

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

Bayan

Special Edition

English Edition

July 31, 2001

Reversing the verdict on the fascist crimes of the Marcos dictatorship



With the help of former Sen. Jovito Salonga and his new book *A Journey of Struggle and Hope*, lies about the massacre during the Liberal Party rally in Plaza Miranda on August 21, 1971 have been revived. Passing on the blame to the Communist Party of the Philippines and to Comrade Jose Ma. Sison (then Party Chairman under the nom de guerre Amado Guerrero) was a falsehood initiated by Marcos. The repetition of this accusation, 30 years after the incident and after it has been belied several times even by the fiscals and the senate, must be assailed and opposed.

Two days after the massacre, Marcos suspended the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus to give

himself free rein to conduct simultaneous raids on the headquarters of democratic mass organizations and effect mass arrests of militant leaders and mass activists. The swift and systematic implementation of these fascist measures showed that even prior to the incident, the script and the sequence had been systematically planned and prepared for.

To justify all this, and likewise as part of the script, Marcos pinned the blame for the massacre on the CPP and Comrade Sison. But the senselessness of this accusation has been proven in the course of history.

It was clear that the Plaza Miranda massacre and what transpired immediately after were merely a dry run for the next plan—Oplan Sagittarius. The latter contained the blueprint for the imposition of martial law the following year and the sowing of even more intense suppression against the democratic mass movement, the people and even the reactionary anti-Marcos opposition. Events from the night of August 21, 1971 to September 21, 1972, on August 21, 1983 and many other massacres and acts of repression, showed that the Marcos

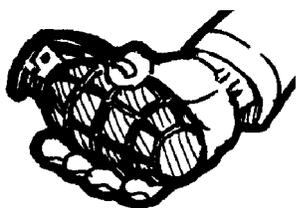
dictatorship was following only one script. It will be recalled that the assassination of Sen. Benigno Aquino in 1983 and the passage of blame to the CPP was also a part of that script. Marcos and his cohorts attempted to pass off the lifeless body of Rolando Galman, a hired killer and prison inmate, as that of Aquino's assassin.

When Marcos found it difficult to pin down the Party for the Plaza Miranda bombing, he tried to pass the blame to then Manila mayor Antonio Villegas. Several prisoners already out on parole or brought out of prison were made to confess to the Plaza Miranda bombing, in exchange for up to P2 million and a house and lot. Col. Paulino Robles of the PC Anti-Carnapping Unit was in charge of convincing them. A certain Francisco Magat, a prisoner at the National Penitentiary in Muntinlupa who was out on parole, was arrested on December 31 for having allegedly perpetrated the crime. He was brought to the PC Stockade in Camp Crame, where he was tortured to force a confession. According to his sworn statement, he was brought by Colonel Robles to Malacañang where

www.angbayan.org editors@angbayan.org

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

More than Comrade Sison, it is the Party and the national-democratic revolutionary movement that is under fire from the false accusations revived by Salonga. The latter would like to make it appear that the Party and its leaders are a conspiratorial lot and would unhesitatingly kill innocent people and that revolution is created through artificial combustion, such as the deliberate perpetration of a massacre in an opposition rally.



Marcos himself tried to convince him to admit that it was he who threw the bomb and that it was Mayor Villegas who ordered him to do so. He refused and was imprisoned for another six years. Flavio Benauro, Benigno Orquico and Francisco Agner, all prisoners, also confessed to the crime and testified on Magat's involvement. None of them was charged.

Meanwhile, a former prison inmate and a sergeant detailed at the PC Firearms and Explosives Unit had been identified, charged and jailed in connection with the series of bombings in Metro Manila—along Carriedo St., Port Area, Meralco and others—right after the Plaza Miranda incident.

Things were to become clearer only after the fascist dictatorship was ousted in 1986.

On March 14, 1989, Manuel Reyes Bogtong, a Presidential Security Unit element, executed a sworn statement admitting that he was among those who planned the Plaza Miranda bombing and that his companions in carrying this out were Maj. Rolando Pattugalan and five other PSU elements. According to Bogtong's narration, it was the AFP chief during the dictatorship, Gen. Fabian Ver himself, who led this project. It will be recalled that it was also Ver who was in charge of the project to assassinate Benigno Aquino on August 21, 1983.

Atty. Reynaldo Bagatsing, son of former Manila mayor Ramon Bagatsing, served as Bogtong's lawyer. Ex-Mayor Bagatsing was among those hit and seriously wounded in the Plaza Miranda incident.

Attorney Bagatsing closely followed the case, also for his father's sake. Three days after Bogtong made his sworn statement, Attorney Bagatsing wrote then AFP chief Gen. Fidel Ramos, to have the PSU officials and elements identified by Bogtong

in his sworn statement, investigated and arrested. But Ramos did nothing. According to Ramos, he received no such letter. Attorney Bagatsing followed up the case with then Western Police District (WPD) chief Gen. Alfredo Lim. Lim ordered then WPD Investigation Division chief Alladin Dimagmaliw to investigate the case, but nothing has been heard of it since. Attorney Bagatsing went to other government offices (National Bureau of Investigation, Ministry of Justice and Commission on Human Rights), to no avail. After some time, Bogtong disappeared and was never located.

According to Attorney Bagatsing, there is another witness who also participated in the operation and supervised the grenade-throwing himself. A former Philcag official, he went abroad when martial law was declared and has lived there since.

MARCOS' CLOSEST ASSOCIATES AT THE time have themselves averred that Marcos was the brains behind the Plaza Miranda bombing. One of them was former Marcos Executive Secretary Primitivo Mijares, once one of the closest persons to the Marcoses. His disclosures came out in his book *Conjugal Dictatorship*, which he wrote when he turned his back on the dictatorship. He and his son were kidnapped and liquidated because of his exposés. In 1986, former Marcos defense minister Juan Ponce Enrile himself admitted that his supposed ambush was fabricated, and that it was Marcos who ordered the Metro Manila bombings from 1971 to 1972. This included that of Plaza Miranda. Their objective, he said, was to create a justification for the declaration of martial law.

On the other hand, the case filed by the Philippine National Police-Criminal Investigation Service Command (PNP-CISC) with the City ►



The CIA, the Marcoses' wealth and other anomalies behind Salonga's reversal

SINCE SALONGA SAT AT THE HELM OF the Presidential Commission on Good Government under the Aquino regime, he has reversed his old position against Marcos' crimes. Salonga—and his operator-son Steve—benefited a lot from the PCGG, which was mandated to recover the Marcoses' ill-gotten wealth. During the Aquino and Ramos governments, he was also implicated in secret deals with Lucio Tan to reduce the amount of taxes the latter was supposed to pay. It would thus not be farfetched for money from the Marcoses to have passed through Salonga's filthy hands in exchange for absolving them.

Even before Salonga, Gregg Jones, an agent, psywar expert and paid hack of the CIA, came out with an anti-communist book on

the revolutionary movement in the country. Through his *Red Revolution*, he resurrected Marcos' failed attempts to reverse the verdict of history. Behind this, the US would like to tighten the unity of the reactionary ruling classes in the fight against the Party and the revolutionary movement under its leadership.

Salonga's reversal of his stand is significant to imperialism and the ruling class. Salonga was among those injured in the Plaza Miranda massacre and whatever he says on the subject—no matter how flimsy its basis and no matter how vacuous—would be imbued with credibility. This serves the US' plans to legitimize the rehabilitation of the Marcoses and their wealth and eradicate one of the biggest obstacles to the unity of the ruling classes in the country. **AB**

◀ Prosecutor's Office of Manila against Comrade Sison and others on the Plaza Miranda bombing charge was dismissed on March 2, 1994 "for lack of sufficient evidence". In a resolution by the City Prosecutor who conducted the preliminary investigation himself, he said that "the supposed participation of the respondents (Sison et al) as planners or masterminds are sheer speculations. To indict (them), therefore, based solely on the submitted sworn statements is tantamount to a hasty, malicious and oppressive prosecution."

The same accusation by Marcos against the CPP and Comrade Sison is now being revived through Salonga's new book. The book is a new publication, but its contents are a rehash. Hearsay, distortions of facts, contrived and fabricated stories were irresponsibly and maliciously used to justify the accusation.

Through this, the Marcos dictatorship has been absolved of one of its most heinous crimes and the country's history and people's verdict perverted. The Marcoses and other rabid reactionaries among the ruling classes immediately and gleefully applauded. Through this, they would like a reexamination of the people's verdict against the imposition of martial law and fascism in the country. The unequivocal responsibility of the Marcos dictatorship and of Ferdinand Marcos himself is a closed book.

MORE THAN COMRADE SISON, IT IS THE Party and the national-democratic revolutionary movement that is under fire from the false accusations revived by Salonga. The latter would like to make it appear that the Party and its leaders are a conspiratorial lot and would unhesitatingly kill innocent people and that revolution is created

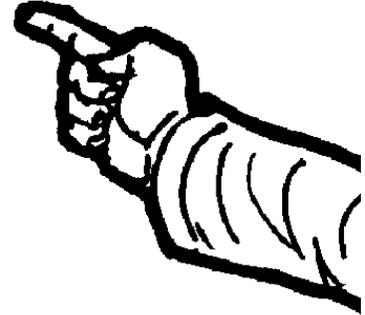
through artificial combustion, such as the deliberate perpetration of a massacre in an opposition rally.

The Party perseveres to achieve victory in the revolution by winning over the broad masses of the people in accordance with the national-democratic line; organizing them in legal and underground mass organizations, alliances and organs of political power; mobilizing them in the protracted armed struggle and in actions and campaigns for basic reforms and changes towards their overall liberation from the rule of imperialists and the local exploitative and oppressive classes.

Conditions for waging revolution are always excellent. The crisis of the decadent system is exploding of its own accord. So many people are enthusiastic to bear arms and wage revolution to completely break free of the bonds of exploitation and oppression. **AB**

“Treading the path of military dictatorship” – CPP

Three days after the heinous Plaza Miranda massacre and the day after the widespread dawn raids on the headquarters and the mass arrests of leaders of, legal democratic mass organizations that were conducted along with the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus, the Party immediately condemned these incidents in the strongest possible terms. Following are excerpts from the CPP statement on August 24, 1971:



“We unite with all patriotic and progressive forces against Marcos terrorist repression”

“The Communist Party of the Philippines, on its own and in behalf of the New People’s Army it leads, declares its strongest indignation over the massacre that took place in Plaza Miranda on August 21 that ended in the death and injury of many persons, including the leadership of the Liberal Party.

“This heinous act was focused not only on the Liberal Party but on all opposition and the entire Filipino people. The US-Marcos clique’s terrorist nature and mad scheming are sufficiently proven not only by this latest massacre and other previous massacres but by the baseless suspension of the writ of habeas corpus nationwide. There is no doubt that

the fascist Marcos clique is hellbent on monopolizing political power through militarist, anticommunist and anti-democratic means.

“The US-Marcos clique continues to tread along the path of military dictatorship against the broad masses of the people. We are now witness to the imposition of open militarist rule. The US-Marcos regime is using all methods it could cull from Hitler’s black book to create anticommunist hysteria, silence any kind of opposition and monopolize political power through the gun....

“The US-Marcos clique unhesitatingly condemns Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought in proclaiming the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus. In this regard, we invite everyone to study the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao Zedong for them to discover by themselves whether or not these great communist leaders would allow terrorist bombings. We Filipino Communists are bound by Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought and constantly rely on arousing and mobilizing the people in their millions.

....

“The Communist Party of the Philippines, along with the New People’s Army, firmly refuse to be led on by the enemy’s provocations such as kidnappings, assassinations, intimidation and bloody dispersals of rallies in urban areas. This is because we are thoroughly developing the strike movement and the new democratic cultural revolution. In the countryside, we wage armed struggle. We always deal merciless blows only on notorious enemy forces.” **AB**





Lies told by Marcos, Gregg Jones and Salonga's "witnesses" on the Plaza Miranda bombing

Marcos, Gregg Jones and Salonga's "witnesses" on the Plaza Miranda bombing are being presented as eyewitnesses to matters that, in reality, are not of their personal knowledge and are pure fabrications meant to destroy the growing prestige of the CPP and the revolutionary movement. In fact, their supposed "testimonies" are also fabrications attributed to others. The statements of these so-called witnesses are so contradictory to each other. "Testimonies" from traitors to the revolution and those with grave accountabilities are likewise dubious due to the fact that the sources have motives to malign and destroy the Party and the revolutionary movement. Not one shred of genuine evidence for truthful analysis could be gleaned from any of them.

Col. Victor Corpus. Corpus' statement that it was the Party's central leadership that planned the massacre and that he was present during the planning is a complete lie. He was not a member then of any central Party organ. He had just defected from the enemy army and the raid on the armory of the Philippine Military Academy had just been conducted, where he endeavored to prove himself. It was thus impossible for him to have witnessed any meeting of the Party's central leadership.

At the time he made this state-

ment, he had clearly gone over to the enemy side, had been fully reintegrated into the AFP and made a sudden jump to the rank of lieutenant colonel, had a new house and lot, a car and other properties in New Alabang Hills. He was already writing his *Silent War* that proposed the strategy and tactics of Oplan Lambat Bitag to fight the New People's Army and the revolutionary movement and was likewise sowing intrigues against the Party and the revolutionary movement. It was not surprising for the government and the armed forces of the reactionary state to have trusted him enough to appoint him intelligence chief of the AFP.

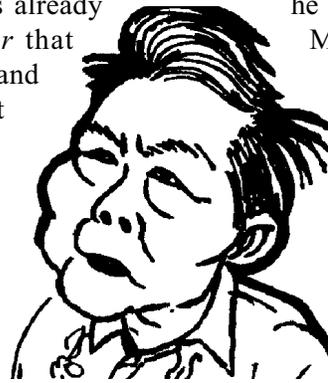
Ariel Almendral. To pass responsibility for the Plaza Miranda massacre to the Party and to Comrade Sison, Almendral used the case of a certain Danilo Cordero. Cordero was a Red fighter tried for mutiny by a military tribunal of the New People's Army in 1972. Tried along with him were two other Red fighters who were mistakenly accused of having taken part in the mutiny. In his desperation, Cordero tried to pass himself off before the judges as a confidant of the central leadership. He rode on the Marcos line and said that it was the three of them who were ordered to bomb Plaza Miranda. Not long after, he retracted his statements,

which were then set aside. He was nonetheless found guilty of mutiny and punished. His two other co-accused in the mutiny case who, though innocent, were likewise implicated by Cordero in the story he concocted about Plaza Miranda, were absolved and went on to become fine comrades and Red fighters. They became martyrs of the revolution in armed encounters with the enemy.

Even Gen. Alfredo Lim, who investigated the Plaza Miranda incident when he was Western Police District chief, said that regarding Cordero's implication of Comrade Sison, "this version would not hold since it was based on hearsay. Cordero, in claiming responsibility for the Plaza Miranda bombing was only trying to ingratiate himself with his comrades who had then put him on trial.

Almendral "testified" in the senate investigation on the Plaza Miranda bombing to pay for his huge debt of gratitude to Salonga and the latter's son Steve. Salonga and his son Steve acted as his godfathers and financiers when Almendral ran as the Liberal Party's candidate for congressman in the first district of Laguna in 1987.

Aside from Almendral, Salonga had no other direct source for his pieces of "evidence". His "data" from other "witnesses" were all picked up by Salonga from Jones' book. ►



◀ **Ruben Guevarra.** Guevarra, a former Party leader, was captured by the enemy in 1981. Even before his arrest, he had already been removed from the Party leadership due to numerous disciplinary cases. In his first years in jail, he said nothing against the Party and Comrade Sison. He even protested his illegal detention and the repressive conditions of his incarceration.

In time, he was coopted through the various privileges and financial benefits extended to him until he eventually turned traitor and joined the Intelligence Service of the AFP

(ISAFP) as an operative. Since then, he has changed his tune and joined the chorus against the Party and Comrade Sison orchestrated by the DND and AFP then under Gen. Fidel Ramos. He and Almendral only tried to make their stories consistent.

Ibarra Tubianosa. Salonga also again made use of the words put by Jones into Ibarra Tubianosa's mouth. Jones makes it appear that Tubianosa points to Comrade Sison as the brains behind the Plaza Miranda bombing. But in fact, Tubianosa never said anything to this effect. Jones himself

acknowledges Tubianosa's demurral in a footnote in the book. Salonga neglects this exception.

Ricardo Malay. In reality, Jones' main source for most of his hearsay, and even for a lot of what he attributes to Tubianosa, is Ricardo Malay. But Jones tries to obscure this fact. Malay harbored resentments against the Party, blaming it for the hardships and misfortunes he experienced in the revolution that he was unable to endure. This led him to concoct stories and accusations against the Party and its leaders. **AB**

Excerpts from the sworn statement of Manuel Reyes Bogtong of the Presidential Security Unit (March 14, 1989)

"On July 2, 1971 Gen. Fabian C. Ver gave me a mission order to get dynamite in Samar. I returned to Manila after four days. When I entered our office, I heard General Ver, Lt. Porfirio Ramos, Sgt. Andres Lacdan, Sgt. Alberto Sulit, T/Sgt. Pedro Gutierrez alias "Pete" and Atong Suarez talking about the plan to bomb the *miting de avance* of the Liberal Party in Plaza Miranda.

"This was one of the many times this operation was discussed. It was firmed up on August 17 after everything was explained to us by General Ver. According to Ver's plan, Lacdan and Sulit were to throw the grenades once Ninoy had arrived on the stage.

"They were to be supported by Porfirio Ramos, Pedro Gutierrez and Atong Suarez.

"I was at the PSU billiard hall when I heard on the radio that

the grenades had been thrown at Plaza Miranda.

"One hour after the grenade throwing, I saw Andres Lacdan, Alberto Sulit, Porfirio Ramos, Pedro Gutierrez and Atong Suarez report personally to General Ver. They told him the mission was a success."

Other data from Bogtong's statement:

1. Their source of funds for the operation was a Maj. Rolando Pattugalan (already a general in 1989).
2. After the Plaza Miranda bombing, their unit's intelligence funds were tripled.
3. He stayed at the PSU from 1968 to 1972. When he resigned from the PSU in late 1972, he was warned by General Ver that he would be liquidated if he revealed their activities at the PSU. **AB**