your weaknesses and shortcomings, and set your tasks for advancing the migrants' rights and interests in Hong Kong.

The theme and objectives that you have set for your congress is important, appropriate and timely: "Expand, strengthen and consolidate the progressive movement of overseas Filipino workers (OFW) in Hong Kong. Make the US-Duterte regime answerable and fight it for its attacks on the rights and livelihood of the migrants and the people."

One-fourth of Philippine labor force is abroad due to the backward character and absence of adequate jobs in the country. Currently, the Duterte regime admits that more than one-fifth of the labor force are unemployed and stay in the Philippines, not counting the numerous underemployed.

The Duterte regime has done almost nothing to help the OFWs even as the fees previously charged from them are already enormous and are now still being increased. The foreign exchange earned from OFW remittances go to the hands of foreign companies and big compradors. These are not being used to put up industries so as to develop the economy and create jobs in the Philippines.

Duterte promised he would put up industries but he killed the peace negotiations and refused the Comprehensive Agreement on Social and Economic Reforms containing the program for national industrialization and economic development; and agrarian reform and rural development.

Instead, he is wasting public funds to bribe the military and police into becoming his private army, to corrupt the bureaucracy, to put up infrastructure projects from which he can easily steal; and to maintain the traditional exchange of raw materials and semi-manufactures from the Philippines and of manufactures from abroad.

Due to the large budget and foreign trade deficits, and large interests on Philippine foreign debt, taxes have been raised and imposed on prices of basic commodities and services.

Our natural wealth in oil, gas and other resources in the West Philippine Sea and other places in the Philippines are our most important resources for industrial development. But Duterte has exchanged all these for Chinese loans at high interest rates for overpriced infrastructure projects. This is driven by Duterte's and his cronies' treason and greed. The Chinese have bribed them to violate and sell out the Filipino people's sovereignty and patrimony.

Through unjust killings and impunity, Duterte wishes to intimidate and sow fear among the people. He wishes to impose martial law, either de facto or proclaimed, over the entire country, so as to control election results next year and establish a fascist dictatorship through charter change for a fake federalism over which he would dominate as fascist dictator and command regional and provincial warlords and dynasties.

The Filipino people must unite to fight and oust the Duterte regime. Should this remain in power, it would inflict many more intense sufferings on the people. We must reject and overthrow this tyrannical, treasonous, cruel, corrupt, exploitative and deceptive regime!

Long live the United Filipinos in Hong Kong-Migrante-HK!

Expand, strengthen and consolidate the progressive movement of overseas Filipino workers in Hong Kong!

Advance the movement to oust the US-Duterte regime!

Struggle for national freedom and democracy!

Long live the Filipino people!

Boldly Expand and Strive to Oust the Duterte Regime

**Message of Solidarity to the 8th International Congress
of Migrante International, December 15, 2018**

As Chairperson of the International Coordinating Committee of the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS), I convey warmest greetings of solidarity from the entire ILPS to Migrante International on its 8th International Congress.

We share with you your joy in celebrating your accumulated and recent achievements in your steadfast work in upholding, defending and promoting the rights and interests of Filipino migrant workers and looking after the welfare of their families in the Philippines.

We support your thematic call, "Boldly expand our reach and lead the struggle of overseas Filipinos and their families to oust Duterte!". Indeed, the Filipino people must do everything possible to end as soon as possible this tyrannical, treasonous, brutal and corrupt regime.

The economic and political crisis of the semicolonial and semifeudal system has become worse with aggravations done by the US-Duterte regime. The Filipino people are therefore eager to oust this regime and relieve themselves of their most intense sufferings.

These among others result from the soaring prices of basic goods and services, the sell-out of Philippine sovereign rights and national patrimony to foreign corporations and foreign banks, and the mass murders and other brutalities of state terrorism as the tyrant Duterte pushes through his scheme of full-blown fascist dictatorship.

Migrante International chapters, leaders and members can contribute a great deal to the ouster of the Duterte regime and advance the national democratic movement not only in the Philippines through their families and friends but also abroad through overseas Filipino communities and organizations of other peoples in solidarity with them in their host countries.

Migrante International must avail of and promote the anti-imperialist solidarity of peoples in view of the worsening crisis of the world capitalist system, the rise of ultra-rightist movements abroad and the urgent need for the working people to assert democratic rights, strengthen the anti-imperialist and democratic movement and fight for better conditions now and for a bright future of greater freedom, democracy social justice, economic development, cultural progress and world peace.

Long live Migrante International!

Long live the Filipino migrant workers!

Long live the Filipino people!

On the Yellow Vest Movement in France

March 19, 2019

On 17 November 2018, 300,000 people of the working class and the middle class mainly from the suburban and rural areas of France rose up in militant mass demonstrations to protest the fuel tax hike and rising fuel prices. Characteristically, they wore the yellow vest to signal their economic and social distress. They had been inspired by an online petition signed by almost one million people.

Eighteen mass demonstrations, centered in Paris and carried out nationwide, broke out up to the most recent one of March 16, 2019 dubbed as “The Ultimatum”. The just demands of the yellow vest movement have expanded from the lowering of fuel taxes to the re-introduction of the solidarity tax on wealth, increase of the minimum wage, expansion of social services, the implementation of citizen’s initiative referendums and the resignation of President Macron and his regime.

The Macron regime has responded with a heavy hand by launching physical attacks by the police on the demonstrators with the use of water cannons, tear gas grenades, flash balls and baton charges.

It is but just that the demonstrators have fought back with the use of sticks, cobblestones, car blockades, control of roads and roundabouts, destruction of traffic surveillance cameras, the burning of the expensive cars of the big bourgeois and mass entries to the upper class restaurants and shops.

The yellow vest demonstrators enjoy the support of the broad masses of the people who condemn Macron, the investment banker turned president, as the promoter and enforcer of the neoliberal policy which favors the big bourgeoisie and its best-paid executives at the expense of the workers and the rural people. They are enraged by the use of police violence during mass actions and by the false promises made by Macron before and after every mass action.

The yellow vest movement has influenced similar mass movements in Europe and elsewhere in the world, whose participants wear the yellow vest and raise demands against the tax and other exploitative policies of the big bourgeois government. Most of the influenced movements have a benign and progressive character directed against the exploitative policies of bourgeois governments. But a few are directed against migrant workers and others unrelated to the monopoly bourgeoisie.

The yellow vest movement may be favorably compared with the May 1968 mass protests in France, especially with regard to militancy and opposition to the capitalist establishment. But it suffers from the same excessively horizontal populist character and the lack of leadership from a revolutionary party of the proletariat. It may also be compared with the Occupy Movement of recent memory, which enjoyed popular support for a certain period. But this fizzled out for lack of leadership from a revolutionary party of the proletariat.

At any rate, such a phenomenon as the yellow vest movement is welcome and praiseworthy for taking up the just grievances of the working class and the middle class and exposing the grave ills of the oppressive and exploitative capitalist ruling system. It shows that there is a wide and deep-going mass base of social discontent and resistance that the Marxist-Leninist revolutionary party of the proletariat can avail of in winning the battle for democracy and aiming for the socialist revolution.

Defend the Rights and Welfare of Migrants and their Families

Message to the Second Congress of Migrante Europe

December 8, 2019

Dear compatriots and friends, I wish to convey warmest greetings of solidarity to Migrante Europe as a whole and to all the delegations present in this Second Congress of Migrante Europe. This is an occasion to take stock of the situation, celebrate the achievements, identify problems to be solved and set forth the tasks and methods to further strengthen Migrante Europe in the whole of Europe and in particular countries.

This is the time for you to renew your determination to serve the Filipino migrants and their families and I appreciate highly that in the theme of the congress definite tasks are already put forward. You must strengthen your unity and expand your ranks in order to raise your capabilities for social investigation and for arousing, organizing and mobilizing the migrant workers and their families. I presume you will be learning more about the general and specific conditions of the migrants and their families, tracing and deploying more organizers and instructors and carrying out campaigns to engage the migrants and their families.

You must promote and defend the rights and welfare of the migrants and their families in the face of adversities due to a reactionary Philippine government that is good at offering cheap labor to foreign employers and at collecting all sorts of fees but is bad at serving the migrants and in effect their families as well as tremendous odds due to worsening crisis of the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system in the Philippines and that of the world capitalist system which generate the conditions for escalating oppression and exploitation.

It is important to understand the general conditions and factors related to the overriding tasks of promoting and defending the rights and welfare of the migrants and their families so that they themselves can speak out and act in their just interest and gain the solidarity and support of the Filipino people, the host people and the people of the world.

You must raise the political consciousness and ability of the migrants and their families to contribute to and participate in the struggle for national freedom and democracy against the forces of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. These forces perpetuate the conditions of underdevelopment, unemployment and mass poverty and compel millions of Filipinos to seek employment abroad. It is an appalling fact that at least half of the Philippine labor force of 44 million cannot be employed by the Philippine economy: 12 million people have to be employed abroad and still 10 million remain unemployed.

We are confronted today by the extremely traitorous, tyrannical, genocidal, corrupt and deceptive Duterte regime. This is a regime that wastes the foreign exchange remittances of migrant workers and uses them not for economic and social development but for import-dependent consumption, assurance of superprofits for imperialist and big comprador firms and banks and feeding bureaucratic and military corruption.

It is therefore the duty of Migrante Europe, the migrants and their families to exert all possible efforts to contribute to and participate in the struggle to end the Duterte regime within the context of the struggle for national freedom and democracy against the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system.

Long live Migrante Europe!

Defend the rights and welfare of migrants and their families!

Advance the national democratic movement!

Long live the Filipino people!

Long live international solidarity!

The Workers Movement: Challenges and the Future in the Current Pandemic and Economic Crisis

August 15, 2020

Dear fellow activists, I am happy to know that the JMS School which was launched in 2010 will be revived and now it is a partner of various organizations that are part of BAYAN-Metro Manila in presenting this discussion on the topic "The labor movement: challenges and future in current pandemic and economic crisis".

It is good that you have a major emphasis on organizing among the working class because in the Metro Manila region there are many working class people. The labor movement only deserves to face their problems as a result of the pandemic and economic crisis and learn to implement possible solutions in the short and long term.

I. The pandemic and economic crisis

Before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, there was already a serious crisis of the global capitalist system due to the crisis exacerbated by the overproduction of the neoliberal policy and rapid spending for the military and the launching of wars of aggression. Basically, the crisis of overproduction means an increase in capital in the hands of monopoly capitalists and a decrease in the income of the workers and thus a decrease in their ability to purchase the products they produce.

In addition to exploiting the production process by extracting surplus value from the largest share of value created by the workers, the bourgeois state imposes taxes on the consumer masses while lowering the taxes on the capitalists, reducing spending for social services (in health, education, housing and others) and increasing spending for the military and wars of aggression.

In the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system in the Philippines, the neoliberal policy also further reduced the income of the workers and the government even imposed a large tax on the basic goods that they buy and therefore at the same time the reduction of wages and the increase in the price of things to buy. Despite this, the profits of monopolies, big compradors, landlords and corrupt officials who live in luxury are growing and spending on corruption, military and police and projects that are of no use to the toiling masses are increasing.

When the COVID-19 pandemic arrived, the Duterte regime did not take measures to prevent it from spreading, but instead allowed half a million Chinese tourists and gamblers into the casino for more than two months. When the lockdown began in March, mass testing and aid were promised to those who would lose their jobs. Instead, what Duterte and his accomplices have done is stealing hundreds of billions of pesos from the public fund, borrowing trillions more in the name of the pandemic and suppressing the masses who are deprived of aid and blamed for reprimands.

Duterte and his allies have terrorized the masses, suppressed the right to free expression, railroaded the state terrorism law and prepared for Duterte to rule beyond 2022 through charter change and the supposed existence of federalism and parliamentarism. The reign of greed and cruelty of a small gang of oligarchs in Duterte's leadership against the Filipino people is now happening in the Philippines. This results in unrest and further resistance of the Filipino masses against Duterte's tyrant, traitor, executioner, plunderer and tyrannical regime.

II. Public grievances and lawsuits

There is too much oppression and exploitation of the Filipino people, especially the child laborers. If so, they cannot be stopped from voicing grievances and lawsuits. All over the country, they are doing protest actions. The role of the masses fighting against the regime in the central region of the country is important because it signals the struggle at the national level. At the same time, the armed revolutionaries in the countryside are trying to launch offensives so as to strengthen the ruling party, mass organizations and organs of political power.

Through the legal struggle, the Filipino masses are insisting to stop the militaristic policy of the regime and not block the medical solution to the epidemic, give the promised aid to the masses who have lost their jobs, have an open accounting of the government's expenses, return to the the jobs and other livelihoods that have been lost in the easiest time, hold the thieves and other criminals in the Duterte regime accountable and oust the tyrant Duterte who is admitted to be useless in fighting the pandemic and vendor of Philippine sovereign rights to China.

Every time Duterte speaks in public, the statements are more chaotic and crazy and it is more obvious that he

has no plans to fight the pandemic and stop the economic collapse. As the pandemic worsens and the economy collapses, Duterte's words are pure bluster to hide the blatant theft of public funds in the name of the pandemic and to intensify the blame and intimidation of the Filipino people.

It is the urgent duty of the Filipino people to oust Duterte from power. The Filipino people have rich experience in ousting a fascist dictator like Marcos. They can oust the scumbag and crazy executioner and looter like Duterte. Strengthen and mobilize a broad united mass base of hardworking people, middle strata and conservatives who hate or hate the monstrous crimes of the Duterte regime.

The movement to oust the monster Duterte is once again a great opportunity for the legal forces of the national democratic movement to strengthen. At the same time, it will be decisive to strengthen the people's democratic revolution through people's war to ensure that the ousting of one monster will not only produce other monsters and the rotten ruling system will remain but will pave the way for the great advancement of the people's revolutionary movement. Filipino

III. Just peace and permanent revolutionary struggle

If in the ousting of Duterte, a wide range of patriotic and progressive forces will prevail, it is possible to have a just peace through peace talks according to The Hague Joint Declaration as a framework. It is a big success that there is a Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law.

Providing the foundation of a just peace will be accelerated if there is a program of real land reform and national industrialization based on self-reliance and with a large supply from the estimated USD 26 trillion worth of oil and gas that is in the exclusive economic zone of the Philippines in the West Philippine Sea. Will get technology for its rise without fooling Chinese or US imperialism.

Should Duterte be able to keep himself or his puppet in power beyond 2022, it means that he has successfully used force and deception and suppressed the growing ouster movement. In other words, there is nothing the Filipino people can do to win but to participate in the armed revolution that is already underway on a national scale. Thus, Duterte's victory is only temporary and a great storm of armed revolution will come back and topple him.

Another possibility is that there is a military group that will seize power against the Filipino people. If this happens, the democratic revolution of the people must also be fought vigorously. The best way to easily oust Duterte is to replace him with the vice president as a result of the withdrawal of military support from Duterte for the patriotic and democratic cause. This is better than replacing Duterte with his puppet or a reactionary military group.

Right now, there are many officials within the reactionary military who believe that Duterte has ruined the Philippines because of the excessive oppression and exploitation of the people and also because of his betrayal of being the seller of the sovereign rights of the Philippines to China. . Officials who support Duterte in the treacherous line of serving the two imperialist masters, the US and China, are in the minority. There is a possibility of replacing the insane president with the vice president in accordance with the principle of constitutional succession.

No matter what happens, the broad masses of Filipinos must be ready to fight so that the monsters of the rotten ruling system do not prevail. Were Dutertes not ousted or were replaced by a monster like him, the Filipino people and revolutionary forces will only have a better chance to continue the fight until the total victory of the new democratic revolution with a socialist perspective.

Questions on Wages, Prices, Profit and Wage, Labor and Capital

October 8, 2020

1. How do we explain the low wages in the Philippines? Why is the wage of a worker in the Philippines different from that in other countries for the same work or product being made (vehicles, piers, electronics and the like)?

JMS: Two considerations of the capitalist in the Philippines or in any other another country in determining the wage for the worker: a) It is enough for the subsistence of the worker, and b) it must keep it down to be able to extract more surplus value.

2. Why is contractualization considered "attack on wages"? How do the various types of contractualization (daily rate, piece rate, pakyawan, seasonal, per project and others) attack the wages of workers. What does the capitalist profit from this?

JMS: In the absence of job tenure and full rights of the workers, the capitalist can extract more surplus value from the workers under threat of being removed from work easily and the general wage level can be lowered because of the lack of job tenure and full rights of workers. No job security, no social benefits. This is how endo or contractualization works, whether daily rate, piece rate, pakyawan, seasonal, per project and the like.

3. It is said that there are 2 methods for capitalists to generate surplus value or surplus profit: 1) absolute surplus value or extension of labor time and; 2) relative surplus value or the increase of productivity using modern technology. In the context of the Philippines, which brings more value?

JMS: A measure of the full value of a commodity is the average labor time applied by workers. The absolute value calculated in the 19th century due to excessive working hours, reached 12 to 18 hours in the first half of the century and decreased to 10 hours in the late years of the 19th century. In the 20th century it was eight hours. But with the shortening of the labor time, there is a speed up through the machine and conveyor belt that increases the excess amount or surplus that is taken from the worker. That is called the relative value which is possible and even higher than the former absolute value.

4. In a semicolonial and semifeudal society where the comprador bourgeoisie predominates, unlike in advanced countries where the industrial bourgeoisie predominates, how is surplus value determined or acquired? How is the price of commodities or products determined? How is the wages of workers determined here? Is it the same in advanced capitalist countries? If not, what is the difference?

JMS: What is called capital is the equipment, raw materials and the factory plant. They are the result of former labor power, so capital is called dead labor. Whether or not any part of capital is imported, no new value is created by it, It is living labor or renewed labor power that creates value in new commodities.

5. What is the exact application of "Wage, Price, Profit" and "Wage Labor and Capital" during the pandemic where many companies, factories and establishments have closed around the world and here in the Philippines, and this' y resulted in the collapse of the economy and led to the bankruptcy of businesses, and eventually mass layoffs of workers from their employed jobs?

JMS: In the law of the bourgeoisie, the pandemic is a fortuitous event, in their logic the bourgeoisie is not responsible for the occurrence and it doesn't matter that they are no longer responsible for the previous employment contract and wages. They will simply say, the workers did not work and we have no income, we will not pay wages to those who did not work, But the capitalist is still ahead of getting a bailout from the government and the bourgeois government can easily say that the funds for unemployment relief.

6. In the service sector is found the largest number of Filipino workers as a semi-colonial and semi-feudal society. How is surplus value obtained in the following that includes service workers that are characteristic of the country:

- a. call center agents/BPOs
- b. sales lady/sales man in department stores
- c. bank tellers

JMS: In the industrial capitalist system, no worker even in the service sector can say that he produced the entire commodity or service because it is made by many workers, It is necessary to add up all the labor time and value of their product or service to know the average necessary labor time spent on each unit of product.

7. Widespread unemployment, with or without a pandemic, is inherent in the Philippines and is considered a crisis.

How does the unemployment crisis and the squeezing of excess value from workers affect wages?

JMS: If unemployment is high, capitalism has a greater opportunity to lower wages because it is easy for capitalists to pick up unemployed people who can easily accept lower wages. It is called the unemployed reserve army of labor or surplus population that is consumed by cheap labor. If wages are low, the surplus value is greater than the profit.

8. As a result of the pandemic, capitalists have taken many health measures to adapt to it and one of them is digital transactions (online banking, beep cards, cashless payment and others). How are workers oppressed under digital transactions and how does the flow and accumulation of capital accelerate from it? What is the proper way to deal with digital transactions?

JMS: The main problem is that the workers have no income and no aid. If so, they have little or no money to go through digital transactions. Digital transactions are another type of wall that the cashless can't talk to, a barrier between capitalists and government officials.

9. Are we seeing the advancement of the Philippines from the traditional product exchange using physical money to a credit system as a result of digital transactions? Has the financialization of capital in the country been developed because of this?

JMS: This is not financialization as in the US where it is assumed that even though manufacturing disappears, be transferred to China and other cheap labor countries, they will earn from financial transactions (loans) and big item transactions from the military-industrial complex. The pandemic is being blamed for doing digital transactions and preventing the spread of the pandemic. Digital operations constitute technical advance but not economic and financial advance. It is not because you have a computer that you can raise the level in economics and finance.

10. Do the Trotskyists, around the world and in the Philippines, have an equivalent study, counterpoint or debunk, regarding Karl Marx's "Wages, Prices, Profits" and "Wage Labor and Capital"? What is it and its fundamental differences from the teachings of Karl Marx?

JMS: Trotsky himself was theoretically weak in the fields of philosophy, political economy and social science. Their talent is being an orator or writer against the obvious enemy such as Tsars, capitalists and landlords. He is confused about the most important issues of what to do at the strategic level to win the proletariat and build socialism.

Like Trotsky, the Trotskyists were good at criticizing imperialism and capitalists. Some of them have a deep knowledge of criticism of imperialism and capitalism. But they are confused by being anti-Marxist and anti-Leninist when discussing socialist construction and what are the stages and steps to be taken.

In Appreciation Of Immanuel Ness' Book Organizing Insurgency: Workers' Movements in the Global South

June 7, 2021

Dear friends, I thank the Pluto Press and Prof. Immanuel Ness for inviting me to speak on his book, *Organizing Insurgency: Workers' Movements in the Global South*. I convey warmest greetings of solidarity to all participating in this event.

I congratulate Prof. Ness for making a major critique of the neoliberal dogma that the capitalist class is the creator of social wealth and that by all means the bourgeois state must enable the capitalist class to accelerate the accumulation and concentration of capital by: pressing down wages and maximizing the extraction of surplus value, undermining trade union and other democratic rights, eroding job security and social benefits hard won by the workers, increasing tax cutbacks for the benefit of corporations, privatizing profitable public assets, liberalizing trade and investments, deregulating the abuse of labor, children, women and the environment and denationalizing the economies of the global South.

By examining and analyzing the practice and consequences of neoliberal capitalism in the global South, Prof. Ness exposes the massive transfer of wealth from the workers to the capitalists, the super-exploitation of the urban and rural proletariat, the widening inequality between the capitalist class and the working people and the rapid impoverishment of the latter. He points out that the urban and rural workers of the global South carry the world on their shoulders.

He debunks completely the notion that under the neoliberal rule of unbridled greed the monopoly corporations can bring about the high tide that lifts both the big ships and small boats or the overflow of wealth at the tip of the pyramid would trickle down to the rest of society.

In his book Prof. Ness points out that the global North takes advantage of the less developed economies of the global South (which has 84 percent of the world's population) and engages in super-exploitation by taking their export of cheap raw materials and cheap labor in exchange for higher-priced manufactured imports as well as by developing global supply chains whereby the value of the primary commodities and semi-manufactures is transferred to the global North.

But even then the monopoly bourgeoisie undermines itself in its own home grounds by outsourcing manufacturing, producing mainly the bigger items for higher profits and financializing the economy. The long term consequence for the working class in the global North is the reduction of employment and income and the increased frequency of rounds of the crisis of overproduction.

In general terms, the workers in the global North are better off than those in the South. But their respective levels of working and living conditions keep on going down and deteriorating. They are losing jobs and earning less. Even the middle class is decreasing significantly. The monopoly bourgeoisie notices that even the cheaper consumer goods from the global supply chains strung out in the South are no longer enough to compensate for the increasing loss of jobs in the North.

Organizing Insurgency: Workers' Movements in the Global South is excellent at focusing on the working class in the global South and exposing the terrible consequences of neoliberal globalization. It debunks the notion that neoliberal globalization has resulted in the urbanization and development of the global South by simply pointing out that urban populations have indeed increased but the rural populations have also increased at a faster rate as the breeding ground for cheap labor, the reserve army of labor and the footloose workers commuting between the rural and urban areas. Moreover, urban poor settlements more squalid than the rural communities have arisen due to the migration of the semi-proletariat or seasonal odd jobbers from the rural areas.

The urban and rural workers of the global South suffer the main brunt of the worsened conditions of exploitation and oppression under the neoliberal policy of imperialist globalization. The multinational corporations do not care about the well-balanced development of any client-economy. They invest only in the projects or enterprises from which they can get the highest and quickest possible profits by using cheap raw materials and cheap labor and by simply trading what are produced abroad.

Prof. Ness presents three case studies to show how the multinational corporations and the local big

compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists engage in the super-exploitation and impoverishment of the working people in the global South, particularly the primitive steel manufacturing for the global consumer market in Wazirpur, India; the system of agricultural commodity production for the global North in Mindanao, Philippines and the corporate restructuring, labor brokering and working-class mobilization in post-apartheid South Africa.

Prof. Ness debunks the claim of certain Indian economists and Western observers that the Indian working class is well-trained and skilled in modern production techniques. He avers that, despite the fact that there are high-technology centers in India, the Indian workforce is predominantly semi-proletarian and agrarian. Most of the industrial activity is at a primitive or crude level under extreme conditions of poverty, both in the rural countryside and in the major urban centers. The working and living conditions of workers in Delhi's Wazirpur Industrial Area are reminiscent of Dickensian nineteenth-century England.

The industrial zone uses workers at extremely low wages and under dangerous conditions to produce the stainless steel kitchen utensils and tableware goods for the global commodity supply chains. Thus, it is no surprise that the steelworkers have engaged in continuous struggles for two decades. Despite tremendous odds, the informal sector workers engage persistently in mass actions against the employers, with the support of resolute and militant support of a political organization of the workers.

Prof. Ness correctly describes the Philippine economy as a country dependent on the extraction of mineral resources, agricultural commodities, and on migrant labor for the global supply chain. It is at the bottom of this chain. It has not developed an industrial sector capable of producing machine tools, basic metals and basic chemicals. The production of bananas, pineapples, mangoes, and other exotic tropical fruits is done in big plantations in Mindanao that are owned and operated by a combination of MNCs, big compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists. Among the biggest agri-corporations are Dole, Del Monte, Fyffes, Sumitomo and Tadeco.

The plantation workers have no job tenure and are grossly underpaid. They are hired by labor contractors or brokers who are agents of the plantation owners, masquerade as leaders of rural workers' cooperatives to which the plantation workers pay membership dues. These so-called cooperatives are mere replications of the old cabo system of recruiting farm workers for haciendas. The Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) has done excellent work in arousing, organizing and mobilizing the plantations workers to fight for their political and economic rights and interests.

Prof. Ness points out that in post-apartheid South Africa 90 percent of the people remain in poverty and destitution, suffering from economic and social inequality despite the grant of political equality in the abstract. Thus, in the 2010s workers in the mining industry carried out strikes and struggled against the corrupt National Union of Mineworkers and the ruling African National Congress (ANC) and Tripartite Alliance which reinforced inequality. The April 2012 Marikana Massacre exposed the Tripartite Alliance Government as the instrument of the economic interests of the white minority, black compradors and multinational corporations at the expense of the South African black majority.

The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA) broke with the ANC and then was expelled from the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). NUMSA represented the urban manufacturing workers and opposed the Tripartite Alliance and helped in the formation of the United Front of community organizations, the South African Federation of Trade Unions, and the South African Revolutionary Workers Party to mobilize the black working class.

While NUMSA has stood for political opposition, social transformation, nationalization of strategic industries, redistribution and collectivization of lands, and the end of economic imperialism by foreign multinationals, workers have engaged in autonomous struggles against employers who have pushed workers into the subcontracting system in the informal economy. The Casual Workers Advice Office (CWAO) established unions among the growing number of workers recruited by labor contractors and brokers, and the workers in small and dispersed factories.

I appreciate Prof. Ness' calling attention to the growing significance of informal sector workers in urban settlements and agrarian regions to global supply chains, and to the need for labor mobilization and political struggles in these crucial geographic zones of the world. He stresses the significance of robust political organization in consolidating the gains of grass roots struggles and the practical potential in advancing effective struggles that may contribute to egalitarian social transformation.

I commend Prof. Ness for laying the basis and calling for organizing the insurgency of the workers. He gives due credit to the history and achievements of the proletarian revolutionary parties and socialist societies of the Soviet Union and China before they were undermined by modern revisionism and succumbed to capitalist restoration.

Definitely the workers must rise by building the trade unions, related social organizations, the workers' party and the political movements of the working class. And may I stress that there ought to be a revolutionary party of the proletariat guided by the theory of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and determined to carry out all possible and necessary forms of struggle towards national liberation, democracy and socialism.

The insurgency of the working class in the global South is of decisive importance to encouraging the workers of the global North to rise up and to make their contributions to the resurgence of the world proletarian-socialist revolution. All workers of the world and oppressed peoples and nations must unite and fight to reverse the setbacks of the socialist cause as a result of the concatenation and combinations of imperialist plunder, state terrorism, wars of aggression, anti-communism, social democratic reformism, neocolonialism, modern revisionism and neoliberalism.

Neoliberal capitalism has been dominant for more than four decades already but is definitely unraveling, especially since the financial crash of 2008 and the consequent protracted crisis and depression of global capitalism. This has sharpened inter-imperialist contradictions, especially between the US and China which were previously the main partners of neoliberal globalization. At the same time, the proletariat and people of the world are intensifying and expanding the anti-imperialist and democratic mass struggles of the proletariat and the oppressed people and nations. These struggles are the harbinger for the resurgence of the world proletarian-socialist revolution.

1. *Is it correct to say that the main cause of modern-day migration of peoples can be basically rooted to the internal socioeconomic and political conditions of their home countries? Can migration of peoples be a barometer of the crises in countries of origin?*

JMS: Yes, it is correct to say that the main cause of modern-day migration of peoples can be traced to the internal socioeconomic and political conditions of their home countries. The migration of peoples is a barometer of the crisis in the country of origin.

It is often claimed that, even outside crisis conditions, the natural rise in population coupled with a locality's limits in carrying capacity will already drive migration. It is true that as more and more new households arise while the local resource base does not equally expand, they will usually out-migrate to nearby areas with more livelihood opportunities. This was probably true in the heyday of feudalism. Under semifeudal and semicolonial conditions, however, these migratory tendencies become class-stratified, intensified, systematic and oppressive, and turn not just into indicators but also as complicating factors of the system's chronic crisis.

The severe conditions of exploitation and oppression in semicolonial and semifeudal Philippines are the main cause of the migration of at least 10 million documented and undocumented Filipinos to more than 100 countries in the world. In concrete terms, the high rate of unemployment, low incomes and mass poverty have compelled Filipinos to seek employment in urban areas and abroad. The trend has been worsened by other push factors such as the neoliberal policy of cheap labor export, land grabbing, large-scale militarization, environmental degradation and the lucrative business of labor recruitment.

The gravity of the socioeconomic crisis of the ruling system is the most conspicuous factor of forced migration. The migration of 10 million Filipinos means that a sizeable proportion of the country's working-age population cannot be employed in the Philippines. In fact, the Philippine Statistics Authority of the Philippine government considers overseas Filipino workers as no longer part of the country's official labor force of 48.8 million; they are not even counted as part of the country's working-age population of 75.1 million (both figures are June 2021 estimates).

As of June 2021 (PSA Labor Force Survey), at a time when the Covid lockdowns were starting to ease up, another 10.2 million Filipinos staying in the country, or more than one-fifth of the official labor force, were either unemployed or underemployed. The PSA-estimated high employment rate of 93.8 percent (June 2021) is empty propaganda because, first, it includes what it underestimates as underemployed at 14.2 percent and of course the huge mass of seasonal farm workers and odd jobbers in both rural and urban areas; and second, it discounts from the labor force such major categories of de-facto unemployed as housewives, those who have given up job-seeking, or those still listed as overseas workers but have been stranded or repatriated due to Covid shutdowns and layoffs.

The distribution of those employed is supposed to be 18.1 percent in industry, 24.2 percent in agriculture and 57.6 percent in the service sector as of June 2021. In each sector, most of those employed have no job tenure and receive subhuman incomes. The service sector is the most notorious category for concealing the underemployed and odd jobbers from the surplus population or reserve army of labor from both rural and urban areas.

2. *How do the crises of global monopoly capitalism shape modern-day migration? How has the current neoliberal framework exacerbated forced migration?*

JMS: For context and comparison with current migration trends, let me share some historical trends in the capitalist era.

Countries that have undergone the process of capitalist industrialization through the 18th and 19th centuries — from Europe to America, Russia and Japan, for example — have experienced massive migration from their countrysides to their respective cities and industrial zones. This is because, whenever capitalism is allowed to run rampant, that process is one of the easiest ways for generating cheap labor for the burgeoning industries, and also for freeing the land to be turned into capitalist farms, mines, industrial facilities, and new towns connected by road and rail. We only have to be reminded of the Enclosures (first in England, then in other European countries),

which essentially resulted in forced migrations first to rural towns, then to cities.

The requirements of imperialism, from the late 19th through the entire 20th and early 21st centuries, has further intensified and globalized these migration trends. Remember that the USA relied not only on freed Southern slaves and migrants from the poorer countries of Eastern and Southern Europe for its heavily industrialized East and Midwest, but also on very cheap coolie gangs from China and its Philippine colony to fill up labor scarcity in the fast-developing West Coast, Hawaii and Alaska, to be followed later by Latin American migrants.

The crises of global monopoly capitalism continue to shape modern-day migration. The problem of stagflation arose in the US as a result of the crisis of domestic overproduction in the 1970s, aggravated by the reconstruction of industries in Western Europe and Japan which had been devastated by World War II. The US economy was also distorted by massive war production, deployment of hundreds of overseas military bases and wars of aggression.

Neoliberalism was a fringe trend of thought until it was adopted by US imperialism as the fake solution to the problem of stagflation. At the core of this problem was the decreasing income of the working class and therefore decreasing demand for consumer goods. The US made the other traditional imperialist countries follow its lead through the Washington Consensus (IMF, World Bank and the GATT series of talks leading to the WTO) in adopting the neoliberal policy regime.

This policy regime is founded on the dogma of unbridled greed, that the monopoly bourgeoisie is the creator of wealth and jobs and that it must have the utmost freedom to accumulate and centralize capital in its hands. The objective is to undermine and weaken the working class and the trade union movement by attacking job security and trade union rights, press down wages, decrease taxes of corporations and individual investors, cut back on labor benefits and social services, liberalize trade and investments, privatize public assets and abuse public debt for the private benefit of the monopoly banks and firms.

Since its adoption in 1979 by the US and other imperialist countries, neoliberalism has accelerated the extraction of surplus value from the working class by the monopoly bourgeoisie and has degraded socioeconomic conditions in the traditional imperialist countries. Marxists and most bourgeois sociologists alike are agreed that the neoliberal assault was one of the main causes of the marked decline in trade-union gains, workers' rights, and strength of the workers' movement as a whole in the industrial capitalist countries.

In the undeveloped countries, like the Philippines, neoliberalism teamed up with neocolonialism to further disemploy and impoverish the people and increase rapidly the number of the unemployed vulnerable to recruitment for cheap labor export alongside the export of cheap raw materials. In certain countries targeted by the US-led "war on terror," such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and parts of Latin America, Africa, and Southeast Asia, the deadly combination of neoliberalism, neocolonialism and neoconservatism has created humanitarian disasters of horrific proportions—the most visible symptoms of which, such as militarized refugee camps, mass treks by land and sea, and breakdown of social services, are just the tip of the iceberg.

Neoliberalism also teamed up with modern revisionism in the former socialist countries to accelerate the restoration of capitalism and the domestic exploitation and export of cheap labor from these countries. Some former socialist countries of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, such as Poland, the Balkans (former Yugoslavia), and the Ukraine, have turned into major pools of migrant labor for the more industrialized countries of the EU.

3. Is modern-day migration, therefore, forced migration in essence? What do you say to agencies who claim that migration is an individual choice, positive and can be a tool for national development, or that migration is a natural phenomenon borne of globalization?

JMS: Modern-day migration is forced migration in essence. What can be more forcible than be compelled to accept cheap and risky employment abroad and separation from one's family under the pain of unemployment, hunger and death. When they get employment abroad, the migrant workers are liable to get the dirtiest and lowest-paid jobs and become easy prey to the violation of fundamental human rights and basic democratic rights.

State and private agencies are lying when they claim that migration is an individual choice, positive and can be a tool for national development, or that migration is a natural phenomenon borne of globalization or professional advancement. There is the superficial appearance of free individual choice only because the migrant workers apply individually for recruitment and travel, even if the overseas migrant worker usually has the advantage of being able to converse in English over the far less educated seasonal farm worker and general run of odd jobbers in the Philippines.

The false illusion of free choice is also strengthened in a handful of cases where the migrants are the lucky few

recipients of graduate-school scholarships, scientists and engineers, health professionals, top corporate personnel, or long-term diplomatic posts, or of wealthy Filipinos expanding their overseas interests—which are certainly a small part and not representative of the international migration flows.

In the underdeveloped and less developed countries, which are the largest source of cheap migrant labor, there is the official rationale that migration is a tool for national development. But the foreign exchange earnings of the migrant workers have been used entirely or mainly for import-dependent consumption, for guaranteeing the neoliberal credit for building shopping malls and skyscrapers and for foreign debt repayment by the states.

Seen as a systemic social phenomenon and not merely as individual decisions, migration reveals many levels of being forcible even in the absence of open state coercion. Social conditions may be so severe and ruling-class interests so contrary, especially in the face of environmental disasters and armed conflicts, that entire communities are obliged to relocate elsewhere.

In the extreme, forced migrations are the direct result of state law and armed coercion used to achieve concrete ruling-class aims, such as when the US government herded native American tribes into reservations, or when Nazi Germany herded entire Jewish populations into concentration camps. Let us recall the long record of modern imperialist states in committing such crimes amounting to genocide or ethnocide.

Even the UN World Food Programme acknowledges that there is a wide continuum of causes and types of migration, in which the category at one pole conveniently called “economic migration” (migration by choice) gradually blends into “forced migration” (migration out of necessity) at the other pole. A key finding in a 2019 UN-WFP report was that hunger and armed conflict were the key drivers of migration. The report stated: “Countries with the highest level of food insecurity, coupled with armed conflict, have the highest outward migration of refugees. Additionally, when coupled with poverty, food insecurity increases the likelihood and intensity of armed conflicts.”

Migration is indeed a conspicuous phenomenon related to the imperialist policy of neoliberal globalization and the war-like character of imperialist states. But it is not something that is unavoidably natural. Patriotic and democratic peoples and governments in underdeveloped countries can decide to become independent of imperialist and reactionary dictates, pursue their own economic development through national industrialization and genuine land reform, and on that basis, ensure democratic governance, justice and peace.

While we view migration, especially in the massive scales we see today, as objectively driven by the mechanisms of imperialism, we should realize that it also triggers strong pushbacks and complex crosscurrents within host countries. These include racial/ethnic conflicts which the ruling classes manipulate for their own ends, anti-immigrant laws and sentiments, and even harsher border controls and police restrictions especially in times of economic and political crisis.

The anti-immigrant pushbacks in the US and EU, which were already simmering by the late 1990s, became prominent starting in 2015-2016, and further tightened during the Covid lockdowns of 2020-21. These counter-trends bear close watching for their possible long-term effects both among migrant peoples in the host countries and on the social economies of their homelands.

4. How best to solve the problem of forced migration? How much of it can be through reforms or as international agencies will say, “management of migration”? Isn’t social revolution the real answer?

JMS: The best way for the Filipino people and other peoples in underdeveloped countries to solve the problem of forced migration is to assert and realize full national independence from the dictates of imperialism and its puppets and to carry out a policy of economic development through genuine land reform and national industrialization that would immediately generate jobs for the huge number of unemployed and underemployed.

Under the aegis of a truly democratic state, economic development would sustainably provide decent wages, health and housing benefits, and other social services that the people in underdeveloped countries have long urgently needed, but for many generations only saw such “comforts” in more developed countries.

Endless calls for reforms or reformism and avilment of superprofit-seeking foreign investments or “assistance” by pro-imperialist agencies and their NGO agents will not enable the people of underdeveloped countries to achieve a situation where they can achieve economic development. The people and their revolutionary forces in the said countries have to achieve national and social liberation through the people’s democratic revolution.

5. In the context of rapid migration of peoples, has it changed the principle of waging revolution in national boundaries under the era of imperialism?

JMS: The rapid migration of peoples has not changed the principle of waging revolution within national boundaries in the era of imperialism. On one hand, such migrations do create potentially more favorable conditions for a common working-class consciousness, cutting across multiple nationalities and ethnicities and developing a strong internationalist orientation. But even if we are proletarian revolutionaries, we do not advocate world wars to win the world proletarian revolution.

We remain committed to the principle that social revolutions are carried out within national boundaries, unless the imperialist powers carry out the cross-border war and they need to be rolled back—as in the case of the Soviet counter-offensive against the German and other fascists in World War II, or in the more recent cases of the Kurdistan and Palestine peoples who are still fighting for a national homeland and so their revolutionary armed struggle have had to extend across certain national borders to adjacent territories (or refugee camps) in neighboring countries.

The migrants are usually a minority in relation to the host people. They can and must support the revolutionary struggles of the host people but must not take away from them (the host people) the revolutionary initiative and main effort to carry out the social revolution. The migrants have the right and duty to pay attention to their own needs and democratic rights and to support the revolutionary struggle in their motherland. But they also have the right and duty to support the host people in their revolutionary struggle in the spirit of anti-imperialist solidarity and proletarian internationalism.

We do realize that as the second and third generations grow up from migrant families in host countries, the expected tendency is for migrant roots to fade and for host-country ethnic identities to predominate. But this is not an automatic process. The US experience, for example, has good examples of migrants retaining their ethnic identities and close ties with their respective motherlands. These identities and ties may remain robust after many generations, and even become a steady source of national pride and solidarity through appropriate types of social institutions, organizations, and traditions. Many of these have developed closely with the anti-imperialist and democratic or revolutionary movements in the original homelands.

6. Do you think that national and social liberation movements should pay attention to arousing, organizing and mobilizing their compatriots who migrated in other countries? Can they (overseas compatriots) be considered a positive force for national revolution?

JMS: Definitely, national and social liberation movements should pay attention to arousing, organizing and mobilizing their compatriots who have migrated to other countries. The overseas compatriots are a positive force for the national revolution in their motherland.

Marx and Engels living in exile in their own historical time, followed by Lenin and the Russian emigré revolutionaries, had all experienced migrant life in other countries of Europe. Many Asian revolutionary leaders of the 20th century such as Zhou Enlai, Zhu De, and Ho Chi Minh also became politically active while working or studying in Europe, US or Japan. They too saw the great value of arousing, organizing and mobilizing their compatriots and support groups from other nationalities. Together with their respective proletarian parties, they relied on overseas mass organizations and encouraged all kinds of actions and linkages in support of the struggle in the homeland.

Being aroused, organized and mobilized to support the revolutionary struggle in their motherland, the overseas compatriots can gather from among themselves moral and material support for the aforesaid struggle as well as from the host people and other migrant peoples in the host country.

Gathering moral support involves information and education campaigns and obtaining expressions of political and moral solidarity and support. Gathering material support involves realizing solidarity partnerships and exchange of publications and visits between organizations of the motherland and host country and obtaining financial, technical and other forms of material assistance for the people in need.

7. But surely there are reactionary classes and revolutionary classes among overseas migrants. What then should be the guiding principle in organizing migrants?

JMS: Indeed, there are reactionary classes and revolutionary classes among overseas migrants. We need to recognize the fact that there are migrants who belong to the exploiting classes, including highly-paid diplomatic officials, business representatives, and top-level corporate professionals, and students of various ideological persuasions.

But the overwhelming majority of migrants belong to the working class and lower middle class; they have a

strong tendency to side with their own class. Although it's often observed that rank-and-file migrant workers in an advanced capitalist country may well display middle-class lifestyles upon their return to the homeland, this is unsustainable. Generally, the objective material conditions and their exposure to class politics will continue to favor conditions for arousing, organizing and mobilizing them.

The guiding principle in organizing migrants is to bring them together in accordance with a national and democratic program. We need to promote and develop the united front in which we rely mainly on the working people, win over the intelligentsia and other urban petty bourgeois and take advantage of splits among the upper classes and reactionaries.

While we are mindful of classes and the class tendencies of those who belong to them, let us be meticulous enough to know that there are individuals who do not think and behave according to their class origin. There are communists who have upper class origins. There are a few workers and students who are anti-communist and opposed to the national democratic movement. There are also individuals who do not know any better at some time but who can be subsequently enlightened and become patriotic and progressive.

8. Should the struggle of compatriots in host countries therefore be principally focused on supporting and contributing directly to the national liberation movement of their home country? How about the struggle for the rights and welfare of their communities in the host countries?

JMS: I presume that most of overseas compatriots, especially the wage-earners, are preoccupied with their wage and living conditions and with paying attention to the rights and welfare of their community. They tend to join the trade unions of their host country (when they are recruited) and also the migrant workers' association which tends to be the biggest organization of migrants.

We also recognize certain sectoral particularities among compatriots, such as among women and youth, who will have their distinct sectoral interests and issues. There can also be a strong interest in their homeland's culture, language or ethnic traditions, or the even more particular issues and concerns of their home regions or home towns.

Within every form of migrant organization, there is a calibration in the focus of compatriots on supporting and contributing directly to the national liberation movement of their home country. At any rate, compatriots who join our migrant organizations tend to be more concerned and militant about Philippine issues and the national liberation movement in the Philippines than those migrant compatriots who do not join the national democratic migrant organizations.

9. What contributions can overseas compatriots make to the advance of national and social liberation of their home countries?

JMS: As I have earlier pointed out, the overseas compatriots can gather moral and material support from their own ranks and from the host people and other migrant peoples in order to contribute to the advance of the revolutionary struggle for national and social liberation in their countries. The contributions include expressions and concerted actions of anti-imperialist and democratic solidarity and proletarian international and financial, technical and other material forms of support and assistance.

10. How can migrant organizations contribute to the anti-imperialist, anti-fascist and democratic struggles in the host countries as well as internationally?

JMS: The migrant organizations of various types can contribute to the anti-imperialist, anti-fascist and democratic struggles in the host countries as well as internationally by promoting and developing relations of solidarity and cooperation with the pertinent organizations according to class interest or social concern and by joining the International League of Peoples' Struggle.

11. What is the role of the working class in the host countries in organizing migrants in relation to the liberation movements in sending countries?

JMS: The working class in host countries has the role of organizing migrants both for the purpose of building the working class movement in the host countries and encouraging them to support the revolutionary struggle in their homelands.

The working class and unions in advanced capitalist countries have an anti-fascist tradition and socialist aspirations even as the monopoly bourgeoisie continues to subject them to imperialist, racist and chauvinist propaganda in order to fracture and pit them against each other along racial, nationality or ethnic/immigrant lines.

The working class movement must counteract the big bourgeoisie's divide-and-rule policies by stressing the

commonality of the workers' economic and political struggles, i.e., the struggles for trade union rights, and the struggles for democracy and against imperialism.

In Celebration of the 120th Founding Anniversary of Union Obrera Democratica de Filipinas

Message of Solidarity to All Proletarian Revolutionaries,

Trade Unionists and All Workers of the Philippines

February 2, 2022

Today, I am happy to join all proletarian revolutionaries, trade unionists and workers in celebrating the 120th anniversary of the Founding Congress of the Union Obrera Democratica de Filipinas (UODF), the first labor congress establishing the first labor federation in the Philippines. The Congress was convened upon the initiative of Isabelo de los Reyes and 140 delegates from trade unions headed by the Union de Litografos e Impresores de Filipinas.

They were inspired by the Marxist slogan of the First International, “The emancipation of the working class must be the task of the workers themselves”. They approved the UODF Constitution which embodied the principles adopted from the books *Vida e Obras de Carlos Marx* by Friedrich Engels and *Los Dos Campesinos* by the Italian radical socialist, Malatesta.

All the speakers in the Congress attacked US imperialism and demanded the national independence of the Philippines. They put forward the political and economic demands of the labor movement and underscored the call of the UODF for the Filipino proletariat and people to struggle for national independence.

They were under surveillance by the spies of the US colonial government who tagged them as “subversives” and “anarchists”. Governor General Taft directly ordered their blacklisting and further surveillance. US imperialism was hostile to their patriotism and class-conscious struggle and prepared its instruments of coercion and suppression.

The UODF organized a mass rally of 50,000 participants on July 4, 1902 and demanded independence for the Philippines. Then on August 2, 1902, it carried out the first general strike of the Filipino labor movement against the rejection of the demand for a general wage increase as an adjustment to the inflationary crisis.

The US colonial government retaliated by charging Isabelo de los Reyes with sedition and rebellion and convicted him upon the false witness of a secret service man. The charges and conviction were based on a Spanish conspiracy law. De los Reyes was compelled to resign from the UODF to concentrate on his religious activity in the Philippine Independent Church. Dr. Dominador Gomez replaced him as the UODF president.

The UODF was not discouraged by colonial repression but grew by leaps and bounds from 33 unions in 1902 to 150 unions in 1903. It had 20,000 members in Manila and had 150,000 members in eight provinces in Luzon. On May 1, 1903, it defied the refusal of the US colonial authorities to give a rally permit and staged a demonstration of 100,000 workers to celebrate labor day for the first time in the Philippines in front of Malacanang palace and the workers shouted: “Down with US imperialism!”

Within the same month of May 1903, the home of Dr. Gomez and the printing press where the UODF organ was printed were simultaneously raided by American and Filipino policemen in violation of the right to home and the right of free press and free assembly.

Like his predecessor Isabelo de los Reyes, Gomez was charged with “sedition” and illegal association.” He was arrested and sentenced to forced labor. Like De los Reyes, he was acquitted on the condition that he resign from UODF. Upon his resignation, unions began disaffiliating from UODF.

After the crackdown on the UODF, which was intended to silence anti-imperialist workers, the agents of the American Federation of Labor tried to take over the Philippine trade union movement and to propagate the bourgeois-liberal concept that labor be separated from political activity and that it be always in unity with capital.

The UODF disintegrated but positive and negative lessons could be learned from the disintegration in order to further advance the labor movement in the Philippines. The Filipino working class would continue striving to develop their trade unions and federate to form a labor center.

On May 1, 1913, the Congreso Obrero de Filipinas was founded. Eventually, Crisanto Evangelista was elected its president on March 1, 1918. Subsequently, he established the Partido Obrero in 1922, the precursor of the Communist Party of the Philippine Islands. The brilliant and militant proletarian leader Evangelista proceeded to establish the Communist Party of the Philippine Islands (CPPI) in 1930.

This is the antecedent of today's Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), which was reestablished on December 16, 1986 under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. It is the advanced detachment of the proletariat and is leading and waging the people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war.

It has won great victories by wielding revolutionary armed struggle and the united front as weapons. It has built on a nationwide scale the Party organization at various levels, the New People's Army, the revolutionary mass organizations, the National Democratic Front of the Philippines and the organs of political power that constitute the people's democratic government.

To this day, the Communist Party of the Philippines honors the founders and all trade unionists of the UODF as pioneers of the modern trade union federation. Their pioneering example and their achievements are a necessary part of the history of the labor movement in the Philippines that brought about the emergence of the revolutionary party of the proletariat.

The founders of the UODF continue to inspire the Filipino working class to develop the trade union movement and the revolutionary party of the proletariat, advance the people's struggle for national and social liberation, win total victory until the socialist revolution can commence and contribute to the resurgence of the proletarian-socialist revolution.

Long live the memory of the Union Obrera Democratica de Filipinas!

Long live the Filipino proletariat and people!

Long live the Philippine revolution and the world proletarian revolution!

Tasks and Prospects of Filipino Migrants in Relation to the 2022 Philippine Elections

Speech to Regional Assembly of BAYAN-Europe

April 10, 2022

Dear compatriots and friends, first of all, I wish to express my warmest greetings of solidarity to the more than 200 Filipino community leaders from more than 50 progressive Filipino organizations and alliances as well as non-Filipino solidarity activists from scores of various formations and networks, who are convened to participate in this video-conference.

I congratulate you for realizing this broad and sizeable gathering of patriotic, freedom-loving and progressive Filipinos and their friends in the region and for adopting the theme, “Sulong BAYAN Europe! Biguin at panagutin ang korap at pasistang tambalang Marcos-Duterte! Makibaka para sa Pambansang Demokrasya! Imperyalismo, ibagsak!” (Advance BAYAN Europe, Defeat and make the corrupt and fascist Marcos-Duterte team answerable! Struggle for national democracy! Down with imperialism!) in order to guide your deliberations and decisions on the applications for membership, review of your constitution and by-laws, election of officers and your general program of action.

I am honored and delighted to be invited to talk on the “Tasks and Prospects of Filipino Migrants in relation to the 2022 Philippine Elections”, inasmuch as your online gathering is also a platform for raising among overseas Filipinos awareness of the current electoral contest for the presidency and vice presidency, the Senate and Lower House and local executive positions. Under the law on Overseas Absentee Voting (OAV), overseas Filipinos are considered an integral part of the Philippine electorate and are expected to be an active and significant voice in upholding, defending and promoting their own rights and welfare.

We are past more than two-thirds of the official campaign period for the 2022 presidential elections in the Philippines. We are less than a month before the May 9 elections. I presume that you are already well informed about the character of the electoral process, the over-all situation, the competing parties, presidential and other candidates, their platforms and their chances of winning or losing in view of the situation and factors that determine said chances. In your current assembly, I can only add my views to those already expressed by many of you.

By yourselves as organizations and individuals you have come to discern and decide what tasks you must carry out during the rest of the campaign period and during election day and you must have also thought about the probable results and prospects after the elections. During the campaign period, you have become better informed about the character of the situation and issues in the Philippines and the political parties and candidates regarding their platforms and qualifications so that you can better inform others as regard to those who deserve the vote.

You belong to the largest federation of patriotic and democratic organizations from all major classes and sectors of Philippine society and you belong to the largest contingent of overseas Filipinos with continental and country chapters. BAYAN is a legal multi-sectoral formation that is constituted to engage in legal struggles for realizing full national independence and genuine democracy. You are therefore expected to participate in the 2022 elections as a matter of civic right and duty.

Despite its legal character, BAYAN has not been spared from red-tagging and other fascist attempts to discredit and disable it from fully participating in the elections. It has been equated with the revolutionary forces waging the people’s democratic revolution through protracted people’s war. The intolerant and brutal forces of fascism misrepresent as “communist conspiracy” or even “terrorism” whatever concurrences and resemblances of views among different political forces concerning the crisis-stricken semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system.

Even as you are committed to the legal struggle for national independence and democracy, it is your right and duty to understand why large numbers of our compatriots have chosen to take the road of armed revolution in order to fight for national and social liberation and are sharply critical of electoral exercises staged by the exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords. But insofar as there is still some space for free political activity, you might even desire that the elections would bring about a new government willing to resume the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations.

All the major presidential candidates other than Bongbong Marcos have expressed willingness to resume

these negotiations but most of them have not been totally clear about how to do away with the law of state terrorism and mechanisms like the Anti-Terrorism Council and National Task Force-ELCAC that Duterte has made to prevent peace negotiations. The Marcos-Duterte tandem vows to continue the corrupt and brutal policies of the Duterte regime against the people and their revolutionary movement.

The Duterte regime has committed so many monstrous crimes of treason, tyranny, mass murder and plunder that it has aggravated as never before the chronic crisis of the ruling system. To be able to commit these crimes, Duterte has wasted huge amounts of tax money to pamper the military, police and paramilitary forces, to instigate them to murder tens of thousands of street-level drug peddlers and usurers in a bogus war on illegal drugs (ensuring the supremacy of the Duterte crime family) and then unleash the terrorism of the state in the main against the armed revolutionary movement of the people.

The brutality of the Duterte regime has been carried out not for its own sake but mainly for threatening and intimidating the people and thereby consolidating the armed power of the bureaucrat capitalists headed by Duterte and giving them the utmost freedom to rob the national treasury through pork barrel projects, military overspending and overpricing of all kinds of government acquisitions, including those related to the Covid-19 pandemic, and to draw the biggest comprador profits in the exchange of cheap raw material exports and manufactured imports.

The Philippine reactionary government and economy are bankrupt, ever sinking in budgetary and trade deficits, under the weight of the mounting local and foreign debts and debt service payments. The rates of unemployment, impoverishment and inflation have soared. Contrary to the claims of Duterte and his military minions that they are doing their best to suppress the armed revolution, they have unwittingly generated with their greed and terrorism the most favorable conditions for the armed revolution.

If the elections of 2022 were to be clean and honest, the Duterte regime and its chosen successors headed by the Bongbong-Sara tandem would be sure losers. Bongbong and Sara represent the most corrupt and brutal political dynasties in the history of Philippine reactionary politics. Their claims to being winners by virtue of paid slanted opinion poll surveys, social media troll armies and use of state and corporate media have been proven to be false by the far larger and more enthusiastic mass rallies being mobilized by the 1Sambayan alliance behind the opposition candidates led by the Robredo-Pangilinan tandem.

Unfortunately, the tyrant Duterte controls the bureaucracy and the military, especially the COMELEC and the electronic vote count. He will do everything in his power in order to rig the 2022 elections and make his successors winners through fraud and terrorism. He is worried to death that if the opposition wins he would be arrested and brought to trial before the International Criminal Court for his crimes against humanity. He is also afraid that a new government will prosecute and try him for plunder. At the same time, the revolutionary movement has promised to the people that they will go after Duterte and his ruling clique for engaging in mass murder and plunder.

Since observing the gigantic mass rallies mobilized by 1Sambayan last month, Duterte has started to red tag the alliance of the Pink Party with the Makabayan Bloc and accused them of plotting a disruption of the elections. Why should they disrupt a process in which they are drawing the largest crowds of voters? Duterte has made a slip in speaking out his criminal mind. He indicates that he can make a false flag operation. He has also announced that he wants a “seamless transfer of power” obviously to his chosen successors. This indicates that anytime he can declare martial law and rig the elections in order to install his chosen successors in power.

There is certainty or at least high probability that Duterte will cheat rig the 2022 elections, unless his US imperialist masters would decide to disbelieve his assurance that his successors would be able to continue the dirty work of finishing off the armed revolution, openly junk him and his crew for having already destabilized the ruling system and allow the opposition to have their electoral victory as in 1986 when Marcos could not take advantage of his electoral cheating.

But why should BAYAN participate in the 2022 elections if Duterte will be able to use his power to rig the elections and there is yet no certainty that he can be thwarted beforehand or after the rigging as in 1986? If you do not participate and others also do not participate in the elections, then how can you arouse, organize and mobilize the millions of people to prove even before election day that the topmost successors of Duterte are already discredited, isolated and sure losers in the elections. If you call for a boycott of the elections, then Duterte and his clique will not even have to cheat and you and the people will not have any reason to be angry about any cheating.

It is not the role and task of BAYAN, Makabayan Bloc, Bayan Muna and other partylist groups to conduct themselves like the revolutionary forces of the people that are banned from participating in the 2022 elections and that are in favor of building the people's revolutionary government in opposition to the reactionary state. There are times when legal democratic forces can debate whether they ought to participate or boycott the elections staged by the reactionary classes. But so far with regard to the elections of 2022, there is still an opportunity wide enough for them to expose and oppose the electoral fraud and terrorism being prepared by the Duterte regime.

If the Duterte regime succeeds in putting in power his chosen successors headed by Bongbong and Sara, there is the prospect of gigantic mass actions of the people rising up to prevent the usurpation of power as in 1986. But it is also possible these may not arise as quickly as in February 1986 because Duterte has already threatened to make a "seamless transfer of power" by declaring martial law in order to suppress the people and opposition forces through mass arrests, exemplary killings, censorship, confiscations and other foul acts. In that case, the alternative for the people is to resist in ways similar to those of the people who have dedicated themselves to the armed revolution.

And certainly, the people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war will become stronger because of the grave political and economic crisis of the ruling system. As the dominant power in the Philippines, US imperialism will have to weigh whether to believe that the Marcos-Duterte tandem will be able to continue successfully the brutal campaign of anti-communist suppression or let the Robredo-Pangilinan tandem take power and try to stabilize the situation as Cory Aquino did in 1986. I presume that the US knows the prospective real winner in the 2022 elections from the usual opinion poll survey that the CIA secretly directs from month to month before election day in the Philippines.

If an Aquino type of regime like that of Robredo-Pangilinan will arise, we can expect the usual first six months to one year of the regime to be a period in which there will be public or third-party clamor for resuming the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations and the contending parties will have to make their best possible responses to such clamor. I would expect BAYAN to be among those progressive forces putting forward its own timely people's agenda to encourage substantive negotiations on social, economic and political reforms until US imperialism, the big compradors and landlords and the reactionary military officers pressure the high bureaucrat capitalists in place to slow down on the peace negotiations and speed up the campaign of military suppression.

1. *Is there really a need for labor collective bargaining in industries and enterprises? Why is there such a need?*

JMS: There is a need for labor collective bargaining in industries and enterprises because it is an important way of upholding, defending and advancing the economic and political rights and interests of the workers, particularly the democratic rights to form trade unions, to raise the real wage level in relation to the cost of living and improve the working and living conditions of the workers and to fight policies and practices that oppress and exploit the working class. Otherwise the capitalist class and particular capitalist employers will have all the opportunity to exploit and oppress the workers.

In countries with historically well-developed unionism, collective bargaining has become an industry-wide arena of struggle between industry-wide unions on one hand, and leading corporations on the other hand. In the Philippines, Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) are likewise the result of the collective actions of workers in a specific company which reflects wages, benefits, conditions of work and various labor-related issues.

It is in these contracts wherein even practical demands such as the grant of a union office within company premises, the kind of food that should be served in the company cafeteria, joint formulation and review of company rules and regulations, cooperative loan grants, the grievance procedure especially those related to penalizing or the firing of workers, conditions on the regularization of contractual or casual employees and the like which were all monopolized by management in the absence of a genuine trade union (GTU) of the workers in the company.

Contractuals, casuals and other temporaries are excluded from these packages even if existing laws and conventions recognize their right to organize and form unions. It is thus imperative for a real union to struggle for their regularization en masse and strongly support their mass actions in and out of the company.

There must likewise be an active campaign to educate workers on the contracts that they have successfully obtained, especially because these have been won through hard work and vigorous struggles, to identify the gaps and gray areas, and to remain vigilant against the capitalists' constant attempts to erode the union's CBA gains. It is of great importance in the education to show that the CBA, like the workers' union that fought for it, is the fruit of collective and sustained effort.

The victories of unions must be disseminated widely in order to inspire workers in similar workplace conditions, especially within an industry, to organize themselves as unions, act concertedly, create favorable conditions for collective bargaining based on the union's strength and other important points of leverage in the negotiations, towards the forging of a CBA that truly reflects and realizes the workers' rights and demands. A successful union's wide arsenal of trade union tactics must be shared with other workers still struggling to organize a union, push for CBA, or retreat and shift tactics in the wake of a failed CBA campaign.

Workers' education entails agitation on people's and workers' issues beyond the current concerns of the union, and certainly union leaders should not limit themselves to being experts and perfectionists in administering the CBA. It is a must that workers relate with other workers in other companies regardless of their employment category as well as the workers' responsibility to unite and struggle with other sectors to attain substantial societal change.

2. *How do we distinguish a "bread and butter" union as against "genuine labor unions"?*

JMS: Before I make a direct answer to your question, let me refer to the history of the workers arising first as a class in itself, with the capitalist class hiring them and putting them to work in order to extract surplus value from them. Subsequently, the workers became a class for itself at first by becoming conscious of the need to form trade unions in order to struggle for the improvement of their economic conditions.

Further on, as a class for itself, the workers realized that they had to have their own political party in order to conduct political activities to obtain immediate economic and political reforms within the capitalist system and also to aim for a fundamental change of system and establish socialism under the rule of the working class.

In the late 19th and 20th century, in Europe and North America, great advances were achieved in organizing

workers in their millions into militant trade unions, in fighting for decent wages, the eight-hour working day, the right to unionize and other workers' rights, and in having many of these rights enshrined through legislation and jurisprudence.

Gains were achieved through general strikes and protest campaigns combining economic and political struggles led by working-class political parties, even during periods of utmost state repression and anti-worker restrictions. Most of these parties (then called social-democratic) had a socialist orientation, although later many of them became reformist. And even through the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s, the bulk of workers organized in unions had a sense of participating in political activity as an organic part of the trade union movement.

Due to the worsening crisis of the world capitalist system and the rise of socialist countries, the capitalist powers launched anti-Bolshevik campaigns after the October Revolution of 1917 and the anti-communist Cold War after World War II in order to oppose the revolutionary direction of the working class movement. Since the late 1940s, the CIA and other agencies of the US government carried out anti-communist witch-hunts to persecute the most progressive unions and red-tag even those unions engaged only in reform-oriented political activities.

At the same time, the monopoly capitalists encouraged purely-economic unionism through the American Federation of Labor (AFL, later merged into AFL-CIO) that raised only "bread-and-butter" demands. Contracts were to be negotiated by the unions with employers, in a business-like manner with the help of lawyers. In the Philippines, the bread-and-butter type of unionism began to predominate especially after the militant Congress of Labor Organizations was outlawed and destroyed in the early 1950s.

The "bread and butter" union limits itself to the economic demands and economic struggle and runs counter to the genuine labor unions which engage in both political and economic struggles. It is important and necessary to organize the trade unions for economic struggle. But it is even more important and more necessary to imbue the economic struggle of the trade unions with the political struggle of the working class in a comprehensive class struggle against the capitalist class.

"Bread and butter unionism" at best tries to play the role of a broker that tries to find a happy middle ground between the interests of the workers and the capitalist. In trying to straddle the so-called dividing line between the management and the workers, one foot of the "bread-and-butter" union is on the one side and the other foot on the other side. More often, however, its stronger tendency is to end up conniving with management and those in the government bureaucracy like the DOLE just to keep afloat without direction. It is thus bound to lead to more overt practices of yellow unionism, which banners the ideology that the interest of labor and capital are identical. Thus the popular adage of capital of "not killing the goose that lays the golden egg" is embraced by the yellows or "labor dealers".

While we regard "bread and butter unionism" as fundamentally reformist and economistic in doctrine and easily corrupt in actual practice, as exhibited for example by some big independent unions and federations under the TUCP umbrella, we should also realize that this approach is still dominant over a section of organized labor despite the 40 years of advances in genuine trade unionism in the Philippines under the banner of the Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU).

This is because of the long history of reformism, anti-communism, company unions and yellow unions in the Philippines. The misled workers are often impressed by the yellow labor officialdom's access to reactionary authorities and apparent ability to make a quick deal with the capitalists and the state. Ways must be developed by the genuine trade unions to approach the workers in yellow trade unions and raise their class consciousness to the level of joining the GTUs.

A genuine trade union is bound by principle to condemn such an ideology of class collaboration. It educates workers that in essence the interest of labor and capital are diametrically opposed to each other. Thus a GTU does not cross the dividing line and abandon the side of the workers or play neutral in order to camouflage its siding with capital. Flexible tactics and handling of alliances are different from unprincipled sell-outs.

We are gratified that the GTU course, which was developed in the early years of re-asserting the workers' movement under Martial Law and which was originally written in English, has been edited and re-written in Filipino and is widely used as a basic union course. It is now known as the KTPMU or Kurso sa Tunay, Palaban at Makabayang Unyonismo. It is a synthesis of the basic tenets of GTU and the set of skills needed in organizing workers' unions and alliance-building.

The legal political struggle waged by the working class party, the labor center and trade unions and the masses

of workers aims to put their representatives in positions of responsibility and influence even in the bourgeois state and social organizations of various types. The objective is to avail of the organized political strength of the workers in order to assert and expand their political and economic rights, and also to amplify the reach and influence of the workers' movement nationwide, to the other toiling masses who look up to working-class leadership and to still wider sections of the people who find common ground with workers.

The economic and political forms of class struggle must be waged against the capitalist class, with appropriate recognition of the different bourgeois strata and alignments in relation to basic national and democratic demands of the people. Terms of employment and labor standards are legal matters in both economic and political struggles. Even then, the labor movement and workers must wage legal and political struggle to defend their political and economic rights, assert the legitimacy of these rights regardless of attempts to derogate them, frustrate any reactionary or fascist scheme against labor and maintain the legality of the labor movement.

Even if it is an essentially big comprador-landlord state, the Philippine bourgeois state pretends to be liberal democratic and ought not to make brazen and gross assaults on the political rights of the proletariat and people as the very source of sovereignty, unless the aforesaid state goes fascist in reaction to the already developed political strength of the proletariat and the people. The trade unions must be imbued with the revolutionary political consciousness of the working class through political education. They must be organized and mobilized as the organized mass base of the working class party. The trade unions and the working class party must be dedicated to upholding the democratic rights and interests of the working class.

At the same time, the trade union movement must exercise the utmost flexibility in organization and tactics in order to encompass the widest possible range of working people within its appropriate forms of local, municipal, craft or industrial-line mass organizations, overcome the many tactics to bust unions or render them illegal and divide and disorganize the working-class masses, and thus attain and sustain the high levels of mobilization required for its economic and political campaigns to succeed.

The ultimate aim of the working class and its revolutionary party is the seizure of political power and the establishment of socialism. That is the historic mission of the working class. In this context, the working class is not limited to pleading for petty concessions from the capitalist class and for petty reforms that further entrench the capitalist class in its position of exploiting and oppressing the working class. There is a life-and-death class struggle between the capitalist class and working class. Without a revolutionary party of the proletariat, the capitalist class ruthlessly oppresses and exploits the working class indefinitely.

3. What do we categorize as labor relation standards? What are formal labor relation standards and what are classified as informal labor relations?

JMS: In a particular country like the Philippines, the standard of labor relations is formalized usually by legislation, administrative issuances of the Department of Labor and Employment and by quasi-judicial bodies (such as the National Labor Relations Commission) and established jurisprudence. All these processes are under the dominance of the capitalist class and in consideration of the strength of the working class movement.

International laws, conventions and ILO resolutions on labor rights which are the result of past and current struggles of the international working class are supposed to guide and enrich the national legislation for setting the standard for labor relations with private capital and the bourgeois state. But the Philippine Labor Code carries limits and loopholes to allow the exploitation and oppression of the workers.

Beyond the laws, jurisprudence and administrative rules, there are informal labor relations that are characterized by the unfair and unjust practices which emanate from the dominance of the capitalist employers. The reality of recurrent capitalist crisis and the huge reserve army of labor allows the capitalist class to push down wages and other benefits and to dismiss workers and replace them with others willing to work for less.

Even the bourgeois laws and administrative measures that appear to improve the terms of employment carry certain loopholes that allow the unfair and unjust practices against the workers. After all, the bourgeois laws are made by political agents of the capitalist class and the administrative measures are adopted by the managers of the capitalist class unless countervailed to some extent by the strength of the worker's union.

Labor Relation Standards (LRS) are practices and norms imposed on employees in the private sector. Based on ILO conventions and as a policy, the creation of LRS is supposed to be carried out through tripartism which puts labor in a corner by private capital and bourgeois government. History has proven that laws, whether they encompass all sectors or singly for labor, are a reflection of the dominant class interest prevailing in society. The

foreign monopoly firms and the big compradors, directly and through lobby groups and their associations like the ECOP, dictate on their cohorts in government the kind of laws and LRS that must be penned in Congress or the executive branch to come out with their own Executive Orders and Department Orders.

Whatever changes in the existing bourgeois law that favor the workers are a product of the mass struggle and victories of the working class. The previous Labor Code PD 442 was drafted by Marcos loyalist Minister Blas Ople. It has been made worse by the Herrera Law RA 6715 and RA 6727 which started the birth of the massive legalization of contractualization and the regionalization of wages respectively under the regime of President Cory Aquino.

Informal labor relations refer mainly to the relations of capital with the non-regular workers who lack job security and unionization and are generally manipulated by capitalists, individually or the entire class, in connivance with the subcontractors, recruitment agencies, labor-only contractors (“cabo” system), in-house “cooperatives”, and other informal or even prohibited labor-hiring systems. They are not covered by the same rights that the regular work force have. They are the ones usually abused and, during the pandemic, they are easily disemployed or their slave wages are not even paid fully. Even regular workers are taken advantage of by their employers on the argument of “no work, no pay”.

In a semifeudal society like the Philippines, jeepney and tricycle drivers, freight hands, construction laborers, vendors, store helpers, domestics and other sectors of the semi-proletariat which comprise a large part of the urban poor and the increasingly mobile rural poor are considered part of the huge informal sector. Most of the toiling masses in this sector are not employed by capitalists but are either self-employed (often, helped by other family members as “unpaid family workers”), or employed by small petty-bourgeois-owned businesses. But they are still exploited and oppressed directly by the semifeudal system through private merchant-usurer-rentier operations, numerous state-imposed fees and restrictions, and outright illegal exactions by local tyrants and AFP-PNP checkpoints.

The state is supposed to protect their interests through special laws and social security programs, but these have remained mostly unmonitored and unenforced. They are supposed to receive their share of Social Security System and Philhealth benefits, but these become locked up once they could no longer afford to continue their contributions. The Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa Ating Disadvantaged/Displaced Workers (TUPAD) program is a palliative to appease these displaced, underemployed, or recurrently self-employed workers amid joblessness and the massacre of their means of livelihood due to the Covid-era lockdowns.

4. Now there are various categorizations of labor conditions according to labor-hiring policies improvised by both the state and the capitalist enterprises, why can't regularized workers such as casuals and contractuels, job orders, 6-2 schemes, on-calls, etc. workers not eligible for collective bargaining?

JMS: Indeed, there are categorizations of work and workers which allow the capitalist class to differentiate regular workers from various types of non-regular workers, such as learners, apprentices, interns, five-month contractuels, part-timers or casuals. Companies in various enterprises get their temporary employees from labor contracting agencies. Similarly plantations get their seasonal and year-long farm workers from so-called workers' cooperatives which are in fact labor gangs under the control and exploitation by traditional labor contractors.

The Philippine Labor Code limits the enjoyment of labor rights and welfare to the regular workers, and at the same time loosens the definition of “contractualization” in order to reduce the need to regularize workers. The objective of the capitalists is, on one hand, to limit the number of regular workers who enjoy job security, regular wages, pension, medical and other social benefits according to law and who can organize trade unions and engage in collective bargaining and, on the other hand, to have as many non-regular workers as possible in order to deprive them of the rights and benefits enjoyed by the regular workers, to extract more surplus value from them and use them to weaken the trade unions.

Under the neoliberal policy regime, the minimization of regular workers and the maximization of non-regular workers has become rampant in the Philippines and throughout the world since the late 1970s. Thus, there has been a rapid accumulation and centralization of capital in the hands of the few and the rapid immiseration of both white collar and blue collar workers and the frequent recurrence and worsening of the crisis of overproduction in the world capitalist system. The conditions of mass poverty, unemployment and underdevelopment in the world are generating conditions of mass resistance by the proletariat and people of the world.

The proliferation of the non-regular and non-formal workers category is being whipped up by the

implementors of the neoliberal policy mainly to maximize profit for the giant corporations. It is a part of the flexible labor policy of big business. Thus in the case of the Philippines, the previous regimes and the present one are among the biggest contributors to the global contractualization scheme. What was once an apparently stop-gap measure to solve unemployment under the Marcos regime has developed into a huge profitable business for both government and private recruitment agencies for the labor export policy.

5. Is there such a segregation or classification of work that needs to collectively bargain with employers, or is it uniform in all forms of work and industries? Are there those who shall collectively bargain and those who shall not? Who can and cannot collectively bargain and why?

JMS: From the standpoint of the basic class interest of the proletariat, all types of toilers who depend on their labor power to eke out a living and who enter into wage or wage-like relations have the right to collectively bargain with those who hire them. For example, even farm workers have this inherent right to negotiate for fair wages as a group when they work for a rich peasant at harvest and hauling time— whether this right is recognized and codified in a country's labor laws or not. But the problem is that the capitalist class, its managers and hiring agents flout the rights of all workers by taking advantage of the large mass of the unemployed reserve army of labor as well as absence or limitations of the existing unions. The solution of such a problem can be found only in revolutionary political struggle by the proletariat.

The basic principles and parameters of collective bargaining with employers have been enshrined in ILO conventions (particularly Convention No. 154 supported by Conventions Nos. 98, 150 and 151, and several related ILO Recommendations as well). They have gradually become accepted practice by employers in most industries and major services, and have been to a large extent codified, institutionalized, or regulated by the bourgeois state in most countries. Historically, this is a gigantic achievement of the trade union movement and can potentially benefit most categories of workers in most occupations. In countries with deep-set trade union traditions, such as the US, even police forces, professional basketball players, and film actors and writers have benefited from their own unions and CBAs.

However, the global capitalist system always finds legal methods and alibis to exclude significant parts of the labor force, such as unskilled youth and migrants doing part-time, seasonal or domestic work, from the formal collective bargaining process. In the past four decades, the neoliberal policy and the consequent laws and administrative measures more systematically reduce the number of regular workers and increase the number of various types of non-regular workers even in the highly unionized industries in order to raise higher the profits of the capitalists and deprive most workers of trade union rights, decent wages and social benefits.

At any rate, both regular and non-regular workers are liable to be subjected to extreme forms of exploitation through speed-ups, high production quotas, overtime work without pay, penalties and so on. There is common ground for the regular and non-regular workers to engage in concerted action and compel the employers to negotiate and yield better terms of work for all the workers.

But there is the force of bourgeois law which allows the capitalist employers to play off the huge mass of unemployed and non-regular workers against the regular workers. Moreover, there are the rotten political agents of the big bourgeoisie like Duterte who promised the end of contractualization only to say later that he was merely making a joke.

The essence of neoliberal policy is to put more capital into the hands of the capitalists on the anti-labor presumption that they are the creators of wealth and the jobs. They benefit from the tax cutbacks, the real wage reductions, the investment and trade liberalization, the privatization of public assets, the deregulation of legal restrictions on anti-labor, anti-women, anti-children and anti-environment practices and the denationalization of underdeveloped and dependent economies.

As a matter of state policy, all regular workers must be covered by CBAs in the private sector and Collective Negotiation Agreement (CNA) between a government agency and the union. However in the Philippine setting, the number of those being covered by both agreements are very minimal as unionization is a prerequisite prior to being able to conclude the aforesaid contracts.

Unionization involves procedures which are very strictly defined and regulated, including so-called "certification elections" and internal union elections. These account for the low percentage of unionization in the Philippines. Using these, the capitalists can also counter the formation of a genuine union, either by organizing a company union headed by their agents in order to preempt it, or by manipulating the local union elections to co-opt it.

They have also perfected the tactic of hijacking the CBA process by enjoining a yellow federation to defeat the genuine union in so-called “certification elections” prior to CBA negotiations.

Contractuals have conducted mass actions in order to be recognized by their respective managements as a bargaining entity. This has been done in the cases of contractual Coca-Cola logistics workers under an in-house agency, The Red Systems Company Inc. (TRCI) and the PUP Janitorial Staff Union. They both have concluded successful contracts with their respective managements but only after so many rallies, demonstrations, strikes and other forms of collective action. The PUP Janitor Staff Union is continuing with union work, while the Coca-Cola contractuals of TRCI have been absorbed as regular workers in various facilities of the company.

6. There is a categorization between private sector and public sector workers. What would be the distinction in their kind of bargaining? What can public sector workers bargain that the private sector cannot and what can private sector bargain that cannot be bargained by public sector workers, e.g., wages, leave benefits, social amelioration: education, health, housing, etc?

JMS: There is no limit to the range of issues that are negotiable and bargainable with management, especially when the issues and bargaining process are clearly placed in the framework of wider conditions of industry and government policy — which are legitimate fields of trade union political action. However the success or failure of the workers’ struggles depend mainly on the readiness and steadfastness of the union in a given government or private enterprise or of the wider industrial-sector association.

The present strength of the labor movement is actually an important matter to factor in as this boosts the morale of the locals to engage in their local struggles including the conclusion of a good, better or the best CBA. Vice versa, the vigor of local struggles add up to the energy of the sectoral mass movement and the further involvement of the unions and the whole labor movement in political activities.

Issues that the local managements could not practically respond to such as laws and government legislations are brought to other venues, for example, a protest against the plunder of our natural resources or the connivance of US and Chinese imperialism with Duterte are either held at the gates of Malacanang or their respective embassies. The Philippine trade union movement also has a rich tradition of dealing with general and industry-wide employers’ associations including ECOP, especially when its level of organization has reached the likes of NUWHRAIN (in hotel and restaurant firms), NUBE (in banks) and is active in electoral struggle through its partylist representatives.

There is a categorization between private sector and public sector workers. And with regard to public sector workers, there are presumptions that their terms of employment are more compliant with the law and that their salaries are generally lower in the spirit of public service than those of private sector workers in large profitable enterprises. But there are sub-sectors of public sector workers like the employees of civilian departments and agencies under civil service rules, personnel of armed services under distinct service rules and government-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCCs) which tend to mimic private corporations with regard to terms of employment. One other special sub-sector covers the employees of those government agencies and GOCCs in the midst or end-stage of privatization such as Philpost, Philhealth, and local water utilities.

At any rate, all subsectors of the public service sector have a tendency to mimic the private sector in keeping down the salaries of lower regular personnel in order to stay within the budget and prioritize the discretionary funds and corruption of the officials and to take a lot of non-regular workers either to accomplish more work at lower cost or to give way to political patronage. There may be priorities set as a matter of policy by the President and Congress, such as beefing up certain civilian agencies or the armed agencies of the government with regular and non-regular employees.

Generally it is the top management level bosses who get the “lion’s share”. The rank-and-file in government offices and GOCCs receive a much lower pay, perhaps, just at par with private sector minimum wage earners. Any marked improvement in the wages and benefits of workers in government offices and corporations are product of years of struggles of government workers who were previously barred from unionizing under the Civil Service Code. These victories are concretely reflected in the improvement of wages, job security, and other benefits of government employees, in general. The government workers’ steadfast struggle surpassed such prohibition.

There are trade unions in civilian agencies and corporations of the government. These unions make demands and engage in collective bargaining. COURAGE, the broadest national umbrella organization of government employees’ unions, has been the most outstanding and most successful in fighting for union recognition and

assertion of other political rights in civilian agencies and corporations of the government.

The impact of large-scale privatization of or within government agencies on employee rights has also produced a remarkable convergence of issues that militant public-sector employees have taken up, thus clearly linking their sectoral or class concerns with the wider national issue of privatization as a neoliberal scheme. The trade union movement can draw good lessons from the experiences of employees unions in such agencies as local water utilities and the National Food Authority.

So far the Philippine state has prevented the unionization of the police and military by invoking, as the US federal government does against the unionization of the military, the specious arguments that unionization goes against the chain of command and that these armed personnel are “not employees” but “service personnel” of the state. Those in the armed services especially top police and military generals have been fattened by Duterte in terms of wages, take-home pay and guarantee of tenure aside from huge opportunities for corruption. He has likewise assured all of these agencies a tremendous increase in their budgets.

Unless the Philippine state is rocked by a major internal crisis and overhaul, the trade union movement cannot hope to directly organize or even significantly influence military-based and police-based associations with a union-like character in the foreseeable future. However, a thorough-going workers’ movement can always reach out to the AFP and PNP rank-and-file, CAFGU, and LGU-hired security, if only to study their working conditions and issues and to give appropriate advice on how to better protect their rights as government employees.

7. Are states and local government units entitled to their own labor relations standards?

JMS: States and local government authorities are generally expected to comply with the existing laws and regulations pertaining to employment and labor relations standards in general, and even improve on them to apply more favorably to public-sector employees.

But at all levels of the Philippine government, bureaucratic interests including graft and corruption are reflected in such employment and labor standards being distorted and abused. For example, there may be certain confidential and discretionary funds and appointments of personnel that allow unfair compensation and even fictitious employment of people or so-called ghost employees. These are practically beyond the scope of serious discussion about employment and labor standards in government.

There is a need to organize the workers both in the private sector and government entities in the local government units (LGUs), especially since the 1991 Local Government Code expanded local autonomy and devolution of formerly national-level functions such as health, education, and regulatory roles (including the regional wage boards).

Relevant to public-sector unionism, LGUs have become a major arena in the tug-of-war of budget allocations and revenue shares, and thus, in policies and programs around hiring, salary scales, and benefits. Government entities which are operating in many municipalities which do not even reach the third or fourth-class categories are oftentimes denied decent wages and benefits. Such economic issues of government employees are also tightly interwoven with other issues inherent in bureaucrat capitalism such as graft and corruption, political dynasties, nepotism and patronage.

During the Covid pandemic and lockdowns, many private-sector labor issues increasingly involved LGUs. These issues revolved around decisions to close or reopen business establishments and local livelihoods based on their status as essential or nonessential; distribution of urgent food relief to impoverished and locked-down working-class communities; handling of urgent cases of nonpayment of wages, mass layoffs, and many laborers especially in transport, construction and commerce being abandoned by their contractors or employers and leaving them stranded on the streets or in makeshift camps, unable to travel or denied entry and thus living like homeless and penniless beggars (“locally stranded individuals”).

On the other hand, the LGUs often have their hands tied. For example, they have jurisdiction over the private firms involved in labor cases but cannot enforce their authority and tend to point to the DOLE for resolution of such cases. As another example, some LGUs would exercise some leniency in the reopening of business establishments and livelihood activities within their jurisdiction, just to ease the horrible unemployment problem, but are constrained by policies decided at the national or regional level.

The trade union movement must therefore exercise utmost flexibility in legal tactics in dealing with LGUs in order to further expand and consolidate in the localities, including the possible working out of alliances with all positive elements among the LGU officials and personnel, and even within the local business circles with which

they find common tactical ground.

8. *What will happen to provisional or contractual workers who are not considered part of the formal relations systems? How will they negotiate and bargain for their economic benefits and amelioration?*

JMS: In the private sector, we have already discussed at length the situation of various wage workers and semiproletarian toilers who are not legally classified as regular workers, and thus will have to fight on more fluid fronts and overcome more obstacles in order to assert their various economic rights.

They will need to develop distinct demands directed at various targets, who may be big, medium and small capitalists; certain forms of organization which may or may not be typical unions; and certain forms of struggle which may or may not be strikes. But all these ought to unite the ranks of the workers and generate the mass force needed to achieve such demands. At the same time, all efforts should result in their being components of the nationwide trade union movement.

Just think of the challenge of organizing and mobilizing jeepney and tricycle drivers, or domestic helpers, or labor gangs hired for specific construction projects. PISTON has demonstrated how to organize the jeepney drivers in cities all over the country. In the countryside, there are major unions of agricultural workers like those under the National Federation of Sugar Workers. The peasant associations take up the cause of the more dispersed traditional farm workers who are hired by small and medium landlords as well as by rich and middle peasants.

Forms of organizations must be developed to bring about the collective strength of the aforesaid workers and the leadership from their own ranks. Trade union organizers will have to undertake intensive but fast-paced mass work, starting with rapid social investigation, deep immersion among select contacts, lively propaganda-agitation, and other creative applications of mass-line principles according to concrete conditions.

There is, for example, an ongoing campaign of various workers' groups to organize contractual workers as a union bargaining with their specific contractors demanding the same wages and benefits as their regular counterparts citing that workers employ the same labor, regardless of employment status. At this level of class struggle, the labor contractors can play off the huge mass of unemployed against the contractual workers. But of course the contractual workers have no choice but to wage struggle against both the labor contractors and the companies concerned.

Mass-filing of complaints and union registration of contractuels have been carried out by various non-unionized workers in the years preceding the pandemic. These actions put pressure on the DOLE to conduct inspections in various companies for possible violations of labor standards. Labor inspectors were hired from labor groups as part of the inspection teams. However, the pandemic has become a hindrance to the continuance of the inspections.

In the public sector, provisional or contractual workers depend usually on political patronage and corruption schemes of government officials. They are easily removed from their non-regular employment upon the change of administration in the entire government or in any particular department or agency of the government. They often suffer from extreme delays and arbitrary deductions in their salaries and allowances due to bureaucratic malfeasance.

They cannot negotiate and bargain collectively for better employment terms and economic benefits or even just amelioration. Thus, there are some who can resort to individual remedies such as acquiring civil service eligibility, gaining tenure and higher ranks under civil service rules. Nevertheless, public-sector union activists under COURAGE or in contact with it must continue to rely on the creativity and determination of the non-unionized masses of government employees to develop forms of organization and struggle appropriate to their situation.

In the final analysis, it is only the overarching class commitment, geographic scale, and multisectoral character of the Philippine trade union movement that will ensure the advancement of the rights of all categories of workers, including the so-called "self-employed" or "unpaid family worker", and their participation in the wider working-class struggle for those rights. In this regard, the Philippine trade union movement can draw lessons from the rich experience of the Indian working-class movement in reaching many categories of the semi-proletariat which would otherwise not be covered by formal labor laws and including their demands in the overall strike movement.

9. *How do we go about labor solidarity to be able to unify all forms of existing labor hiring strategies and unify all types of laborers to push for greater economic change in both the industrial front and the national economy?*

JMS: I think that the Kilusang Mayo Uno is the most outstanding and successful labor center for Filipino workers and their trade unions in the field of legal struggle. It stands for unifying all types of workers and trade unions,

defending their democratic rights, improving the wage and living conditions, fighting all forms of unjust hiring strategies, laws and practices that exploit and oppress the workers and pushing for greater economic change in the industrial front and entire economy.

The broadest alliance of various labor organizations was formed to rally the workers into a broad united front to take Duterte to task on his campaign promise to end contractualization. After several face-to-face negotiations with Duterte, he shed his true colors in late 2016, singing a different tune saying that capital must be considered.

Subsequently, United Workers was formed, primarily composed of Philippine affiliates of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) namely—KMU, Federation of Free Workers (FFW), SENTRO, and Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP). Later developments in the labor struggle will see the alliance expanding with the Bukluran ng Manggagawang Pilipino (BMP) and labor coalition PAGGAWA as additions. Solidarity was reflected in a United Labor Day Protest in 2017, and the Martsa ng Manggagawa (Workers' March) in August 2018. All major Filipino labor centers are allies in a common goal — to junk all forms of contractualization.

Of course, as an advocate of the people's democratic revolution against the entire semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system, I must point out the leading role of the working class and its advanced detachment, the Communist Party of the Philippines, with the support of the underground Revolutionary Council of Trade Unions and underground trade union movement. The CPP leads the people's democratic revolution in the direction of the socialist revolution.

10. How can the socialist perspective of socializing the means of production achieve labor solidarity and greater social equity?

JMS: In the Philippines today, state power is in the hands of the comprador big bourgeoisie in combination with the landlord class and in the service of foreign monopoly capitalism, chiefly US imperialism. Through the people's democratic revolution, the working class in alliance with the peasantry overthrows the state power of the big bourgeoisie.

Consequently, it begins the socialist revolution by socializing the commanding heights of the economy or making public the ownership of the strategic industries, the banks, the sources of raw materials and the main lines of communications and transport. The actions to nationalize or socialize the ownership of strategic enterprises can be combined with transitory measures of concessions to the small and medium entrepreneurs and traders in order to let them participate in the rapid recovery of the economy.

The socialist perspective and objective of the people's democratic revolution start to be realized by the working class seizing state power and taking over of the commanding heights of the economy and socializing the ownership of the means of production. There can be no better way than socialist revolution and construction to achieve and further develop labor solidarity and social equity after the basic completion of the people's democratic revolution.

On the Historic Mission of the Proletariat to Defeat Capitalism and Build Socialism

May 1, 2022

On May First, it is important and interesting to review the course that the international proletariat has taken in carrying out its historic mission of defeating capitalism and building socialism, learn lessons from the persistence of the world capitalist system and from the revolutionary experience of the proletariat and foresee how the epochal class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat will further develop.

Since thousands of years ago, upon the advent of civilization with metallurgy, class struggle and literacy, the embryo of capitalism in social relations has been nurtured within slave and feudal societies. But since the 13th century in Italian city states, stimulated by Mediterranean trade, capitalism has steadily developed from the stage of handicrafts, onward to steam powered manufacturing in the 18th century and further on to large-scale machine production powered by electro-mechanical processes in the 19th century.

It was in the social setting of the capitalist Industrial Revolution in England in the 19th century that Marx and Engels started the first comprehensive and profound critique of the internal laws of motion of free competition industrial capitalism and offered the philosophy, political economy and social science by which the industrial proletariat could develop the revolutionary theory and practice to defeat the bourgeoisie and realize the historic mission of building socialism.

From the issuance of the *Communist Manifesto* in 1848 to the end of the 19th century, the most that could be accomplished by the industrial proletariat was to learn from the teachings of Marx and Engels, seize power briefly in the Paris Commune of 1871 during the First International, learn from the defeat of the Commune and promote Marxism as the main trend of the workers' movement in the last decade of the 19th century through the Second International.

In the meantime, since 1871 free competition capitalism developed into monopoly capitalism in several countries, including the US, Germany, France, Italy, Russia and Japan. Like England, monopoly capitalism became dominant in their economies, with industrial and commercial bank capital merging to form a finance oligarchy, with surplus capital for direct and indirect investments abroad and with strong impulses to form conflicting blocs against each other and to catch up with the capitalist powers ahead in the game of acquiring colonies, semi-colonies and dependent countries.

Emergence of socialist societies and revisionist betrayal

It was Lenin who first described the world era as one of modern imperialism and proletarian revolution in the 20th century. He observed that by themselves the imperialist powers were driven by the exploitation of the proletariat and the crisis of overproduction and manifested the decadent and moribund character of monopoly capitalism, especially by engaging in wars of aggression. And he pointed out the need to overthrow the bourgeois state and to turn the first inter-imperialist war into a revolutionary civil war.

Under his leadership, the Bolsheviks successfully carried out the Great October Socialist Revolution in 1917 and prevailed in the subsequent civil war and war against the foreign interventionists. After the New Economic Policy succeeded in reviving the economy, Stalin carried out a series of five-year economic plans to build a socialist industry and to collectivize and mechanize agriculture, to strengthen the Soviet Union and to proclaim the victory of Leninism as a further development of Marxist theory and practice.

Stalin was able to defeat the Right and "Left" opportunists and counterrevolutionary currents and the anti-Soviet maneuvers of the imperialist powers and the all-out war of aggression spearheaded by Nazi Germany in World War II. As a result of World War II, several socialist countries and national liberation movements arose on an international scale. Stalin was able to industrialize the Soviet Union for the second time, break the US monopoly of nuclear weapons and assist the Chinese and Korean peoples win resounding victories in their wars of national liberation. US imperialism was also defeated in its war of aggression against Vietnam and the whole of Indochina in 1975 and began to be afflicted by the problem of stagflation.

Exactly at the point when one third of humanity was governed and led by communist and workers' parties, the modern revisionists headed by Khrushchov were able to seize political power with a coup d'etat in the Soviet Union in 1956, totally negate Stalin, decentralize the economy and restore capitalism under the slogans of

bourgeois populism (state and party of the “whole” people and bourgeois pacifism (peaceful transition, peaceful competition and peaceful coexistence).

Brezhnev made his own coup d'état against the Khrushchov ruling clique. He ruled for a longer period of time than Khrushchov and sought to recentralize the state and the economy for the purpose of engaging the US in superpower rivalry and arms race, accelerating capitalist restoration and carrying out social fascism and social imperialism. The Soviet Union was weakened by economic disintegration and by self-defeating military adventures, especially in Africa and Afghanistan.

By the time Gorbachov, Yeltsin and their likes took over the reins of government, the Soviet Union was ripe for further disintegration in the latter 1980s and total collapse in 1991. The revisionist leaders had their factional rivalries but shared the common illusion that if they took the capitalist road, destroy the Soviet Union and dissolve the Warsaw Pact they could enjoy the life of the capitalist oligarchy in peace and prosperity.

They forgot that World Wars I and II had been inter-imperialist wars arising from the very nature and internal laws of motion of monopoly capitalism and that World War III had been postponed for more than 46 years because of the loss by the US over its monopoly of nuclear weapons, the fear of mutually assured destruction, the rise of several socialist countries and national liberation movements due to World War II and the consensus of the imperialist powers to wage non-nuclear proxy wars among themselves and direct imperialist wars of aggression only against the underdeveloped and impoverished countries.

While the Soviet Union deteriorated in the quagmire of modern revisionism and capitalist restoration from 1956 onwards, the Chinese Communist Party under the leadership of Mao Zedong acted for a while in defense of the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism and carried out a series of revolutionary achievements, such as the anti-Rightist campaign, the Great Leap Forward, the socialist education movement and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR).

The GPCR was started in 1966 and was conducted in accordance with what Mao and the Chinese communists themselves considered as Mao's highest theoretical and practical achievement in combating modern revisionism, preventing capitalist restoration and consolidating socialism. The GPCR was optimistically regarded as the guarantee for the worldwide victory of socialism and even for the imminent collapse of imperialism.

But after the Shanghai Commune, factional struggles and allegations against and surrounding the death of Lin Biao surfaced, policy shifts were initiated by a Centrist-Rightist combination veering away from the proletarian class struggle and leading to the Nixon diplomatic visit, the rehabilitation and promotion of Deng Xiaoping, reinterpretations of the GPCR and the three-worlds theory by Deng and the increasing calls for modernization through capitalist reforms and opening up for integration with the US and world capitalist system.

After the death of Zhou Enlai in February 1976, Deng was removed from office for promoting big comprador ideology. But after the death of Mao in September 1976, the October coup resulted in the arrest and imprisonment of the so-called Gang of Four by the combination of Hua Guofeng and Deng. After the latter gained the upper hand over the former who resigned, the GPCR was declared a complete catastrophe, Mao no less was castigated for it and millions of CPC cadres and members were expelled. Liu Shaoqi the No. 1 capitalist-roader was rehabilitated. The communes were dismantled and public assets were privatized in earnest. The sweat shop operations for the US market began.

In the 1980s the revisionist-ruled countries of the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe and China accelerated the restoration of capitalism. By the time that the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, the US had become the sole superpower proclaiming a new world order, acting as the patron of neoliberal globalization among the former socialist countries and other countries and applying the neoconservative policy of state terrorism and ceaseless wars of aggression. While the Soviet Union dissolved the Warsaw Pact, the US and its allies did not dissolve the NATO and prepared for NATO expansion.

The reunification of Germany was the first step in the NATO expansion and led to a number of former Warsaw Pact members requesting to join NATO. In 1994, Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic joined NATO. In 1999 the US and the NATO demonstrated their ability to destroy Yugoslavia and create several puppet states from it. Another expansion came with the accession of seven Central and Eastern European countries: Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. In 2022, NATO recognized the following states as having applied for membership: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia and Ukraine. The NATO encirclement of Russia has tightened.

In coordination with the NATO expansion in Central and Eastern Europe and the show of imperialist force in the Balkans, the US imperialists, goaded by the Israeli Zionists, began to launch wars of aggression against such countries as Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Syria that reflected a measure of non-alignment or the balance of power in the previous bipolar world. They also announced the neoconservative policy of ceaseless wars and full-spectrum dominance, especially high tech military power, to make the 21st century a century of Pax Americana.

The US continued to be chieftain of such multilateral agencies as the Group of 7, OECD, IMF, World Bank and the World Trade Organization. Eventually, China and Russia took the lead in forming the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) and the New Development Bank. They have their respective international development projects, the Belt-Road-Initiative and Eurasian Economic Union. They tended to come together as a bloc of new imperialist powers against the bloc of the traditional imperialist powers.

The “sole superpower moment” of US imperialism did not last long. The financial crash of 2008 exposed the unravelling of the US-instigated neoliberal policy and the untenability of US concessions to China and the extremely unsustainable costs of the ceaseless wars of aggression already running at US\$6 trillion with no significant expansion of economic territory. Under the Obama regime, the US expressed wariness over the economic and military rise of China and began to make countermoves in the East Asia-Pacific region.

Under the Trump regime, the US strategists started to openly refer to China as chief economic competitor and chief political rival of the US and to accuse it of using a two-tier economy, manipulating its currency and market and stealing technology from US subsidiaries in China as well as from the research and developments of private corporations and from institutes in the US.

The US is definitely no longer the sole superpower in the unipolar world of 1991 to 2008. The new imperialist power China is most assertive that there is now a multipolar world. But the US is still the No. 1 imperialist power in terms of GDP and military power even as it continues to suffer strategic decline because of the crisis of over-production and over-accumulation of capital and runaway costs of the ceaseless wars of aggression. The withdrawal of the US from Afghanistan in 2021 is a clear proof of the failure of the neoconservative policy.

China is still a far No. 2 to the US, especially if we look at its GDP per capita. Thus it often presents itself as shy from entering a world war that prejudices its capitalist advance and ambitions to succeed with its BRI, which would change the focus of the world economy and trade. On its part, the US has decided to disrupt the capitalist advance of China by cutting down its export surplus to the US market through high tariff walls, restricting technology transfer and restraining further development of trade and economic relations. The US expects that by withdrawing its concessions to China in the last 40 years, China would suffer economic and political decline.

China has been reckless in claiming more than 90 per cent of the South China Sea in violation of the UN Convention on Law of Sea and the 2016 judgment of the Permanent Arbitration Commission in favor of the Philippines against China. Thus, the US has put together the Quad Security Dialogue among the US, Australia, Japan and India in order to keep open the Indo-Pacific ocean route and to assure the littoral ASEAN states that China can neither deprive them of their exclusive zones and extended continental shelves nor compel them to abandon such route.

Upon the outbreak of the Russian-Ukrainian war, it has become obvious once more that since the destruction of Yugoslavia, the sequence of the Soviet revisionist betrayal of socialism and sell out to the US and NATO has been the cause for war coming to Europe. The fact is also exposed that Russia has recovered from the debilitation it had suffered from the collapse of the Soviet Union and that China is its most reliable ally and rear in confronting the NATO expansion to its borders.

At the same time, the limits of US imperialist power and NATO are exposed as the Ukrainian fascists are left to fight Russia. Nevertheless, quite a number of those partisan to US imperialism are happy that the NATO expansion is pressing on the borders of Russia and that a new Cold War is on and a third world war is in prospect. For decades to come, we shall witness the rise of inter-imperialist contradictions between the old set and the new set of imperialist powers.

A world of multiple crises and the prospect of socialist resurgence

We are living today in a world beset by multiple crises, including gross social inequality, economic depression, high rates of unemployment and mass poverty, state terrorism, fascism, wars of aggression, threats of nuclear war, pandemic, environmental destruction and global heating. All of these are due to the dominance of the

extremely exploitative and oppressive monopoly bourgeoisie in the imperialist countries and underdeveloped countries. Ultimately, all these crises can be resolved only by the proletariat recovering from its major setbacks since 1956, taking power and building socialism.

The world capitalist system is now stricken by a prolonged depression due to the crisis of overproduction and over-accumulation of capital. A few hundreds of billionaires now own most of the productive assets of the world and continue to accumulate their private wealth, while billions of people live in poverty. The social and economic crisis is aggravated by the lockdowns and shutdowns as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Most governments do not know how to solve the crisis except by using neoliberal measures favoring the monopoly capitalists, government deficit spending and foreign borrowing. Almost all governments now suffer from public debt crisis, involving a total of US\$281 trillion, which is more than 355 percent of global gross domestic product (GDP).

There are major supply gluts in steel, grains, crude oil and oil products. There is a temporary shortfall in the production of semiconductors. There is now a race between US and Chinese monopoly capitalists to invest billions of dollars in the production of electronic chips and semiconductors. Under the recently enacted National Defense Authorization Act, the Biden government is promoting domestic semiconductor production to grab the biggest share of rising demand. This is connected with state investments in military research and production in both the US and China.

In trying to revive their economies, the advanced capitalist countries are pouring trillions of dollars worth of stimulus packages to monopoly firms. But they are running the risk of economic overheating and generating a debt bubble that could burst in the coming years. Under the Biden administration, the US government has recently approved a US\$1.9 trillion economic stimulus package. This will provide subsidies for domestic production and distribute cash to almost every American to promote consumption.

Other major capitalist countries are also planning to spend huge amounts of money to stimulate their own economies, like Japan (US\$710 billion), Germany (US\$250 billion), the United Kingdom (US\$210 billion) and France (US\$120.5 billion). China plans to achieve a 6 percent economic expansion by financing the operations of state-owned corporations.

The billions of the impoverished people in the undeveloped economies will suffer the prolonged effects of the global economic recession because these economies have long been wasted by super-profit taking by foreign monopolies and by unsustainable domestic and foreign public debts. By conservative estimate, the number of people living in extreme poverty (less than US\$2 per day) in 2020 has increased by 124 million. This is expected to increase by another 150 million in 2021.

The toiling masses of workers and peasants suffer the worst effects of the economic lockdowns such as insufficient income and inflated prices of basic goods and services. Under the neoliberal policy, the cash-strapped underdeveloped countries will be compelled to borrow more money, further open up their economies to foreign monopolies, liberalization and depression of wages in order to draw in foreign capital and investments.

While the world is laid prostrate by the economic crisis, the Biden administration is set on a policy of military aggressiveness and intensifying inter-imperialist rivalries. Biden declared that he will more vigorously secure US economic and political interests in Asia in the face of growing challenges of imperialist rival China.

The US recently conducted military exercises using two carrier strike groups in the South China Sea and Taiwan Strait directly challenging China's claims over these international waters. It touted building the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue between the US, Japan, India and Australia in order to press for American military forces and weapons to be forward-deployed to these countries and to put more economic, military and political pressure on China.

In the Middle East, soon after assuming the US presidency, Biden ordered a missile attack in Syria, violating its sovereign territory, against what it claimed was arms transport from Iran. While it extended the New Start agreement with Russia, which sets limits to strategic offensive arms, the US has yet to announce a rollback of development and production of nuclear arms and intermediate-range missiles promoted under the Trump government. These have been overtaken by the US and NATO proxy war against Russia. In the meantime, Biden has not yet reinstated the nuclear deal with Iran nor lifted sanctions against the country despite Iran's expressed willingness to comply with previous agreements.

China is relentless in aggressively asserting its sovereignty over more than 90 percent of the South China Sea and continues to maintain military presence in the West Philippine Sea. Border conflicts have erupted

intermittently between China and India. Russia recently opened a naval base in Sudan in the Red Sea, in conjunction with its air base in Syria and naval base in Yemen, to maintain the capacity to control strategic transit routes in the Middle East and a gateway to Africa.

As the inter-imperialist rivalries for world hegemony intensify, military spending by rival powers continued to rise by 3.9 percent to US\$1.83 trillion last year, despite the severe world economic crisis. The US is the biggest military spender with US\$801 billion, with China running second at US\$293 billion, an increase of 4.7 percent compared with 2020. China's military spending has grown for 27 consecutive years. Exports of major weapons remain close to highest levels since the past 30 years, with the US share increasing to 37 percent.

All major contradictions in the world are intensifying: those between capital and labor in the imperialist countries; those between the imperialist powers and the oppressed peoples and nations; those between the imperialist powers and governments assertive of national independence and socialist programs and aspirations; and those between blocs of imperialist powers, such as the bloc of the traditional imperialist powers and the bloc of new imperialist powers, China and Russia.

The worsening crisis of the world capitalist system engenders revolutionary resistance among the proletariat and the rest of the people because of the escalation of class exploitation and oppression. On a global scale, the proletariat must work and fight hard to recover the trade union and other democratic rights undermined or suppressed by neoliberalism and fascism. The ultimate aim is to wage revolution and build socialism. But before the revolutionary resistance wins victory, the ruling big bourgeoisie uses state terrorism or fascism against it. The open rule of terror by fascist regimes is rising in an increasing number of countries.

While conditions of exploitation are escalating, brazen attacks against national and democratic rights are being carried out by the big bourgeoisie in order to preempt, deter or suppress revolutionary resistance. But the escalating conditions of both exploitation and oppression make armed revolution necessary and urgent. History has proven that the proletariat is at its best in leading the revolution when the imperialist powers themselves cannot avoid waging war among themselves directly, as in World War I and II, or by proxy and by wars of aggression by an imperialist power or combination of imperialist powers against an underdeveloped country.

Imperialist war is the worst form of terrorism as proven by World Wars I and II and by the post-World War II situation when US imperialism can at will unleash wars of aggression and kill 25 to 30 million people. Only new democratic and socialist revolutions led by the proletariat can defeat imperialism and solve all the problems that it brings about, such as national and class oppression and exploitation, fascism, war of aggression, threat of nuclear war and human extinction, epidemics and global heating.

In the continuing era of modern imperialism and proletarian revolution, the role of the proletariat to turn imperialist wars to revolutionary civil wars and build socialism cannot be underestimated and should be upheld and carried out by the broad masses of the exploited and oppressed peoples. The upsurge of anti-imperialist and democratic mass struggles and the perseverance in people's wars for national and social liberation are the prelude to the resurgence of the world proletarian-socialist revolution. In this decade and the next decade, the proletariat and its revolutionary forces must work and fight for this resurgence.