

ANG

PAHAYAGAN NG PARTIDO KOMUNISTA NG PILIPINAS
PINAPATNUBAYAN NG
MARXISMO-LENINISMO-MAOISMO

Bayan

Special Issue

English Edition

July 4, 2001

Masses rejoice at Colonel Aguinaldo's punishment

Only a few minutes after a team from the NPA's Fortunato Camus Command punished Col. Rodolfo Aguinaldo, news travelled far and wide. For the thousands of victims of Aguinaldo's brutality, there could be no better news than the imposition of the death penalty on the hated fascist and scourge.

Aguinaldo was a former PC colonel turned politician, who was dubbed the "vulture of Cagayan". But he was better known throughout the country for his long and bloody counterrevolutionary and antipeople record as a leading violator of human rights, torturer and butcher of political prisoners and other revolutionaries and masses.

He paid for his many blood debts against the revolutionary movement and the people on the night of June 12, 2001, right in his "stronghold" in Tuguegarao City. His punishment has long been much desired by the people.

Colonel Aguinaldo devoted his life to defending the rotten ruling system. And he did so in the most decadent, vilest and most despicable ways. For a long time, Aguinaldo sowed fascist terror and unleashed dirty psywar tactics against the people of Cagayan, Apayao and other places. He is the archetype of the reviled enemy, rabidly antipeople and counterrevolutionary, anti-communist and militarist. For the people who were at the receiving end of Aguinaldo's brutality, he was the devil incarnate.

On the other hand, Aguinaldo was a hero to the imperialists, big landlords and com-



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Published by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines

Bloody record against the masses in Cagayan and Apayao

Aguinaldo served in the 1980s as the intelligence officer, and later as the project officer of the counter-insurgency program dubbed “Oplan Katatagan sa Cagayan” that was planned and directed by the CIA. Aguinaldo was directly under the wings of Juan Ponce Enrile who served as defense chief of the dictator Ferdinand Marcos. Under “Oplan Katatagan” in the first half of the 1980s, no less than 350,000 peasants and their families from more than 300 villages in Cagayan and Apayao were forced to vacate their



homes, fields and places of livelihood. The villagers hailed from the municipalities of Gattaran, Lasam, Sto. Niño, Lallo, Rizal, Buguey, Alcala, Amulung, Baggao, Peñablanca and Piat in Cagayan and the municipalities of Flora,

Luna, Conner and Pudtol in Apayao. They were made to live under subhuman conditions in numerous hamlets (guarded concentration camps) around military camps of the AFP, PC-INP and Integrated Civilian Home Defense Forces.

Aguinaldo and Enrile were raving madmen in their desire to eradicate the “insurgency”. The salvagings, massacres, torture, mass evacuations and psywar that they perpetrated were calculated to terrorize the people of Cagayan, destroy their newly built militancy and

revolutionary organizations and to nullify the resounding victories of the implementation of the minimum policy of agrarian revolution. There was hardly a barrio in Cagayan and Apayao that was not affected by the madness of Aguinaldo and his cohorts in the military, police and paramilitary forces.

In December of 1980, truckloads of military men under Aguinaldo swooped down on several villages to order a mass evacuation. They threatened to kill anybody who failed to obey. Men, women, children and farm animals were herded out, forced to walk several kilometers along muddy, mountainous trails towards the main roads, municipal centers and barrios that were guarded by military camps. Many infants and elderly folk did not survive the ordeal.

But the masses fought back. In the evacuation camps in Lallo, Cagayan, the people staged daily rallies along the national highway and appealed for help from the townspeople and passersby. They petitioned the local government to allow them to return to their barrios immediately and safely, decisively negotiated for indemnification and got the support of many more people. Then Mayor Aladino Dupaya could not but agree to the people’s just demands.

In Masi, Rizal in Zinundungan Valley, the hamletted Malawegs defied the AFP and left the fenced encampment to return to their homes and fields. Thousands of peasants and students in Gattaran held march-rallies with coffins to protest the massacre of children in Naddungan and other barrios.

With the continuing advance of the militant mass movement in the region and the call for a nation- ►

◄ pradors. In defending him, a CIA official once retorted that “You can sleep safe and sound because of people like Rodolfo Aguinaldo”.

As expected, the country’s ruling classes and their imperialist

master were angered and terrified with the death of their trusted butcher Aguinaldo. They would have the life and example of Hitlerite demons like Aguinaldo honored and emulated. It is a crucial matter

to them in the face of the growing threat to their rule posed by the rapidly advancing revolutionary movement.

From now on, they can never ever sleep soundly again. **AB**

Notorious torturer of the 5th CSU

As soon as he graduated from the Philippine Military Academy in 1972, Aguinaldo joined the notorious 5th Constabulary Security Unit or 5th CSU as a second lieutenant. The 5th CSU was responsible for the arrest, torture and murder of many Party cadres and mass activists during the Marcos fascist dictatorship. He was a member of the unit for almost a decade. During his stint, Aguinaldo was one of the leading torturers of political prisoners in the custody of the 5th CSU (despite their having been arrested and detained by other military units). Among them were:

Jose Ma. Sison (arrested and tortured in 1977);

Jose “Pete” Lacaba and Bonifacio Ilagan (1974);

Johann Baroso, Nenita Luneta-Evangelista and her three-year-old child Ningning (abducted and murdered in 1977);

The Luneta brothers Franco, Domingo and

Ernesto (arrested and tortured in 1974); Purificacion Pedro (wounded and brought to hospital, where she was raped and later hanged in what was made to appear as a suicide);

Edgar Jopson (arrested and tortured in 1975);

Dr. Juan Escandor (arrested in 1983, with his body later found with the skull cavity stuffed with his underwear); his companion Yolanda Gordula remains missing to this day;

Marco Palo (arrested in 1982; he was rushed to the V. Luna Memorial Hospital on the brink of death after intense torture by Aguinaldo); and

Venerando Villacillo (abducted, tortured and murdered in 1985. His body was burned and thrown off a cliff). **AB**

◀ wide boycott against the bogus presidential election of Marcos in 1981, Aguinaldo and his men went on a rampage. There was an unprecedented number of tortures, salvagings, massacres and other brutalities committed by the fascists against the people of Cagayan and Apayao. More and wider areas were declared “no man’s land”. Houses were burned down, fields and crops destroyed. Suspected members of revolutionary mass organizations were harassed, arrested, detained, tortured, subjected to indignities.

Upon his orders, troops of the 17th IB-PA and the 51st PC Ranger Battalion killed scores of civilians suspected of supporting the revolutionary movement. Forty-seven persons were murdered in the town of Lasam alone.

Aguinaldo staged a “mass surrender” of some 150 civilians and NPA relatives on one occasion in Gattaran in 1983. To pressure them to “surrender”, he first ordered the abduction of children of known NPA fight-

ers. The civilians were forced to show up as “surrenderees”, and were later enlisted as members of the CHDF or as civilian informers in exchange for their lives and temporary liberty.

Villagers were forced to attend meetings called by Aguinaldo and made to line up as each one was interrogated to name relatives in the NPA. Aguinaldo and his men incessantly harassed families or close relatives of NPA fighters to force the revolutionaries to surrender.

Those who refused were repeatedly struck with pieces of wood that were two inches across. Children and women were not spared. Many were left with deep psychological trauma due to experiences in the hands of Aguinaldo. Children of NPA fighters were abducted and brought to military camps and the women were raped or used by Aguinaldo to sow intrigues through their husbands and relatives.

Some surrenderees were formed as the so-called Cagayan 100. This paramilitary group served as ►



Fascist-turned-warlord politico

With his participation in the coup attempts, Aguinaldo knew he could never become a general. He resigned from the military. To further rise in wealth and power, the shortest possible route open to him was to become a politico.

Since he landed in Cagayan in the 1980's, Aguinaldo had long been preparing for that eventuality. Thus his "image-building", goons and guns honing, money-collecting, and "image-demolishing" and physical elimination of his would-be opponents in the electoral battles ahead.

His guns, goons, gold, psywar tactics, military backing and "special operation" to physically eliminate his would-be strongest opponent, sealed the victory of Aguinaldo. The AFP combat units, armor, guns and facilities were mobilized to support his political ambitions.

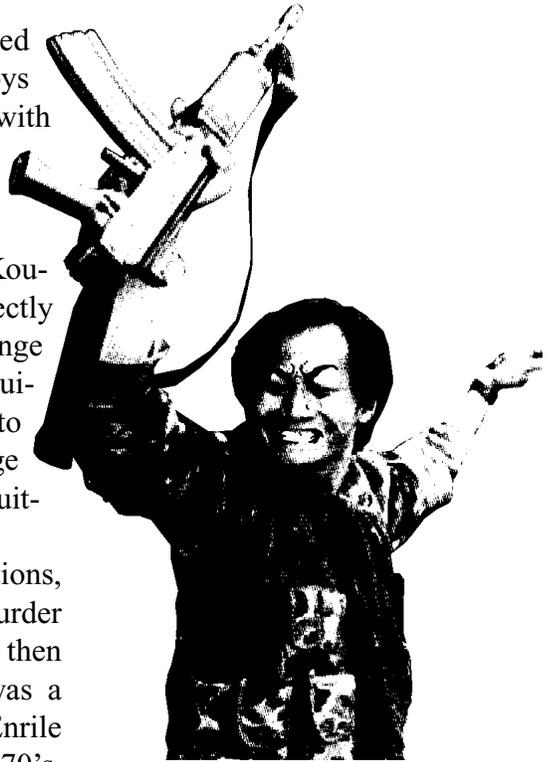
When he first ran for governor, he positioned his armored personnel carriers near the polling precincts in the districts and towns of

his rivals. Voters were terrorized and bribed by Aguinaldo's boys who pointed guns at them with P100 bills attached at the end of the barrels.

Aguinaldo's campaign was bankrolled by the Koumintang, whom Aguinaldo directly approached for a deal. In exchange for a large sum of money, Aguinaldo allowed Taiwanese to freely enter Cagayan and engage in illegal fishing, illegal recruitment and smuggling.

Before the 1990 elections, Aguinaldo engineered the murder of Tito Dupaya who was then planning a comeback, and was a strong contender that even Enrile could not defeat in the 1970's. His bloody "electoral operations" made Aguinaldo governor for three consecutive terms, and later as congressman of the third district of Cagayan since 1998.

From the time he became a career officer of the AFP, and more so when he became the PC provincial commander and eventually a bureaucrat capitalist, he began to amass wealth. He acquired assets



through landgrabbing, extortion, corruption and through the criminal syndicates headed by the highest ranking officials of the military and the civilian bureaucracy. (*see related article*)

When he became Cagayan provincial commander, he set up the ISLACABA (Isabela, Laguna, Cagayan, Cavite, Batangas) Jueteng Connection with Col. Tirso Gador.

◀ his private army. He used them in counterrevolutionary and antipeople activities, as his personal bodyguards and later, as goons for his electoral bids and dirty politics.

With the overthrow of the Marcos dictatorship in 1986, Col. Rodolfo Aguinaldo was immediately appointed provincial commander of the Philippine Constabulary in Cagayan and as intelligence chief of PC Recom 2. It was a "reward" for his participation in EDSA 1.

Soon after, he was involved in coup attempts against the Aquino regime in 1987 and 1989. In 1990, with the help of his Cagayan 100, Aguinaldo staged his own mock coup in Tuguegarao that led to the killing of then AFP spokesperson Col. Oscar Florendo. He then abandoned his Cagayan 100 and went into "hiding", until he was absolved by Fidel Ramos. The case against Aguinaldo on the murder of Colonel Florendo did not prosper in the reactionary courts. **AB**

It was then that he became partners in crime with the former Calauan mayor and Laguna jueteng kingpin Antonio Sanchez.

Aside from the huge profits Aguinaldo raked in from jueteng, logging concessionaires called him "Mr. Ten Percent" behind his back because he forced them to pay him 10% of the income of logging companies in Cagayan.

One of the businessmen he extorted from was Don Augusto Dy, owner of Tropical Wood Industries Inc. (TPWII). Aside from collecting his share of the profits, Aguinaldo also used TPWII as a base for intelligence-gathering.

Since he came to power, Aguinaldo considered the provincial treasury and other properties of the provincial government as his own. Construction materials bought cheaply from Manila were consistently overpriced in his financial reports so he could pocket the balance.

Aside from buying prime real estate with jueteng money, Aguinaldo used government equipment and construction materials to set up and maintain Oasis, a luxury resort.

In the mid-1990s, the Sandiganbayan filed graft charges against Aguinaldo for failing to account for P1 million from the Cagayan provincial budget.

The defeat and demise of Aguinaldo

In the May 2001 elections, Aguinaldo again used his tested psywar tactics, intimidation and vote buying. Even in Tuguegarao City, he threatened every barangay captain who openly supported his opponents or who did not openly support his candidacy.

Threatened by the widespread unity focused against him, he tried hard to link the open mass organizations with the armed and illegal forces of the CPP, NPA and NDF. Expectedly, he maliciously attacked the revolutionary movement's alliance work and mobilizations. But he utterly failed in

RECORD OF AGUINALDO'S ANOMALIES

Jueteng. Aguinaldo immediately took over jueteng operations in Cagayan as soon as he became governor. The province's jueteng kingpins paid him up to P500,000 a month in protection money. He also ran the ISLACABA Jueteng Connection.

Logging. From the customary 10%, Aguinaldo began to ask for 20-30% of logging concessioners' profits since becoming governor. He controlled Sta. Teresita Wood Industries Inc. that had a logging concession in Lasam and Paco Valley. This, despite his declarations against logging.

Smuggling. Illegal human and drug traffic regularly occurred between Taiwan and the municipalities of Buguey and Sta. Ana located along Cagayan's Pacific coast. The provincial PNP, the Philippine Navy and Philippine Coast Guard as well as the mayors of Buguey and Sta. Ana and the Alien Control Office in Cagayan were Aguinaldo's co-conspirators in this venture.

Big fish caught by Taiwanese fishing boats within Cagayan's territorial waters were brought to Sta. Ana for cold storage. After the fish's innards were taken out, illegal drugs such as shabu and concaine were placed inside the fish cavity before transport.

Marijuana traffic. Along with his co-conspirators Conrado Balweg (punished by the NPA in December 1999) and Abrino Aydinan of Cordillera, Aguinaldo ran an extremely lucrative marijuana trafficking business, selling the drug to pushers in Baguio, Zambales and Metro Manila.

Illegal recruitment. Aguinaldo facilitated the illegal recruitment of Cagayano fishermen to work on Taiwanese fishing boats as apprentices. Despite their meager wages, Aguinaldo exacted P500 a month from each recruit for the duration of the contract. But he never lifted a finger whenever the fishermen, who were used by the Taiwanese for illegal fishing and drug trafficking, were arrested, imprisoned and executed in other Asian countries. **AB**

all this.

Aguinaldo was defeated by a landslide in the electoral campaign. Not only did his opponent win. So did the progressive political party Bayan Muna that he attacked everytime he opened his mouth in

public, also win resoundingly in the province and in the nationwide electoral contest on May 14. It signalled the up and coming destruction of the self-styled “legend” that was Aguinaldo and the end of his brutality.

Aguinaldo built an image of seeming invincibility. “The Eagle of Cagayan” was how he fancied himself, like the title of the movie made to glorify a fascist. He armed himself to the teeth and surrounded his “nest” with a pack of police and military men. His paranoia led him to put up layer upon layer of security around his house. He even went as far as to circulate the ridiculous story that he had an amulet to ensure his safety, as he fabricated tales about his being immortal and legendary.

In the end, the self-proclaimed “legend” stood no chance against the death sentence the revolutionary movement and the masses meted out against him. Aguinaldo’s iron fortress, throng of armed bodyguards, political and military influence among his peers, and even his fabricated amulet could not shield him from meeting the punishment he deserved.

His death is a victory for the people. **AB**

Punitive operation against Aguinaldo

No reactionary fortress is impregnable to the revolution

The successful punitive operation against Colonel Aguinaldo proves that no matter how much the people’s enemies wrap themselves in the thickest of armor, there will always be a way for the arrows of revolutionary justice to pierce through their defenses.

Thus, the meting out of punishment on Aguinaldo has sent shivers down the spine of reactionaries and fascists guilty of the most serious crimes against the people. Never again could they sleep soundly. No reactionary fortress is impregnable to the revolution.

The successful operation launched by the Fortunato Camus Command is an inspiration to all revolutionaries, especially to NPA fighters. It is especially relevant to study and draw lessons from the punitive operation against Aguinaldo in order to mete justice on others guilty of grave crimes against the people.

Aguinaldo’s fortress

Aguinaldo knew that he was guilty of many grievous crimes, especially against the masses and the revolutionary movement, and that this would cost him his life. Thus, he was always careful about his personal safety and his movements.

Wherever he went, he always had with him his personal bodyguards, including armed police and military personnel. During the election period from April to May, he had eight armed goons from Bataan, five SWAT elements armed with M14s and M16s aside from a team of policemen who guarded him round the clock even inside his house. He hardly went to the barrios to campaign. He had people in his payroll to do this for him. Once, he briefly attended a meeting in a barrio in Tuguegarao City at the height of his campaign, but he spoke only for a few moments. He then hurriedly left for fear that he would be targetted by his rival.

In previous elections, Aguinaldo campaigned while aboard armored personnel carriers, with several AFP, PNP and CAFGU companies because he feared being targetted by a sparrow unit, or ambushed or sniped at by the NPA or his political rivals.

He transferred from one residence to another in Manila, Ilocos and Cagayan. Even in Cagayan, Aguinaldo lived in more than one house. He always had an armed bodyguard with him, even while entering and coming out of the door.

He positioned himself in an apartment that was only spitting distance from the police station at the Tuguegarao City Hall (near the end of the road was the headquarters of the 111th PNP Company, 200 meters from the apartment). There was no other entrance to or exit from the apartments in the area aside from a small alley whose gate was always closed and watched by his bodyguards. From the gate, anyone entering the small wall leading to Aguinaldo's apartment at the end of the alley would be confronted by two big dogs. He hardly came out. But nary a week would pass before he would transfer to another house.

He had paid informers spread out around the neighborhood who would harass anyone new who happened to come around. Two old women from Tuao who carried bags and came over to visit their townmate who owned an apartment in the alley were harassed by Aguinaldo himself. He ransacked their bags and accused them of being informers of his rival Manuel Mamba of Tuao. He was always shouting at and harassing his neighbors, earning the ire of those who lived in the same alley. Mamba had said that even Aguinaldo's neighbors in the nearby apartments would not vote for him.

For a long time, Aguinaldo boasted and propagated as part of his psywar tactics, that he could never be defeated by his enemies, not even by the revolutionary forces, that he was "loved by the masses", that he was a "friend of the NPA" and that he had an amulet.

Through the large eye of a needle

No matter how careful Aguinaldo was, he nonetheless had weaknesses. The NPA forces who cased him easily found this out, as they were Marxists who used dialectical materialist analysis.

Aguinaldo's record revealed that he had never had experience in close quarter combat and that the only NPA fighters and Party cadres he had encountered up close were in handcuffs or had already surrendered to him. He was good at waging psywar but not in combat. Once, when his car passed by Baybayog, Alcala on market day and made a temporary stop, Aguinaldo fainted when a farmer who was carrying a *bayong* came close to the car and was mistaken for a member of an NPA sparrow unit who had come to punish him.

In his attempt to live in different residences and his refusal to stay long in any place, the pattern of his movements was more easily determined. After a period of observation, the operatives were able to detect the pattern of his departure and return, on what days and at what times these were, who his companions were, who he would come home to, who his bodyguards were, what sort of weapons they carried, how

he exited and entered, where he parked his cars, how far away his guards were and their reasons for harassing strangers in the vicinity. They were able to estimate how far the fighter-operative would be from Aguinaldo, how many seconds the firefight would likely last.

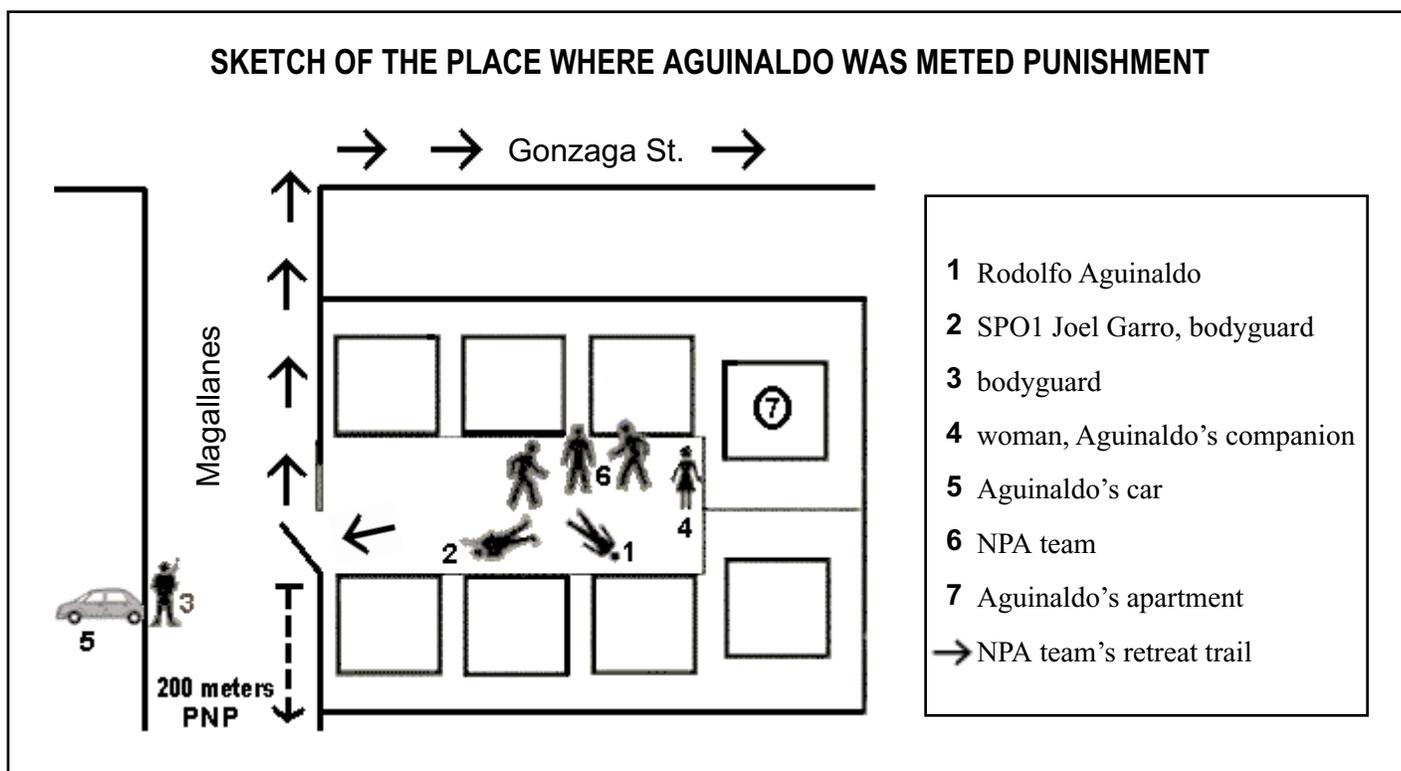
A strong and sure refuge for Aguinaldo was his apartment on Magallanes, a street in Tuguegarao, because it was near an enemy camp, had only one entry and exit point and was on a narrow alley. He had stayed here for 10 years because he felt secure. He and his men continued to harass,

surveil and question everyone who came in and Aguinaldo's bodyguards were constantly found inside and around his apartment. Nonetheless, they could not stop people from renting a neighboring apartment. It was here that a team from the Fortunato Camus Command positioned itself.

After placing him under surveillance and having him in the bag, so to speak, it was easy

enough to plan a small unit operation. Within the designated 24-hour waiting period, an NPA team was able to punish Aguinaldo while he was about to pass through the fence of his apartment. In a span of a few seconds, Rodolfo Aguinaldo had fallen, including his aide who tried

The successful operation launched by the Fortunato Camus Command is an inspiration to all revolutionaries, especially to NPA fighters. It is especially relevant to study and draw lessons from the punitive operation against Aguinaldo in order to mete justice on others guilty of grave crimes against the people.



to fight it out. Two other armed guards at the other side of the fence came to the rescue. But the comrades were able to evade them by playing a ruse and leaving the site fast.

In a few moments, the numerous checkpoints set up by the enemy had become ineffectual.

Because they had cased their target well, had access to detailed information and made quick observations and analyses of new data, the concept for the operation was easily determined and refined, along with the combat tactics and rehearsal of the operatives. They pinpointed the time and place where they could use the element of surprise, have local superiority and execute precise and quick movements for the offense, be assured of total victory in punishing Aguinaldo and ensure the safe retreat of the entire force from under the ene-

my's nose.

Meanwhile, the masses and other forces it had linked up with were able to fill up whatever the team had lacked. It was on them that the team relied from start to finish.

The NPA had once more shown its capability to "pass through the eye of a needle" or "enter and leave the crocodile's mouth" to fulfill its duties to the masses and the revolution.

Aguinaldo's punishment is a brilliant victory of the people and the revolutionary movement in the region and the entire country.

Nonetheless, there are many other rabid fascists like him who have yet to pay for their blood debts against the revolutionary movement and the people, for the torture, summary executions, harassment and other human rights violations perpetrated since

the Marcos dictatorship. Foremost among them are the Marcoses. Also included are their ilk in the PC/INP, AFP, NICA/NISA (National Intelligence Coordinating Agency/National Intelligence Security Agency), DND and other sections of the reactionary armed forces, intelligence units and their paramilitary groups.

The successive reactionary regimes that took over after the Marcos dictatorship never undertook any decisive step to positively address the people's long-standing demand to seek redress from heinous fascist crimes and hold the guilty parties accountable. It is only the New People's Army and the revolutionary movement that have taken on and continued to assume the responsibility of meting justice for these crimes against the revolution and the people. **AB**