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Seize the initiative and intensify the offensives

There are three advantageous conditions as well as compelling reasons for the Communist Party of the Philippines to direct the New People's Army to seize the initiative and intensify the tactical offensives against the reactionary state.

First, the crisis of the world capitalist system and the domestic ruling system of the big compradors and landlords is inflicting intolerable suffering on the broad masses of the Filipino people. The people are therefore desirous of revolutionary change. They demand national and social liberation from foreign monopoly capitalism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

They are proud of their revolutionary tradition and of the perseverance and growing strength of the revolutionary forces. They are convinced that the ruling system is rotten and beyond reforming. The NPA's intensification of tactical offensives will further inspire them to express their demands and undertake mass actions against the incumbent regime and the entire ruling system.

Second, the socio-economic crisis is generating the political crisis of the ruling system. The contradictions among the reactionaries are sharpening and are weakening the ruling system as a whole. The reactionaries out of power always tend to join in a broad united front with patriotic and progressive forces against the

reactionaries in power.

The reactionaries in power try in vain to overcome their isolation and weakness by using deception and violence. They have a propensity to use the military, police and paramilitary forces for counterrevolutionary violence to secure themselves from their reactionary rivals and from the revolutionary forces. At the same time, the military and police forces are becoming more fractious due to clashing loyalties to various political masters and criminal syndicates.

Third, using the slogan of "war on terror" the US and the Arroyo regime have been prodding the military, police and paramilitary forces to seize the initiative in pursuing the war against the revolutionary forces. US military interventionist troops are training the puppet military and police to engage in commando tactics of infiltration and surveillance and use for these purposes such new technology as cellphones, night vision goggles, GPS devices and satellite surveillance.

But the enemy armed forces cannot overcome the fact that they are discredited as antipeople instruments of imperialism and reac-

tion, that they are divided into several reactionary factions (with some tending to be disgusted with the ruling system) and they are limited in number and have limited resources and capabilities in relation to the great number of people that uphold the revolutionary cause and nurture the New People's Army.

Seize the initiative and intensify the offensives

While the people and the revolutionary forces are confident of victory and can have strategic contempt for the enemy, they must take seriously the damage that the enemy can inflict at the tactical level on units of the NPA in a camp or on the march. The enemy has his own basis for, and way of, trying to seize the initiative in particular areas at certain times. The revolutionary forces have a wide and deepgoing mass base and a wide array of tactics for defending themselves as well as for taking the offensive and delivering lethal blows on the enemy.

The NPA relies on a mass base of millions on nationwide. It has 130 guerrilla fronts in the countryside. It can seize the initiative by following the leadership of the Party, availing of the support of the people under the organs of

political power and in the revolutionary mass organizations and using the direct assistance of the people's militia and the self-defense units in the revolutionary mass organizations.

At every level, national, regional and guerrilla front, the NPA can study the deployment of the enemy military, police and paramilitary forces as well the supply lines, depots, installations and facilities. These are quite in the open. Through study of certain documents and observations, especially at the level of the region and the guerrilla front, the NPA can determine the easiest or softest targets for surprise raids, ambushes, arrest operations or demolition.

Normally, police stations, individual police personnel and paramilitary units are easy to disarm, often without a shot being fired, so long as elements inside or close to the target help the NPA by providing the intelligence and assisting in other crucial aspects of the operation. Raids through stratagems can be carried out.

There are installations and facilities that are vital to the ruling system and to enemy operations and yet are either unguarded or lightly guarded. The NPA can attack and destroy such installations and facilities in order to hamper enemy operations and force the enemy to waste armed personnel by assigning them to guard duty. Such guards are also vulnerable targets.

A military camp may be an easy, difficult or impossible target for a raid, depending on the size and entrenchment of the enemy and on the available NPA force for the purpose of a raid. When an NPA unit does not have enough capability to raid a military camp, it can opt to ambush enemy elements that go out of the camp to patrol or to fetch the payroll or supplies from elsewhere. A camp is also vul-

nerable to firebombs, mortar or RPG fire.

Induce the enemy to commit mistakes

The vulnerabilities and weaknesses of relatively stationary enemy units, as regards size, location and distance from any possible reinforcement, can easily be discovered or determined through simple observations and deeper intelligence. But the NPA can also use certain tactics to induce the enemy to commit mistakes and create the opportunities for tactical offensives.

The tactics include luring in the enemy deep, making a feint in the east to attack the west, attacking one point and ambushing the reinforcement, attacking where the reinforcement comes from, using land mines and ambushing enemy patrols, and so on. The NPA must wipe out enemy units in ambushes but give lenient treatment and medical care to the soldiers who surrender or are rendered unable to fight.

Wide areas, including entire provinces and districts, are guarded by no more than the police. The police forces can be disarmed repeatedly in campaigns of varying scale and duration. When the military forces come in a big way to reinforce the police, the NPA can undertake the disarming campaign in areas where the enemy's security is weak.

Disarming operations can be undertaken against the private armed gangs of hostile politicians and the security forces of big corporations and plantations. Arrest operations or punitive actions can also be undertaken against the most notorious plunderers and human rights violators among government officials and military or police officers and against hostile

officials and armed personnel of enterprises that violate the laws of the people's government on social policy and taxation.

When they are deployed to secure the notorious plunderers and human rights violators and the hostile personnel and key installations of corporations and plantations, the military and police forces become exposed as tools of the oppressors and exploiters and their strength also becomes divided. When the exploiters organize more private guards or paramilitary units to protect their interests, this means more armed personnel that the NPA can eventually disarm.

The NPA must take the initiative of launching far more tactical offensives than the enemy. It must avoid camping for a long time or being complacent anywhere and practically waiting for the enemy forces to launch an offensive, allowing them to use infiltration tactics and new technology gadgets. The people in the mass base should render the enemy forces blind and deaf. And no matter how superior are the enemy forces in terms of number, training and equipment they are vulnerable and weak because they do not enjoy the support of the people and thus are unable to predict when and where the NPA would attack.

When taking the offensive, the NPA must always concentrate superior strength and use the element of surprise in order to annihilate an enemy target. But the concentrated NPA force must be able to withdraw, disperse and regroup according to a flexible plan. When a superior enemy force advances and is raring for a fight, the NPA must evade it and watch for opportunities to strike at its weaknesses. While the enemy force is advancing, snipers can obstruct its advance. When it camps, it can be harassed and prevented from tak-

ing a rest. When it retreats, it can be pursued.

When the enemy forces in company, battalion or brigade strength are deployed for a long time in an area, the main forces of the NPA there can make a shift to another area in order to avoid encirclement and be able to continue taking initiative in launching tactical offensives on exterior lines. The NPA can trade space for time whenever necessary. The total strength of the enemy's forces, comprising the military, police and the paramilitary, is small relative to the population and territory of the country, especially because the enemy is forced to divide these for defending too many fixed positions and is often caught in the dilemma of defending or attacking, concentrating or dispersing.

The ruling system is rotten and moribund

The US, the business groups, the Catholic bishops conference,

former president Ramos and until recently, former president Aquino (before the impeachment complaints were junked by the pro-Arroyo majority in Congress) have publicly declared that they do not wish the Arroyo regime to be overthrown by a mass movement cum military withdrawal of support, as in the overthrow of Marcos in 1986 and Estrada in 2001. They have expressed the fear that the revolutionary mass movement might gain strength and destabilize the ruling system no less.

But the prolonged stay in power of an already discredited and isolated Arroyo regime also presents certain advantages for both the legal democratic mass movement and the armed revolutionary movement. The stinking regime will continue to aggravate the moribund character of the ruling system and will discredit all the counterrevolutionary forces, institutions and personages that condone the regime's corruption, electoral fraud, puppetry and human

rights violations.

The armed revolutionary movement gains time to strengthen itself by seizing the initiative and intensifying tactical offensives. The cumulative growth of the armed strength of the NPA will allow it to launch more frequent and bigger offensives on a wider scale. Because the ruling system is rotten and moribund, it does not really matter whether the Arroyo regime is overthrown within a short period of time or persists until 2010 as the hated target of the people's resistance in various forms.

The NPA is under CPP strict instruction to keep its distance from any ongoing legal mass actions in urban centers. But it can launch tactical offensives against targets away from these mass actions. And when there are no mass actions in urban centers, the NPA can undertake rural and urban special operations that the people would appreciate and would demonstrate further the regime's inability to govern. **AB**