

On the Indonesian Revolutionary Struggle

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Since the declaration of Indonesian independence on August 17, 1945, US imperialism and its Western imperialist allies have maneuvered to put Indonesia under neocolonial rule. This country is the fourth largest in terms of population and has vast oil and other natural resources. It is therefore coveted by the imperialist powers.

When the eye of the global revolutionary storm was in Southeast Asia in the second half of the 20th century, US imperialism suffered the biggest defeat in Vietnam and the whole of Indochina but was able to seize Indonesia beforehand as its biggest prize through the Suharto fascist military coup against the Sukarno government.

The destruction of the Communist Party of Indonesia (Partai Komunis Indonesia, PKI) and all other anti-imperialist forces in Indonesia in 1965 was of global significance and had far-reaching consequence in the brutal attempt of US imperialism to reverse the great wave of revolutionary movements for national independence, democracy and socialism.

US imperialism as instigator

US imperialism has been the most active among the imperialist powers in subverting and attacking Indonesian national sovereignty and independence. It has used all sorts of tactics to achieve its malicious end, including combinations with other imperialist powers, the cultivation and use of reactionary politicians and military officers, sponsorship of and supplies to Rightist rebellions and direct acts of aggression.

US imperialism succeeded with its scheme of using General Nasution as stalking horse for a time and then General Suharto as the principal instrument for the crucial action in 1965. It had cleverly designed and instigated the coup plan of the council of generals, which provoked the presidential security officers to launch a counter coup. In turn, this led to the main coup of General Suharto.

The US-directed Suharto regime massacred more than a million Indonesians (estimates range from a low of half a million to a high of 1.6 million people). Consequently, the US and other imperialists have enjoyed

complete liberty to extract superprofits from the exploitation of cheap Indonesian labor and natural resources and from the imposition of the most burdensome loans. Taking their own share of the blood money, the fascist puppets have also gone for so long into a frenzy of bureaucratic corruption.

Since the collapse of the Indonesian economy and the rise of sustained militant mass actions in 1997, the imperialists and their Indonesian henchmen have found it necessary to put aside the figure of Suharto and try to conjure the illusion of democratizing Indonesian society. But the fascist forces represented by Suharto and the wealth that they have privately accumulated remain intact.

Megawati Sukarno Putri garnered the biggest bloc of votes in the elections staged by the successors of Suharto but is unsure of becoming president. But even if she were elected president, instead of Habibie, she would still be encircled and bound by compromises with unrepentant fascists and plunderers. As in the Philippines in 1986, she could become a decorative figure like Mrs. Aquino under the watchful eye of a military point guard appointed by the US. General Wiranto could play the role of General Ramos.

US imperialism boasts of itself as the sponsor of democracy in Indonesia. There lies the biggest problem for the Indonesian people. As in the Philippines, it will take a great deal of struggle even only to document the ill-gotten wealth and the massacre victims of the fascists. It will take a revolution to realize the justice that the people demand.

What is to be done

Definitely, it is necessary to continue developing a broad anti-

fascist democratic united front in order to achieve the objective of dismantling the “new order”, the fascist military dictatorship which was established by the US-Suharto clique and which persists through Suharto’s direct successors and the so-called dual functioning military.

But such a united front, which is absolutely necessary, does not suffice to make a revolution, to get

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rid of imperialist domination and the ruling system of the big compradors and landlords, to do away permanently with the factors of fascist military dictatorship and to get out of the “transition” and “continuity” scheme which is designed by the US and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank and World Trade Organization (WTO) and which is being played out by the puppet generals and reactionary politicians.

To the Indonesian people, especially the toiling masses of workers and peasants and the middle social strata and the surviving families of more than one million martyrs murdered by the fascists under the instigation of US imperialism, it is not enough that Suharto is put aside and that an electoral exercise is carried

out only to make a big compromise between Suharto’s followers and their rivals within the same ruling system.

In addition to the broad anti-fascist united front, which has already demonstrated the power of militant mass actions to pressure the imperialists to put Suharto aside by using financial leverage, it is necessary for the Communist Party of Indonesia to strengthen itself once more in order to build a people’s army and wage a protracted people’s war.

In the aftermath of the 1965 massacres, the Communist Party of Indonesia tried to launch people’s war in Blitar and then in Kalimantan Utara. Everytime, the enemy was able to suppress the armed revolutionary movement. But so far, the PKI has not tried starting people’s war in three to five regions at the same time, under the principle of centralized ideological and political leadership and decentralized operations of guerrilla warfare.

It is timely to build the Party and the people’s army. Indonesia is ravaged by the imperialists and the local reactionaries. The fascists persist and continue to terrorize the people and in effect to incite them to wage armed revolution. In the indefinite future, the big comprador-landlord ruling system will continue to be wracked by an ever worsening socioeconomic and political crisis.

The global crisis of over-production in oil and other raw materials and in import-dependent low value-added semimanufactures for export, the ever-growing trade and budgetary deficits and the crushing debt burden will continue to impoverish the people and weaken the ruling system.

So-called free market globalization accelerates the crisis of the ruling system and intensifies the oppression and exploitation of the

people. This crisis drives the broad masses of the people to resist. The ceaseless aggravation of the agrarian and semifeudal conditions of Indonesia are fertile conditions for protracted people's war along the general line of the new democratic revolution.

Once upon a time, the anticommunist and antipeople exponents of pro-imperialist "liberal democracy" and "civil society" touted the relatively peaceful overthrow of Marcos as an example for people under despotic rule to emulate and they mocked at the Communist Party of the Philippines for refusing to subordinate itself to the anti-Marcos reactionaries, including the belated turncoats from the Marcos fascist camp itself.

But without a real politico-military and social revolution by the people, there can only be the reinstitution of the electoral game of the reactionaries, the persistence of the exploiting classes and the scandalous return of the Marcoses and their worst cronies and hatchetmen to political power. Irony of ironies in the Philippines, those opportunists and reformists who blabbered in the past that it was democratic enough to replace Marcos with Aquino are now in the same bed with the Marcoses and the most despicable of Marcos cronies under the presidency of Estrada.

Without revolutionary action to divest the Suharto family and their followers of the political power and the ill-gotten wealth that they have amassed, they will continue to oppress and exploit the people in very much the same way that the political heirs of Marcos are doing in the Philippines. The sons, daughters and some of the biggest cronies of Suharto appear now to be sidelined with him. But after a short while, they will again be flaunting their power and

wealth.

Suharto stayed in power longer and amassed more wealth than Marcos had done. He has not found it necessary to flee from Indonesia as did Marcos from the Philippines in 1986. He appears to maintain influence over the military as Pinochet of Chile does. He and his stand-ins are still lording over the temporary compromises among the various sections of the reactionary classes.

The fascist diehards in the Indonesian reactionary armed forces are hell-bent on retaining their political power under the pirate's flag of "dual function". They apply the tactics of divide-and-rule by instigating armed conflicts along ethnic and religious lines in several regions and are maneuvering to prevent the people of East Timor from realizing their national independence. The revolutionary forces should turn the disorder against the fascists who make it.

The Maoist road of people's war

As proven in the Philippines, a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist party can wage and advance a protracted people's war in a country that is archipelagic and that is under the sway of US imperialism. US imperialism and the local reactionaries have failed to suppress the people's war. The physical, historical and social conditions for people's war in Indonesia are even more favorable in Indonesia than in the Philippines.

By their self-criticism soon after the massacres of 1965, the Indonesian comrades themselves have long come to the conclusion that the Indonesian people must take the Maoist road of people's war and that they must use the three most powerful weapons, the Marxist-Leninist party, the people's army and the united front, for carrying the Indonesian

revolution through to the end. Such a conclusion is even more valid today.

The lessons learned could not be implemented successfully because of circumstances and reasons that the PKI can do best in summing up and analyzing in a further process of rectifying errors and rebuilding the party. Thus, the PKI can take advantage of new favorable conditions, such as the grave political and economic crisis of the ruling system and the total discredit of the ruling fascist dictatorship and its anticommunist reason for existence.

This is a time for rectifying errors and rebuilding the Communist Party of Indonesia and for rejuvenating and strengthening it. The mass movement, which is on the upsurge, is an ample source of fresh recruits to the revolutionary cause and for developing new proletarian revolutionary fighters. The new Party recruits can join up and synergize with elder comrades who have rich experience and have remained steadfast as communist revolutionaries.

The PKI has the glorious history of leading the Indonesian people in fighting for national liberation and democracy by force of arms against the imperialists and the local reactionary puppets. The only way for the PKI to rise from defeat and win victory is to wage a protracted people's war.

The people's war in the Philippines was launched in 1969 to serve the Filipino people and to extend support to the Indonesian people and the people of the rest of the world. It will certainly become stronger when the PKI launches people's war. In this regard, the Filipino and Indonesian peoples can engage in mutual support and make a significant contribution to the resurgence of the anti-imperialist and socialist movement on a global scale. **AB**