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From the Publisher

NEW RESOLVE TO PUBLISH *AB* REGULARLY

There is a new resolve to put out *Ang Bayan* as often as possible and necessary along the general line of the new-democratic revolution, under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and the Second Great Rectification Movement. As publisher, the Central Committee has reconstituted the editorial staff and is determined to continue strengthening it and have the issues come out regularly.

The publication of *Ang Bayan* is absolutely needed to serve as the scaffolding (Lenin's metaphor) in building the entire Party. *Ang Bayan* serves to inform and educate the Party membership and plays a crucial role in organizing the Party.

Since the reestablishment of the Party in 1968, *Ang Bayan* has been conceived of as an indispensable major instrument for Party building and revolutionary struggle. The proletarian revolutionary cadres learn from Lenin's *What Is to be Done* concerning the decisive importance of the Party newspaper.

Editorial

ESTRADA REGIME: ANTI-POOR

Contrary to its much-vaunted slogan "Erap para sa Mahirap" (Erap for the Poor), the incoming Estrada regime is no different from all previous reactionary governments: it is pro-foreign, a US imperialist puppet, agent of the big comprador bourgeoisie and big landlords and is against the interests of the majority of suffering peasants and workers.

The US-Estrada regime is currently the caretaker of the semicolonial and semifeudal system. All programs and policy pronouncements of Joseph Estrada, the new reactionary president of the Government of the Republic of the Philippines, do not depart from the programs that currently lie at the root of the economic crisis and the people's impoverishment. In truth, Estrada has not only vowed to continue with the programs of the Ramos regime. He particularly assures the strict implementation of the policy dictates of the IMF-WB-WTO.

The Estrada government assumes power amid a most intense economic crisis. The people's anger is flaring, sectoral mass struggles are advancing along with the armed struggle in the countryside. During the elections, the Estrada camp exploited the people's dissatisfaction and profited from the large protest vote. After the elections, Estrada continued with his pro-poor theatrics: he bragged about abolishing the Congressional "pork barrel", warned that he would go after criminals and lunched with farmers from Sumilao, Bukidnon who were picketing the office of the DAR (Department of Agrarian Reform).

But there is no obscuring the wide chasm that lies between his posturing and intent. In his recently released "Ten-Point Action Program of the First Hundred Days of the Estrada Presidency", Estrada has bared his true priorities. At the core of Estrada's program, patterned after that of the US-Ramos regime, is the implementation of the policies of denationalization, liberalization, privatization and deregulation. Gen. Ramos was right when he assured foreign monopoly capitalists that they had nothing to worry about regarding the Estrada government

New Resolve ... From p. 1

It is very regrettable that for quite a number of years issues of ***Ang Bayan*** have come out only occasionally and infrequently. This was the case even when ***Ang Bayan*** was urgently needed as a vehicle for criticizing and repudiating the grave errors of the incorrigible opportunists and renegades in the course of the Second Great Rectification Movement and for counteracting the enemy's intensified psychological warfare.

As the official news organ of the Party Central Committee, ***Ang Bayan*** reports the statements and decisions of the Central Committee, the revolutionary work of the Party and other revolutionary forces, the various struggles of the masses and the most significant national and international events.

The pages of ***Ang Bayan*** seek to carry promptly the news about the tactical offensives in the people's war, the various forms of mass resistance, the advances in mass work, the implementation of the united front policy, the analysis of the burning issues of the day and the opinions of its readers.

The news items and articles in ***Ang Bayan*** reflect the principles, line and policies of the Party. But they can do so successfully only in concrete terms and with accuracy of facts. The objective is not only to mirror the events but also to inspire the entire Party and the revolutionary masses to advance in the revolutionary struggle.

As the publication of the entire Party, under the direction of the Central Committee, ***Ang Bayan*** is determined to make its reports and analyses timely and

informative and educative and is ever ready to receive and publish reports and opinions from Party members and the masses.

The content and style of ***Ang Bayan*** serve the general membership of the Party and the revolutionary masses of workers and peasants. ***Ang Bayan*** strives to make the style simple, direct and incisive. It can be easily translated into the various Philippine languages.

To be efficient and effective in their work, the editorial staff of ***Ang Bayan*** rely not only on their own capabilities and efforts but also on a network of correspondents and contributors of reports and concise analytical articles.

Ang Bayan urges and encourages all leading committees of the Party, all commands of the New People's Army and leading committees of revolutionary mass organizations to promptly submit reports on events and activities which they consider worthy of publication.

As a matter of course, the heads of propaganda organs and editors of various revolutionary publications should send publishable material to the ***Ang Bayan*** editorial staff. ***Ang Bayan*** can designate from among cadres in propaganda work and reliable contributors definite correspondents.

Correspondents and contributors can send news items and articles to ***Ang Bayan*** via the clandestine channels of the Party. Using certain techniques to cover their tracks, they can also send these to the web sites of the NDFP on the Internet. Subsequently, the editorial staff process these for publication in ***Ang Bayan***. ■

Editorial...From p.1

because it would merely perpetuate existing economic and political policies.

Estrada's "Ten-Point Program" is geared towards the complete sellout of national patrimony and economic sovereignty to foreign monopoly capitalists and the betrayal of the masses' interests.

It raises the banner of "globalization", meaning the all-out abandonment of the economy to control and exploitation by big foreign capitalists. It focuses attention on production for export that is totally dependent on foreign investments, imported technology and foreign markets. It boasts of an "all-out export offensive" amid a glut in the world capitalist market and an oversupply of traditional export products (raw materials) and cheap reexports (garments, toys, chips and others).

An adjunct to this policy is the further opening of even more sectors of the economy such as banking, the retail trade, mass media and real estate, to foreign players. Also related to this is the implementation of policies to "control wage inflation", meaning contractualization, low wages, cuts in safety and health costs and of course, anti-union and anti-strike policies to forcibly implement such measures.

In order to set aside land reform, Estrada's program has declared that the central issue is "agricultural productivity, not simply land ownership". He pays lip service to land reform but plans to implement policies that would further attract foreign capitalists to

IN THIS ISSUE ...

EDITORIAL	1	Magdangal-Bill-Olive Crap	9
Publisher's Note	1	Globalization and Labor	11
Return of Marcoses	3	Underground Workers' Movement....	15
CC: Arrest Dictator's Minions	4	Revolutionary United Front	16
CL: Revival and Resurgence	4	Human Rights	18
Breakthroughs in NEcija	8	NEWS	19

THE RETURN OF THE MARCOSES TO POWER

Accompanying Joseph Estrada to Malacanang as the new reactionary president is a flock of minions and cronies of the former dictator Marcos.

Leading the pack are his son Bongbong and daughter Imee who won as governor and congressional representative, respectively, of Ilocos Norte.

Aside from them, Estrada plans to appoint prominent Marcos men to his cabinet. Estrada himself and Edgardo Angara who ran as vice president under Estrada's party, are both former Marcos minions. One of the top bankrollers and supporters of Estrada's candidacy is Eduardo 'Danding' Cojuangco, Marcos' number one crony.

The return to power of Marcos' minions paves the way for their recovery of wealth sequestered by the government in 1986. First in line are Cojuangco's shares of stock in San Miguel Corporation (SMC),

the recovery of which would give him majority control over SMC.

There is also a looming possibility that the Marcos family will be able to recover its ill-gotten wealth. Plans are already afoot to withdraw cases filed against Imelda Marcos in court. Once the Marcos family recovers this wealth, compensation for victims of fascist abuse during the dictatorship will certainly be jeopardized.

Despite fierce resistance from different sectors, Estrada insists on giving the fascist dictator a hero's burial. Not only does he want to bury in oblivion the fascist dictator's unprecedented crimes against the people and the thousands of direct victims of fascist abuse who have yet to obtain justice. He is also using the issue of the burial to revive and mobilize Marcos loyalists within and outside the military and civilian bureaucracy. -**AB**

Continued from p.2

invest in agriculture and concentrate on producing high-value crops for export. He also rides on the issue of food security but only tightens big landlord and big merchant-usurer control over the production and trading of rice and other grain.

Estrada's cabinet and pool of advisers are dominated by agents of the IMF-WB-WTO and giant transnational banks. Also prominent in these circles are former Marcos cronies. There is a smattering of former Leftists but they serve as mere adornments, have long ago transferred allegiance to the ruling system and are nothing but Estrada stooges. Many even doubt the seriousness of the promised anti-crime crusade because of Estrada's connections and debt of gratitude to notorious jueteng and gambling lords and other syndicates.

The big foreign and local capitalists and big landlords are rejoicing. Erap is undoubtedly on their side. Small wonder that Estrada has the full support of the White House, Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Makati Business Club and other organizations of the big compradors and imperialists.

Nonetheless, the crisis is already most intense. Estrada's insistence on such anti-national and anti-people policies will accelerate and further worsen the people's suffering. It will also fan the flames of the people's anger and resistance. The people's gnawing hunger and the desperation afflicting the hundreds of thousands who have been thrown into the streets, deprived of their land and robbed of their livelihood will not be assuaged by Estrada's balderdash and gimmickry. Every added amount of suffering inflicted

on the people by the Estrada government will surely be met with massive protests and struggles.

The Party and revolutionary movement should resolutely lead the masses. The truth of the Estrada regime's puppetry, its reactionary character and policies must be immediately, thoroughly, widely and concretely exposed. So must concrete cases of plunder, exploitation and oppression be exposed and opposed as we target the Estrada regime's anti-national and anti-people programs dictated by the IMF-WB-WTO, foreign banks and transnational corporations and local big bourgeoisie and big landlords. Mass struggles must be more assiduously broadened and strengthened along with the revolutionary armed struggle. - **AB**

Central Committee:

Arrest the Dictator's Minions!

The Communist Party of the Philippines and New People's Army condemn the incoming Estrada regime for honoring, through an official burial, the despised dictator Marcos. This is a grave insult to the people who were oppressed by and suffered tremendously under, the fascist Marcos dictatorship, especially the thousands of victims of human rights abuses, who have long been crying for justice but continue to be denied it.

The reactionary government in Manila has long abandoned the quest for justice for victims of the hated Marcos fascist dictatorship. But it is now evident that the incoming Estrada regime even intends to surpass the criminal negligence of the two previous administrations. Not only does it want to bury in oblivion the crimes and the savagery of the fascist dictatorship without rectification. It also plans to place in the centers of power and privilege the relatives and minions of the fascist dictator who remain unrepentant and unwilling to accept responsibility for their crimes against the people.

Accordingly, the Party's Central Committee directs the New People's Army to form special units to undertake operations to arrest the relatives of Marcos, especially Imelda Marcos and Ferdinand Marcos Jr., along with the other minions of the late dictator and oblige them to face the people's justice and answer for their major crimes against the people. **-AB**

Revolutionary Struggle in Central Luzon:

Revival and Resurgence

The armed revolution in Central Luzon faces a bright future. Because of the thorough repudiation of the erroneous line, strict adherence to the correct line and diligent leadership over mass struggles, the Party, people's army and mass movement in the region continue to regain strength.

Despite anti-Party acts of splittism and sabotage that sowed disorder among the revolutionary forces in two provinces, overall, the revolutionary movement in the region is steadily advancing. Membership in revolutionary mass organizations grew by 350% from 1992 to May 1997. There has been a 26% increase in the number of barrios where the revolutionary forces maintain an effective presence. The number of Red fighters grew by 50% and Party membership by 14%.

There is renewed vitality in the legal democratic movement in the cities and town centers of Central Luzon.

Eighteen strikes demanding wage increases were launched from 1996 to 1997 in various factories in Bataan, Bulacan and Pampanga involving more than 1,700 workers. These actions were successfully carried out despite threats and harassment from capitalists and the Department of Labor and Employment. Aside from these strikes, hundreds of workers from the region joined mass actions against oil price hikes, the deregulation of the oil industry and the Ramos regime's "charter change" scheme. More than 3,000 workers attended the rally commemorating International Workers' Day and hundreds also joined the demonstration held in Manila to protest Ramos' empty rhetoric in his State of the Nation Address.

The militant workers' movement in the region encompasses more than 60 factories in five provinces. These factories employ tens of thousands of workers, 85% of whom are unionized. Within the vast majority of these unions exist revolutionary cores of the Party or of advanced worker-activists.

In 1997, thousands of students from 16 major schools participated in 19 mass actions. Propaganda and political education are lively and conducted extensively among student ranks. Among the major issues tackled are Education 2000, the Medium Term Philippine Development Program, imperialist globalization, APEC, the oil price hike, human rights, tuition fee increases and issues concerning students' rights and welfare. Membership in the Kabataang Makabayan grew by almost 8% in the region.

Major Factors

The vast majority of Party cadres and members in the region are determinedly rectifying past deviations and errors. They also strictly adhere to the correct line of people's democratic revolution and extensive and

intensive guerrilla warfare based on an ever widening and deepening mass base. Under the leadership of the Party Regional Committee, the erroneous line of strategic counter-offensive (SCO) within the strategic defensive has been repudiated. This line, which led to the erroneous transformation of the NPA into fighting units devoid of mass work, seriously weakened mass work and military capability in localities and resulted in the wanton intensification of the war. Repudiated was the insurrectionist line which gave too much weight to urban struggles, intensified partisan warfare and overrode the mass movement and urban struggles, flirted with insurrection and disrupted the correct deployment of forces and the balance between the struggle in the countryside and urban areas. Also repudiated was the opportunist line that ran counter to the correct class line of two-stage revolution, diluted the class basis of building the united front and spurned the Party's proletarian leadership over the revolution.

The Party organization in Central Luzon has resolutely struggled against these errors. Building the Party and mass organizations on the basic level both in the countryside and urban areas is once again being emphasized. Administrative structures have been simplified to deploy the biggest possible number of Party cadres to mass work and building local Party branches. A system of reporting has been implemented at every level of organization. From time to time, leaders conduct direct investigations of lower units, down to the basic level.

Aside from deeply rooting itself among the masses, the revolutionary movement in Central Luzon has rectified more than a decade of neglect in the study of the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and its conscious application to revolutionary practice. Such neglect led to serious disorientation, deviations and errors. The emergence of the SCO line itself was a manifestation of a feeble grasp of the theory of people's war.

To consolidate the regional Party organization ideologically, the correct style of study which merges revolutionary theory with revolutionary practice through diligent theoretical education, social investigation, assessments and summings-up and criticism and self-criticism are being implemented. An important component of rectification efforts in political

education is conducting studies on the mode of production and class analysis. Such studies will set on firm ground the line of people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war. This obliterates the insurrectionists' erroneous view that the capitalist mode of production prevails in Central Luzon (and in the entire country), thus, making insurrection the correct strategy for the region (and for the whole nation). The conduct of revolutionary work in Central Luzon has also been summed up to draw lessons and prevent a repetition of past errors and deviations.

While the rectification movement and internal consolidation work are being assiduously advanced, the Party has been daringly and creatively positioning itself at the frontline of people's struggles. It ensures that such struggles expand and fortify basic revolutionary organizations and contribute to overall revitalization and restrengthening.

Cradle of the Revolution

The renewed advance and buildup of the revolutionary movement in Central Luzon has unique significance.

It was in Central Luzon that the Communist Party was reestablished on December 26, 1968. The Party was born amid the First Great Rectification Movement that repudiated the revisionism of the Lava clique. After three months, the

New People's Army was established in the second district of Tarlac. Nine NPA squads were formed and the first guerrilla front in the Philippines was established. This encompassed the second district of Tarlac and contiguous areas in Pampanga, Zambales and Nueva Ecija.

It was in Central Luzon that armed struggle first broke out. Tactical offensives, which added almost 200 automatic rifles to the NPA's arsenal, were launched.

It was also here that the first major mass actions led by the reestablished Party were waged. A legal demonstration participated in by 50,000 people was launched in Tarlac in April 1969. Before the imposition of martial rule, a huge rally joined by around 100,000 people was held in Clark Air Base to protest the US' war of aggression in Vietnam. These were the fruits of revolutionary work conducted among the youth, students and workers even before 1968.

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Massive enemy attacks failed to crush the revolutionary movement in Central Luzon. Using flexible tactics and underground methods, the people's army and revolutionary forces were able to preserve themselves. Tactical offensives continued. By 1972, the New People's Army had grown to 15 squads operating in five provinces in the region. There were also 320 Party members in Central Luzon (equivalent to 16% of the overall Party membership that year).

The advance of the revolutionary movement in Central Luzon yielded personnel and weapons, which helped sow the seeds of armed struggle in other regions. The region continued its leading role in the armed struggle and mass movement at a time when the groundwork for building guerrilla fronts in other areas of the country was still being laid.

Central Luzon's proximity to Metro Manila provides distinct relevance to the conduct of the armed struggle and the revolutionary mass movement in the region. Because it lies practically at the doorstep of the national urban center, the revolutionary movement's advance in Central Luzon easily reverberates across Manila and the rest of the Philippines—raising the people's and revolutionary forces' morale and dealing exceptional blows against the state.

Central Luzon demonstrated this capability in the first half of the '80s as the crisis of the US-Marcos fascist dictatorship intensified. Widespread tactical offensives and massive protest actions in the region contributed much to shaking the foundations of the dictatorship and hastening its political isolation and eventual downfall. The people's army launched seven raids, three ambushes and widespread partisan operations in the final year of the fascist dictatorship. In Bataan, 27 nuclear plant transmission lines were blown up in June 1985, closely followed that year by the second BEPZ (Bataan Export Processing Zone)-wide strike involving 10,000 workers and a people's strike (*welgang bayan*) against the operation of a nuclear plant participated in by tens of thousands of people. The fierce resistance of the people of Bataan not only to the nuclear plant but also to the dictatorship echoed throughout the archipelago.

With the rectification movement's continued advance in the region, Central Luzon is sure to continue its relevant contributions to the overall surge of the revolutionary struggle in the Philippines.

Tortuous Route

Before the process of rectification and

restrengthening was able to take off in Central Luzon, the region went through a tortuous struggle with incorrigible petty bourgeois elements that blocked the rectification movement.

In 1994, 11 years of revolutionary experience in Central Luzon were summed up. A bloc within the regional leadership led by paramours Bill (Luisito dela Cruz) and Olive (Caridad Magpantay) posed as advocates of the rectification movement but stridently defended the SCO line and the policies and practices enforced in the region subsequent to this line. The bloc's erroneous views prevailed in many of the issues discussed. Nevertheless, the Regional Committee agreed to present the summing-up results first to the Central Committee's Executive Committee.

In the 55-day consultation between the Regional Executive Committee and the EC-CC held in the first quarter of 1996, a number of them pretended to agree to the rectification movement's judgment on the SCO line, how such was enforced throughout the region and the extent to which the revolutionary forces constricted and overreached their capacity as a result. They feigned conformity with the Party's current policies pursuant to the rec-

tification movement. The bloc also pretended to agree to the necessity of reconducting the summing-up to rectify its erroneous conclusions.

After the consultation, however, the bloc continued harping that "no regularization occurred in Central Luzon" and that the transformation of the NPA into full-time fighting units was "correct". Despite untiring and continued efforts to win them over, they adamantly advocated the SCO line, especially in combination with the verticalization of the NPA, insurrectionism, the bourgeois line in united front building and urban basing.

In a series of "study sessions" and "meetings", they pushed their own analyses, line and concepts, which ran counter to the rectification movement and to the Party's line and policies. They later raised

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trumped-up and exaggerated issues against loyal members of the Regional Committee which they used as a pretext for a mass resignation designed to create an organizational crisis. This they did to better position themselves within the regional leadership and split the Central Luzon regional organization from the Party. They held conspiratorial meetings with organs and individuals, hoping to win their sympathy by spitting poison and intrigue against loyal Party members.

When the EC-CC and the Regional Committee took steps to thwart their foul deeds, the bloc turned

WITH A FIRM GRASP OF LESSONS DRAWN FROM POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES, THE PARTY IN CENTRAL LUZON IS NOW IN AN EXCELLENT POSITION TO LEAD THE REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE IN THE REGION AMID THE INTENSE CRISIS OF THE RULING SYSTEM.

to open factionalism and splittism. The Party was obliged to expel and repudiate the now overt Bill-Olive faction on August 28, 1997. Nicolas Magdangal (Francisco Pascual) who first posed as a mediator even as he actively conspired to commit acts of sabotage and splittist activities, was also expelled in January 1998 after he surfaced as the leader of an anti-Party faction and attempted to divide the former National Peasant Secretariat.

The faction has grave accountabilities. With the long delay in the implementation of the rectification movement in the region, the Party organization in Central Luzon continued to suffer serious harm. Foremost among this was the capture of the regional leadership's core. The enemy had subjected the regional leadership to close surveillance after years of urban basing. Of all regions, Central Luzon holds the record for the most number of cadres arrested in urban areas. As a result, not only was the regional leadership crippled; the enemy also feasted its eyes on the most detailed and up to date information about the revolutionary forces and revolutionary work in Central Luzon.

This is aside from the disorientation and demoralization of cadres and Red fighters due to equivocation in the conduct of rectification work and the attitude towards the SCO line. The inordinate

delay of rectification has also resulted in the accumulation and worsening of old errors and problems, including problems regarding relations with the masses—all of which have wrought more damage and hardships.

But the greatest damage inflicted by the anti-rectification turned anti-Party forces was to sow factionalism and splittism—to brazenly dismember the Party, people's army and the mass base. Factionalism and splittism are the bitterest fruits of the serious deviations and errors of the past.

Although frustrated in their attempts to create havoc within most of the regional organization, the trio has been able to inflict a lot of damage on the Party, army and the mass base in Bataan and Zambales, the two provinces that had long been controlled by the faction's leaders. Of all provinces in Central Luzon, it is only in Bataan and Zambales where the Party, army and mass base have failed to expand since 1992.

The trio failed in its attempt to use the cadres and fighters who broke away with them to create trouble in nearby provinces. They tried in Bulacan to deceive the masses and revolutionary forces into joining them. The factionalists' leading "asset" in the province, however, was ousted without a single loss in the Party and mass base.

They have been arrogantly resorting to armed threats, such as harassing the masses and revolutionary forces in areas in Bataan recovered by the Party. In one instance, the factionalists paraded their rifle formation before villagers, pressuring the latter to choose sides. Barriofolk who are known to have been mobilized by the Party are coerced to stop supporting the revolution. However, according to reports from mass work units in these areas, the faction's armed group has had to leave defeated because "the masses remain committed to the Party and the movement".

In the face of such provocation, proletarian revolutionaries firmly avoid armed confrontations, stressing the importance of exposing the factionalists politically.

On the other hand, the forces that have been deceived into breaking away with the faction have been thoroughly corrupted. Like the Taruc-Sumulong gangster clique, the armed group has turned to extortion. This has resulted in the rapid disintegration and dissipation of their ranks. Young fighters who until recently were fired with exuberance, have become apathetic, eventually losing heart and deserting after only a few months of breaching the revolution's line

and basic principles.

The faction has now openly linked up with the Alex Boncayao Brigade-Revolutionary Proletarian Army (ABB-RPA) led by Sergio Romero and other grouplets who had earlier bolted the Party such as the Manjet Manalo clique. With the rapid disintegration of their forces in the countryside, they are gearing their sights on the mass movement in Metro Manila. The faction has been establishing overlapping alliances relying on office-bound forces (with no mass base to speak of) and advocating the national democratic line of the old type (struggle led by the bourgeoisie).

They persist in spreading poison and intrigue against the Party and distorting its basic principles. This April, they hurled the hilarious accusation that the Party “has abandoned legal struggle” and will concentrate on advancing the armed struggle in the countryside.

The only positive outcome of such factionalism and splittism are the lessons that have been learned by sincere and loyal Party cadres and members. The factionalists serve as living negative examples of petty bourgeois elements who have ceased to remold themselves and were corrupted in the process. Their decadence has culminated with their perpetration of acts of sabotage and destruction within the Party.

This bitter experience with internal struggle and the rocky road that the rectification movement has had to tread have left very profound lessons on the two-line struggle. Party cadres and members have, in the process, deepened their understanding of issues related to the Party’s principles, line and policies.

Prodded by such intense struggle with the factionalists, loyal Party elements have conducted a correct summing up of the region’s revolutionary experience (covering 1982-1997), propagated the study of Party courses and strengthened and advanced mass work and the mass movement.

With a firm grasp of lessons drawn from positive and negative experiences, the Party in Central Luzon is now in an excellent position to lead the revolutionary struggle in the region amid the intense crisis of the ruling system. **-AB**

BREAKTHROUGHS IN NUEVA ECIJA

One of the provinces in Central Luzon where the revolutionary movement has made significant strides is Nueva Ecija.

Membership in the Party and New People’s Army which used to be on the decline, grew by 10% from 1996 to 1997. The number of revolutionary organized masses expanded almost one-and-a-half times. In addition, the number of barrios covered by guerrilla fronts registered a 10% increase. The revolutionary movement has been able to maintain its presence in strategic places such as municipal boundaries and areas with mountainous and hilly terrain. The revolutionary forces are also able to operate once more in areas that were temporarily abandoned due to intense enemy attacks.

It is important to note that unlike in the past, when the task of recovering lost areas used to be centered on a small number of Party cadres and members, many of those who enthusiastically took on this responsibility in the province—a responsibility which entailed much sacrifice—were mass activists.

The NPA’s tactical offensives, especially two successful ambushes launched one after the other in Carranglan and Cuyapo in 1997, have also inspired many cadres, revolutionary forces and masses.

Aside from these are the small military actions which punish diehard informers and bad elements that are a burden to the masses. Last January 24, SPO1 Eleony “Ely” Cariaga was punished in Caliwanagan, San Jose City. Cariaga, who was assigned to the 308th PNP Mobile Group was a notorious policeman with many blood debts against the people and the revolutionary movement. Prior to this, ret. PNP Insp. Celedonio Baniaga, an intelligence operative, was punished last January 12 in Pulong Mayaman, Aliaga.

Even the death of two Red fighters in a defensive battle on July 17, 1997 has been transformed into a political victory as the masses, relatives and friends who attended a memorial meeting in honor of the slain comrades left with their fighting spirit and militancy raised. Most of all, six young activists immediately volunteered to join the NPA to take the place of the two martyred fighters.

A growing number of spirited, selective and daring actions has also marked the open mass movement in the province since August 1996. A breakthrough has been scored with mass actions becoming self-reliant and receiving relevant support from the masses as well as allies. Such activities have also served as “schools” for participants and formed the basis for their recruitment into the underground movement and the New People’s Army. In particular, the deployment of growing numbers of cadres and activists from the ranks of the youth and students in the province has begun—a trend that is expected to continue. **-AB**

ON THE SOPHISM OF THE MAGDANGAL-BILL-OLIVE TRIO

*In its April 18 issue, the **Philippine Daily Inquirer** featured an interview with a “Nicolas Magdangal”. In the article, Magdangal (Francisco Pascual) spat all sorts of venom and falsehoods against the Party leadership. He brazenly gave a distorted rendition of events related to the factionalism in Central Luzon, of which he was one of the leaders. Foremost among his fantastic claims is the Party’s alleged “abandonment of legal organizations in order to focus all efforts on advancing the armed revolution in the countryside”. Magdangal claims that the Party considers legal struggle as a “waste of time”. The article was merely one of a series of poisonous assertions by Magdangal and his cohorts against the Party. Since the factionalists have decided to raise the issue in the media, the Party is obliged to clarify matters in public and counter their false claims. Following is a statement from the Communist Party of the Philippines on the **Inquirer** article.*

The Party and the revolutionary movement have been persevering in the Second Great Rectification Movement for six years. For six years, proletarian revolutionaries have been exerting all efforts to revitalize and restrengthen the movement by consciously and steadfastly advancing the correct line of people’s democratic revolution through protracted people’s war.

The Party also has, for around six years, been trying to win over certain elements that, though having second thoughts about the rectification movement, were considered sincere and true. Among them are Francisco Pascual (Nicolas Magdangal), Luisito dela Cruz (Bill) and Caridad Magpantay (Olive). But despite such efforts, there were a few elements like the Magdangal-Bill-Olive trio who continued to defend the militarist and insurrectionist line of SCO, advocated the revisionist concept of the united front, spewed poison against the rectification movement and spurned the Party’s principle of democratic centralism while posturing as loyal

Party leaders.

Worse, for the past two years, the three—instead of rectifying and submitting themselves to Party discipline—have turned to outright factionalism, splitting and sabotaging the Party organization in the Central Luzon region and some organizations based in Manila-Rizal. Under the circumstances, the Party was obliged to expel these militarists and insurrectionists who are not only incorrigible but are brazen factionalists and splittists. The Party formally expelled paramours Bill and Olive in August 1997 after they broke away with certain sections of the Party and the people’s army and set up open Contra organizations in Central Luzon. Nicolas Magdangal, who posed as a “mediator” even if he has been one of the factionalist leaders from the onset, was also formally expelled from the Party in January 1998 after he openly defied the Party’s democratic centralism, sowed disunity and wrought havoc within the NPS (National Peasant Secretariat).

The three now have illusions of becoming the center of revisionist resistance to the revolutionary movement. They have been attempting

to gather scattered revisionist and anti-Party elements in a vain effort to revive the failed militarist, insurrectionist, populist and revisionist campaign against the line of people’s democratic revolution. Nonetheless, they have nothing to offer aside from the tired, old revisionist distortions and lies laced with anti-Communism.

They parade and offer themselves in the service of imperialist and bourgeois propaganda as living exhibits of alleged Communist narrow-mindedness and persecution. In fact, they are living negative examples of petty bourgeois elements who, having ceased and turned their backs on remolding, were seduced by adventurism and opportunism while seeking shortcuts to victory, became decadent and shamelessly violated Party discipline, attempted to divide the Party and sow disorder within it and failing this, decried persecution by the Party. Counterrevolution lies at the end of the their chosen path.

In their attempt to raise purportedly relevant issues against the Party and revolutionary movement, they have been weaving fairy tales about the alleged complete “Left”

turnaround of the Party and revolutionary movement. But because they are more interested in sowing intrigue rather than engaging in serious debate, they refuse to confront the real policies and practice of the Party. Instead, they invent fantastic tales about the Party's so-called new strategy that calls for the total repudiation of legal organizations and struggle.

But those who seriously study the documents and publications of the Party can never fail to take note of how the Party continues to value highly the legal movement and struggle. Anyone who observes the revolutionary movement's day-to-day practice cannot but come to the same conclusion.

In the past few years, the Party has exhausted all efforts to overcome the damage wrought by past deviations and militarist and insurrectionist errors on the legal democratic movement. The Party has been ceaselessly endeavoring to advance legal struggles despite attempts by the revisionist renegades at sabotage and in spite of cruel suppression by the fascist state. All things considered, the revolutionary movement has in fact been able to broaden further the scope of activities waged and methods employed in the field of legal struggle compared to years past when insurrectionism and populism held sway. The attention paid and effort put in by the revolutionary movement on political negotiations also presents clear proof of the high value the Party continues to give to legal struggle.

Nonetheless, unlike the revisionist renegades who peddle parliamentarism and reformism after losing their gamble with militarism and insurrectionism, the Party steadfastly advances the legal movement and struggle while determinedly developing the armed struggle as the leading form of revolutionary struggle. Unlike the revisionist renegades, we do not advance the legal movement and struggles to derail the masses from the path of armed revolution. Instead, we advance the legal movement and struggle to more broadly arouse, mobilize and enlist the support of the people for the armed revolution.

The Magdangal-Bill-Olive trio has also been attempting to supplant the NDF and its 12-Point Program with the New Katipunan line and program even if the Party and allied organizations have long repudiated the latter. The New Katipunan line and program of the early '80s was a line and program for the united front within the framework of the democratic revolution of the old type. It views the leadership of the Party as a hindrance—rather than a basic requisite—to building and broadening the revolutionary united front. It views the strengthening of basic

revolutionary forces that clearly advocate proletarian leadership and the democratic revolution of the new type with a socialist perspective, as a hindrance - rather than a basic requisite - to building and broadening the revolutionary united front.

This revisionist and bourgeois line of building the united front not only utterly failed in the past to broaden and strengthen the united front. It further weakened the Party and the basic forces of the revolution; and also seriously weakened and constricted the different tasks of and organizations within, the united front. Thus, the Party as well as the First National Conference of the NDF held in 1994 have repudiated the New Katipunan line and program.

Since then, the Party has thoroughly rectified the grave deviations and errors in the united front. The continued restrengthening of the Party and other basic forces of the revolution--concurrent with the correct combination of different conferential, consultative and consensual relations and various areas and levels of multilateral and bilateral cooperation--have successfully broadened and strengthened the revolutionary united front. Nationwide and in different regions, the revolutionary struggle is steadily advancing and the revolutionary prestige and leadership of the Party and the national democratic movement continue to heighten and broaden among the ranks of democratic and progressive forces and the broad masses of the people.

The revolutionary movement has the absolute right to defend its revolutionary integrity against the attacks, sabotage and splittism of the petty bourgeois prima donna Magdangal-Bill-Olive trio. It is the Party's absolute right and compelling duty to advance its basic principles and expose and repudiate the revisionism, militarism, insurrectionism and opportunism advocated by this trio.

With their expulsion, their troublemaking and acts of sabotage within the Party and revolutionary movement in Central Luzon and certain Manila-Rizal-based organizations have not only ceased. The rectification movement has been more assiduously advanced. Party cadres and members of units which the trio attempted to convert into their own private concessions and control through deception, cajolery, slander and bribery, could now freely air their criticisms. These organizations have actively expanded and rapidly overcome the temporary dislocations caused by the trio. Other comrades have also expressed that they again feel they truly and firmly belong to one Party and one revolutionary movement. **-AB**

IMPACT OF “GLOBALIZATION” AND CRISIS ON FILIPINO WORKERS

Under the backward and agrarian conditions of a semifeudal economy, there exists a permanent oversupply of labor, an excessively large army of the unemployed and underemployed coupled with severely depressed wages, inhuman working conditions, absence of job security and other evils characteristic of a small and backward capitalist sector dominated by foreign monopoly capital.

Whatever benefits and rights workers may enjoy are fought for tooth and nail and then relentlessly eroded, trampled upon, circumvented and reversed by capitalists. Thus, the overall condition of workers in factories and in society depends on the strength of the workers' movement as well as on their union and political struggles.

As a result of the struggles waged by the working class movement led by the Congress of Labor Organizations (CLO) in the late '40s, the reactionary state was obliged to formally recognize the rights of workers to collective organizing and bargaining. But as usual, such reforms reaped through revolutionary struggle were conceded by the reactionaries only after crushing the revolutionary forces that advocated them—with the objective of preventing the latter from reorganizing.

In the 1950s and 1960s, collective bargaining formally existed in industrial relations, along with the legal standards on wages, working conditions and union rights. Though observed more in the breach, such rights provided space for unions and collective bargaining especially in large enterprises.

From 1973, the US-Marcos fascist dictatorship outrightly banned strikes and attempted to directly control unions and industrial conflicts. Collective bargaining was further undermined; trilateral talks among government, business and labor prevailed, along with assumption of jurisdiction by the state, and above all, fascist coercion. In the name of attracting foreign investors, workers and unions were

openly suppressed and wages were kept low.

The first years of the Aquino regime were a period of political and economic transition. The new government inherited a debt-ridden economy burdened with a huge trade deficit and under the complete control of the IMF-WB and foreign transnational banks. The share of industry in overall employment was further reduced; the informal economy grew, especially the service sector; and the problem of unemployment worsened.

The economy lay prostrate but the popularity of the new president was utilized to perpetuate the country's dependence on export-led production, the prioritization of debt servicing, reliance on foreign investments and loans, and continued liberalization in favor of foreign monopoly capital. Nonetheless, under Ramos' Philippines 2000 program, the IMF-WB-WTO policies of denationalization, deregulation, liberalization and privatization were more vigorously pursued in accordance with imperialist “globalization”.

Under a program that stakes the country's entire fortune on foreign investments, loans and markets, even the nominal protection of workers' rights and welfare is directly abandoned. The merciless and insatiable desires of the monopoly capitalist-dominated market are given free rein to attack with full force the rights and welfare of workers, caging and chaining them to work like animals in exchange for measly wages.

Worse, the outbreak and intensification of the depression in Asia are rapidly aggravating the country's economic crisis. The already intolerable oppression and poverty are made worse by business bankruptcies, mass layoffs, the repatriation of hundreds of thousands of migrant workers who also lost their jobs and many other burdens imposed by the imperialists to pass on the full weight of the crisis to the exploited classes and to neocolonies like the Philippines.

According to the reactionary government, there are currently 2.6 million unemployed and 6.4 million underemployed workers. Besides this are an estimated 200,000 in Mindanao alone who lost their jobs between

July 1997 and the first quarter of 1998. In fact, more than 10 million out of the 30 million-strong work force are unemployed or underemployed. The estimate that 50% of the population who are capable of work are either unemployed or underemployed is more grounded on reality.

Depressed Wages

Filipino workers receive very low pay and real wages continue to deteriorate.

Wages are also woefully inadequate. Government estimates place the daily cost of living for a family of six at P410 as of January 1998. The legal minimum wage in Metro Manila, however, is pegged at P198.

To further depress wages, the reactionary state has dismantled the national standard minimum wage and localized the setting of the minimum wage through the Regional Wage Boards. Not only has this divided the workers; wage levels are now more stringently controlled by bureaucrats and capitalists and set more arbitrarily and one-sidedly against the workers.

Worse, despite already depressed wages, most firms do not pay the legal minimum wage. According to a February 1997 study by the reactionary government, the minimum wage is the most often violated among labor standards, followed by other wage standards such as 13th month pay and remittances of SSS contributions. In a study of government factories, only seven out of 16 firms surveyed paid minimum wages. But these seven firms imposed quotas. Workers who did not meet the set quotas suffered wage deductions.

Because of the wide discrepancy between wages and the workers' daily expenses, the workers' quality of life continues to deteriorate. This is exacerbated by government neglect in the delivery of basic social services.

Because wages are insufficient, the food intake of workers usually falls short of the minimum daily standard for maintaining good health. According to the Food and Nutrition Research Institute, the average Filipino does not meet the recommended daily consumption of meat, corn, flour and roots crops. They are thus prone to illness, worse they

have no access to free or affordable medical care.

Neither do they have access to decent housing. According to *Ibon Facts & Figures*, 70% of the urban population are poor and live in slums. They also have very little left to spend for their children's education especially in the light of rising tuition fees.

Low wages lie at the core of the severe exploitation suffered by Filipino workers at the hands of foreign monopoly capitalists. Because of low wages, the latter are able to expropriate from the workers a very large surplus value and remit monstrous superprofits.

The minimum wage in the US is \$5.15 per hour (equivalent to P206/hr or P1,648/day). This is eight times greater than the P198 legal minimum wage in Metro Manila. Thus, the wage of an unskilled American worker is equivalent to the wages of eight Filipino workers. Furthermore, the devaluation of the peso from P25 to P40 to a dollar enables foreign capitalists to purchase with their dollar investments longer hours of local labor power.

Monopoly capitalists are able to take advantage of low wages in the Third World by transferring to the latter the low technology and labor intensive stages of production. Moreover, by reducing the number of employees and workers in their home countries, they are able to save on labor cost and raise profit rates. By transferring industrial processes that are environmentally harmful and hazardous to health, they are also able to avoid political problems and the high cost of pollution control.

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“Flexibilization”

Due to conditions of semifeudalism, the labor situation in the Philippines has long been extremely “flexible” even in the industrial sector. But by applying this western concept, the big bourgeoisie and bureaucrats have more ruthlessly caused the deterioration of already primitive conditions of labor in the country's factories.

At its core, “flexibilization” seeks to push wages and other labor costs to the minimum, extend working hours and extract the greatest possible surplus value from workers.

A study by the ILO revealed that 73% of Philippine firms were already enforcing various “flexible” labor schemes in 1992. The prevalent forms include labor-only contracting, casualization and contractualization,

subcontracting/out-jobbing, rotation and other forms of “flexible” work schedules and forced overtime.

The number of core-production regular workers and supervisors is reduced to the barest minimum. Most of the regular workers are laid off and are replaced by contractual or casual workers or are hired through subcontracting private agencies in setups that are no different from those of seasonal *sacada* workers.

Casual and contractual workers do not receive minimum wages, enjoy no benefits such as 13th month pay, sick leaves and vacation leaves and others. Above all, since they are neither regular workers nor directly employed by the industrial capitalist, their right to unionize and to bargain collectively are not recognized.

A case in point is Shoemart (SM), the largest chain of supermarket and department stores in the country. Among its more than 20,000 employees, only 1,731 are regular workers. The rest are on contract for less than six months through recruitment agencies. Not only do these contractuales receive low wages and fail to enjoy other legally mandated benefits due to regular workers; employment agencies even extract part of their wages.

A survey has revealed that labor-only contracting was already being implemented by 857 firms in 1994. Because of government encouragement and the benefits accruing to capitalists, labor-only contracting is rapidly becoming the norm. In 1995, 1,070 firms were already implementing this scheme. By 1996, 1,255 factories enforced labor-only-contracting.

Through labor-only contracting, capitalists extract the greatest benefit from the extremely large army of unemployed workers. This intensifies to the extreme the mad scramble of millions of unemployed for limited employment opportunities.

Another prevalent practice is the direct hiring of contractuales, casuals, apprentices or temporary workers. This is common in firms engaged in the large-scale hand production of items such as garments, electronics and handicrafts.

There used to be thousands of regular workers in Manila Bay Hosiery in Marikina City, the leading manufacturer of socks in the Philippines. Now only 250 of its workers are regular. The company established an “independent” shop

inside the factory which employs workers on five-month contracts.

Laws allowing apprenticeship of up to six months have legalized this oppressive practice. But even this is commonly violated. There are cases of workers who remain apprentices or temporaries for many years and may be laid off anytime.

There is also the widespread practice of “flexible” work schedules: extending working hours beyond eight hours a day, requiring work even during rest days, or rotation. These are different ways of intensifying production and raising workers’ productivity without additional compensation or the outlay of additional fixed capital.

The so-called “6-2” scheme is being implemented in Wyeth Philippines in Laguna, a large pharmaceutical company. Workers are made to work for six straight days after which they get two days off. Through this, workers are forced to work on weekends without overtime pay and for more than 40 hours a week in violation of their CBA and common labor standards.

Ten to 12-hour working days are common in Export Processing Zones.

In a Taiwanese firm in Cavite, workers are forced to work for 14 hours daily from Monday to Saturday and eight hours on Sundays. When struggling to meet quotas, workers are made to work from 7 am to 9 pm, and at times up to 12 midnight or early morning.

The imposition of quotas is another way of intensifying production and imposing forced overtime. Quotas that are impossible to fulfill within the average eight-hour working day are imposed. Workers are thus forced to speed up their work, usually resulting in physical injuries. Otherwise, workers are forced to labor for more than eight hours in order to fulfill quotas and receive a full day’s wage without payment for overtime work.

Anti-Union and Anti-Strike Policies

The different “flexible” labor schemes not only attack workers’ wages; they attack the workers’ right to unionize. Such schemes are carried out only after suppressing, crippling or totally crushing the unions.

At the same time, through contractualization,

WORSE, THE OUTBREAK AND INTENSIFICATION OF THE DEPRESSION IN ASIA ARE RAPIDLY AGGRAVATING THE COUNTRY’S ECONOMIC CRISIS.

more and more workers are denied their right to organize or join unions. Capitalists also employ yellow unions to deceive and hoodwink workers into accepting oppressive policies.

The case of Rubberworld Philippines illustrates this. From more than 5,000 workers, the company started reducing its workforce in 1991. Three factories were closed down resulting in the layoff of 2,300 workers. The company pleaded bankruptcy. In fact, it transferred its operations to

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subcontractors producing different parts of shoes and slippers. To completely shut down its central plant in Novaliches in 1994, the capitalist col-laborated with yellow union leaders who did not oppose the closure of Rubberworld: instead, they simply re-quested separation benefits and called on the workers to voluntarily retire. One of the firms where Rubberworld trans-ferred its operations is Rubberland which in 1996 employed 400 workers--all of them

contractuals supplied by EC Dynamics Manpower Development.

Unions and strikes are strictly prohibited in Export Processing Zones. The imposition of the "no union-no strike" policy is directly supervised by bureaucrat capitalists such as Juanito Remulla at the Cavite Export Processing Zone in the 1980s, Jose "Peping" Cojuangco at Luisita Industrial Park and Richard Gordon at Subic Bay Freeport.

At the Subic Bay Freeport, more than 3,374 workers are directly supervised by Gordon and the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority. Through Gordon's authority and through the police and military, "industrial peace" is enforced with an iron fist. Anyone attempting to organize unions or launch a strike is immediately laid off. No one who has previously joined a union or a strike is hired.

At the Bataan Export Processing Zone (BEPZ), the "no union - no strike" policy is also strictly implemented. Fifty unions were organized at the BEPZ at the height of the antifascist struggles against the US-Marcos dictatorship. Now there are only 18 unions in 62 factories. Only half of the 25,000 workers in BEPZ are regulars. It is a common practice for factories to close shop and reopen under a different name in order to replace regular workers with contractuals and casuals. To prevent unionism, workers are commonly housed

in tightly guarded dormitories inside factory compounds.

The reactionary government is a promoter and active partner in using export processing zones to repress unions, suppress workers and allow capitalists, usually foreign, to exploit domestic labor with impunity.

In 1996, the Center for Trade Union and Human Rights (CTUHR) reported 80 cases of rights violations involving 2,436 workers. One worker was murdered and another was a victim of attempted murder. There was an attempted massacre of 26 unionists. Two-hundred and fifty-three workers were illegally arrested. There were 25 cases of picketline harassment involving 1,338 workers.

Workers' Resistance

The Filipino working class has gone through the course of accumulating strength, waging resistance and advancing despite conditions of open terrorist rule under the US-Marcos fascist dictatorship. In the face of such incessant abuse of their rights and welfare, workers are once more building up their collective organization and resistance.

Protests and mass actions to demand wage increases, assistance for millions of victims of unemployment and an end to contractualization and casualization are expanding vigorously and gaining strength. Workers are also at the frontlines of the protests against repeated oil price increases. The "People's March Against Poverty" held October 20-24, 1997 enjoyed widespread sympathy and support.

The workers' strike movement is regaining momentum. In 1997, the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) recorded 40 strikes. In the first quarter of 1998 alone, 40 strikes had already been waged. The number of workers participating in strikes and the man-hours lost are rapidly increasing. Strikes are being launched in the biggest companies such as Philippine Airlines where workers are being targeted for contractualization and casualization.

As the political crisis intensifies, large numbers of workers are also involving themselves in political struggles. Thousands of workers participated in the giant march and rally last September 21, 1997 against charter changes to allow the extension of Ramos' term.

Unity and determined resistance are the only correct responses to the unbridled intensification of workers' exploitation and oppression. All-out resistance to oppression and the suppression of economic and democratic rights is a basic requisite for building the militant and revolutionary strength of the working class as it marches at the vanguard of the revolutionary struggle of all exploited and oppressed classes. -**AB**

Revolutionary Underground Workers' Movement Advances

The militant workers' movement is vigorously advancing in the face of the severe economic crisis. It has contributed greatly to the expansion and strengthening of the overall people's revolutionary struggle.

The experience of building the revolutionary workers' movement in "Y", an agribusiness corporation, provides one of the best examples. On their own, the company's close to 500 workers organized a union in the '80s. Affiliating with the militant workers movement, the union actively participated in the campaigns and struggles of the masses of workers and in protest actions of the broad legal democratic movement.

Starting in the latter part of 1997, the Party appointed a team to conduct mass work in Y. Because the workers had already been exposed to national democratic propaganda, it did not take long for an organizing group to be set up in one of Y's five factories.

The factory, however, closed down a few weeks after the underground group was organized. Determined to pursue revolutionary work, the group members decided to be reassigned to the other factories of Y instead of accepting the retirement pay offered by the capitalist.

This initial group was like a seed that rapidly grew and bore fruit in the other factories of Y. After just a few months, its members were able to organize a group in each factory while conducting systematic investigation and leading study sessions concerning the trade union movement and revolutionary struggle. The organized workers exhibited greater militancy and supported the revolutionary movement and armed struggle. Revolutionary work advanced further, including integration with the New People's Army. Six months after joining the first organizing group, four mass activists were recruited into the Party as candidate members.

A Party branch composed of the four new candidate members and two others from the Party's mass work unit was organized. The branch prepared a six-month program aimed at further raising the workers' revolutionary consciousness and practice and developing the revolutionary character of the union in an all-round way.

The revolutionary movement firmly advanced the workers' welfare. Through the Party's leadership, a strike was launched towards the end of 1997. The strike, which lasted close to 10 days, pushed for wage increases.

The mass of workers ardently supported the strike. More than 98% participated, practically resulting in the full stoppage of the capitalist's operations. Having lost millions of pesos from the strike, the capitalist had no choice but to enter into a Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) favoring the workers. The workers won a wage increase, the biggest pay hike ever in the history of the union's negotiations with the capitalist.

The successful strike accelerated the pace of revolutionary work in the factory. Within five months, the number of mass activists more than doubled and Party membership reached several score. Three Party branches were organized.

According to the latest reports, more than 200 workers have taken courses on wages, prices and profit. More than a hundred have attended basic courses on Philippine society and revolution. The workers actively and continually solicit and send material support to the armed struggle and peasant movement in the countryside, such as clothes, food, medicine, bullets and grenades. Several members have also expressed their readiness to join the people's army.

The workers' revolutionary spirit continues to heighten. Their perseverance and unity with the Party and the Philippine revolution will surely lead to their attainment of more resounding victories. - **AB**

25 Years of Victory in Revolutionary United Front Work

Morning of April 24, 1998. Hundreds of activists, comrades and friends assembled at Abelardo Hall in the University of the Philippines to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the National Democratic Front (NDF). In different parts of the country, the revolutionary masses held similar celebrations together with the Party and units of the New People's Army (NPA).

The assembly was an occasion to celebrate the victories of the revolutionary movement and people in the field of united front. For the past 25 years, the united front has made great contributions to the revolutionary movement.

The celebration gained greater significance, it being held at a time that the revolutionary movement is achieving resounding victories in various fields. The armed struggle is advancing on the basis of an ever widening and deepening mass base as the New People's Army launches successful tactical offensives. The revolutionary mass movement of workers and peasants and other progressive sectors against the policies of the US-Ramos regime is expanding and ever vigorous.

Since its reestablishment, the Communist Party has recognized the important role the revolutionary united front would be playing. It led the way in broadly uniting the people for the national democratic revolution.

Comrade Armando Liwanag, Chairman of the CPP Central Committee, summed-up 25 years of experience in building the revolutionary united front in his message on the occasion of the NDF's anniversary.

Requisites

First, the Party's leadership is necessary in building the revolutionary united front.

The proletarian party is not an ordinary organization that could be subsumed under the more numerous petty bourgeois organizations within the united front.

No section of the bourgeoisie has the determination or the capability to lead the Philippine revolution. Their role in the bourgeois revolution of 1896 was outstanding. But that was a national democratic revolution of the old type. To revert to such leadership would be regressive and reactionary.

Second, it is necessary to build the basic alliance of the working class and peasantry. The other positive classes and political forces can be won over to the side of the united front and revolutionary movement only on the strength of this basic alliance.

The basic alliance is built by organizing the People's Army. The People's Army led by the Party focuses on resolving problems of feudalism. The broad masses of peasants are mobilized for people's war through the agrarian revolution that addresses the peasantry's basic demand for land.

Third, it is necessary to win over the petty bourgeoisie as another basic force of the revolution. Within the NDF, there is a numerical preponderance of organizations with a petty bourgeois character or tendency. Such is the character of these organizations despite their being led by cadres of the CPP. This preponderance is a concession to the urban petty bourgeoisie to encourage them to join the revolutionary united front.

Should the revolutionary movement gain the broad support of the petty bourgeoisie, it would mean the destruction of one of the pillars of the ruling class and the rapid weakening and isolation of Reaction from the Filipino people.

The revolutionary movement, in fact, could never emerge victorious if it fails to win over the most advanced section of the petty bourgeoisie. They are utilized by the ruling classes to perpetuate the current system. They are a wellspring of talents and skills required for the advancement of the revolution. So important are the petty bourgeoisie that the ruling classes continually pander their selfish tendencies to lead them away from the revolutionary movement.

Fourth, it is necessary to unite with positive and patriotic forces such as the national bourgeoisie. This can be achieved so long as there is a strong alliance of the basic revolutionary forces of workers, peasants and the petty bourgeoisie.

The Party and the NDF are aware of the dual character of the middle or national bourgeoisie. The revolution-

ary movement persuades the national bourgeoisie to join the united front on the basis of their progressive character while keeping close watch over their reactionary character. The middle bourgeoisie have repeatedly refused to join the NDF or even legal democratic alliances. They have formed only informal alliances with the revolutionary movement.

If they do business in a territory where armed revolutionaries operate, or if revolutionary unions exist within their enterprises, they may be persuaded to comply with the policies of the revolutionary movement. In dealing with them on issues concerning workers' and peasants' legitimate demands, the revolutionary movement differentiates the middle bourgeoisie from foreign capitalists and big landlords.

Fifth, it is necessary to take advantage of contradictions among the ruling classes. These contradictions naturally weaken them. To weaken them further, the revolutionary movement can enter into various forms of cooperation and coordination with factions of the ruling classes against a common enemy. The CPP, NDF and NPA distinguish enlightened landlords from the unenlightened, enlightened businessmen from the unenlightened, local from national bureaucrats, small from big reactionaries and reactionaries who are out of power from those who are in power.

The different factions of the ruling classes are inherently unreliable allies since they only temporarily side with the revolution whenever it serves their interests. Still, the CPP, NDF and NPA temporarily ally with them when uniting with them serves to weaken the ruling class and strengthen the revolutionary movement.

In times of intense factional struggle among the ruling classes, such as dur-

ing elections, a few of them side with the revolutionary forces against their political opponents. This occurs as well when the competition among the ruling class factions for economic privileges and political power intensifies. If the revolutionary movement is able to skillfully take advantage of such instances, the entire reactionary camp can be further weakened. The revolutionary movement will reap victories and strengthen itself in an all-round way just as when tactical and temporary alliances with the different factions of the ruling class were organized against the Marcos dictatorship.

Sixth, it is necessary to build tactical alliances against the most reactionary faction of the ruling class in power. It is this faction that is the most rabid puppet of US imperialism.

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lutionary united front are meant to weaken Reaction, defeat the enemy, strengthen the revolutionary movement and eventually overthrow the entire ruling system.

The CPP, NPA and NDF engage in peace talks. Despite the limited usefulness of negotiations and documents resulting from such talks, the ruling class can be compelled to recognize the people's basic problems. The hollow-

ness of the regime's peace initiatives is further exposed amid the negotiations' twists and turns, together with the antipeople and pro-imperialist policies as well as the reactionary nature of the ruling faction becoming more evident.

Conclusions

The revolutionary united front is built on the basis of the strength of the Party, the armed struggle and mass movement and the organs of political power in the countryside. They advance and strengthen the people's revolutionary power.

Independence and initiative are the operative principles within the united front. Allied organizations can freely implement policies within their scope. Concessions to the legitimate demands of each sector, even of the middle bourgeoisie and sections of the ruling class are allowed so long as these do not violate the basic principles of the united front and the Party. The Party ensures that the decisions and policies of the united front benefit everyone and do not run counter to the interests of the basic masses.

In accumulating revolutionary strength against imperialism, the Party implements the principle of proletarian internationalism, and at the same time strengthens the broad anti-imperialist united front. To build and advance the Philippine revolution is to fulfill the task of building and strengthening the international anti-imperialist united front.

The Philippine and world situation are extremely favorable for strengthening the revolutionary united front. As the people's suffering intensifies and the living standards of more and more people decline, more and more can be persuaded to join the united front. It is important for the united front to adhere firmly to basic principles to prevent deviations from the correct path of people's democratic revolution.-**AB**

Respect for Human Rights

INTEGRAL TO THE PEOPLE'S WAR

On the 10th of April 1998, the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) was signed by Comrade Mariano Orosa, Chairman of the NDF National Council.

Consequently, the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) announced that it would declare a 30-day unilateral ceasefire starting on the day the two principals sign the agreement.

GRP principal President Fidel Ramos, however, has up to now refused to sign the agreement, stating that he would do so only after a ceasefire of indefinite duration is mutually declared. The regime has shown extreme reluctance to ratify the agreement, citing whimsical and capricious reasons.

The agreement is the most comprehensive document so far produced after more than four years of peace talks. It is merely the first of four agreements that should arise from the negotiation, which has three more points on its substantive agenda: socio-economic reforms; political and constitutional reforms; and disposition of forces. Discussions on the subsequent agenda will surely be marked by the regime's vacillating attitude that could culminate in its complete withdrawal from the peace talks.

The Comprehensive Agreement on Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law is important as it addresses the need to protect the people's rights amid the raging civil war. The agreement can be of benefit to the people and the revolutionary movement. It can also serve as an added weapon and support for the defense of the people's human rights and for exposing the regime's fascist abuses in the conduct of war.

The revolutionary movement has always accorded the highest value to the respect for the people's human rights and is firmly committed to this ideal. Such respect is integral to its conduct of people's war. This is evidenced by the NDF's ratification of the comprehensive agreement on human rights and international humanitarian law, without reservation, condition or limitation. In addition, the NDF on

its own submitted on July 5, 1996 the NDFP Declaration of Undertaking to Apply the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and Protocol I of 1977 to the Swiss Federal Council and to the International Committee of the Red Cross. Above all, the revolutionary forces firmly uphold the Three Main Rules of Discipline and Eight Points of Attention as a daily guide in their conduct among the people.

The NDF and the revolutionary movement will persevere in negotiations in line with the principle of using all avenues to advance the national and democratic aspirations of the people. It is clear to the NDF, CPP and New People's Army (NPA) that entering into peace negotiations is in accordance with and not contrary to, the line of the national democratic revolution. At all times, the revolutionary integrity of the NDF, NPA and CPP is intact and shall never be subsumed by the regime's legal system. The NDF, CPP and NPA also recognize that so long as this is conducted by the designated panel, peace negotiations will serve as a form of legal struggle that is secondary to armed struggle and the mass movement.

The peace negotiations bear the distinction of having introduced the NDF, CPP and NPA as the representatives of the Filipino people in the international community and as co-equal of the regime under international law. On the other hand, the NDF recognizes the danger of the regime using the talks to sow confusion among revolutionary ranks and entice them to capitulate. Thus, the NDF makes appropriate clarifications and preparations among the revolutionary ranks and people about the nature and role of peace negotiations in the entire revolutionary process.

The counterrevolutionary nature of the US-Ramos regime is evident to the revolutionary movement. The movement is also clear on which form of struggle should be principal and secondary to achieve the people's national democratic aspirations. Presently, the US-Ramos regime can be challenged to recognize the basic problems that lie at the root of the armed struggle. The revolutionary movement can expose in the process the regime's pretentious "peace initiatives". The regime is compelled to deal and conduct talks with the revolutionary movement in the face of the latter's resurgence and brewing people's protests and struggles.- **AB**

GUERRILLA WARFARE CONTINUES TO ADVANCE IN SOUTHERN TAGALOG

The frequency and intensity of tactical offensives in Southern Tagalog increased dramatically in 1997. According to correspondence reports, the New People's Army (NPA) in the region launched 11 platoon-size offensives and 47 small operations that year. Up to 45 enemy troopers were killed. Twelve soldiers were wounded and three were taken as prisoners of war. The region's only casualties were two fighters who were not seriously wounded.

As a result of these offensives, 52 high-powered firearms and 51 short arms were added to the NPA's arsenal, aside from the machine guns and mortars confiscated. The number of Red fighters grew by almost 40% since 1996.

Such advances have been based on an ever expanding and deepening mass base. Reports indicate that the region's mass base, now spread over nine provinces in Southern Tagalog, grew by almost 40%. This covers a few hundred towns and several thousand barrios. Party membership in the region also grew by 35%.

ARMED STRUGGLE SURGING IN NORTHERN MINDANAO

Sixty-three successful tactical offensives were launched in Northern Mindanao in 1997. According to the regional mass newspaper *Kalihukan*, these include 37 ambushes and raids and 26 sparrow operations and punitive actions taken against the people's enemies. Forty-two firearms of various caliber were confiscated in these offensives.

In the first quarter of 1998, Red fighters also raided the Special Civilian Active Auxilliary in PTFI and punished Ruel Tapayan, a notorious criminal with many transgressions against the people of Agusan del Sur. The masses in the locality welcomed such actions because of the long history of abuse heaped on them by the two targets.

According to *Kalihukan*, territory covered by the NPA has further expanded and many areas

have been recovered due to the active participation of Red fighters in mass work. The NPA is again able to operate effectively in several hundred barrios and communities, and the mass base has grown by several hundreds of thousands.

TACTICAL OFFENSIVES LAUNCHED IN EASTERN VISAYAS

Four enemy troopers were killed and a despotic landlord was punished in a series of tactical offensives launched by the New People's Army (NPA) in Eastern Visayas in the first half of May. Consequently, 10 firearms of various caliber were seized by the NPA.

According to correspondence reports, three soldiers were killed when they were ambushed by Red fighters in Barangay Layo, Pinabacdao, Western Samar. Confiscated in the ambush were an M203 and an M14.

Also raided was an enemy detachment in Barangay Giparayan, Pambujan, Northern Samar. The NPA overran the camp and confiscated six rifles and rounds of ammunition. According to reports, the raid was conducted without a single shot being fired after the NPA played a ruse on the enemy.

Meanwhile, landlord Carlos Larrazabal of Ormoc City, Southern Leyte was punished with death. Also meted revolutionary justice was Capt. Solima of the 803 Bde, the notorious henchman of Northern Samar. A .45 pistol was confiscated from each of them.

NPA RAIDS BOHOL MUNICIPAL HALL

The New People's Army (NPA) raided a Philippine National Police (PNP) station in Jatuan, Bohol morning of June 27. Jatuan is about 30 kilometers from Tagbilaran City.

The successful raid was launched without a single shot being fired. According to reports, the policemen were unable to fight back as the Red fighters took them by surprise. The NPA confiscated all the firearms from the PNP arsenal.