

# Response to questions of campus journalists

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Over the past few weeks, campus editors have jointly and individually dished out important questions on the matter of terrorism, the enactment of the Anti-Terror Law and the use of terror-tagging by the Duterte regime against the CPP and NPA. We have collected here these questions and the response of Marco L. Valbuena, Chief Information Officer of the CPP.

We are publishing this Q&A as reference and study material which can be used by revolutionaries, activists, students, journalists as well as ordinary citizens who wish to be informed of the CPP's views on the matter of terrorism.

The Party aims to end the semicolonial and semifeudal socioeconomic system and replace the neocolonial state serving as dictatorship of big bourgeois compradors, big landlords and bureaucrat capitalists.

The Party seeks to establish a people's democratic government which is a coalition or united front

## Q What prompted the establishment of the communist party in the country?

The Party was established amid worsening socioeconomic and political crisis. Worsening oppression and exploitation of the broad masses in the form of feudal land rent, land grabbing, low wages, joblessness and economic crisis, rising debt, corruption and suppression of democratic rights roused the Filipino people to wage revolution struggle along the national democratic line to end the semicolonial and semifeudal system.

The establishment of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) on December 26, 1968 was borne out of the need for the Filipino

working class to lead the struggle of the broad masses of the Filipino people for national and social liberation.

There is a need for a communist party or a political party of the working class to serve as vanguard or leader of the Philippine revolution. Possessing a scientific worldview, the working class has the standpoint and strength to unite and lead all democratic and patriotic classes in the country to wage a social revolution to overthrow the reactionary classes of big bourgeois compradors and big landlords.



## Q What is its vision and goals for the country?

government representing the interests of the democratic and patriotic classes of workers and peasants, and the small and middle bourgeoisie.

In the economic field, it aims to carry out free land distribution and national industrialization to put an end to the backward conditions in the country, bring about a progressive

and modern economy and lay the foundation for socialist revolution and construction in the future.

The Party's program for a people's democratic revolution has a comprehensive agenda in the political, economic, social, cultural and military fields where the democratic and patriotic interests of the Filipino people are represented.

## **Q How is armed struggle rooted in history and why do you think it is vital in the revolutionary movement?**

Every revolutionary upheaval in history is marked by the armed uprising of the oppressed and subjugated masses against their oppressors and colonizers. From the ancient slave rebellions to the 1776 American Revolution, from the incessant peasant uprisings of Dagohoy against Spanish colonizers, the Katipunan Revolution and Philippine war of resistance to US armed occupation at the turn of the century, from the October Socialist Revolution of 1917 to the 1949 Chinese revolution and the series of new democratic revolutions of the 20th century, armed struggle has always played a crucial role in the struggles for liberation.

Armed struggle is vital because the key question in any social revolution is political power, the need to wrest it from the reactionary classes, and the necessity of using it to establish a new progressive order. The ruling reactionary state organizes armies and police forces, as key elements in its coercive machinery, to protect their property rights and perpetuate the oppressive and exploitative system. The key task in any revolution is to smash this coercive machinery and establish a

new armed state in order to allow the progressive elements of society to advance and thrive.

The CPP formed the New People's Army in 1969 to serve as its main weapon. It wages a protracted people's war across the country. It helps the people get organized and establish organs of the people's democratic government. This government has a clear set of laws and policies. In many places across the country, it is the people's democratic government that is recognized and supported by the broad masses. The National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) is the political authority that represents the people's democratic government in diplomatic relations and peace negotiations.

Because political power is monopolized by the ruling classes, because laws favor the interests of the oligarchs, because elections are controlled by ruling class dynasties, and because courts are there to protect their property rights, there is no other effective way for the downtrodden masses to defend and pursue their rights, other than to take up arms and wage revolutionary armed struggle.



## **Q Why do individuals partake in parties which forward democratic revolution, specifically in your organization?**

At the most basic level, members of the Party, the New People's Army and the revolutionary mass organizations are driven by the desire for social justice and national freedom. They all aspire to see an end to oppression and exploitation. Thus, the Party draws members mainly from the democratic and patriotic classes, especially workers and peasants, who suffer the worst forms of poverty and injustice, and are thus the most desirous of revolutionary change. They practically have no other recourse but to unite, bear arms, fight back and resist.

The NPA, in particular, draws most of its fighters from the peasant masses and national minorities. They are encouraged to join the NPA because they see how Red fighters have taken up the cudgels of defending their interests and fighting for their cause. The peasant masses find an ally in the NPA as they

fight landlord despotism, oppression and exploitation. With the NPA as their army, the peasant masses can now stand firmly with heads held up high as they confront their oppressive masters.

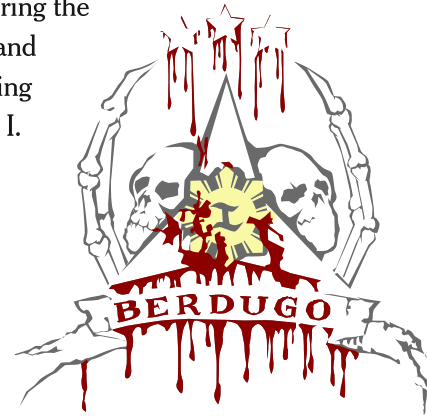
From the Sierra Madre and Cordillera mountains of Luzon to the Pantaron range in Mindanao, the national minorities join and support the NPA because the people's army defends their interests and help them resist land-grabbing logging concessionaires, plantation owners and mining companies protected by the military. With the NPA, they have an ally in their defense of their ancestral land and in the promotion of their culture. For the first time in their history, they were accorded respect and regard, in stark contrast to ill-treatment, terror and intimidation they have long experienced under their armed aggressors and oppressors.

## Q How does the CPP define terrorism?

For purposes of the current discourse, we can define terrorism as the systematic infliction of violence by an entity engaged in armed hostilities against civilians or unarmed people to sow fear among them and force them to submit to the will of the terrorist entity.

In legal terms, you can say that terrorism is the willful disregard of international humanitarian law and rules of war as stipulated in such instruments as the Geneva Protocols. These conventions were framed for the

protection of civilians and those who are not taking part in armed hostilities. Recall that these were forged in the 1930s by the international community in the hope of preventing the kind of brutality and sufferings inflicted during the Holocaust and abuses during World War I.



## Q What is your stand on terrorism?

The Party and the New People's Army are firmly opposed to terrorism. Terrorism or violence against unarmed civilians goes against the fundamental principles of the Party.

Terrorism is a crime which the Party has consistently condemned. The Party condemned the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack on the World Trade Organization, as well as the dropping of atomic bombs by the US in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 which killed close to a quarter of a million civilians. It condemned the US military dropping of the 21,000-lb "mother of all bombs" in Afghanistan in 2017 and the incessant drone and aerial strikes in Pakistan, Iraq, Syria over the past ten years or so causing thousands of civilian lives.

The biggest terrorist in modern history is US imperialism which has killed millions of civilians in the wars of aggression and occupation it has waged since the turn of the 20th century. US imperialist terrorism is driven by the desire to grab markets, sources of raw materials and spheres of investments and to control trade routes. In the Philippines, US occupying forces carried out the worst forms of terrorism against the Filipino people under

their so-called "pacification campaign" which included the 1901 campaign to turn Samar into a "howling wilderness" by killing every man above 10 years old. The US continues to wage a dirty counterinsurgency war of intervention in the Philippines through the AFP.

Terrorism oppresses the people. It runs against the Party's aims of empowering the masses. It is contrary to the aims of national and social liberation. One cannot unleash the revolutionary potential of the people through terrorism. Terrorism is antithetical to revolution. It is counterrevolutionary.

If the CPP and NPA believed otherwise, they could not have struck deep roots among the workers, peasants and other democratic sectors, raised their social and political consciousness, built their mass organizations and organs of political power and mobilized them in their numbers.

The Party and the NPA continue to draw their strength from the wellspring of support of the masses because they steadfastly uphold the interests and well-being of the broad masses.

## **Q Does not bearing arms against the government make the CPP/NPA terrorist?**

No. It is not terrorism for the oppressed masses to take up arms against their oppressors. The right of people to bear arms against an oppressor or foreign aggressor is universally recognized. It is a just and necessary course of action recognized since ancient times. Oppression leaves the masses with very little recourse other than to bear arms to defend themselves.

The people's war being waged by the New People's Army is a continuation of the armed resistance of the Katipunan for national liberation. The aim is to achieve national and social liberation. These aims are wholeheartedly embraced by the poor peasant masses, workers and other oppressed classes and sectors.

The people's war is mainly a peasant war, giving national form to the history of incessant peasant uprisings. It continues to rage in the

countryside because the peasant masses are left with no choice. Once the masses stand up for their rights and fight oppression, the feudal despots and foreign big economic aggressors respond with armed might, with massacres, killings and other gross rights abuses. The Party and the NPA help them discover their strength in unity. Their oppressors taught them to bow their heads. With the Party and NPA, they have learned how to raise their fists.

All liberal democratic and socialist constitutions affirm the sovereign power of the people and their sovereign right to fight and defeat a government that becomes oppressive and tyrannical or any foreign aggressor that violates their national sovereignty and the integrity of their territory.



## **Q But isn't it against the prevailing laws to take up arms?**

The ruling class oppressors and exploiters and their foreign masters, of course, will invoke their legitimacy and denounce the armed struggle. In the country's history, revolutionaries and freedom fighters have always been vilified by all sorts of names—bandits, thieves, insurrectos, and terrorists.

Today, the reactionaries wish to downplay the existence of a national civil war. They refuse to recognize the CPP/NPA and NDF as a belligerent force, even if they contradict themselves in demanding the NPA to measure up to standards of international rules of war

and the conventions on human rights.

But to the eyes of the oppressed classes, it is the ruling reactionary regime that is illegitimate because it does not represent the interests of the majority of the people. In large areas in the countryside, there is practically no presence of the reactionary government except for the military which equal oppression. Here, the masses recognize and support the laws and policies of their own government which they themselves have established on the foundations of their organizations.

## **Q The NPA is known to take military action against mining corporations and plantations. The military claims this is terrorism as it causes injury to non-armed entities.**

To protect the people and the environment, the Party and organs of political power require that economic enterprises that operate within revolutionary territories abide by policies which prohibit large-scale destruction and extraction of resources for commercial export or capitalist superprofits. These policies also seek to ensure the conservation of resources for future industrial development under the people's democratic government.

These policies are enforced mainly through persuasion. Businesses are allowed to operate and earn reasonable profits as long as they comply with revolutionary policies. Coercion or the use of armed might comes in only when these operations show complete disregard of the policies for the protection of the environment and interests of the people.

Over the past years, the NPA has been an ally of the national minorities in their struggle to defend their ancestral land. The NPA served as defender in their struggle against the Chico River Dam project in the Cordilleras. The NPA stood with them in the struggle against logging operations such as those of Enrile in Samar, the Puyats in Surigao provinces, the Nasipit Company in Caraga, the Alcantaras in the Pantaron ranges, the Consunjis in the Daguma

ranges and so on.

Over the past years, the NPA has carried out sanctions against companies who refuse to comply with these policies and for causing gross destruction to the environment and the people's socioeconomic well-being. Such actions are carried out on orders of the concerned organs of political power. In essence, these are an exercise of state power comparable to how other governments seize, confiscate or destroy property and other assets of enterprises that violate laws.

Let me also mention that while economic in nature, mining operations, as well as other logging, energy, tourism, road projects and other "development projects," are typically combined with military force. They violently aggress into agricultural and ancestral lands to drive away peasants and minority people from their land and to keep them oppressed. In 2008, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) formed the so-called Investment Defense Force (IDF) with the specific aim of providing big business with military protection. It receives large funding from capitalists.



## **Q Is it not true that there have been incidents in the past where civilians were hurt in NPA military actions? Is this not terrorism? Do you consider this as collateral damage?**

The NPA is governed by the firm principle and strict policy not to harm the civilian population and to avoid launching military operations that harm civilians. But there have been past incidents where civilians were accidentally wounded or killed during NPA military actions. These result mainly from failure of last-minute intelligence on the part of the NPA.

The NPA does not target civilians, nor does it consider civilian casualties as collateral damage. On the contrary, it is the highest priority of the NPA to ensure that no civilian will get hurt in the course of a firefight. The

NPA does not target civilian vehicles and respects humanitarian symbols such as that of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), in accordance with international rules of war.

Before mounting an ambush against a military unit, the NPA takes effort to ensure that there are no civilians in the vehicle. Countless ambushes have been called off after receiving information that a civilian is aboard the vehicle.

When errors do occur and civilians get hurt, the NPA assiduously carries out measures to correct its mistakes. In addition to internal



self-corrections and disciplinary actions, the NPA makes public self-criticism and tries to recompense the victim or their family.

The CPP and NPA, however, distinguish civilians from paramilitary forces, vigilantes, armed bodyguards of persons who are subject to

arrest but resist arrest and other organizations armed and supported by the AFP. The AFP duplicitously described them as “hapless civilians.” In fact, these elements are armed and are active in counterinsurgency operations, and are thus legitimate military targets.

## **Q What is your view of the Anti-Terrorism Act?**

Duterte’s Anti-Terrorism Act is a law of state terrorism. It overturns universally accepted norms of due processes. It breaks down the bourgeois liberal principles in jurisprudence, threatens civil and political rights, undermines the judiciary, and gives way to fascism and tyrannical arbitrariness, malice and caprices. It is anti-democratic and anti-people. It sets forth the “legal” framework for large-scale suppression of democratic rights. It has emboldened the militarists.

The extraordinary powers it gives Duterte and his cabal further reinforces the reign of terror of this murderous regime. We anticipate the ATA to be used to intensify the campaign against the progressive and democratic forces, as well as the conservative opposition forces, especially in conjunction with Duterte’s schemes to perpetuate himself in power and unleash a fascist dictatorship worse than that of

Marcos.

Duterte’s military officials are itching to use the ATA against activists and critics of the regime. Their tactic is plain to see: designate and proscribe the CPP/NPA as terrorist, and red-tag or label legal organizations and individuals as supporters, members or allies of the CPP/NPA in order to justify their suppression through mass arrests, torture and mass murder as in Oplan Tokhang.

Duterte has elevated “anti-terrorism” and “ending the local communist armed conflict” to key state policy giving the military a central role in running the affairs of the state. The tenet of civilian control of the military, stipulated in the 1987 constitution, is set aside. Civilian agencies are compelled to march to the military’s baton lest they be accused of siding with the “terrorists.”

## **Q What can you say about the recent spate of red-tagging?**

The recent spate red-tagging by AFP officers against some personalities and organizations are highly condemnable. Red-tagging is like marking someone for liquidation. The brashness of the AFP in red-tagging shows how it has been emboldened by the ATA. It is like we are back in the dark days of McCarthyism of the late 1950s and 1960s. Anyone who had progressive and patriotic leanings was subjected to anti-communist witch-hunting.

Red-tagging and terrorist-labelling is a tactic designed to put the progressive and democratic forces on a political defensive and drive a wedge between the legal democratic forces and the armed revolution. The “terrorist” vilification campaign against the CPP and NPA is a futile attempt to question the justness of

the people’s democratic revolution and the necessity of waging armed struggle.

The tactic is, however, proving counter-productive. It has incited people to push back. It has further exposed the ATA as a weapon for suppressing the people’s democratic rights. Instead of gaining support, the AFP has antagonized more and more people has only succeeded only in further isolating itself.

Those who are red-tagged are well within their rights to denounce the AFP and NTF-ELCAC’s witch-hunting. They correctly assert that “activism is not terrorism” and demand respect for their right to free expression. It must also be asserted that neither is it terrorism to follow the path of Bonifacio and Sakay, to carry out revolution, to bear arms and wage a just war for national liberation.

## **Q How will the ATA affect the CPP/NPA?**

I don't see how the ATA will adversely affect the NPA and the revolutionary armed struggle. The AFP claims it will stem NPA recruitment from the cities. How will they do that? By suppressing the rights of activists to espouse the people's national democratic cause and their work of organizing and serving the masses? These fascists ignore history. You cannot defeat a revolution by suppressing the idea of revolution and concealing the rotten social realities that incite people to take up arms.

I see that the ATA will prove to be self-defeating for the reactionaries. While we cannot discount the intimidating and

paralyzing effect of illegalization, the masses are bound to resist and push back. Even now, people are pushing back against AFP red-tagging of progressive and democratic forces and their allies, friends and associations.

Instead of stemming NPA recruitment, the suppression of the national democratic cause under the ATA will only spur more workers, youth, the unemployed, women, and other sectors to join the revolutionary armed struggle. The more you suppress, the more that people rebel.

## **Q The regime has declared plans of including the CPP/NPA in the list of designated terrorists. Are you planning to challenge this?**

The Party and the NDFP do not recognize the juridical processes of the reactionary government and has no plans to participate in court proceedings especially under a law that was designed primarily to suppress the Party and the people's democratic rights. Any such process under the ATA will be a farce and must be rejected by the revolutionary forces and the people.

The Party and its allies in the National Democratic Front of the Philippines, however, must continue to vigorously question the bases for designating the CPP and NPA as terrorists.

The plan to designate the CPP and NPA as terrorist, however, is only the first step in the strategy to use the ATA against all democratic

forces that are being arbitrarily linked as "fronts", "supporters" or "sympathizers" of the CPP and NPA. Lawyers and other interested parties, thus, can also consider the option of questioning plans to designate the CPP in line with the legal opinion that the crime of "terrorism" as defined by the ATA cannot be applied to the "rebellion" being waged by the CPP/NPA. This view was expressed recently by former Supreme Court Associate Justice Antonio Carpio.



## **Q Under the ATA, the government can designate organizations listed as terrorist by the United Nations, or if requested by another country or other international entity. Will this affect the CPP and NPA?**

As we have pointed out earlier, the CPP and NPA, in fact, are not included in the list of terrorist organizations of the United Nations Security Council. Contrary to the repeated claims of the AFP and the Duterte government, neither are the CPnP and NPA included in the list of terrorists of Canada, the United Kingdom and Australia.

The CPP and NPA are included in the list of “terrorist organizations” of only three foreign entities, namely, the United States, New Zealand and the European Union. The inclusion of the CPP and NPA in these lists is baseless. We urge these countries and entities to urgently remove the CPP and NPA from these lists. Otherwise, they might be used by the Duterte regime under the ATA to justify the further suppression of democratic rights. I’m sure these countries and entities would not want to be construed as having connived with the fascist Duterte.

The inclusion of the CPP/NPA in the US “list of foreign terrorists,” furthermore, is being

used by the State Department to justify military intervention in the country and the annual military financial assistance to the AFP for the purchase of US surplus war matériel. It is now used to justify military support for the Duterte regime’s dirty war.

Under the laws of war, the people’s revolutionary government based in the countryside has the status of a belligerent force, with millions of people as constituency, with territory, with a system of administration and a people’s army under its command. It is a co-belligerent of the Manila-based reactionary government in a civil war.

It is best for the international community to recognize the people’s revolutionary government as a belligerent force in order to enhance the application of international humanitarian laws and respect for human rights and encourage the revival of the peace process that has been onesidedly terminated by the Duterte regime.

## **Q Duterte claims the NPA is terrorist because soldiers are being killed. What can you say?**

The CPP and the NPA is engaged in a war against the reactionary state, specifically with its armed forces. The NPA conducts itself in accordance with international rules of war, as well as with its own rules of discipline.

In the course of a civil war, armed combatants on either side get killed or injured. This is the inevitable outcome of armed conflicts. However, to the NPA, killing enemy combatants is not in itself the objective of the war; the aim rather is to erode and take away the capacity of the enemy to wage war in the narrow interest of the ruling oppressors and exploiters.

This has been repeatedly demonstrated by the NPA where it achieved victory without even firing a single shot or killing an enemy combatant. Enemy armed combatants who surrender, have been subdued, or rendered incapable of fighting are always treated

leniently. Wounded combatants are given medical treatment on the spot. Captured officers and soldiers are considered as prisoners-of-war with rights.

At the current stage of the armed conflict, the NPA’s immediate aim is to take away the enemy’s weapons in order to arm more people and build more NPA units. This is the reason why in battle, NPA fighters are often heard calling on AFP soldiers to just surrender their weapons.

The NPA’s lenient treatment of wounded, surrendered, subdued and captured AFP combatants is in stark contrast to the brutal and cruel treatment that Red fighters receive when they are wounded in action. It is only fair that NPA combatants be accorded the rights that they inherently possess under the Geneva Conventions and which the NPA afford wounded or killed AFP soldiers.



## **Q What can you say about the claims of the AFP that the NPA's use of land mines are terroristic or violate international laws?**

The command detonated explosives (CDX) employed by the NPA are allowed under international treaties, including the Ottawa Treaty. This treaty prohibits only anti-personnel land mine that detonate upon contact. As we understand it, the aim of the treaty is to prevent civilians being accidentally killed or maimed. As an aside, let me point out that the United States actually did not sign this treaty, and that US companies are among the leading manufacturers of these and other types of unlawful weapons.

While the NDFP is not a signatory to the Ottawa Treaty, the CPP and NPA have repeatedly assented that it opposes the use of

contact-detonated landmines. In practice, the NPA only employs explosives which are deliberately detonated only during battle with an enemy armed unit. The NPA is willing to subject these weapons to inspection by international humanitarian agencies to determine its compliance with existing treaties.

We urge the local and international human rights and humanitarian law community to train attention on the AFP's increasingly use of aerial bombs. The dropping of 500-lb bombs in mountain ranges and rice fields as well as carrying out aerial strafing not only endanger the lives of civilians, but also cause the destruction of their livelihood.

## **Q What is your reaction to AFP claims that it has weakened the NPA and that it is set on crushing the NPA before the end of Duterte's term?**

These AFP claims are not new and are simply not true. Successive AFP leaderships have sang the same tune for the past several decades. But all these claims fall flat on their face by the growth of the NPA indubitably manifested by the steady rise in the level of the people's war in the course of several years. The NPA, with very little resources compared to the US-supported AFP, would not even be able to

preserve itself, much less grow in strength, without the support of the masses.

"Crushing the NPA" has been the repeated end-goal of all past regimes, their respective AFP leadership and their corresponding 6-year plans. Past AFP leadership and regimes have all failed to meet this objective. We have lost count how many times they have moved their deadlines.

## **Q What can you say about the AFP's reports that thousands of NPA have already surrendered?**

The AFP's claims of thousands of NPA "surrenderes" are all hogwash. The number, now probably around 10,000 or 15,000, has far exceeded the AFP's various estimates of NPA strength from 3,000 to 5,000. Yet, the AFP's estimates of the number of NPA fighters has largely remained the same.

The AFP tries to explain away this bloated number by claiming that the "surrenderes" include militias and supporters of the NPA who have decided to "pledge allegiance" to the government. In doing so, the AFP is inadvertently admitting that people in these areas are under revolutionary political

authority and that they are in fact aggressors.

At any rate, claims of "surrenderes" are part of the AFP multibillion peso swindle of "livelihood assistance," "housing projects" and "community integration" where large amounts of public funds get diverted to the pockets of AFP generals and middle officers. On the other hand, they continue to insist that the NPA has thousands of fighters to justify the bloated counterinsurgency budget where the generals earn from the purchase of overpriced war matériel. This is all a sham.

## Q Who then are the people being claimed by the military as “surrenderees?”

The thousands of peasants and minority people paraded by the AFP as “surrenderees” are, in fact, victims of AFP deception, intimidation and coercion. Their civil rights have been systematically violated by the military’s tactic of arbitrarily labelling people as “NPA supporters” without actually filing charges against them in court where they could defend themselves. People condemned by the military are required to “clear” their names by submitting themselves and “cooperating” with the military under pain of AFP reprisal.

These methods adopted by the AFP are causing deep resentment among the people because their livelihood and way of life is disrupted and their rights curtailed. In many areas, people are prevented from purchasing

and storing rice and other supplies in their household. Checkpoints are set up which prevent people from freely moving around. Peasants are prohibited from working in their fields. The military uses civilian structures including schools and barangay centers as barracks in violation of international rules of war. Undisciplined and uncouth AFP soldiers are seen as bad influence as they encourage pornography and drug use among the youth. They disturb the peace with late-night drinking sessions and indiscriminate firing of weapons.



## Q What can you say about the “whole of nation approach” adopted by the AFP and the NTF-ELCAC in fighting the CPP and NPA?

The “whole of nation approach” is an AFP catchphrase drawn from US military counterinsurgency guidebooks. The aim is to put all branches and agencies of government, as well as non-government entities, under the command and leadership of the military.

Under this shibboleth, the AFP steers the priorities of village and town councils towards counterinsurgency. The AFP dominates local governance through so-called “peace and order councils” where they meddle even in economic plans. The AFP intimidates local officials. Government councils have been compelled by the AFP to issue “persona non grata” resolutions against the CPP/NPA for fear they will earn the ire of the military and be accused of “welcoming the terrorists.”

Many local officials are disgruntled that

military officers interfere in all aspects of civil governance. What we are seeing, in fact, is how the military is taking control of the entire state. The tenet “civilian control over the military” has been undermined by the so-called “whole of nation approach” of putting everything under the diktat and control of the AFP.

At the most basic levels, these tactics of coercion and intimidation applied by Duterte and the AFP show the inability of the reactionary classes to rule without resorting to brazen fascist methods of suppressing the people. However, these tactics of relying on military suppression, rather than political persuasion, are unsustainable and counterproductive in the long run.

## **Q Do you think there is a problem of terrorism in the Philippines?**

Yes, there is a problem of terrorism in the Philippines, that is, state terrorism under the Duterte regime.

For more than four years now, Duterte has subjected the Filipino people to untold brutalities and cruelties. Duterte's state terrorism is marked by mass killings in the sham drug war, the extrajudicial killings of peasant activists, human rights workers, trade union organizers, environmentalists and other political personalities, surveillance and red-tagging, hamletting of villages in the

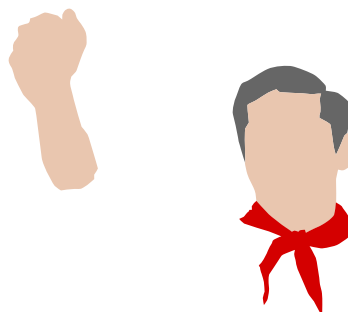
countryside, indiscriminate aerial bombardment and use of artillery, forcing people to "surrender" without due process, and so on.

The terrorism of the Duterte regime has resulted in gross violations of human rights. State terrorism is being used by Duterte to silence his critics and intimidate the opposition in the vain hope of securing his power and continuing his reign of corruption and national treachery.

## **Q Do you have any message to the Filipino students and youth?**

The fascists seek to snuff out the Filipino youth's idealism and spirit of patriotism which for decades has inspired generations in the struggle to defend democracy, fight for justice and resist dictatorships. By preventing the youth from getting actively involved in society's affairs, the reactionaries aim to put everyone under their authority and control.

At this critical juncture of the country's history where the Duterte regime aims to consolidate and perpetuate its tyrannical rule, it is critical for the youth to keep the fires of rebellion burning. The Filipino people expect nothing less.



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