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Oust the fascist and puppet Arroyo regime

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The ruling fascist and puppet Macapagal-Arroyo regime has lost all credibility and is on the verge of collapse. It has been scheming and fighting tooth and nail to preserve itself and its hold on power, with all its attendant perks and access to bureaucratic plunder. But even as Arroyo stubbornly tries to cover up her crimes and remain in power, there are ever growing and intensifying calls for her resignation, and ever widening rifts within the cabinet and the ruling coalition. There are powerful bourgeois-comprador groups that are ready to sacrifice Arroyo and that have likewise called for her resignation. There is intensifying agitation and maneuvering within the AFP and PNP. There are signs that the US is gearing for the possibility of abandoning Arroyo even as it tries to wring out more concessions from a dying regime desperate for its support.

So long as a truly massive and powerful deluge of street protests is yet to materialize; so long as no credible alternative—individual or collective—has emerged to unite the people in their broadest numbers to renounce the regime; so long as Congress is controlled by the pro-Arroyo majority coalition that accords the regime constitutional sanction; and so long as there are no major cracks in Arroyo's control over the AFP and PNP—the Arroyo regime will stand its ground. With the regime's outright dismissal of the accusations against it no longer effective, Arroyo has been challenging the opposition and those calling for her resignation to go through the impeachment process which is at the mercy of the Lakas-NPC-Kampi majority in congress. Arroyo and Speaker Jose de Venecia are like-

wise in a mad scramble to amend the constitution and change the form of government in their bid to seize the political initiative and gloss over the issue of electoral fraud.

But even as Arroyo envelops her continued stay in power with the cloak of reformism, this can only be possible through stronger support by the US and rabid puppet, fascist and reactionary forces in the military and civil bureaucracy. This portends the adoption of

even more puppet, fascist and antipeople policies. On the other hand, this also hastens the decay of the semicolonial and semifeudal system.

In its desperate bid to stay in power, it is entirely possible for the Arroyo clique to use the AFP and PNP in "wag the dog"* schemes such as contrived terrorist plots and attacks to justify the suppression of the mass movement and anti-Arroyo forces.

Progressive forces are correct in intensifying the struggle to bring down the ruling Macapagal-Arroyo regime through ouster or resignation. It is the urgent demand of a people who have suffered immensely under a regime that is servile to foreign imperialists, abusive of human rights and is anti-worker, antipeasant and corrupt. In the face of seething political and economic unrest, the progressive forces must lead the masses in ousting the puppet and fascist regime and upholding their national and democratic aspirations.

Protests and calls for Arroyo's

*"Wag the dog"- an English idiom referring to the reverse situation where a subsidiary part ("a dog's tail") controls ("wags") the major part ("the dog's body"), or where a small group manipulates the bigger situation through contrived events. The term "wag the dog" was used as the title of a 1998 American film that showed how propagandists diverted public attention from major issues hounding the US president by manufacturing a fake war abroad. The mass media was fed a stream of fabricated news stories and images in a bid to focus public attention on the so-called war. In the present Philippine situation, "wag the dog" refers to efforts by the Arroyo regime's propagandists and assassins to concoct terrorist attacks or other contrived events to create a "bigger crisis" and sidetrack the people from efforts to oust Arroyo.

ouster are fast gaining in momentum. But they must be further expanded and strengthened severalfold. This must also be done quickly. It is imperative to sustain the momentum of mass protests to heighten public pressure on the Arroyo regime and encourage an increasingly wider range of people to rise up. Aside from gathering ever bigger numbers in the streets, the protest movement and the ouster call must quickly spread among the various sectors, especially among the basic masses and sections influential to public opinion, both on a national and regional scale.

Expanding the protest movement and forming the broadest possible united front for the ouster of the puppet and fascist regime are closely related. The oust Arroyo united front is a tactical alliance between the progressive forces and the broadest range of forces fighting and repudiating the ruling regime. It is grounded on the ouster call and the Filipino people's most basic national and democratic principles. Its foremost objective is to enlist the participation and support of all positive forces in the ouster movement and strengthen different forms of protest and mass struggles.

The ouster movement's center of gravity lies in the field of legal and unarmed struggle. But the intensification of tactical offensives nationwide is essential under the current situation and in the struggle to topple the puppet and fascist regime. It is an apt response to the regime's imposition of escalating economic burdens, mounting fascist terrorism and intensifying foreign military intervention. It is likewise necessary in order to take aim at, and weaken, the Arroyo clique's grip on the AFP and PNP, and to demonstrate that the situation has gone

out of the regime's control.

Directly and indirectly, the ouster struggle must be linked and coordinated with other particular economic, political, sectoral and local struggles. The struggle to oust the Arroyo regime and the particular economic and political struggles of sectors and territories must mutually strengthen and expand each other's capacity and support base.

Certain matters must be addressed and resolved in developing the broad united front:

First, it would be best for the broad united front's program to embody basic national and democratic principles in order to unite and mobilize a broader range of forces and enable the majority to concentrate on intensifying the actual struggle to oust the regime. Programmatic details can be elaborated further in the course of the struggle and as the need arises. Among these principles are:

- ▶ National sovereignty
- ▶ Land reform and national industrialization
- ▶ Patriotic and scientific culture
- ▶ Independent foreign policy for development and world peace against aggression

Upon Arroyo's ouster, the broad united front may establish a revolutionary transition council. It may hold elections within six months or a short period as may be determined by the council, and preside over the framing of a progressive and democratic constitution.

Second, as the struggle progresses and intensifies, there will be greater need for a formal alliance that will serve as the acknowledged leader of the broad front fighting the ruling regime. Actual cooperation in the ouster struggle indicates that the broad united front already exists although it has yet to translate

itself into a formal organization. Coordination and cooperation are carried out through the combination of bilateral and multilateral relations geared towards collaboration on specific projects and activities.

The progressive forces may enter into formal alliance with the political opposition, where they may work with the pro-Estrada and other anti-Arroyo reactionaries, as their struggle against the ruling regime becomes fiercer and more intense. Cooperation in the struggle against the common enemy would thereby emerge as the most prominent feature, and serve as the context in addressing any unsettled issues in connection with the EDSA 2 struggle.

Third, multilevel sectoral and territorial alliances must be developed to truly broaden the united front. The progressive forces have the initiative in developing these alliances among many sectors and localities. The growth and expansion of such alliances can compensate for whatever is lacking in the national-level united front. Alliances calling for Arroyo's resignation that are as broad or even broader than those achieved by the Estrada Resign Movement may be formed.

Fourth, it is right for the progressive forces to continue shunning alliances with renegades and revisionists who relentlessly spread venom against Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, the Party and the NPA. As usual, the participation of renegades in a broader activity or alliance does not deter the progressive forces from likewise participating, in keeping with the objective of achieving a broader front that may include revisionists who may have a noticeable presence. On such occasions, the progressive forces need only avoid creating the false impression that the renegades and

revisionists play a very vital or significant role.

Conditions are extremely volatile. We must follow developments very closely and watch out for any sudden and unexpected turn of events. Even as we boldly intensify the struggle and strive to advance positively, we must always be on the alert as reactionaries engage in a most intense factional struggle

and try to outmaneuver each other. We must be prepared for the possibility of a sudden turnabout among unreliable allies, for sudden compromises taken behind the people's backs, and for surprise fascist attacks on progressives. The broader and stronger the mass movement, the stronger the initiative of the progressives and the better the position they will be in, in con-

fronting sudden and even negative changes in the situation.

Whatever comes out of the reactionaries' factional struggle, the semicolonial and semifeudal system will continue to decay and the broad masses will remain unrelenting in their desire for fundamental change for so long as seething fundamental national and social contradictions remain unresolved. **AB**