

ANG

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Editorial

Greet the 21st century and new millennium with the resolve to intensify the revolution

From the message of
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Chairman, Central Committee
Communist Party of the Philippines
December 26, 1999

As we celebrate the 31st anniversary of the re-establishment of the Communist Party of the Philippines under the theoretical guidance of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, we greet the 21st century and the new millennium with resolve to intensify the people's democratic revolution under the leadership of the proletariat.

We are determined to complete the revolutionary struggle for national independence and democracy that started more than a century ago. Our revolutionary forefathers heroically fought and won against Spanish colonialism which had ruled the country for more than three centuries. They proceeded to fight the aggression of US imperialism. Carrying forward the revolutionary legacy, we shall continue to fight US imperialism

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Take advantage of the reactionary Estrada regime's crisis of rule

The crisis of the ruling political system is rapidly intensifying, as the reactionary Estrada regime's hold on power grows more tenuous. Estrada is digging himself a deeper grave by carrying out rabidly antinational and oppressive policies. The possibility is becoming ever apparent that, like Marcos, Estrada will be toppled from his Malacañang pedestal due to severe reactionary conflicts, widespread people's uprisings and relentless armed blows by the New People's Army and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

The crisis of the ruling system and the tottering rule of the Estrada clique is a good thing and should be taken advantage of by the Party and the revolutionary movement. This further exposes the rottenness of the ruling exploitative system and opens the opportunity for the revolutionary forces to gather strength and to intensify armed and non-armed struggles.

Because of its all-out implementation of antinational and antipeople policies, the Estrada regime continues to be isolated from the masses. Estrada's sham "pro-poor" slogan has easily been exposed as he exhibited himself as an out and out puppet and fascist. Estrada assiduously carries out the commandments of the IMF-WB-WTO to completely open up the country to foreign investments and the dumping of foreign goods, worsening even further the country's semifeudal status and deepening the crisis of the local economy.

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and its puppets even for another century.

On the broad scale of history, the new-democratic revolution through protracted people's war, which we are now carrying out, is a short period. But we are ready to pursue it for as long as necessary to win complete victory. We are confident that within the first few decades of the 21st century, we shall be able to establish the people's democratic republic and proceed to the socialist revolution.

Our revolutionary struggle is part of the world proletarian revolution. We are benefited by the historical experience and current struggles of the proletariat and oppressed peoples of the world. And we resolve to continue contributing the best we can to the resurgence and advance of the world proletarian revolution against imperialism and all reaction.

In the decade that is about to pass, the imperialists and all reactionaries have gloated over the fall of the revisionist regimes and misrepresented it as the end of the socialist cause. But from year to year, the crisis of the world capitalist system and the new world disorder have worsened. The people have no way out other than through armed revolution.

Indeed, the revisionist betrayal of socialism has allowed the imperialists and all reactionaries to intensify the

oppression and exploitation of the people under the slogan of "free market" globalization. But in turn, the people's suffering generates revolutionary resistance. We are certain that in the forthcoming century the proletariat and oppressed peoples shall win far greater victories than in the century that is about to pass.

....

As Marx and Engels have taught us, the contradiction between the social character of the forces of production and the private character of appropriation under capitalism is irreconcilable. Lenin has further taught us that such contradiction sharpens and becomes more violent in the era of imperialism. Thus, the outgoing century has been characterized by grave economic crises and wars and has become the most violent in the history of mankind.

....

As the 20th century draws to a close, the stage is set for the great battles in the epochal struggle between the proletariat and the monopoly bourgeoisie. The current grave crisis and great disorder in the world capitalist system are the prelude to great upheavals and social revolution in the 21st century.

....

In the spirit of proletarian internationalism and broad anti-imperialist solidarity, the Communist Party of the Philippines leads and carries out the Philippine revolution. Workers and oppressed peoples must unite in order to overthrow imperialism and all reaction and achieve national and social liberation.

History has proven that socialism can be established and built in one country after another. But to attain the ultimate goal of communism, the revolutionary proletariat and people must first defeat imperialism on a global scale. Before this global victory, the ruling proletariat and the people in socialist countries must also combat revisionism, prevent the restoration of capitalism and further consolidate socialism.

The era of imperialism and proletarian revolution continues. It takes an entire historical epoch to bring about the global defeat of imperialism and conversely the global victory of socialism. All genuine communists, from generation to generation, are ready to wage revolutionary struggle for any length of time in order to achieve the victory of socialism in a series of countries until the ultimate goal of communism is reached.

It is certain that in the early decades of the forthcoming century there will be a conflagration of people's wars and broad anti-imperialist movements on an unprecedented global scale. The socialist and anti-imperialist movements are bound to resurge. There shall be great battles in the epochal struggle between the ►

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Estrada brazenly insists on auctioning off the national patrimony as a condition for survival in the so-called age of globalization. That is why he is deadset on rewriting the constitution and make it worse by granting foreigners the unrestricted right to plunder the country's natural resources and own all types of businesses, including public utilities (such as water service, electricity and transportation), banks, retail, schools, mass media and advertising.

The Philippines is now experiencing a worse economic crisis due to all-out liberalization since the start of the 1990s. Still, and despite growing criticism against liberalization even by reactionary client-states, Estrada continues to be foolishly obsessed with completely opening up the Philippines in order for it to be plundered by foreign big capitalists.

In insisting to rewrite the 1987 constitution and implement pro-imperialist laws and policies, Estrada fires up the people's patriotic spirit and reinforces the resolve to resist the puppetry of the reactionary government. Estrada's unabashed puppetry makes it ever clearer to

◄ proletariat and the people of the world on one side and imperialism and reaction on the other side. To repeat for emphasis, there shall be far greater revolutionary victories in the 21st century than in the outgoing century.

All genuine communists are optimistic that when the proletariat and people again build socialist societies in the forthcoming century, they shall apply well the lessons they can learn from the actual restoration of capitalism by revisionists and from the proven teachings of Comrade Mao on the need for a series of cultural revolutions under proletarian dictatorship in order to combat revisionism, prevent the restoration of capitalism and consolidate socialism until the global defeat of imperialism leads to the realization of communism. ^{AB}

**The foregoing are culled from the message that delved on the continually intensifying crisis of the world capitalist system, recounted the victories of the revolutionary movement and laid out the tasks pursuant to the further advance of the revolution.*

Ang Bayan shall print the entire statement in a special issue for December 26.

the people that their poverty and misery are directly connected to the rule of foreign big capitalists in the Philippines.

The Estrada government is bankrupt. In a desperate attempt to supposedly revive the economy, the government has accumulated a budget deficit of over P100 billion. Almost all public assets have already been sold, tax collections are down and tariffs are being eliminated in line with liberalization. Moreover, a large portion of the budget is wasted on unproductive spending such as those for debt servicing and for fattening the behemoth military force.

There is open conflict among the Office of the President, Congress and other departments and local officials over who would pocket the largest chunk of the rapidly dwindling budget. There is a similar struggle among the closest cronies within the Estrada camp over control of the largest funds and contracts. Because of this scrambling among reactionary politicians, corruption and crime honeycomb the civil and military bureaucracy. They thus deprive the public of the most necessary services, and worse, pocket and use public funds to fund their illegal operations.

In a desperate bid to hold on to power, Estrada is revving up the entire fascist machinery to suppress the people's resistance as well as that of his reactionary political rivals. The so-called anti-crime campaign is being used to rationalize the strengthening of the Philippine National Police (PNP) and the Armed Forces of the Philippines, especially in terms of carrying out counter-revolutionary warfare in the countryside and surveillance and other oppressive measures against the legal democratic movement in the cities. Dovetailing this is the appointment of the notorious fascist Gen. Panfilo Lacson as PNP chief.

The strengthening of the fascist machinery and fascist intensification are directly related to the worsening

THE STRENGTHENING OF THE FASCIST MACHINERY AND FASCIST INTENSIFICATION ARE DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE WORSENING EXPLOITATION BY THE IMPERIALISTS AND THE RULING REACTIONARY CLIQUE. IT IS THE REACTIONARY GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE BLOWS IT HAS BEEN RECEIVING FROM THE GROWING OPPOSITION OF RIVAL REACTIONARY POLITICIANS, THE MILITANT PROTESTS AND STRUGGLES OF THE TOILING MASSES AGAINST ANTIPEOPLE AND ANTINATIONAL POLICIES AND THE INCREASING NUMBER OF TACTICAL OFFENSIVES BY THE NPA.

exploitation by imperialists and the ruling reactionary clique. It is the reactionary government's response to the blows it has been receiving from the growing opposition of rival reactionary politicians, the militant protests and struggles of the toiling masses against antipeople and antinational policies and the increasing number of tactical offensives by the NPA.

On different occasions in the past year, the reactionary rivals of Estrada exhibited their capability to pool resources and launch street demonstrations. These were widely supported by the people, especially the urban petty bourgeoisie because these upheld the democratic stand against the return of the Marcoses, suppression of press freedom and the planned rewrite of the 1987 constitution.

The intensity of protests and mass struggles in the cities continues to heighten, especially those of workers struggling to achieve a just increase in their wages. Noteworthy as well are the struggles of government employees, public school teachers and other oppressed sectors who are being bludgeoned by the crisis and by policies that further weigh down on their already burdened shoulders.

Consequent to the Second Great Rectification Movement, the NPA now has the capability to launch more numerous and bigger tactical offensives nationwide in accordance with the military capability of the NPA and the deepening mass support enjoyed by the revolutionary movement in the countryside. It is these armed offensives that deal the most telling blows on the reactionary government, compel the regime to squander an enormous amount of resources on strengthening its military machine, shatter the illusion of civil democracy and give the Filipino people inspiration and courage to struggle.

THE STRUGGLE of the revolutionary movement against the US-Estrada regime is part of the more strategic struggle to overthrow the ruling system. Its political crisis will be taken advantage of by the CPP in order to aggressively expand the Party membership, further strengthen the armed revolutionary movement and solidify the national democratic unity of the Filipino people. The Party strengthens its revolutionary integrity and initiative in order to effectively build unity among or cooperate with various forces to oust the ruling reactionary Estrada clique or compel it to relinquish power. **AB**

Regarding basic and special tactical offensives

Punitive action against the Keangnam Construction Co. in Mulanay, Quezon last October. The capture of Maj. Noel Buan, intelligence chief of the Southern Luzon Command, last July. The arrests of Brig. Gen. Victor Obillo in Davao City and Chief Insp. Roberto Bernal in Bacun, Sorsogon last February. The capture of Sgt. Wivino Demol, an intelligence operative, in Rizal in January 1998.

These are but some of the noteworthy special tactical offensives launched recently by the New People's Army (NPA).

Punitive action was taken against the Keangnam Construction Co., a Korean outfit, for its refusal to respect the taxation policies and laws of the people's democratic government. Meanwhile, Major Buan, General Obillo, Chief Inspector Bernal and Sergeant Demol were arrested for their intelligence activities that formed part of the reactionary government's suppressive military campaigns against the people and the revolutionary movement.

Aside from these, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines has issued a directive to the NPA in June 1998 to form special units to arrest the relatives of the late dictator Marcos (especially Imelda Marcos and Ferdinand Marcos Jr.) along with their minions, bring them before the people's court and make them answer for their crimes against the people.

Special tactical offensives are combat operations that may be carried out by NPA commando units or armed city partisans beyond guerrilla zones. These offensives may encompass urban areas, the enemy's trunklines as well as his rear.

Special tactical offensives are aimed at:

- delivering occasional head blows to the enemy, tying down his forces to urban areas and strategic camps, seizing arms and sabotaging facilities that are crucial to his military campaigns of suppression, waging nationwide propaganda through dramatic or high-impact offensives and countering enemy propaganda that the people's army is too remote and is dwindling;
- targeting and punishing the most notorious enemies of the revolution, such as the biggest plunderers, the worst violators of human rights, renegades in the active service of the enemy and other bad elements who have incurred blood debts, thereby making them all feel unsafe, waste resources for their self-protection and cover themselves with armed body guards whose presence all the more justifies armed assaults;
- undertaking exemplary actions against key facilities and operations of the foreign monopoly capitalists, big compradors and

big landlords who refuse to negotiate with representatives of the people's democratic government on outstanding matters and violently oppose the revolutionary policies and laws on business enterprises, land reform and taxation;

- preventing the most reactionary politicians and plunderers from appearing in public and from deceiving the people in the course of reactionary elections and other political activities and thereby countering the enemy objective of conjuring the illusion of democracy and aggravating his inability to rule in the old way.

- serving notice to all and sundry that the people's army has a long-range capability and that the enemy cannot attack the people in the rural and urban areas with impunity.

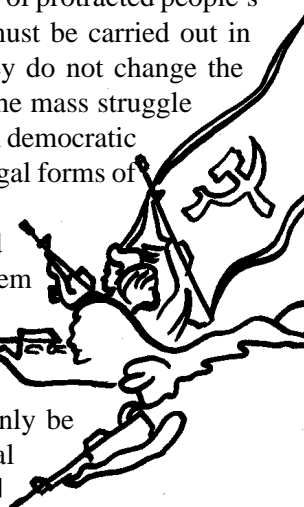
By a rule of thumb, guerrilla units of the NPA devote 90% of their time and effort to mass work and 10% to tactical offensives. The NPA expands and consolidates the mass base in the guerrilla zones to advance wave upon wave. On the basis of an ever-widening and -expanding mass base, the people's army can wage guerrilla warfare intensively and extensively in the countryside.

In this regard, 90% of tactical offensives launched by the NPA are basic tactical offensives while 10% are special.

These percentages are not meant to be followed mechanically but are meant to stress what is principal and secondary in the relationship between mass work and combat operations and between basic tactical offensives and special ones.

Nonetheless, if the people's army were to limit itself to basic tactical offensives in the countryside, the enemy can become confident that it has a completely safe rear and that it can deploy more forces against the guerrilla fronts in the countryside. It is therefore necessary to attack the enemy where he comes from and do so once in a while or as often as possible and necessary.

But the conduct of special tactical offensives should not run counter to the strategic line of protracted people's war. Special tactical offensives must be carried out in such a way and at a rate that they do not change the legal and defensive character of the mass struggle in the urban areas and that the legal democratic forces can give full play to their legal forms of struggle.

The worsening economic and political crisis of the ruling system increasingly makes it impossible for the enemy to rule in the old way. His inability to rule in the old way will certainly be aggravated by the special tactical offensives of the people's army. 

Storm of resistance against globalization

Tens of thousands of people in various parts of the world launched protest actions during the World Trade Organization (WTO) meeting on December 1 in Seattle, Washington. The protests shook Seattle, London and other urban centers in Europe, Latin America and Asia, including Manila. Reactionaries dealt with the protesters with an iron fist in a desperate bid to support and defend "globalization" and protect the interests of big monopoly capital.

Exemplary courage and militancy were manifested by the irate protesters, especially the American workers and people and the anti-WTO international delegation who stood their ground before the repressive US National Guards in Seattle. Despite having been bombarded with tear gas and pepper spray and shot at with Armalite and rubber bullets, the defiant demonstrators remained steadfast and even gathered strength through the four-day protest.

The anti-"globalization" actions signify the seething anger of peoples the world over. At the center of the anti-"globalization" and anti-WTO protests were workers from industrialized countries and the toiling masses of the Third World, all victims of low wages, liberalization, land use conversion, privatization and other policies attendant to "globalization". Also among those resisting the WTO and "globalization" are the various middle forces and petty bourgeois groups who are railing against the gross disregard for education, environmental destruction, violations of human rights and other legitimate concerns.

The ongoing campaign of big monopoly capitalists to do away with all restrictions against their operations especially in semicolonial countries continues to create conditions that are disastrous to the toiling masses. The vacuousness of the much-vaunted "development" wrought by "globalization" is being rapidly exposed. The peoples of the world are also rapidly becoming aroused to stand up and resist liberalization, privatization, deregulation and denationalization and related policies that impoverish and oppress them.

The expanding empire of Lucio Tan

Through the protection and favorable policies of the reactionary Estrada regime, Lucio Tan's business empire worth several tens of billions of pesos is on an expansion binge.

Estrada employs bureaucratic power and influence to the hilt in order to provide favors and privileges to Lucio Tan. Aside from benefiting from the reactionary government's dismissal of his P25 billion tax evasion case and its all-out support to the operations of the Tan-owned Philippine Airlines (PAL) and his seizure of the Philippine National Bank (PNB) this December, Tan is now maneuvering to take hold of the National Steel Corporation.

Since assuming power, Estrada has given his all-out support to Lucio Tan in order to save PAL from bankruptcy. Upon orders from Estrada, the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) supervised the granting of a 12-year extension on PAL's debt repayment schedule to enable it to pay its \$2.24-billion liability, have its financial problems alleviated and prevent Tan's corporation from folding up. Despite opposition from some banks, the SEC approved Tan's retention as chairman and chief executive officer of PAL.

As a favor to Tan, and to the detriment of migrant workers and other Filipino passengers who would be burdened by higher fares, the Estrada government, through the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) and the Department of Foreign Affairs, pushed for the review and revision of air agreements to reduce the number of passengers carried by other air companies plying the Manila-US, -Korea, -Hong Kong, -Taiwan and -Singapore routes. In October, the government ordered the reduction of passengers carried by China Airlines and Eva Airways flights plying the Philippines-Taiwan route from 9,600 to 6,500. The order was rescinded only after the Estrada government was taken aback by Taiwan's move to completely cut off air traffic between the two countries and its threat to expel Filipino workers from Taiwan.

Estrada himself led in bullying and oppressing PAL workers who struck against the widespread layoffs, contractualization and casualization being carried out by Tan. Collaborating with some yellow union leaders who were under the influence of revisionists and opportunists in the *Bukluran ng mga Manggagawang Pilipino*—the workers were compelled to accede to a 10-year moratorium on strikes and suspension of Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) negotiations, in return for supposed stocks worth P60,000 per worker.

In line with his promise to Tan that workers should not be "pampered", Estrada repeatedly intimidated the striking workers of PAL. In June, Estrada summoned the PAL union leaders to Malacañang to



browbeat them into swallowing Tan's policies on the strike moratorium and CBA suspension. Furthermore, the courts later declared the strike of June 1998 illegal. This gave Tan the freedom to boot out 7,000 PAL workers.

Through the collaboration of Tan, the CAB and the Air Transportation Office (ATO), the application of Air Philippines owned by William Gatchalian to conduct international operations was blocked to force Gatchalian to sell 50% of his company to Tan. The sale was consummated in November.

TAN EFFECTED control of PNB on December 8 after he pocketed 35% of its stocks and had himself and his associates elected to the bank's Board of Directors.

As early as October, Tan had already started to accumulate PNB stocks through the Luys Securities Co., Inc. and the Mandarin Securities Co., Inc. Both these companies are owned by known close associates of Tan.

Tan is eyeing absolute majority ownership control over PNB by buying out the government's 35% share once the stocks are auctioned off next year. He is also preparing to merge PNB with his Allied Bank in order to build one of the largest banks in the Philippines. Tan is keenly interested in PNB principally because the bank is PAL's largest creditor. By

controlling PNB, Tan can be sure of acquiring more leeway with PAL's debt payments or blocking loan applications by rival corporations. Tan's control of PNB is also related to his scheme to get hold of the NSC.

THE NSC FOLDED up in November after banks, foremost among which was PNB, refused to grant it any latitude in its debt payments. But unlike the case of PAL, Estrada did not bother to help out the NSC, instead allowing it to collapse under the weight of a P15.4-billion debt (which is far smaller than PAL's P80-billion debt). Prior to this, the government repeatedly denied NSC's appeal to impose restrictions on the dumping of cheap surplus steel products from Russia. The NSC's business suffered from the competition. NSC was also denied incentives that would have enabled it to overcome its mounting debt problems.

Six billion pesos out of the P15.4-billion NSC debt was borrowed from the PNB. In order for Tan to grab hold of NSC, PNB needs only to write off its debts in exchange for stocks (debt-to-equity swap). Through this, Tan would be able to pocket a large number of NSC stocks without going through public biddings.

The reactionary Estrada government is now preparing measures to support Tan's plan to get hold of NSC. Among these is the imposition of higher tariffs on imported steel products to prevent the flooding of cheap steel from Russia. This is precisely what the Estrada government had refused to grant the old NSC management before the steel firm's closure. Estrada is also preparing

incentives to attract foreign big capitalists who can work with Tan on the NSC.

TAN IS ONE OF THE foremost comprador big capitalists in the Philippines. Among his big business operations are Allied Banking Corp., Oceanic Bank, Eastern Pacific Bank, Asia Brewery Inc., Tanduay Distillery, Fortune Tobacco Corp., Macroasia Corp. (airline catering), Century Park Sheraton Hotel, Charter House Hotels, Foremost Farms Inc. (piggery) and the Asian Pacific Equity Corporation (APEC, now listed as Tanduay Holdings in the stock market). In mass media, Tan is part owner of ABS-CBN (3%) and is believed to hold some interests in the *Philippine Post* newspaper. He has property in Hong Kong including three residential towers in Queen's Garden (worth no less than \$650 million); the Eton Tower, a 24-storey building in Causeway Bay (\$103 million in 1993); a residential site in Cox's Road (\$132 million); and Dynamic Holdings that owns the 30-storey Dynamic Cargo Center and real estate in Shenzhen and Guangzhou, China (\$600 million).

Overall, Tan's properties are estimated to be worth more than \$2 billion with 46,000 workers under his employ.

Tan accumulated his business empire through the help, favors, protection and privileges that were accorded him by the past bureaucrat capitalist regimes, especially the Marcos dictatorship. He has been one of the biggest contributors to the political funds of reactionary politicians, shelling out several hundreds of millions of pesos to the Estrada campaign in 1998.

Tan's comprador operations expanded severalfold under the fascist dictatorship. His businesses benefited a lot from the oppressive fascist rule. Tan has been a notorious union-buster since martial law, having smashed workers' unions such as that in Fortune Tobacco Corp.

Tan's empire continued to grow under the Aquino and Ramos regimes. Despite being one of the biggest cronies of the Marcos dictatorship, the wealth he accumulated under

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martial law remains largely.

Tan portrays himself as having been oppressed by the Ramos government. But in fact, in 1996, Tan made a P2.315-billion profit from buying 463 shares of stocks from PAL sold by the Ramos government at a discount of 64%. Each share then worth P14 was bought by Tan for a mere P5.

CRONYISM AND bureaucrat capitalist operations are worsening under the reactionary Estrada regime. The mad scramble among the big bourgeois compradors to control big business, get hold of government funds and banks, public works contracts, the colonial trade and partnerships with foreign monopolies signifies the depth of the crisis.

Lucio Tan is one of the biggest cronies/patrons who has benefited from government measures favorable to their interests. Among the other cronies/patrons of Estrada are Eduardo Cojuangco Jr., the Marcos ►

Lacson's appointment as PNP chief:

Sharpening the fascist fangs of the US-Estrada regime

As soon as he assumed his post, Lacson immediately bared his fascist fangs. In accordance with his boss Estrada's orders, he instantly strengthened the Philippine National Police (PNP) as a fascist instrument against the people and the revolutionary movement. He ordered the police to intensify counterrevolutionary campaigns, once again extolled and justified salvaging or summary executions in the style of the Kuratong-Baleleng rubout and pushed for repressive policies such as the national ID system.

The ruling class applauded Lacson's appointment, confident as they are that he would defend their interests. Nevertheless, because of the intensity of the political crisis, the appointment of Lacson will inevitably cause further schisms within the ranks of the PNP as well as elsewhere in the ruling class.

Bloody record

Gen. Panfilo Lacson, 51, belongs to the Philippine Military Academy Class of '71 whose members include military and police officials trained under martial law and who embraced, defended and supported the fascist Marcos dictatorship. After serving the Philippine Constabulary (PC) since 1971, Lacson was assigned to the fascist Metrocom. It was here where he was promoted—from lieutenant to lieutenant colonel. He also spent five years with the Military Intelligence and Security Group (MISG), the main intelligence agency during martial law. Under



the MISG, Lacson was directly responsible for the torture of members of the revolutionary movement captured by the dictatorship.

From the Metrocom, he was assigned as provincial commander of Isabela where he collaborated with giant illegal logging concessionaires.

Lacson brazenly boasts that he idolized the late Col. Rolando Abadilla, a notorious human rights violator and one of the most hated henchmen of martial law. Hence, when he was deployed to Cebu after his stint in Isabela, Lacson unleashed his fascist terror in the manner of his idol Abadilla. He was also assigned commander of the PC-INP and chief of the Metrodiscom in Cebu from 1987-90. It was here that Lacson gained further notoriety as an advocate of salvaging, widescale militarization, torture and the buildup and proliferation of anti-communist, fanatic vigilante groups.

Lacson was also deployed to Laguna in January

◄ family, William Gatchalian, Mark Jimenez and his big syndicates involved in smuggling and other criminal activities. In return for policies favorable to their business interests, these cronies provide all-out support to the Estrada regime. A case in point is the buyout of the *Manila Times* by Mark Jimenez, a move designed to turn the newspaper, formerly a critic of Estrada, into a government apologist. Another is the collaboration of business and government agencies to boycott the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* to force it to its knees and stop it from criticizing Estrada.

There are widespread protests against cronyism coming from among the anti-Estrada reactionaries. These

reactionaries could not stomach Estrada's coddling of known and despised cronies of the Marcos dictatorship, including Lucio Tan, the more brazen operations of big cronies and the more direct role that Estrada has been taking in managing and reaping benefits from such operations. This indicates the ever-narrowing elbowroom left for the ruling classes to share and the dwindling benefits and privileges corollary to bureaucratic power.

Bureaucrat capitalism and cronyism are being exacerbated by Estrada's government. As time passes, he can only succeed in swelling the ranks of a people united in militant resistance to the rule of his rotten and despised regime. **AB**

1992. That same year, he was assigned commander of Task Force Habagat where he developed stronger ties with Estrada and where their collaboration in criminal syndicate activities deepened. When Estrada became president, Lacson headed the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF) before he became the PNP chief.

Publicity stunts and fascist schemes

Lacson's publicity stunt of "ousting criminal elements from the PNP" and "furthering" the campaign against criminality is pure balderdash. To prove his "determination" to wipe out criminality, Lacson made a very big deal out of the resolution of a small kidnapping case, the arrest of small-time policemen who extorted from motorists and the annihilation of the so-called "Padlock Gang" through the rubout of eight alleged criminals. But these are all just for show as Lacson and other military and police officials conspire with or are themselves the leaders of major criminal syndicates. They use their positions as cover for their illegal operations. Should Lacson seriously go after anyone, these would likely be elements from rival syndicates, dropouts, those planning to build their own gangs or those he fears would turn traitor.

But beyond the anti-crime stunt, Lacson wants to get away with and legitimize "vigilantism"—the relentless use of power and violence unbound by, and even violative of, bourgeois judicial processes. There lies the added danger for the people from Lacson's appointment as a PNP chief with a long record of utilizing illegal methods such as wiretapping, illegal arrest, detention, torture and salvaging.

These methods will surely be employed to surveil, intimidate and repress Estrada's political rivals and most of all, the legal democratic movement in the cities, in the style of secret marshals during the Marcos dictatorship. (See related article)

In this regard, Lacson once again tried to revive the national ID system despite strong opposition from progressive forces, religious organizations and civil rights groups. Lacson has also made sure that next year, the

PNP's intelligence funds would be boosted by 60%. One hundred million pesos will also be allotted for the purchase of new guns and vehicles.

Maneuvers by the Estrada-Lacson team

Lacson's assumption to the post of PNP chief has resulted and will further result in deeper divisions within the PNP especially among the ranks of its leading officials. Many officials were demoralized when Estrada promoted his favorite super cop. There are as many as 56 generals in the military and PNP qualified for selection but despite Lacson's putrid record, he was still appointed police chief. This is because Estrada knows too well that he could rely on Lacson to keep a watchful eye on the president's political enemies and guarantee his boss' share in the booty from the operation of criminal syndicates.



WITH LACSON'S CURRENT POSTURE, THE REGIME CAN BE CERTAIN THAT THE PNP WILL REMAIN A STRONG PILLAR OF FASCISM IN THE COUNTRY. BUT IT WILL NOT BE ABLE TO STANCH THE CURRENT SOCIAL CRISIS THAT IMPELS THE PEOPLE TO WAGE RESISTANCE.

Meanwhile, Lacson has had his personal rivals exiled to remote areas of the country. Senior Supt. Eduardo Matillano, for instance, has been deployed to the PNP Eastern Visayas Regional Police Office Eight or PRO8. Col. Reynaldo Beroza, on the other hand, has been assigned to Mindanao.

The Estrada-Lacson team is making sure that the PAOCTF remains under its control so that it could still lead criminal syndicates that deal in drugs, smuggling, jueteng and other forms of illegal gambling.

Factionalism within the ranks of the ruling class could no longer be concealed and neither could the worsening political crisis. Particularly with the PNP, Estrada and Lacson themselves admit that the agency is gravely divided. The various factions of criminal syndicates within the PNP, where the Estrada-Lacson team is a major bloc, continue in their mad scramble for spoils and control over territory.

Lacson's appointment itself is proof of the deep discord within the ranks of the police.

Lacson's promotion is a step taken by the Estrada regime to heighten the ferocity of its fascist machinery. With Lacson's current posture, the regime can be certain that the PNP will remain a strong pillar of fascism in the country. But it will not be able to stanch the current social crisis that impels the people to wage resistance. **AB**

Intensifying fascism of the US-Estrada regime

On the whole, the US-Estrada regime employs the outdated style and tactics of the dictator Marcos in launching war against the people with its unbridled use of fascist violence and terror to vanquish any hint of resistance. But Estrada is in far more desperate straits owing to the social crisis that is by every means sharper than that which existed at the time of martial law. This has seriously limited the resources available for waging fascist war, exacerbated graver factionalism among the ranks of the reactionaries and, most important, paved the way for the broader unity and firmer conviction of the people in resisting oppression and violence.

Particularly in the countryside, and even in the cities, the reactionary military and police continue to attack, destroy and plunder the lives and property of the toiling masses. Under the aegis of the so-called “Oplan Makabayan” (OpMak), the reactionary state is pursuing its renewed ambition to crush the people’s revolutionary struggle through all-out war. With OpMak, the reactionary police and military will without doubt persist in being the notorious human rights violators that they are.

Last May, Estrada rushed to arbitrarily put an end to the peace negotiations in order to do away with all the obstacles that could hinder the launching of an all-out war. In its desperation to quell the widening resistance of the toiling masses, the fascist regime ceaselessly tramples on the people’s human rights.

According to human rights organizations, the US-Estrada regime perpetrated a record 562 cases of human rights violations from the beginning of its term until December. In Southern Tagalog, 176 cases have been reported. In the Bicol region, 77 cases of illegal detention and arbitrary arrest and nine cases of salvaging were documented in Estrada’s first 16 months. The accounts do not as yet include cases of human rights violations in Central Luzon and Western Mindanao.

Already, this tops the bloody record of Estrada’s predecessor Gen. Fidel V. Ramos in his first year of office. Yet the number of verified cases documenting the current fascist regime’s violations continues to tip the scale. The following are cases covering only the last quarter of 1999:

Martial rule in the countryside. In advancing counterrevolution, the military incessantly conducts forced evacuations,

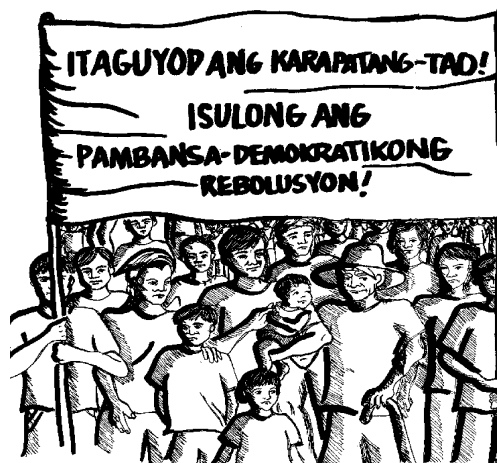
salvaging, strafing and arrests, sows terror and threatens farmers, women, the youth and national minorities. The military, police and paramilitary forces also continue to ransack and burn peasants’ property. Current practice indicates that military authority indeed prevails over any of the reactionary government’s civilian structures.

In the first two weeks of December, 80 Aeta families lost their homes, 10 people were killed and two were missing due to the intensification of OpMak along the tri-boundary areas of Pampanga, Bataan and Zambales.

Forces of the 69th IB treacherously fired at residents of Sitio Pusod Gabun, Barangay Nagbuklod, Floridablanca, Pampanga after failing to score in an encounter with the NPA. Indong Bulong, an elderly Aeta, was hit on the thigh. After only a few days, 50 policemen and 30 soldiers composed of the 24th and 69th IB, Scout Rangers, the Philippine Air Force, Special Action Force and Regional Mobile Group were deployed around Pusod Gabun. They disrupted classes when they turned the school in Nabuklod into their temporary base. Two barangay tanods also disappeared after they were forced by the troops to serve as guides.

Militarization also continues to hound Tarlac, Bohol, Nueva Vizcaya and Mindanao. In Tarlac, cases of arson, robbery, manhandling, excessive drinking, unpaid debts, verbal abuse, strafing, harassment and terrorism by troops of the 69th IB have piled up. The soldiers terrorize the people and justify their presence by

claiming to maintain “peace and order” against supposed criminals at large. They prohibit villagers from working on their swidden farms in the mountains to prevent them from allegedly supporting and giving food to the NPA. Troopers



of the 69th IB accuse the barriofolk of being NPA members, pointing their guns at and threatening to massacre villagers, especially those who argue with them.

Forces of the “B” coy on the other hand also ceaselessly terrorize and harass the people of Quezon, Nueva Vizcaya. Despite a petition from the barriofolk in Sitio Totong, Barangay Bonifacio, Quezon, however, Capt. Donald Hongitan, the troops’ commander, has declared that the operations shall continue.

In various towns of Bohol, military troops impose curfews so that they may conduct patrols unimpeded. In the course of such patrols that focus on searching for NPA units, the number of people victimized by illegal arrests, strafing and intimidation by AFP and PNP forces continues to grow.

In Mindanao, fierce military operations continue. On November 10, in Carmen, North Cotabato, brutal AFP attacks forced 5,000 people to evacuate their homes. Aside from this, the AFP’s indiscriminate bombing, strafing and other violent measures against the Moro people have resulted in mounting deaths and destruction.

Serving the ruling class at the expense of the people In catering further to the interests of landlords, local compradors and foreign investors, the US-Estrada regime orders the reactionary armed forces to launch savage attacks on the ranks of people who dare to stand up for their rights.

On December 15, two Manobos were executed while two others were wounded by the armed security forces of the Silangan Investors and Management, Inc. in Quezon, Bukidnon. Eddie Suello, 28 and Romeo Talisan, 50, both members of the Quezon Manobo Tribal Association (Quemtras), were killed after security guards attacked the minorities who demanded their rights to more than 2,000 hectares of ancestral lands. Two other Quemtras members suffered injuries.

On December 14, in Malaybalay, Bukidnon, 13 protesters were hurt when troops from the town’s PNP Regional Mobile Group attempted to dismantle an anti-logging barricade. Aboard four trucks, the policemen fired at and hit the barricaders with truncheons to give way to 22 logging trucks of the Timber Industries of the Philippines, Inc.

On December 1, in Digos, Davao del Sur, policemen strafed the home of the Gonzales family to drive them out of the land they tilled. The day after, the policemen harassed a female member of the family, slaughtered seven cows and wounded nine other farm animals in order to force the Gonzaleses to leave.

Likewise, armed security forces have relentlessly been

intimidating farmers on vast haciendas in Bulacan, Pampanga, Batangas, Zamboanga del Norte and Negros Occidental as well as in a growing number of provinces all over the country where agricultural lands are set to be converted for use by big business.

Further suppression of revolutionary forces, brazen disregard for international humanitarian laws. With or without peace negotiations, the fascist regime has never denied its intention to do everything in its power to crush the revolutionary movement.

Abductions of cadres and activists are widespread. One of the most recent cases involved the prolonged detention of Ruben Saluta of the NPA-Panay by forces of the Military Intelligence Group (MIG). He was seized along with a companion on November 23, but relatives who had been searching for him for almost a month had come up empty-handed. On December 22, an alleged vigilante group owned Saluta’s abduction. The following day, the PNP in Panay declared that Saluta was in their custody. It is obvious that the emergence of a so-called vigilante group was merely a smokescreen by the MIG to wash its hands off Saluta’s case.

On the other hand, Bernard Alvarez whom the military suspects to be an NPA official in Bohol, remains missing. He was captured after being wounded in an encounter between the NPA and the 8th Reconnaissance Group in Barangay Rosariohan, Batuan on August 15.

Justice continues to elude Godofredo “Ka Paking” Guimbaolibot, a respected Party cadre, Rolando Jubahib, a Red fighter and two officials of Bullex Mining, Mariano Diamante and Edwin Asion, who were treacherously massacred by forces of the 60th IB in Compostela Valley on August 2. The four were arrested at a checkpoint by troops led by Lt. Rolando Cateel who ordered them to disembark and later brought them to a remote area where they were tortured and salvaged.

The military’s abduction and illegal detention of Leonardo Pitao or Ka Parago in November is another example of the Estrada regime’s gross disregard for the rights of prisoners of war, particularly those who had been rendered *hors d’ combat*. This is the exact opposite of the revolutionary movement’s humane and respectful treatment of prisoners of war (*see related article*).

Human rights violations in the cities The state’s widespread use of fascist violence against workers, the urban poor, students, the petty bourgeoisie in the cities and forces of the legal democratic movement continues.

On December 4, some 40 people including nine employees of the Mondragon Leisure and Resorts Corporation suffered injuries as they were forced to leave the premises of the Clark Special Economic Zone. The

attack was ordered by police officials in Angeles City and Central Luzon.

Also in the first week of December, dubbed as the “Week of the Urban Poor”, around 700 families lost their homes in Madrigal Estate, San Juan, Metro Manila. Jinggoy Estrada, son of Joseph Estrada and current mayor of San Juan, wants to convert the Madrigal Estate, which used to be a relocation site for victims of demolition under the Marcos regime, into a commercial center.

On November 24, soldiers and policemen violently demolished around 105 houses in Barangay Sto. Tomas, Baguio City, upon the orders of Mayor Domogan.

During the informal meeting of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) leaders at the Philippine International Convention Center also on November 24, around 10 people were injured when elements of the Southern Police District (SPD) used water cannons and truncheons against more than 200 demonstrators. Before this, urban poor residents of Dabudabu, Pasay City were violently evicted on November 19 in order to “beautify” Roxas Boulevard for the ASEAN meeting. Two were killed, four children lost consciousness and a three-month-old infant was hurt when the demolition team sprayed tear gas on the residents. Besides the National Capital Region SPD, the Special Weapons and Tactics Team and representatives of the Presidential Commission for the Urban Poor, National Housing Authority and the Urban Poor Affairs Office of Pasay were involved in the violent eviction.

An estimated one million urban poor residents are set to be evicted in the course of implementing Estrada’s much-vaunted housing projects.

Also on November 19, some 10 students supporting a workers’ strike at Shoemart (SM) North Edsa were hurt when around 200 guards attempted to dismantle the picket line. Four days before, five workers were hurt in an earlier attack by SM guards on the workers. SM workers struck to demand a P115 increase in their daily wage.

Meanwhile, even the petty bourgeoisie and other sectors in the cities have not been spared from the fascist Estrada regime’s harassment and suppression. Anyone who voices out criticism or protest against the reactionary system is sure to suffer persecution, overtly or otherwise. Not a few students, employees, or staunch advocates of

democratic rights, not to mention media persons, have been hounded by the fascist state.

The reactionary fascist regime is also intensifying its persecution of forces of the legal democratic movement. One of its leaders, Vicente Ladlad, was illegally arrested and detained in July.

On November 22, the MIG of Iloilo rearrested Roberto Cabales, active organizer of the national democratic movement. He and his companion were threatened with death if he did not admit to being a member of the NPA. After a series of interrogations, he was released the following day. Cabales was first abducted in June and was kept under prolonged detention by the MIG without charges.

One hundred and thirty nine (139) political detainees continue to languish in prison, making Estrada’s move of

WE MUST BE VIGILANT AND RESIST ALL ATTEMPTS TO IMPLEMENT THE WARRANTLESS ARREST POLICY, THE NATIONAL IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM AND OTHER FORMS OF HUMAN RIGHTS REPRESSION PROPOSED BY LACSON, AND AGAINST PERSISTENT ATTEMPTS TO REWRITE THE REACTIONARY CONSTITUTION, ALL OF WHICH ARE INTENDED TO ENABLE THE REGIME TO RELENTLESSLY RIDE ROUGHSHOD OVER THE PEOPLE’S RIGHTS.

freeing only 10 detainees in December a mere publicity stunt. Meanwhile, political detainees forcibly charged with criminal cases continue to grow in number. Victims of human rights violations under the Marcos dictatorship are still denied indemnification while Estrada has allowed the Marcoses’ full return to power.

All of these are the fruits of the fascist US-Estrada regime’s iron fist policy. It had trashed the Comprehensive Agreement for the Respect of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law,

which was signed by the GRP and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines in 1998, even before it predictably ended the peace negotiations in May.

The US-Estrada regime can be expected to outdo its predecessors in the realm of human rights violations. Estrada has appointed notorious fascists—Brig. Gen. Angelo Reyes and Dir. Gen. Panfilo Lacson—to the topmost posts in the AFP and PNP. We must be vigilant and resist all attempts to implement the warrantless arrest policy, the national identification system and other forms of human rights repression proposed by Lacson, and against persistent attempts to rewrite the reactionary constitution, all of which are intended to enable the regime to relentlessly ride roughshod over the people’s rights.

Meantime, it is certain that mounting violations of their rights shall rouse the people to courageously confront fascist violence and with full determination, advance the revolutionary struggle. **AB**

Editors' Note:

On the Rights of the Filipino Children

There is a particular significance in focusing our attention on the situation of Filipino children in this issue of *Ang Bayan*. We must counter the reactionary all-out propaganda of the Estrada government and of petty bourgeois anti-communist organizations accompanying the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The government is launching cosmetic programs to conceal the intense suffering of Filipino children and its direct and indirect participation in oppressing and violating the rights of children. It desperately attempts to dissociate the problems and oppression suffered by children from poverty and from the rottenness of the social system so as to give the impression that "charity" projects are sufficient to address the needs of children and their parents.

Because it could not completely conceal its iniquity, especially the targeting of children in its counterrevolutionary war, the Estrada government highlights the concocted issue of the New People's Army's supposed policy of recruiting child fighters in an attempt to diminish the ever-widening support of the Filipino people for armed struggle, and tarnish the rising prestige of the Party and the revolutionary movement in the realm of international diplomacy.

To thoroughly belie the Estrada government's rotten propaganda, **AB** is publishing the August 30 statement of the Military Commission of the Party Central Committee that clarifies the long-standing policy of the Party and the New People's Army regarding the minimum age requirement in recruiting NPA fighters. Also in order to strengthen and further clarify this policy, **AB** is printing in this issue the memorandum on the "Minimum Age Requirement for NPA Fighters" which the Executive Committee of the Party Central Committee released on October 15. These also serve as reminders to all NPA units.

Related articles regarding the situation of child workers and about fascism in the countryside describe the oppression and violence perpetrated by the reactionary state against children. These articles show why children will remain miserable for as long as the oppressive semicolonial and semifeudal system exists; and why scores of children and youth actively seek to be a part of the revolutionary movement. Due to the oppression they suffer, they immediately realize that only the unity of the people and the revolutionary movement can ensure a bright future for children. **AB**

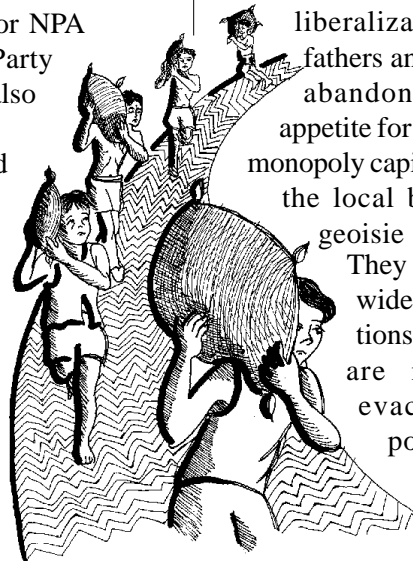
On the NPA's alleged mass recruitment of child guerrillas

*Military Commission
Central Committee
Communist Party of the Philippines*

30 August 1999

The revolutionary movement considers children and youth as social sectors that should be aroused, organized and mobilized for the revolution. Millions of children and youth, sons and daughters of workers, peasants and other exploited and oppressed people, are condemned by the decadent ruling semicolonial and semifeudal system to extreme poverty, slavery and a dark future.

They are further made to suffer by the current rabidly reactionary, puppet, anti-democratic and antimasses US-Estrada regime. Under the policies of imperialist "globalization" and all-out denationalization, deregulation and liberalization—they and their fathers and mothers are brutally abandoned to the voracious appetite for superprofits of foreign monopoly capitalists and extortion by the local big comprador bourgeoisie and landlord classes. They are victimized by the widespread military operations of the AFP-PNP that are marked by forced evacuations, food and population control, indiscriminate bombardment and firing,



illegal searches and arrests and other forms of fascist abuse and intimidation.

The revolutionary movement led by the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army in particular, is a young movement. It is youth who are at their prime that constitute the vast majority of the revolutionary movement's cadres, members, officials and fighters. This is as it should be. It has been repeatedly proven by the country's history that it is the youth who are most open and interested in revolutionary change and advance. There is likewise a need for the youth's enthusiasm and their resolute faith in the future for perseverance in the struggle despite a myriad of suffering and trials. One significant victory of the Second Great Rectification Movement has been the revitalization of the youth's participation in the revolutionary movement and the noticeable growth in the number of new blood among the movement's full-time forces.

Along with this, the Party, NPA and the movement as a whole are conscious of the particular status and needs of minors, especially children. The movement is made up of various types of organizations as well as military and non-military forces and participates in different types of activities and struggles both armed and unarmed, legal and illegal in the political, economic, cultural, organizational, health, military and other fields. Thus, even as they are tirelessly mobilized to participate in the revolution, minors are purposely removed from combat and military activities. Children are organized under the aegis of the revolutionary women's movement to provide special attention to their health and educational needs that have been grossly neglected by the reactionary ruling classes.

The revolutionary movement consciously abides by international laws and rules of war that prohibit the recruitment of children below 15 years of age for combat work. More, in 1988, the Political Bureau of the Party's Central Committee issued a clear decision stipulating that the NPA may only recruit persons who are 18 years old and older for its combat units. This issue, along with other issues related to respect for human rights were included in the first phase of the peace talks between the GRP and the NDFP and the

Comprehensive Agreement (CARHRIHL) that has been approved and signed by both parties but which the Estrada regime has refused to implement.

While the Marcoses and the worst violators of human rights in the Philippines are being exculpated and allowed to return to power, the Estrada regime and its minions in the AFP and PNP are fabricating issues about supposed NPA violations of human rights through the alleged mass recruitment of child guerrillas. Up to now, they have had nothing to show except for isolated cases in a few places, most of whom are victims of illegal arrest and have been falsely accused of being NPA members. The AFP and PNP have long had the practice of falsely accusing as NPA and planting firearms as "evidence" even on members of unarmed and nonmilitary mass organizations, including elements of the legal democratic movement. The Party and the NPA do not expect the reactionary and fascist US-Estrada regime to cease, but rather, step up such vilification and intrigues while intensifying its militarist Oplan Makabayan that aims to end the armed conflict in the country with an iron fist.

Data prove that the NPA on the whole abides by international laws and rules on war that include the prohibition of the recruitment of children for combat. The Communist Party and the NPA have their own clear internal rules to implement this. On this occasion, the Party's Military Commission and the NPA National Operational Command once again remind all commands and units of the NPA in different areas of the country to strictly ensure the implementation of the Party's policies and the NPA's rules on this matter. **AB**

**Expose and resist the unbridled
oppression and exploitation of the
youth by US imperialism and the ruling
comprador bourgeoisie and landlord
classes!**

**Further arouse the youth for the
revolution!**

Minimum age requirement for NPA fighters

Executive Committee, Central Committee
October 15, 1999

To all Party Organs and NPA Commands:

Please be informed and guided by the following:

1. Under International Humanitarian Law, specifically Article 77, para. 2 of Protocol I of 8 June 1977 additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts, the parties to the armed conflict "in recruiting among those persons who have attained the age of 15 years but who have not attained the age of 18 years (...) shall endeavor to give priority to those who are oldest."

Under Article 4, para. 3 of Protocol II additional to the Geneva Conventions, children who have not attained the age of 15 shall not be allowed to take part in the hostilities. Under Article 4, para 3 (d) of Protocol II, children under the age of 15 who have taken a direct part in hostilities, despite the prohibition in Article 4, para 3(c) of the same Protocol and are captured remain entitled to the special protection provided to children by Article 4, para 3.

2. Under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted on 20 November 1989, children are accorded special rights up to the age of 18 years and the minimum age limit stipulated for the participation of children in hostilities is 15 years.

3. The International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement have called for the adoption of an optional protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child aimed in particular at prohibiting the recruitment of children under 18 years of age into the armed forces and armed groups and their participation in hostilities. The proposed optional protocol has not yet been adopted and carries vague terms, such as "direct and indirect participation" and "hostilities".

So far, existing international humanitarian and human rights law allows the recruitment of persons between the age of 15 and 18 as combatants of a party to an armed conflict.

The Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines respect the aforesaid law and take into account the following: the fact that ►

Pertinent facts

The children. Forty-five percent (45%) or almost 33 million of the Philippine population are children aged 17 and younger. Majority or 13.85% of this group are aged 0-4 years.

Health. For every 1,000 infants born, almost 43 die instantly due to illness, malnutrition, absence of medical services and other causes. More than 28% of children aged five and younger suffer from severe malnutrition. Thirty percent (30%) of those aged five and younger have been reported to be suffering from stunted growth. Forty-nine percent (49%) of all infants and 26% of children aged one to six years suffer from iron-deficiency anemia.

Lack of education. Sixty percent (60%) of children in the elementary grades stop schooling upon reaching the second grade due to the high cost of education-related expenses such as snacks, books, various school fees, transportation and others. Their chances of entering high school or college grows even slimmer due to the very high cost of tuition and other educational expenses. More than a third of the 42,000 barangays all over the country have elementary schools that do not offer the full six grades. Similarly, there is a woeful lack of teachers. Only 70 towns have high schools. There are even less colleges.

Work. Filipino children enter the working force early. At the age of five or six, a child is usually made to work to help his or her family (*see related article*). Worse, there are children forced into prostitution and subjected to sexual abuse. Five to 5.7 million of all children work, including 25,000 child domestic helpers. One and a half million children are estimated to roam the streets of the country's urban areas as itinerant peddlers. Among them are 60,000 - 100,000 children who are forced into prostitution and become pawns of criminal syndicates. **AB**

the NPA is waging a people's war, that its enemy is brutal and carries out acts of aggression against the people in their territory and that all persons regardless of age are entitled to the inherent right of self-defense. Entire communities are responsible for their internal security and can carry out self-defense against the aggressor.

In consonance with existing international humanitarian and human rights law, the Politburo of the Party Central Committee adopted in 1988 the policy prohibiting the recruitment of children below the age of 18 years as regular members or armed fighters of combat units of the New People's Army. We continue to uphold such policy and reiterate it now in the face of the intensified psywar campaign being waged by the Manila government.

Furthermore we hereby amend Point 1 of Principle III of the Basic Rules of the New People's Army which reads as follows:

Point 1. Anyone who is physically fit, regardless of age, sex, race, nationality or religion and has the capacity to fight and is ready to participate in a protracted armed struggle against the reactionary state power may be a member of a fighting unit of the New People's Army.

As amended, Point 1 of Principle III shall henceforth read as follows:

Point 1. Any person, who is at least 18 years of age and is physically and mentally fit, regardless of sex, race, nationality or religion, has the capacity to fight and is ready to participate in armed struggle against the reactionary state power, may become a combatant or a member of a fighting unit of the New People's Army.

Any person, not less than 15 years of age, may be admitted as a trainee or apprentice of the New People's Army and may be assigned to self-defense, militia and other non-combat units and tasks.

In the event of enemy aggression against or encroachment on the territory of the people's democratic government, all persons above 15 years of age may be mobilized for self-defense, provided that priority among those below 18 years of age but more than 15 years of age shall be given to the eldest ones in the distribution of weapons for self-defense.

The foregoing amendment shall take immediate effect.

The New People's Army adheres strictly to the principles and instruments of international humanitarian and human rights law. We must expose as false and malicious the propaganda campaign of the enemy that the NPA is systematically recruiting children who are less than 15 years of age to become combatants.

We must denounce the enemy's practice of murdering children of less than 15 years of age and misrepresenting them as armed fighters of the NPA or kidnapping, torturing, intimidating and forcing them to say that they are NPA combatants and imprisoning them indefinitely and subjecting them to cruel and humiliating treatment.

We challenge the Manila government (GRP) to honor its own signature on the GRP-NDFP Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law and accede to the realization of the GRP-NDFP Joint Monitoring Committee where complaints may be presented or proceed directly to the appropriate international court of law and to complain against any alleged violation of the Geneva Conventions and Protocols I and II. **AB**

Organizing children

Our perseverance in revolutionary struggle is our gift to children and to future generations of the toiling masses. Thus, we pay special attention to the care and nurture of the young as the most beloved children of the revolution. Organizing children's groups and conducting activities focused on the needs of the young in the realm of health, literacy, culture, politics and the economy are considered part of the duties of Party units.

These serve to expand and deepen the revolutionary mass base and advance the national democratic revolution.

At present, our experience in organizing children is richer in the countryside. Here, children's groups are formed upon the initiative of the barrio organizing committees. Children's groups are administered and guided by women's or youth groups or committees. Through various methods appropriate for their age, the children are guided to understand that only a revolution can end the social system that tramples on their rights as children and exploits the people.

The children are taught to read and write. They are also taught basic knowledge about nature and science. Community projects are launched to provide

the children with clean surroundings, basic medical services and nutritious food. Various children's contests and games are launched to help them build strong bodies and develop the spirit of cooperation and love for others.

The children are also taught to perform simple duties for the revolution. For example, they are taught to sing revolutionary songs, recite stories or poems of struggle and shout slogans especially during mass actions which they and their parents join. The children also carry out very important tasks in passing on messages concerning the movement of comrades and mass organizations and in actively assisting in production work.

While children are deliberately excluded from combat and military work, the significance and need for armed struggle, the decadent character of the reactionary army and the noble history and aspirations of the people's army are clarified to them. In simplest terms, the children are taught about clandestine methods, including the importance of guarding very sensitive information such as anything that concerns the membership of committees and the movement of comrades in their area.

Children who are victims of reactionary military violence are immediately cared for and their wounds attended to, and are provided with moral support as they overcome their trauma. Their steadfastness in the face of hardships is recognized and hailed as models to be emulated.

Special attention is also given to the children of fighters. Revolutionary barrio committees help the families both of comrades and revolutionary martyrs as much as they can to meet their most basic needs.

Amid crisis and the reactionary government's oppression of the people and of children, the revolutionary struggle of the toiling masses is fast intensifying. Side by side with the continuous development, expansion and deepening of the revolutionary mass base all over the country, more and more children are embracing the revolution as they hold fast to their dream of a free, just and peaceful future for the entire nation. **AB**

The miserable state of child workers in the Philippines

Up to 5.7 million children work to support themselves and their families. Outside this number are the thousands of undocumented migrant child workers. Child workers are aged 17 and younger, work on a full-time basis and perform tasks that stunt or damage their physical, emotional and psychological development.

Most child workers may be found in plantations and haciendas; in households that receive out-jobbing assignments from certain factories; and in sweatshops found all over the Philippines. They also work as domestic help while others are out in the streets eking out a livelihood from hawking and prostitution. Because they lack job security and are often hired illegally, child workers in these areas are far more exploited and suffer so much more. They toil under the most terrible working conditions in exchange for measly wages, if at all.

Even if exploiting children's labor power is prohibited by law, the reactionary government turns a blind eye to the gross and wanton violations of such laws by capitalists and hacienda owners. In fact, the rabid promotion of "globalization" and competition with other backward semicolonial countries in offering the lowest wages to foreign investors encourages the utilization of child workers who usually receive wages several times lower than the minimum wage. This worsens their already miserable conditions engendered by backward production and a society impoverished by old feudalism and imperialism.

Slave-like status

The price of child workers' labor power is immensely, if not rock-bottom cheap. Because they are in dire need, many of them work in exchange for extremely low wages. Others work to pay off their parents' debts or toil alongside their parents without receiving their own wages. Many are forced to work for more than eight hours a day for food, lodging and some bare necessities.

In the garments industry, children aged 11 to 14 usually work in their own homes or in factories for 11 hours a day. They receive only a third of the stipulated minimum wage. Those who live inside cramped factories have to pay for their lodging. Expenses for items like thread, needles and even machinery repairs are also deducted from their pay.

In rattan and wood furniture factories, children are paid P15-P25 daily. Others are paid for every piece of furniture they make. Children in mining companies receive P40-P50 for their day-long toil hauling sackfuls of mineral ore. Adult workers are paid P250-P400 a day.

In vegetable plantations in Northern Luzon, children work from Monday to Saturday for P25, which is less than half of what an adult farm worker is paid. In sugar plantations, children cut grass in exchange for a few centavos a day. When they reach the age of 12, they begin cutting sugar cane for measly wages.

In *muro ami* fishing, children are not paid until they have served the full 10-month contract at sea. From their slave wages are deducted expenses for food aboard the ship, the cook's salary, rent for equipment and medicine. The *muro ami* merchant doubly profits by overpricing these expenses. While deductions usually add up to 30-40% of their pay, there are cases where they reach 100% or more, thus forcing the children to sign up for another 10-month contract to pay their debts.

Inhuman working conditions

Child workers toil under the worst possible working conditions, brutally damaging their young minds and bodies. They labor in factories and other work places that are cramped and unsanitary. Facilities and ventilation are usually inadequate. Mechanisms and protective gear that would ensure their safety at work are insufficient, if they exist at all. Worse, many child workers are employed to perform very perilous tasks such as underground mining, where they inhale toxic chemicals and toil close to huge machines that are extremely dangerous to them.

Children's delicate bodies are more vulnerable to heavy toil and hazardous working conditions. Their tiny bodies tire more easily as they perform repetitive and energy-straining tasks, especially since they suffer from malnutrition. They are thoroughly unaware that they are in need of protection to ensure their safety, and are thus more susceptible to illness and accidents compared to adults. Some die from disease, fatigue or work-related accidents.

Child workers toiling in small factories usually complain of back and eye pain and muscle cramps in their hands and legs. Prolonged exposure to toxic chemicals results in skin, lung and eye diseases.

In *muro ami*, children dive to depths of up to 100 feet using nothing more than wooden goggles. Thus, they often suffer from burst eardrums. Because of constant exposure to polluted water, they are highly susceptible to diseases such as typhoid fever. They are also in danger of being attacked by sharks and other large fish.

Children who work in plantations and haciendas suffer from back pain and cramps in their legs and hands. They often suffer from cuts and on other occasions, succumb to chronic illnesses or suffer permanent physical damage (such as severed fingers or hands) from using razor-

sharp farm implements.

In addition to such work hazards, child workers suffer psychological and physical abuse. Some children are confined to filthy and crowded factories and made to work like beasts of burden. They are forced to toil beyond their physical capabilities and are denied the right to see their families and friends. They are prohibited from interacting with one another and are not allowed even a moment's rest. They are often beaten up, shouted at and sexually abused.

In the face of the relentless blows inflicted by pro-imperialist policies on both child workers and their parents, their deprivation and suffering worsen as they live under such

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miserable conditions. Not only are they denied just compensation for their labors. They are also deprived of the opportunity and conditions to develop as chil-

dren—time for play, making friends and going to school.

The system of utilizing child labor and the social setup that gives rise to such exploitation must be exposed and roundly condemned.

In addition, there is urgent need to organize child workers, along with their parents, to empower them to fight not only for what is due them as child workers but for their rights as children. **AB**

Counterrevolutionary violence against children in the countryside

Reactionary military troops do not spare, but in fact consider the millions of children, as direct targets of ruthless fascist attacks and abuses.

Many children have fallen victim to indiscriminate killings, bombing, strafing, arson and forced eviction perpetrated by soldiers. Most of them are outrightly terrorized, beaten up and abused to force them into admitting that they are supporters or fighters of the New People's Army. They are made to witness the brutal murder of their parents. In evacuation centers where victims of forced evacuation are thrown into and neglected, they suffer from hunger, sickness and intense deprivation, with many of them dying. Worse, some children are coerced to serve as guides and/or spies during military operations.

The fascist cruelties they suffer not only cause children physical harm but inflict emotional and psychological damage as well. Sometimes, farmers' children would tremble with fear at the sight of uniformed soldiers and cower and hide upon hearing the drone of a helicopter.

THE FOLLOWING ARE but a few of the cases of direct violations of children's rights under the pro-imperialist, puppet and fascist US-Estrada regime.

On August 15, Patricia Quirante's 5-year-old child sustained a bullet wound in the foot when forces of the 303rd Infantry Brigade strafed their home in Guihulngan, Negros Oriental. The shooting was in retaliation for the death of six troopers from their unit in an encounter with the NPA.

On July 30 and 31, five armed soldiers disrupted and harassed a therapy session for children who were victims of violence in the militarized sitios of Carupian, Bunugan, Taguing and Bagunot in Baggao, Cagayan. The soldiers intimidated the facilitator and even snatched a notebook from a young girl. The session was intended to restore the children's self confidence and help them speak their minds regarding the violence they experienced at the hands of fascist soldiers.

On July 18, in Tungkong Mangga, San Jose del Monte, combined forces of the Securicor Agency and the Philippine Marines shoved 4-year-old Ritchie Dalaquit into a hut that they had set on fire. Ritchie managed to escape but until now bears the trauma resulting not only from what had been done to her but also from having witnessed the murder of her father Benedicto Dalaquit and three other farmers who were members of a peasant association in Tungkong Mangga.

On April 23, in Basud, Camarines Norte, a soldier repeatedly banged the already injured head of John-John Benza against a

wall. The perpetrators were 1st IB troops led by Lt. Benjamin Pajarito Jr. They maltreated 13-year-old John-John because he witnessed the soldiers' beastly murder of four NPA fighters who had already surrendered. John-John's head was swollen for many weeks. Worse, the child was traumatized by the violence that he both witnessed and experienced.

Four children lost their homes when their family was violently evicted by forces of the 202nd Infantry Brigade on March 6 in Camalig, Albay.

In Dinarangan, Pinggot, Ilog, Negros Occidental, Rodrigo Asanan Jr., a 14-year-old, was walking with his parents Rodrigo Sr. and Leonida when fired at by soldiers of the 61st IB on March 29.

In Barangay Mahan-ub, Baganga, Davao Oriental, two children, including their father, were shot and killed by troops of the Special Forces Company also this year.

On November 14, 1998, armed men repeatedly shot at 5-year-old Rodolfo Coliano Jr. and his parents at Barangay Kagawasan, San Miguel, Bohol. Rodolfo's father was slain while his mother was wounded.

Gerry Selenta, 15, his sister Mary, 5, and Heny Cortes, an infant, were victims of indiscriminate firing by combined forces of the 60th IB, SCAA-SF and the Paper Industries Corp. (PICOP) Infantry Battalion on November 8, 1998 in Barangay Pangyan, Trento, Agusan del Sur. The armed rogues strafed the house of the Selentas, wounding the Selenta couple and Gerry who was hit in the stomach. Gerry died after two days due to the seriousness of his wound and because his family could not afford to pay for a much-needed blood transfusion. The little finger on Mary's right hand had to be amputated. Heny Cortes, son of the Selentas' neighbors, was injured when his mother fell on him while trying to evade gunfire. He died after five days.

Six-year-old Jonalyn Baste, daughter of Nilo Baste, one of the striking workers of PICOP, became another victim of the iron-fisted fascist protectors of PICOP. On May 27, 1998, the strikers' picket line was attacked and dismantled by the 90th PNP Composite team led by Insp. Edgardo Maduro and Officer Empredu Curada.

The fascists did not spare mother and daughter Norma and Jonalyn who were then merely paying Nilo a visit. Jonalyn was among 42 others who were arrested without warrant. The little girl was also among those charged with grave coercion. She was detained for four months, along with her 2-year-old sibling and eight other children like her. In prison, the children were not given separate food rations. They had no choice but to share the measly rations that their parents received.

Two children were hit when soldiers of the 74th IB led by Lt. Jun Picot peppered a house with bullets despite their knowledge that there were farmers and children inside. Perpetrated on October 15, 1998, it was an attempt by the military to liquidate an NPA unit in Sitio Mangga, Barangay Binay, San Narciso, Quezon. Twelve-year-old Ponciana Dondriano, who was sick at that time, was hit on her right leg with an M16 bullet. An M60 bullet also shattered the knee of Genito Francisco, aged 10. The soldiers sowed even more terror when they set up a detachment in the community immediately after the shooting.

Indiscriminate firing also crippled 2-year-old Cristina Boncalos who was hit by a bullet at the back of her knee on July 3, 1998 at Barangay Oras, Tabaco, Albay. Because her father was a suspected NPA member, forces of the 22nd IB strafed their home. Cristina's father died instantly, while a bullet that shot through the knee of Cristina's mother hit the toddler who was then seated on her mother's lap.

IT IS ALSO THE PRACTICE of the reactionary army to kill minors and later make them appear as NPA fighters. Many children are abducted, tortured, illegally arrested, imprisoned indefinitely, and treated in a cruel and humiliating manner. The enemy systematically uses them in its propaganda that the NPA allegedly recruits children on a wide scale.

Last August, in San Fernando, Camarines Sur, the AFP killed a 15-year-old boy named Nelson in an encounter between the NPA and the military. Neither has the monstrosity committed by the 54th and 70th IB led by Lt. Raymundo Aguada against four minors in Barangay Dikapanikian, Dingalan, Aurora in June 1998 been forgotten. The soldiers captured the teenagers, including two young girls, and raped the latter before summarily executing the four youths.

On December 2, a 13-year-old boy was captured by soldiers of the 34th IB in Quezon, San Jorge, Samar, and was branded as an NPA fighter. Last May, the AFP

arrested a girl nicknamed "Cheche" after encircling a NPA unit in Laac, Compostela Valley and exhibited her as an NPA combatant.

Similarly, many other children like "Brian" of Davao Oriental, "Tony" and "Emer" of Surigao del Norte, "Mariel" of Bohol and another "Cheche" of Surigao who have been captured by the AFP in armed encounters, have been made to appear as NPA combatants and later coerced to serve the reactionary army as spies and guides in military operations or made to undertake other tasks directly related to the military's campaign against the revolutionary movement. Many of them are terrorized and then conditioned to inform not only on NPA fighters but on the revolutionary masses in their respective barrios. Some are trained to become efficient instruments in the reactionary state's counterrevolutionary operations.

In February, military troops captured Jelyn Dayong in Alegria, Surigao del Norte in an encounter between soldiers and the NPA. They left her wounded but apprehended her later after villagers brought her to the hospital. She was detained indefinitely as a "youth offender" along with other child criminals in a Department of Social Work and Development office in the guise of protecting her rights as a child. Against her own wishes, she was in fact denied the right to see and be with her family, lawyers and human rights advocates.

In the same way, Mylene Francisco, 14, was captured while ill in November 1998 when a section of the 5th Scout Rangers Company encircled an NPA unit in Kalangatan, San Teodoro, Oriental Mindoro. Contrary to the reactionary state's claim that it advocates the rights of children, the AFP used Mylene as a guide in their military operations against the revolutionary movement.

Desperate to crush widening and intensifying mass resistance, fascist troops behave like rabid dogs in suppressing the people and attacking revolutionary forces. For the counterrevolutionary Oplan Makabayan, the reactionary and fascist US-Estrada regime is pouring even bigger funds into the AFP, PNP and CAGU in order to sow more terror in the countryside and the cities. This could only mean the worsening of fascist abuse and violence against children and their parents. But far from driving the masses away from the NPA, fascist intimidation and cruelty can only bolster the people's solidarity as they rally around a singular revolutionary goal and struggle. **AB**

On the nationality question and the right to self-determination

In its September-October 1999 issue, Ang Bayan (AB) published a letter from Ka Adi of the Ilocos-Cordillera region and a related article dwelling on the Moro nationality and self-determination question. The following is a rejoinder sent by a member of the Executive Committee of the Central Committee and received recently by AB.

Regarding AB's reply to K. Adi's question on the Moro people, I believe it is necessary to clarify that the principle of recognizing the right to self-determination should concur with the political concept on nationality, but should prevail over the latter should conflicts arise.

On the issue of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), we should clarify, in a balanced way, that our recognition for existing concepts of nationality among groups within the revolutionary movement of the Moro people is integral to our recognition of the right to self-determination, especially since in the case of the Moro people, this has both historical and contemporary basis. Thus, in our relations with the MILF, we respect their political concept where they consider themselves as a separate people even if we stand for a political concept that sees them as part of the Filipino people.

Through our independent organizing efforts among the Moro people and through our close alliance with them within the framework of the national-democratic revolution and our recognition of their right to self-determination, we are able to demonstrate to them through clarifications and sincere actions—that there is basis within the framework of the national democratic revolution and the establishment of a new social system for the abolition of the centuries-old national oppression that they have experienced and basis as well for carrying out, on a wide scale, the political concept that they are part of the Filipino people.

Should the concept that they are a separate people and that they should secede from the country still prevail upon the attainment of revolutionary victory, we should respect this for as long as they do not become instruments of imperialism or the restoration of semicolonial and semifeudal conditions. But it is in the very act of advancing the revolution side by side, unitedly or in cooperation that we shall be able to minimize the conditions that may lead to this. Aside from this, there remains the fact that many of the provinces where the Moro people live have majority populations that are non-Moro.

For AB's readers and for the revolutionary masses, I believe there is greater significance in stressing our openness to and recognition of their right to self-determination, the history of their oppression and their just demands for the purpose of developing a better attitude toward their struggle. Once this is recognized, we shall have stronger basis for uniting with and encouraging them to accept the political concept that we advocate. **AB**

Widespread mass actions for human rights launched

Aside from activities held in Metro Manila, thousands of people joined mass actions launched in the country's cities and provinces on December 10 to commemorate the 51st anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

In Davao, 5,000 people condemned the series of killings, illegal arrests and abductions perpetrated by the reactionary military and its intensified militarization of the countryside, under the direction of the fascist US-Estrada regime.

More than 3,000 gathered to oppose the state's widespread violation of the people's rights in General Santos City.

Around 2,000 people held a march-rally at the demolished public market of San Francisco, Agusan del Sur.

In Iloilo, 2,000 people demanded the release of Ruben Saluta who was illegally arrested and is still being detained by the Military Intelligence Group.

In Naga, 500 people denounced the Estrada regime's bloody record of human rights violations.

In Cebu, 400 youth and activists confronted Dep. Dir. Gen. Panfilo Lacson when he visited the island, and demanded that he pay for the abuses he committed against Cebuanos in the late '80s.

Meanwhile, 200 workers of the National Power Corporation rallied in Iligan and Cagayan de Oro to dramatize their objection to the imminent privatization of the company. **AB**

Sham negotiation between the US-Estrada regime and the Tabara-dela Cruz clique

On December 26, newspapers blazed with headlines that “peace negotiations” would be held between the Estrada regime and the Revolutionary Proletarian Army-Alex Boncayao Brigade (RPA-ABB) led by revisionist traitors Arturo Tabara and Nilo de la Cruz.

The zarzuela was staged after the reactionary government terminated peace negotiations with the National Democratic Front due to the former’s inability to discuss and address the basic issues that are the root causes of people’s war.

With this scheme, the Estrada regime is engaged in a vain attempt to salvage the RPA-ABB’s worm-eaten name and have the people believe that the government would be pursuing a legitimate negotiation.

This is also being staged amid the regime’s unprecedented isolation from the masses of the people.

In “negotiating” with the RPA-ABB, the Estrada regime will but be talking to its own shadow.

The Tabara-de la Cruz clique is one of the regime’s most reliable counterrevolutionary agents.

As far back as 1988, Tabara was already an agent of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. The RPA-ABB has been an intelligence and psywar unit of the fascist military.

Aside from being racketeers, Tabara and de la Cruz serve as minions of reactionary politicians. They are lapdogs of compradors and landlords like Danding Cojuangco and Lucio Tan.

This meaningless farce is sure to fail. **AB**

NDF condemns inhumane treatment of Ka Parago

The National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) has condemned the Estrada regime’s inhumane treatment of Leonardo Pitao, better known as Ka Parago Sandoval, head of the Merardo Arce Command, the New People’s Army (NPA)’s regional unit in Southern Mindanao. The NDFP said that the regime’s continued denial of Ka Parago’s basic rights were gross violations of the Geneva Conventions and existing protocols governing the treatment of prisoners of war.

Ka Parago was arrested by elements of the Military Intelligence Group (MIG) and the 73rd IB led by Col. Eric Palabrica at 11 p.m. on November 2 in his wife’s house in Barangay Bago Gallera, Davao City. Ka Parago was then with his wife and five children. Although there was no other guerrilla with Ka Parago, the raiding soldiers were in full battle gear when they swooped down on the house.

Ka Parago said that he was in the city to seek medical treatment for his right arm that often caused him pain due to a bullet that had long been lodged in it. The military, however, did not even take this into account. Despite his condition, Ka Parago was immediately handcuffed and brought to the MIG headquarters in Davao where he was subjected to tactical interrogation for five hours by four men in civilian clothes.

On the morning of November 3, he was airlifted to Manila, from which he was brought by helicopter to Malacañang where he was presented to Lt. Gen. Jose Calimlim, chief of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (ISAFP). After this, he was brought to the ISAFP headquarters in Camp Aguinaldo where he was interrogated by Calimlim himself.

From the time of Ka Parago’s arrest, he was deprived of sleep and food for 19 hours while being subjected to interrogation thrice by teams of military men that took turns in grilling him. After he had been given food, he was again interrogated.

He was held incommunicado, or denied the right to see his family, relatives, friends and lawyers, for 34 hours. Despite his legal counsels’ prompt arrival at Camp Aguinaldo, the ISAFP at first repeatedly denied having Ka Parago in its custody before finally surfacing him.

From the very start, the revolutionary leader has been treated like a common criminal. He has been slapped with a series of criminal charges and denied his right to be recognized and treated as a prisoner of war. Ka Parago’s handcuffs were not even removed as he conferred with his lawyers. Military men also forcibly eavesdropped on what was supposed to be a private consultation with his counsels. He was likewise denied the right to seek medical treatment from a doctor of his choice.

Nonetheless, despite the fact that all of the common criminal acts Ka Parago has been charged with were committed in Davao, he is being forcibly detained in Manila, far away from his family, relatives, friends and comrades.

This beastly treatment of Ka Parago starkly contrasts with his humane ►

CAPTURE OF SOLCOM SPY CHIEF BARED

A New People's Army (NPA) special unit has arrested the the intelligence chief of the Philippine Army's Southern Luzon Command (Solcom). Communist Party spokesperson Gregorio 'Ka Roger' Rosal announced in November that the NPA had captured Maj. Noel Buan on July 6 in a special operation for his intelligence activities that wrought damage to the people and the revolutionary movement in Southern Tagalog and Bicol.

Buan, formerly the intelligence chief of the 76th IB, was assigned to Bicol in 1989. He was transferred to Southern Tagalog in 1990, reassigned to Bicol in 1992 and to Southern Tagalog in 1998.

He was arrested in San Pablo City through the use of stratagem.

POLICE CHIEF NABBED, 3 SCOUT RANGERS KILLED IN QUEZON

New People's Army guerrillas captured the police chief of a Quezon town on November 3. Chief Insp. Abelardo Martin was arrested when Red fighters attacked the Philippine National Police station in Dolores town. The guerrillas attacked at 12:30 noon aboard two jeeps. The Red fighters also seized an M14, five M16s, four .38s, two 9 mm's and a radio in the 10-minute raid.

Meanwhile, three Scout Rangers belonging to a composite team of the 415th Police Provincial Mobile Group and the 9th Scout Rangers Coy were killed in an NPA ambush on November 9. The soldiers who were aboard a truck were part of the enemy forces sent to comb through towns near Dolores to look for Martin.

REGIME'S NEGLECT OF BUAN AND MARTIN ASSAILED

Gregorio 'Ka Roger' Rosal condemned the Estrada government's lack of concern for two prisoners of war, Maj. Noel Buan and Chief Insp. Abelardo Martin (*see related news*). In a statement aired at the end of December, Ka Roger said that the regime was taking a hardline position in refusing to negotiate for their release. Instead, it has massively deployed as many as 10 battalions of military and police forces in Southern Tagalog.

On the other hand, the New People's Army has accorded Buan and Martin their rights as prisoners of war. Buan and Martin sent a voice tape and a letter, respectively, to their families.

NPA PUNISHES KOREAN COMPANY

Red fighters of the New People's Army (NPA) punished a Korean company in Barangay Sta. Rosa, Mulanay, Quezon on October 30. The raid against the Keangnam Construction Co. was launched at 2:45 a.m. Guerrillas from the Maria Teresa de Leon Command of South Quezon burned company machinery worth P25 million and confiscated other equipment such as video cameras and a computer. In a statement, the NPA command said it punished the company for its refusal to abide by the revolutionary movement's taxation policies. This, despite the fact that it operates within the NPA's guerrilla zones that fall under the people's Red authority.

PNP COMPANY HEADQUARTERS IN BOHOL RAIDED

Three policemen were killed when Red fighters raided the headquarters of the Philippine National Police

◀ treatment of two military men who were prisoners of war, Gen. Victor Obillo and Capt. Eduardo Montealto. Ka Parago had headed the NPA unit that acted as the two prisoners' custodians.

As Obillo and Montealto's custodian, Ka Parago faithfully abided by the provisions of the Geneva Conventions and international protocols, by the NPA's rules and by the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law. This, despite the difficult conditions brought about by pursuit

operations conducted by more than 4,000 military troops sent by the Estrada regime in its failed attempt to recover the two prisoners of war.

Ka Parago can never hope to attain justice from a regime that perpetrates gross violations not only of the basic rights of captured revolutionaries but also of the rights of all people, especially the toiling masses.

It is only the revolutionary movement's all-rounded advance that shall liberate and mete justice to Ka Parago and all other political prisoners in the country. **AB**

(PNP)'s 702nd Provincial Mobile Group in Sta. Fe, Danao, Bohol. The 702nd Provincial Mobile Group is the PNP unit primarily responsible for waging suppressive campaigns against the people and the revolutionary movement in Bohol province.

The raid was launched on December 2 by about 50 New People's Army guerrillas who were in police uniform and aboard a truck and 10 motorcycles. The Red fighters were able to come close by playing a ruse on the policemen. Pretending to hold a Christmas party, the guerrillas brought with them two roasted pigs, bread, rice and drinks.

PNP DETACHMENT RAIDED IN MINDORO

The New People's Army (NPA) raided the Philippine National Police (PNP) station in Pola, Oriental Mindoro. The raid launched on November 1 was successfully executed in a matter of five minutes. The raiding Red fighters were aboard an L-300 van, a jeep and four motorcycles. Seized from the police station were an M14, two M16s, a 9mm, ammunition, a radio set and typewriters.

Meanwhile, a notorious policeman was meted revolutionary justice in Oriental Mindoro also on November 1. SPO4 Ciriaco Manalo, who is assigned to Naujan, was punished at 5 a.m. in Sitio Murangan, Barangay Alcate, Victoria town. Confiscated from him was a .38, ammunition and a hand-held radio.

POLICEMEN, SOLDIERS AMBUSHED IN EASTERN SAMAR

Six policemen and soldiers were wounded in two separate ambushes by the New People's Army (NPA) this December in Samar.

Three policemen assigned to the Philippine National Police (PNP) station in MacArthur, Eastern Samar were seriously wounded in an ambush by NPA guerrillas. The policemen, who were aboard a patrol car, were ambushed on December 22 in Sitio Palanas, Barangay Vigan, MacArthur, Eastern Samar.

Earlier, another ambush was launched by the NPA on December 15 against Philippine Army elements in Barangay Lale, Pinabacdao, Samar, wounding three soldiers.

SUCCESSFUL AMBUSHES LAUNCHED IN SURIGAO DEL SUR AND ABRA

Nine paramilitary elements and soldiers were killed in separate ambushes in Surigao del Sur and Abra.

Seven elements of the Citizens Armed Forces Geographical Unit (CAFGU) were killed in an ambush by Red fighters on November 7 in San Miguel, Surigao del Sur. They were part of a truckload of CAFGU.

Meanwhile, two Philippine Army troopers were killed in an NPA ambush on their unit in Tubo, Abra on October 30. The soldiers were attacked as they were crossing a hanging bridge.

NDF DECLARES HOLIDAY CEASEFIRE

A four-day ceasefire was declared by the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army (NPA) and the National Democratic Front (NDF) this Christmas season. In a statement, Elias Dipasupil, Secretary General of the NDF National Council, announced that the ceasefire would take effect from midnight of December 23 till midnight of December 25 and from midnight of December 30 till midnight of January 2. All NPA units were nonetheless ordered to maintain alertness against military and police attacks.

