

# **LIBERATION**

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**'di  
matalo-  
talo**





The NDFP is the revolutionary united front organization of the Filipino people fighting for national freedom and for the democratic rights of the people.

Established on April 24, 1973, the NDFP seeks to develop and coordinate all progressive classes, sectors and forces in the Filipino people's struggle to end the rule of US imperialism and its local allies, and attain national and social liberation.

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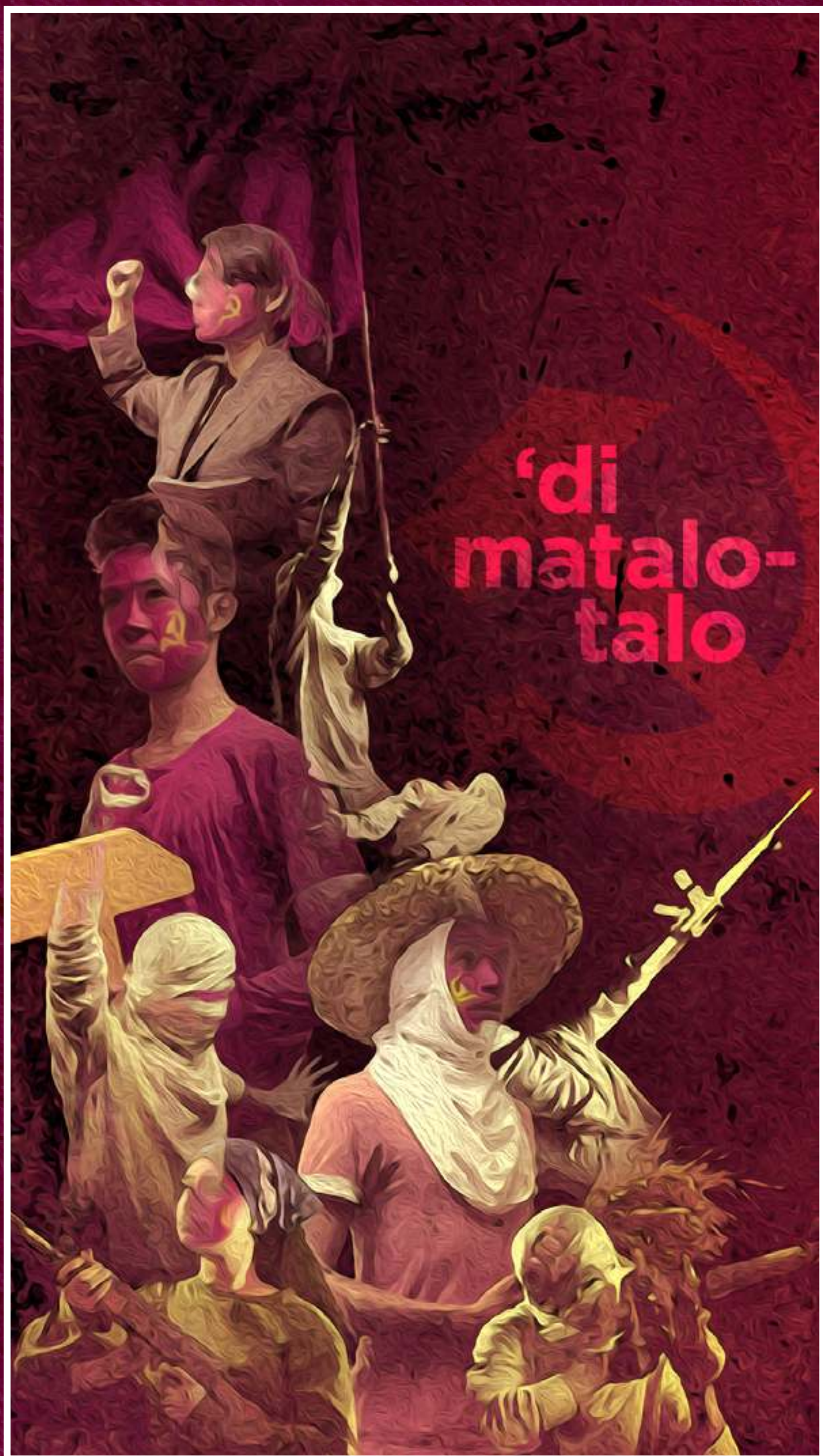


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## ABOUT THE COVER

The *#DiMataloTalo* (undefeatable) referring to the revolutionary movement is an apt slogan because even during the pandemic, and despite intensified military operations of the AFP and PNP, the CPP, NPA, the organs of political power and revolutionary mass organizations continue to multiply and operate in more than 100 guerrilla fronts all over the country. Indeed, love and service to the people and the burning desire for a better tomorrow move mountains better than tyranny and terror.

*Layout and graphics:*  
Miguel Liwanag  
Markus del Pilar

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# Wishful THINKING



Into his last year in office, President Rodrigo Duterte blamed the constitutional limit to his term for the failure to fulfill his campaign promises to quickly solve the problems of corruption, crimes, and illegal drugs—and to “steer the nation towards a comfortable life.” He also laid the predicate for his drive to stay longer in power.

“The Constitution only afforded me six years to make those changes happen,” he said in his last state-of-the-nation address (SONA). “I bore no illusion that steering a nation towards a comfortable life for every Filipino would be easy. Indeed, the past five years have been challenging and humbling,” he added.

Conceding that corruption is “endemic in government,” Duterte said, “Nobody can stop corruption unless we overturn the government completely.” The fascist in him suggested: “If I were the next president, if you think there is a need for you to change everybody in the system, then you declare martial law and fire everybody.”

He also conceded that his regime's "war on drugs" still has a long way to go. Conscious that the International Criminal Court prosecutor was awaiting the court's authority to start investigation of crimes against humanity of murder allegedly committed in the drug war, he feigned defiance and bravado by saying: "I would never deny and the ICC can record it: Those who destroy my country, I will kill you. And those who destroy the young people of our country, I will kill you. I will destroy you because I love my country."

Later in his speech, Duterte declared, "Today's my last SONA. This is by no means my swan song." What would come immediately to someone's mind is his plan to stay longer in power by running for vice president in the 2022 elections, with a presidential candidate of his choice.

He vowed: "I shall never cease to implore Congress [whose two chambers he practically controls] to pass vital and critical legislations, as well as to

push the entire government to ensure nothing than the full recovery and reinvigoration of our country." He bragged that his regime has laid down the groundwork and continues to push for "landmark reforms" till his last day as president.

But can the two proposed laws he's asking Congress to pass urgently be considered landmark reforms, or vital and critical legislations? One would establish a "unified system of separation, retirement and pension" for "new entrants" in the military and uniformed services to provide them "adequate benefits and remunerations." The other would provide free legal aid to AFP and PNP officers and enlisted personnel to help defend them from criminal charges "related to the performance of their official duty" (such as *tokhang* type of raids on activists in their homes carried out in Negros, Panay, and Calabarzon).

The proposed laws would complement the substantial legislated salary increase given, in 2018, to military, police and other uniformed officers and personnel.



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Duterte justified the proposed legislations, pointing out that before he took office, the armed forces were ill-equipped to deal with internal and external threats, while the police force had been overwhelmed by criminality and the drug problem. He gave priority to strengthening and “modernizing” the AFP, as well as the PNP and other armed services, and boosting the morale of their officers and personnel.

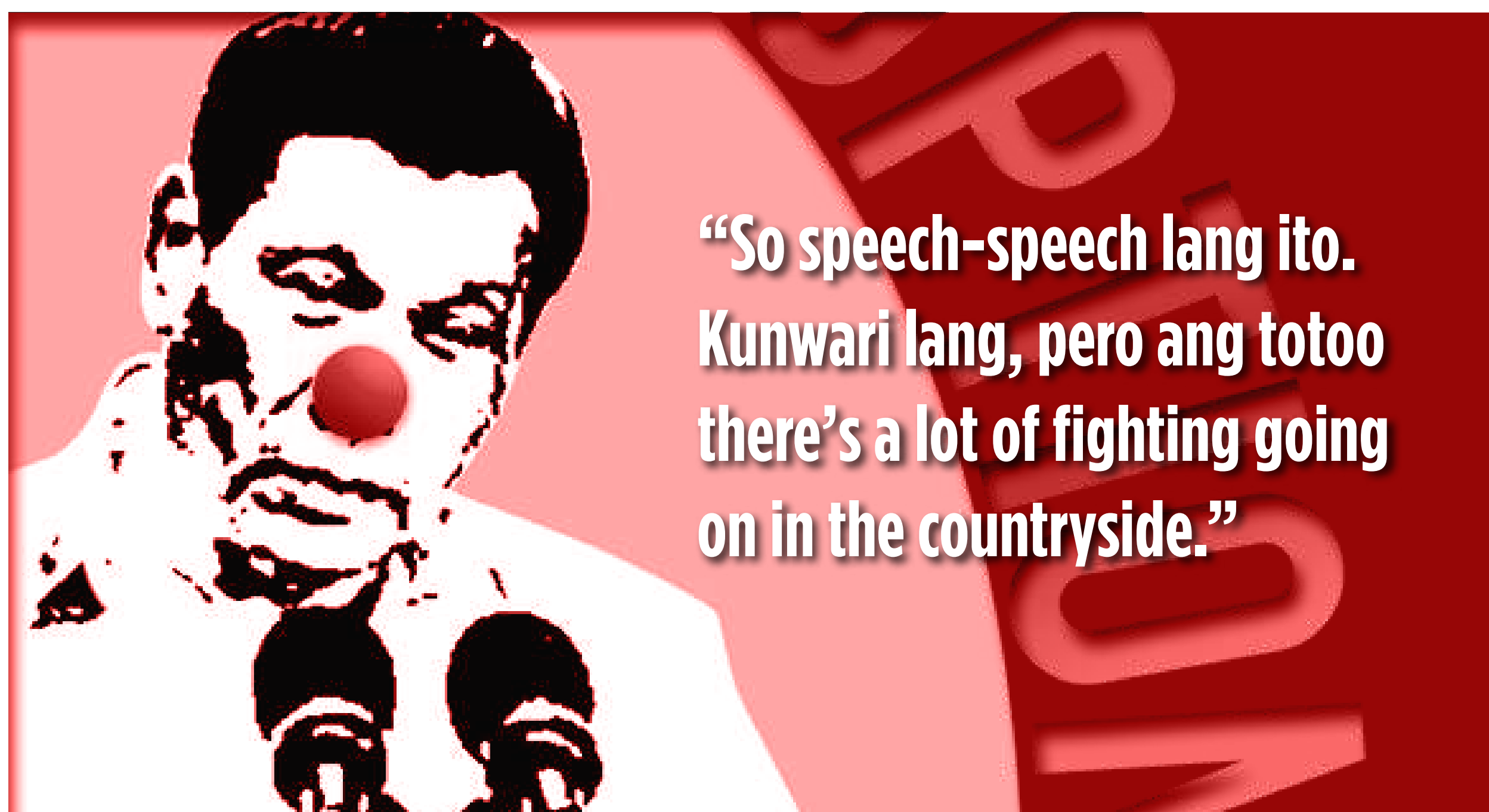
“We enable them to carry out their mandate to defeat all enemies of the state whatever the cost,” Duterte boasted. “Indeed, I am proud of the accomplishments of our troops in securing our nation against all threats to our democratic institutions,” he added.

On the issue of peace, Duterte said his regime has “deviated” from the traditional military approach because “peace and security [are] not just a military concern.” “With

the creation of the NTF-ELCAC [National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict],” he claimed, “we have made great strides in addressing the root causes of this conflict by empowering our *kababayans* who have been used by the communists for so many decades.”

Really? How have they done so?

Duterte explained: “In our continuing effort to build safe and conflict-resilient barangays, we have worked towards the sustainable rehabilitation and development of communities where the communists used to operate.” Through NTF-ELCAC, he explained, “We invested in farm-to-market roads, school buildings, water and sanitation systems, health stations, and livelihood projects.” Practically all of these should have been done by the concerned agencies of the national and local governments. So what’s new?



Duterte's reply: "Because of these interventions, more than 17,000 former communist rebels have surrendered to the government. They have returned to the fold of the law and are happily reintegrating [with society] through the E-CLIP [Enhanced-Comprehensive Local Integration Program]." Where did so many "rebel surrenderees" come from? Have not the AFP been claiming for years (since Gloria Arroyo's presidency) that there were no more than 5,000 (or even less) NPA combatants remaining nationwide? How many million pesos have been spent through this E-CLIP scheme?

Duterte's last pitch (reading his written speech): "With the support of our LGUs [local government units], I am confident that support for the communist movement will continue

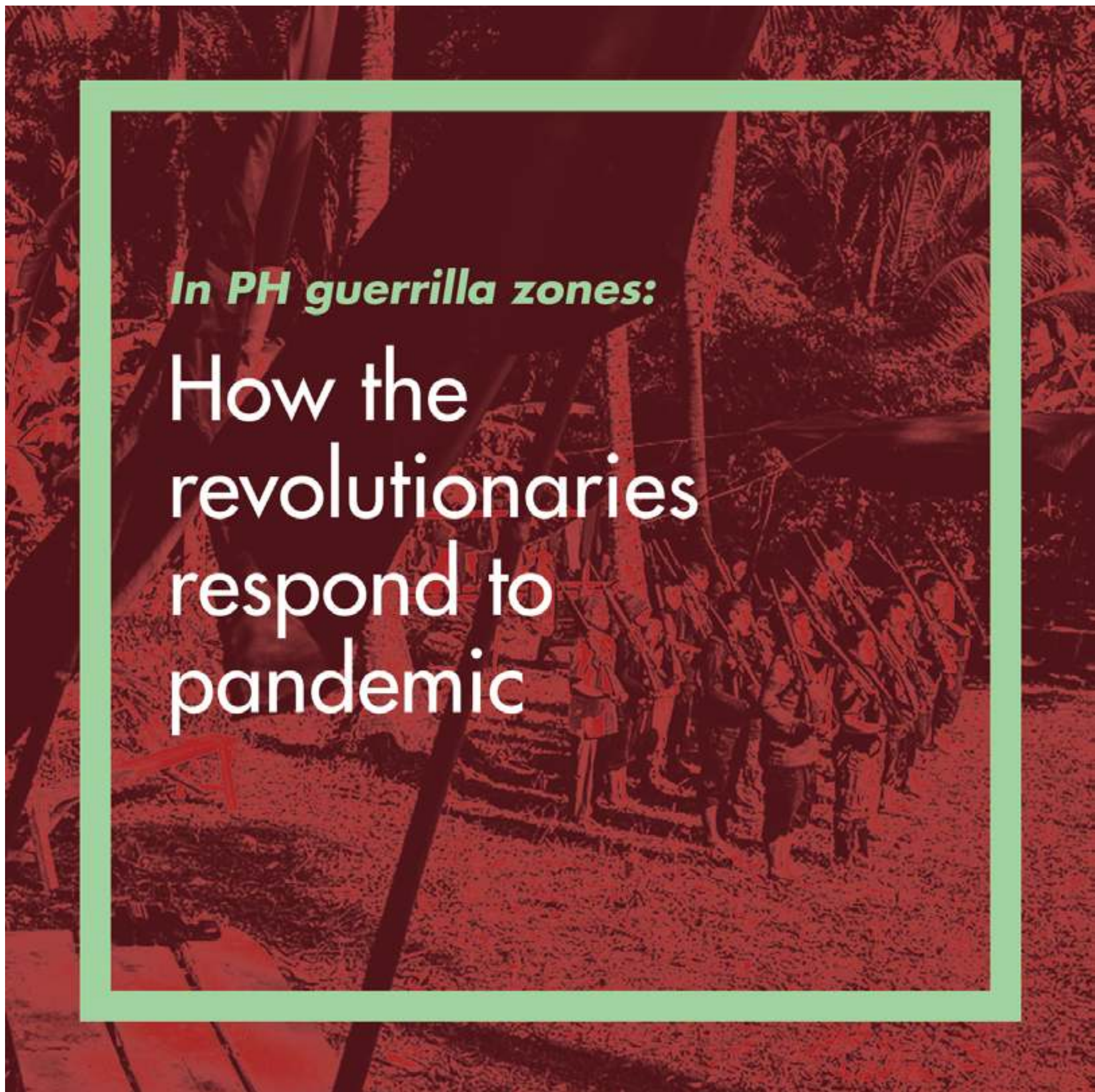
to erode in the next few months. And like the decades-old Moro rebellion in Mindanao, we will also bring an end to the armed struggle of the communists once and for all."

He did not say when this could be achieved. It sounded more like wishful thinking. And as he was wont to do, Duterte ad-libbed:

*"So speech-speech lang ito. Kunwari lang, pero ang totoo there's a lot of fighting going on in the countryside. But I'd like to credit the police and the military for destroying so many communist fronts. I think they have destroyed more than 15 apparatus of the fronts of the CPP." He was probably referring to the CPP-NPA guerrilla fronts—of which there are more than 100 across the country.*

**LIB**





*In PH guerrilla zones:*

## How the revolutionaries respond to pandemic

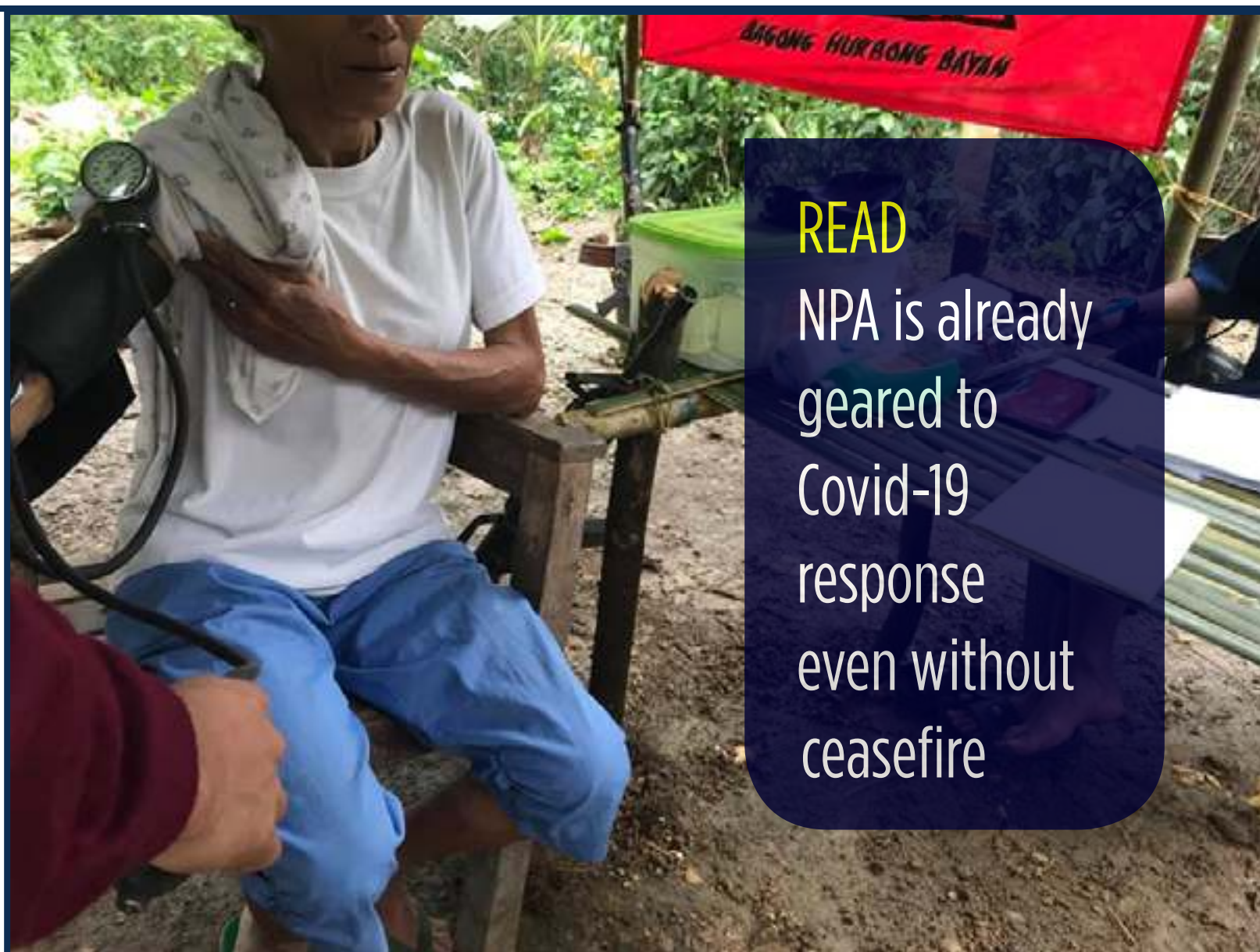
*by Iliya Makalipay*

Immediately after the World Health Organization declared the Covid-19 pandemic, the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) directed the fighters of the New People's Army (NPA) to "step up efforts to render social, economic, medical, and public health services to the people."

On March 26-April, 2020, the CPP declared a unilateral ceasefire as a response to the call of UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres for "a global ceasefire between warring parties for the common purpose of fighting the Covid-19 pandemic."

The Party and the people's army mobilized the organs of political power (OPP) and the revolutionary mass organizations affiliated with the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) nationwide to immediately undertake two tasks: 1) conduct information campaigns on the Covid-19 virus; and 2) implement social services and community actions "to respond comprehensively and extensively to the threat of the virus."

NPA units worked with local people's health committees. Together, they carried out mass campaigns and enhanced the long-time practice of collective action. Providing services to the masses is among the functions of the NPA and the OPPs in the guerrilla fronts, whose existence the reactionary government has refused to acknowledge up to now.



**READ**  
NPA is already geared to Covid-19 response even without ceasefire

The various services put to good use the financial and material contributions of friends and allies, and revolutionary taxes—shaming the reactionary government's trillions of annual budget and billions more in loans poured into its war machine and the bureaucrats' pockets.

The NPA has not only been a fighting unit. It has also been engaged in agrarian revolution and mass-base building. These vital tasks continue even during the pandemic and continuing attacks by the enemy forces.



The interaction with the NPA and the masses in the course of providing services helps in deepening the members' grasp of the people's war—why it is legitimate, necessary and who benefits from it.

**READ**  
Health services benefit peasants, indigenous peoples in guerilla fronts

**READ**  
Reply to questions by Kavel Alpaslan of Gazete Duvar on the revolutionary health system and response to Covid-19 pandemic

Base-building for the NPA includes organizing, production work, cultural activities, and health care trainings and services, among others. It works with the local Party organization and revolutionary mass organizations in the communities to set up health committees or medical groups. Even before the pandemic, NPA units and local branches of the Party held clinics for the masses, conducting check-ups for high blood pressure, diabetes, cough and common colds, dental services, and minor operations. Alternative treatments were used such as acupuncture and herbal remedies.

The tyrannical Duterte regime has tried to prevent the NPA from carrying out its duty to assist the people in the revolutionary areas overcome the Covid-19 crisis. It violated its own ceasefire and attacked communities.

And it went on a shopping spree for new fighter jets, attack helicopters, drones, tanks, bombs and other military equipment— dispensing huge amounts of money that could have been better spent on mass testing and strengthening the inadequate health system.

On April 23, 2020, for example, the 20th Infantry Battalion of the Philippine Army attacked a unit of the NPA in Eastern Visayas, which was conducting information campaign on Covid-19. They attacked when a ceasefire was still in place. “It was inhumane and cruel in that the armed attack impeded

READ

10 THINGS THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC HAS SHOWN US



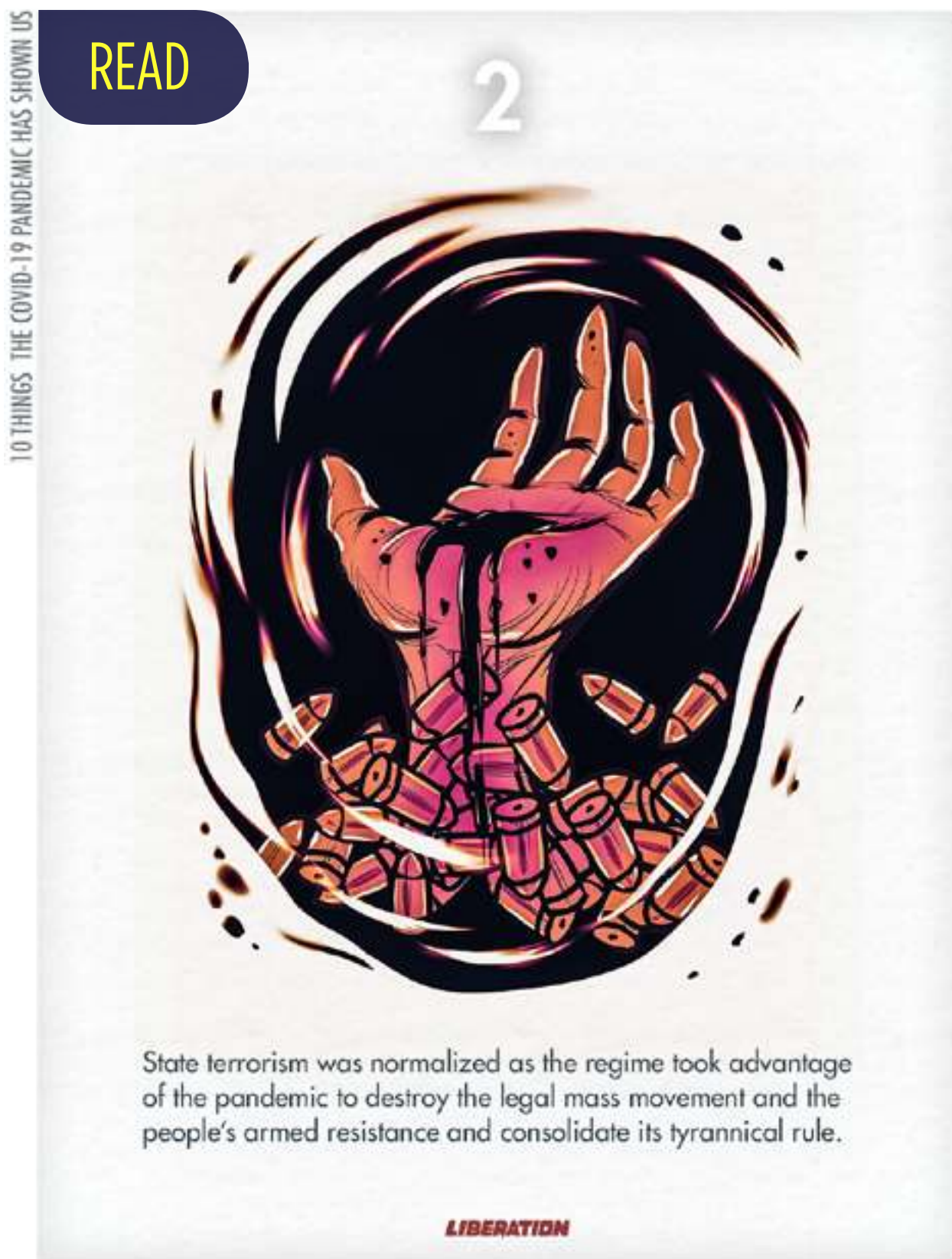
A public health system battered by the regime's budget cuts, corruption cases, and neoliberal policies

**LIBERATION**

the assistance that could have been provided by the NPA,” said the Efren Martires Command, pointing out that the masses were deeply affected by the twin public health and economic crises.

Aerial bombings and artillery shelling were not the only iniquities inflicted on communities. The state security forces carried out food blockades, illegal arrests and detention of suspected members and supporters of the NPA, and coerced people to “surrender” to the government.

The AFP sabotaged and discredited the campaigns of the Party, the people's army, and the mass organizations on public health, sanitation, and food production. Similar or parallel sabotage operations were carried out against what the legal mass movement was doing in urban centers: conducting humanitarian and relief missions



in urban poor and neighboring peasant communities.

But neither the intensified and sustained attacks against the revolutionary movement nor the limited resources on-hand hindered the efforts of the NPA. The masses warmly welcomed the Party and the NPA's leadership, and with them, they planned and instituted measures to prevent the spread of the disease and ensure the steady supply of food in the communities and prevent hunger.

Here are some of their cooperative efforts gathered from the various *Ang Bayan* news stories:



## Health education and services

The health committees of the revolutionary mass organizations actively engaged in information campaign on Covid-19: distributing leaflets, holding education sessions, meetings, and trainings. In Bicol, the people's army and members of organizations used cultural forms such as plays, dances, and songs to discuss the health situation and ways to avoid contracting the virus. These were performed during medical trainings, mass clinics, and meetings.

The NPA in Central Negros under the Leonardo Panaligan Command provided medical services to at least 1,000 farmers



during the first lockdown in March 2020. The Red Army organized check-ups and provided vitamins and herbal medicines for fever, cough, and colds. They were assisted by members of the barrio health committee, *Makibaka* and *Kabataang Makabayan*, underground organizations of women and youth, respectively.

In Surigao del Sur, the NPA units under the Northeast Mindanao Regional Operational Command focused their efforts on agriculture and health programs such as sanitation, mass clinics, and planting of herbs for medicine. They organized education activities on how to prevent the transmission of Covid-19 virus and manage those afflicted by it.

The NPA and the revolutionary mass organizations in Samar held health orientation seminars, trainings on the use of acupuncture and herbal medicine, and prepared health protocols in 17 barrios. They identified possible facilities for quarantine in case someone got

infected by the virus. Also, part of their plan was to create herbal gardens and plant food crops.

The people's army also launched basic medical training among members of the four units of the NPA, barrio health committees, and members of the *Pambansang Kalipunan ng mga Magsasaka* (PKM, revolutionary organization of peasants). The newly trained medics later held a mass clinic where they examined more than 400 residents in four barrios. In the base areas, the NPA led in maintaining sanitation, making and wearing of face masks, and in practicing physical distancing during gatherings.

In Southern Mindanao, the Medardo Arce Command assisted all OPPs and revolutionary organizations to respond to the health crisis. They launched information and health and sanitation campaigns; and drew up preventive measures that were implemented in the communities. Because the NPA unit also operates in suburban communities near Davao City, the people's army

included in its protocols the timely monitoring and immediate reporting of Covid-19 infections in the communities. Health workers were on standby for urgent consultations and referrals.

In a barangay in Quezon Province, a unit of the people's army conducted sanitation and education campaign

on Covid-19. They held mass clinics to check up on the masses and provide basic medical services and helped in planting vegetables and root crops. While in the barrio, they also taught the children of farmers how to use the internet and cellphones for their online classes and tutored them in their lessons.



## **Relief operation and mutual aid in food production**

The lockdown restricted the farmers in going to their farms, selling their produce, and in buying their food supply. Aware of the reactionary government's almost nil assistance to the people, the CPP directed its forces to "carry out emergency food production and intensify economic work in revolutionary territories," on top of providing medical assistance. Aside from mobilizing its forces and the masses, the Party also urged the landlords to let the peasants use the land for food production without collecting rent, extend financial assistance, and allow access to other farm facilities owned by the landlords.

The NPA units and the local OPPs held economic conferences to appraise the needs of the masses and plan for immediate and increased food production such as planting of palay, bananas, corn, vegetables, and root crops. In Surigao they launched a campaign for mountain farming in areas with available spaces.

To meet the challenge of the pandemic, the revolutionaries enhanced their cooperative endeavors that have long been a practice in guerrilla fronts. They particularly boosted cooperative activities impacting on food supply of the people.

In Bicol, the NPA and the farmers consolidated their *grutul* (mutual aid groups in production) to plant fast-growing crops for their consumption. Local party branches also provided emergency relief packs to immediately address hunger in the communities while the PKM conducted a feeding program. During these activities, leaflets on Covid-19 were also distributed.

In Southern Mindanao, units under the Merardo Arce Command launched food production campaign to ensure food security in guerrilla bases and zones while advancing the agrarian revolution in areas they can reach. The capacity and leadership of the revolutionary forces in Southern Mindanao have been proven especially in the rehabilitation and reconstruction of communities after the super-typhoon Pablo hit the region.

All of the regions cited were among the most militarized regions in the country, where the bulk of the AFP units are concentrated in trying to push the Duterte regime's attempt to meet its own over-extended deadline to neutralize the armed revolutionary movement before its term ends.

On top of responding to the challenges of the pandemic, the CPP has called on the NPA to "heighten the military struggle against the fascist and tyrannical regime." It is through heightening the armed struggle that the revolutionary mass base can be defended and the tasks of building the organs of the political power can advance in the countryside. **LIB**



## **Strengthen the NDFP for crucial battles for national freedom and democracy**



**Communist Party of the Philippines**

*24 April 2021*

**T**ogether with the New People's Army (NPA), the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) extends greetings of revolutionary solidarity to its allies in the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) on the occasion of the alliance's 48<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

The CPP and NPA take pride in having hundreds of thousands of allies who belong to revolutionary organizations of workers, peasants and farm workers, semiproletariat, minority peoples, Moro, youth, teachers, women, church people, health workers, scientists, cultural workers, employees, lawyers and overseas Filipinos. The NDFP now has 18 allied organizations and continues to expand as more and more get organized to help wage the national democratic revolution.



The NDFP has accumulated a great number of achievements over the past decades. Its 12-Point Program has served to enlighten the broad masses of the people and inspired people to wage revolutionary struggle. Serving as governmental representative in the provincial, regional and national levels, the NDFP stands for the interests of millions of people under the auspices of the people's democratic government. It has been outstanding in representing the interests of the exploited and oppressed classes in peace negotiations with the Government of the Republic of the Philippines.

There is an urgent need to further raise the level of strength and determination of the NDFP as the Filipino people faces crucial battles for national freedom and democracy.

In the face of the national treachery of the Duterte regime over the surrender to China of the country's rights in its exclusive economic zone in the West Philippine Sea, it is urgent for the NDFP to bring together the Filipino people under

the banner of national freedom. The fight to defend and take back the country's seas is as historically significant as the resistance of Datu Lapulapu and the indigenous Filipinos to defend their land and seas against the Spanish colonizers.



The NDFP must unite all patriotic sectors and individuals to demand the immediate withdrawal of Chinese militia vessels, industrial fishing boats, Coast Guard and naval crafts from the country's territorial waters. The NDFP and all its forces must amplify the Filipino people's outrage over

China's infringement on the country's sovereignty, and protest the plunder of the country's fish and other marine resources which have resulted in depleted supplies to the detriment of the Filipino people, especially the Filipino fisherfolk. They must also denounce the wanton plundering and siphoning of Philippine mineral and agricultural resources.

We call on all the NDFP's forces to denounce Duterte as a national traitor for having allowed China to build its military facilities, encroach on the Philippine EEZ and take



away the country's resources. He has set aside the country's rights under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Seas (UNCLOS) as recognized by the International Arbitral Tribunal in its decision of July 2016. Duterte has failed to put up a robust and comprehensive strategy to defend Philippine sovereignty to confront the giant imperialist China. He uses the false argument that we could not win a war against China to justify his refusal to take carry out any political, diplomatic or military action.

The NDFP's forces must mobilize all its forces to manifest the Filipino people's demand to take back the country's sovereign seas. They should carry out a widespread education and cultural movement to rouse the patriotism of the Filipino people. They must unite and mobilize the broad masses to demonstrate their collective indignation in the parks, streets,

communities, factories, school campuses, offices and so on.

The need for the NDFP and all its forces to strengthen and take action is also crucial in the face of the intensifying fight against Duterte's plans to perpetuate his political dynasty by imposing a fascist dictatorship or rigging the 2022 elections to have his daughter or factotum replace him.

The NDFP's forces must help in building the broadest united front against the Duterte tyrannical regime. They must denounce the Duterte regime for prioritizing corruption, its overspending for the military and police to consolidate its state terrorist rule. This has resulted in the bankruptcy of the ruling regime, massive foreign and local borrowing, epic failure to manage the Covid-19 pandemic, a severe economic crisis marked by historic levels of joblessness, loss of income and widespread hunger and poverty.

Building and mobilizing a broad united front against the Duterte regime is the key to ousting Duterte and his cohorts from power. The NDFP must help in uniting the biggest number of forces against the Duterte regime by linking up with the widest sections of society, to carry out education and propaganda to expose the grave abuses under Duterte's tyrannical rule and appeal to the people's sense of duty to uphold and fight for democracy.

The NDFP and its forces must continue to galvanize and mobilize the Filipino people in great numbers. It must fight for the people's urgent public health (mass testing and greater budget allotment for public hospitals and laboratories) and socioeconomic demands (wage and salary increases, suspension of land rent, higher farmgate prices, state subsidies amid crisis and others). They can continue to support the socioeconomic work and campaign for food production work in the countryside and support the widespread mutual aid efforts across the country, while exposing the basic ills of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism, and linking the people's day-to-day struggles to the need to wage a national democratic revolution with armed struggle as the principal form.



The NDFP and its allied organizations must continue to raise the militance and revolutionary determination of the broad masses of the Filipino people in fighting the fascist regime. As the Duterte regime resorts to heightened state armed attacks against the legal democratic forces, the NDFP's forces can play a critical role by strengthening their underground organizations and network of support, to absorb and protect those being persecuted and hunted down by the regime's fascist agents or facilitate their transfer to the guerrilla zones where they could afford the protection of the NPA.


Many of the NDFP's underground organizations were tempered in the struggle against martial law during the 1970s. Combined with the Party's branches and committees, they will undoubtedly play a critical role in the event that Duterte resorts to imposing a fascist dictatorship by serving as the most consolidated and most organized force of resistance.

**#DiPagagapi**

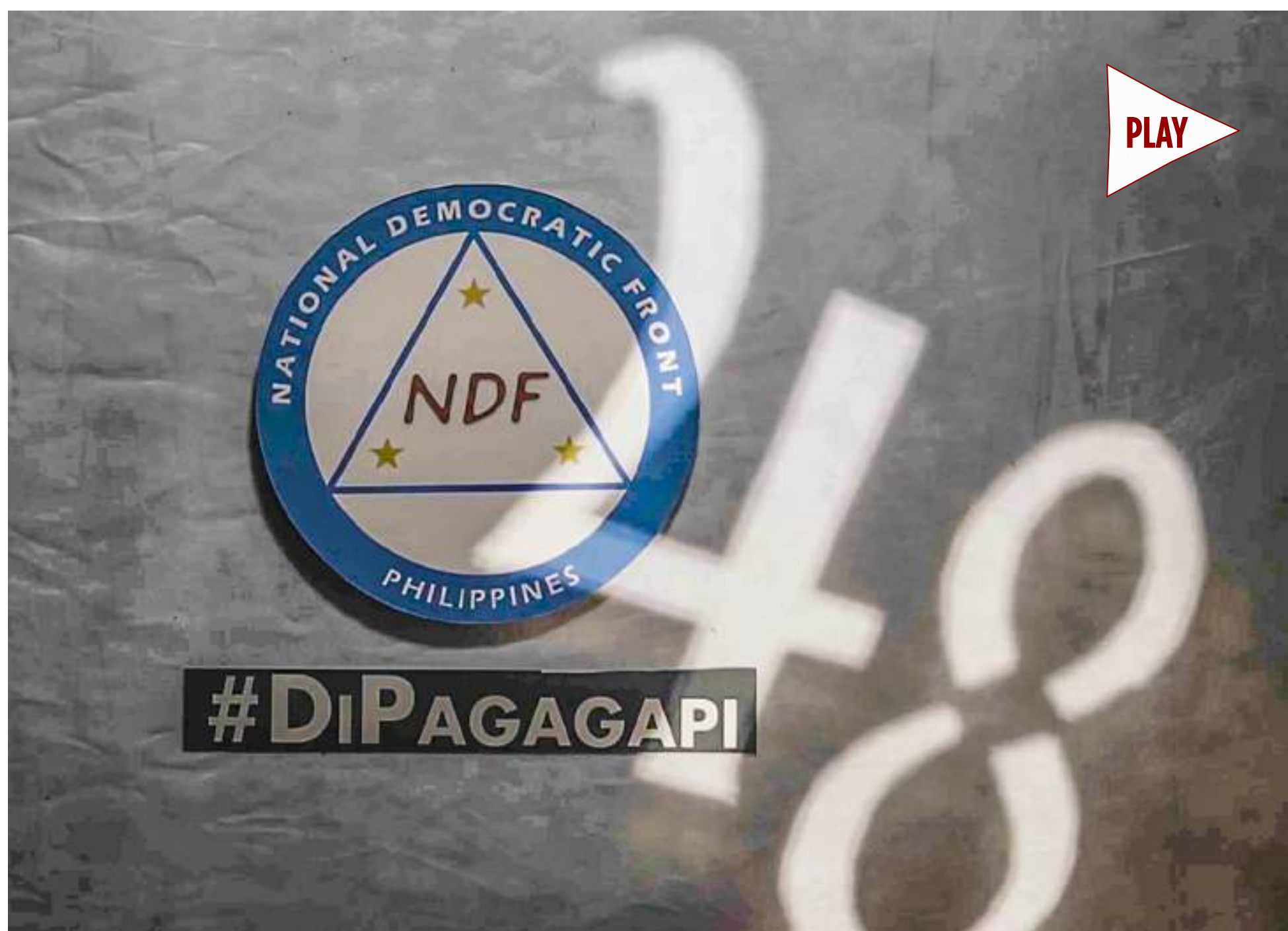
As a revolutionary united front, the NDFP and its allied organizations must carry out more vigorous efforts to mobilize the people to support and join the revolutionary armed struggle. We call on our allies in the NDFP to join the New People's Army and help carry forward the people's war. At the same time, the NDFP and its allied organizations must continue to wage campaigns to support the armed struggle in the form of material and financial contribution to the cause of the armed resistance.

The NDFP forces must expose the Duterte regime's cruel tactics in its dirty war against the peasant masses in the countryside. In the cities, they must untiringly expose the killings and rights abuses being committed by the military and police against civilians who are being subjected to brutal suppression in the form of killings, threats and intimidation, arrests, torture, non-stop harassment and other forms of abuses in the vain hope of denying the NPA of mass support. The NDFP must actively expose and call for a stop to the costly campaign of aerial bombardment which endangers the lives of people in rural villages and mountain communities. They must expose and denounce the garrison-like control of villages and communities in the guise of the so-called "Retooled Community Support Program" of the AFP.

MABUHAY  
ANG NATIONAL  
DEMOCRATIC FRONT  
OF THE PHILIPPINES



In the countryside, the NDFP forces must actively forge an anti-fascist united front to help the peasant masses in their fight to defend their rights, and oppose military abuses committed in the course of its "surrender drive" and attempt to take over control of the civilian functions of government. They must expose and oppose corruption in the implementation of the E-CLIP and the NTF-ELCAC's Barangay Development Program, and resist plans to construct so-called "farm to market roads" that are in fact, "mining and military roads."



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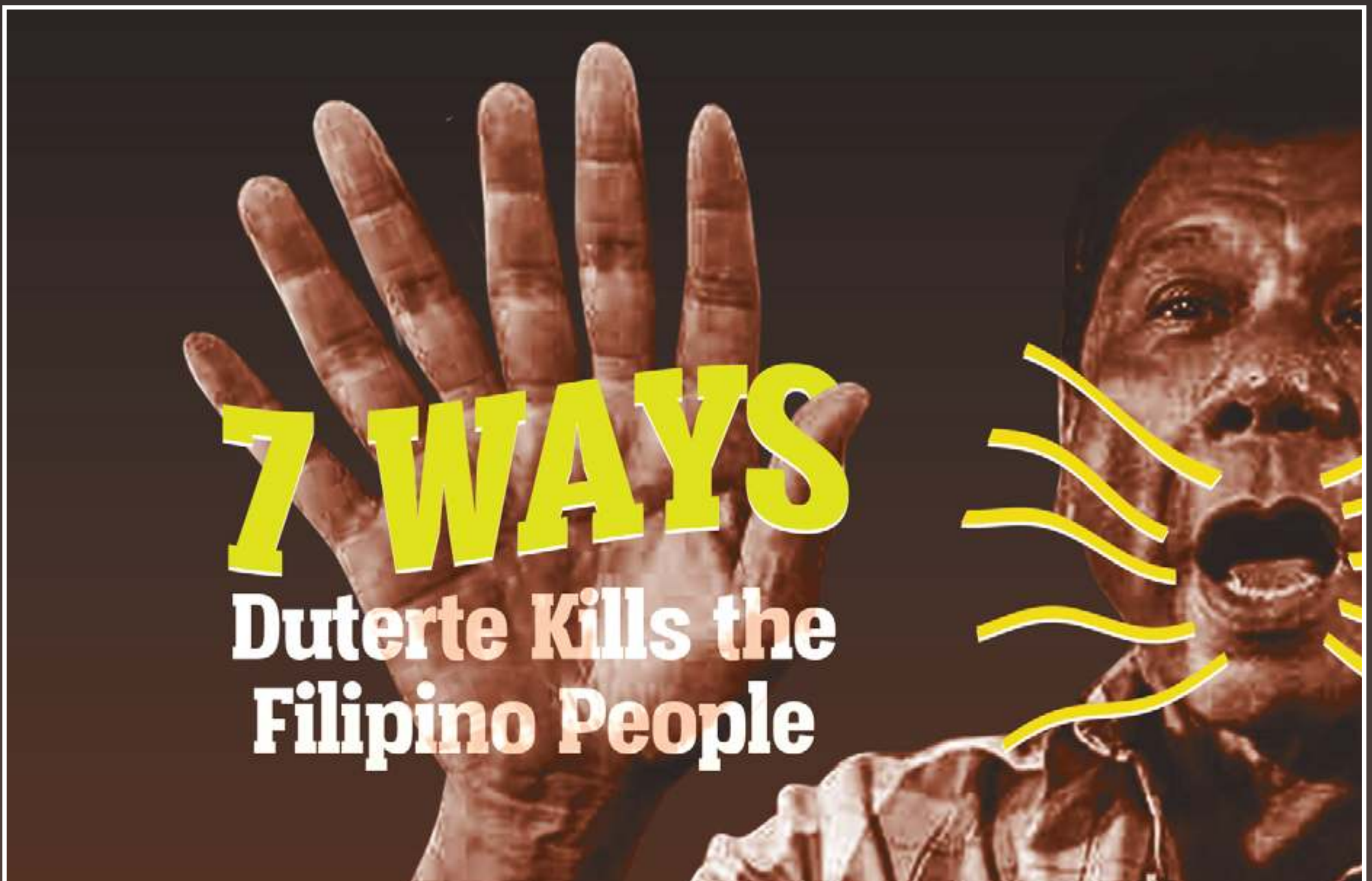
The NDFP must join the rest of the Filipino people in valiantly fighting the crucial battles for national freedom and democracy. They must draw inspiration from all their heroes and martyrs in the resistance of past centuries. In a few days, we will mark the 500<sup>th</sup> year of the victory of Lapu-Lapu and the indigenous Filipinos in the Battle of Mactan, the first victory in the long and continuing history of armed resistance for national freedom and social liberation.

*Long live the National Democratic Front of the Philippines!*

*Long live the Communist Party of the Philippines!*

*Long live the New People's Army!*

*Long live the Filipino people!*



**N**o matter how President Duterte and his ilk have tried to dismiss or downplay his regime's crimes against the Filipino people as a joke, no one is laughing.

*by Pat Gambao  
and Lia Tindog*

Surely, not even Duterte laughs, as he is obviously shaken to face the people's wrath and the prospect of an international trial for "crimes against humanity of murder" after ending his term. Thus far in his five-year tyrannical rule, the Duterte regime has brought about catastrophic consequences to the lives and livelihood of the people.

For one, he has failed to silence his critics; instead, he has further isolated himself and his tyrannical regime from the people. And, for all his arrogant pretensions, Duterte has failed to neutralize the revolutionary movement (like all the past regimes since Marcos's dictatorship). Yes,

despite wasting billions in public funds.

That the regime now sees red everywhere is a sure sign of political paranoia.

Now on its final year, the Duterte regime is haunted by its innumerable and most atrocious crimes against the poor, the majority of the Filipino people. And the Filipino people are not scared. They are determined to block all of Duterte's and his minions' maneuvers to remain in power beyond 2022 and cause more harm to the people and damage to the country.

Following are some of these crimes:

**“Maliit na bagay.”**

(It’s no big deal.)

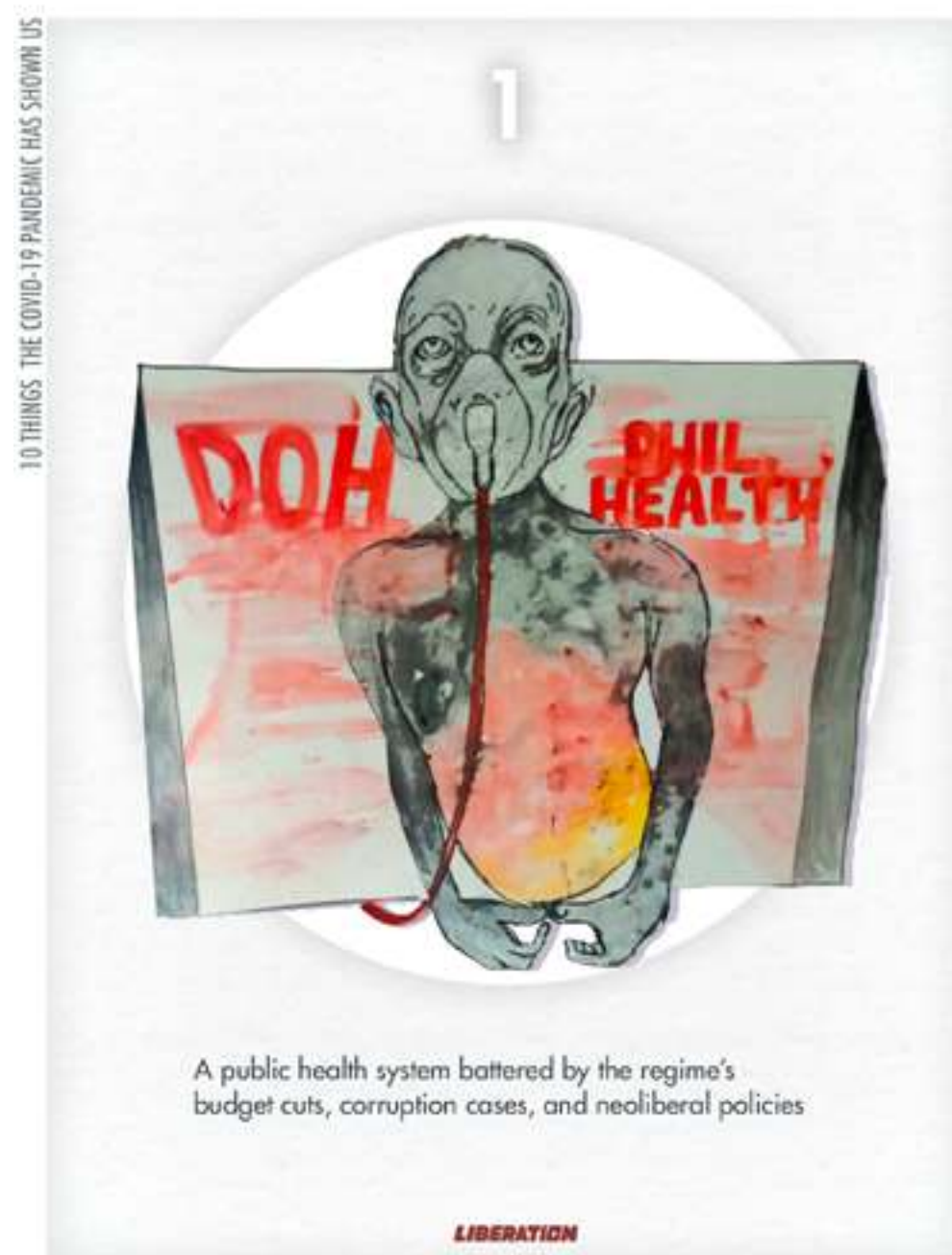
**Duterte, March 2021**

# 1

## Criminal neglect of people's health

Duterte treated the pandemic as a national security concern instead of a health crisis. Thus, he took the militarist approach to solve the pandemic through the Inter-Agency Task Force against Covid-19 (IATF) which is dominated by military men instead of health experts. His regime has been devoting more funds to its killing machine rather than strengthening the overburdened healthcare system. He has failed to secure vaccines earlier for the Filipino people in the same way he has neglected mass testing, contact tracing, and isolation which are basic requirements in preventing the spread of the virus.

READ





**“Mahirap kayo?  
P\*\*\*\*g i\*a, umalis  
kayo. Magtiis kayo sa  
hirap at gutom, wala  
akong pakialam.”**

(You're poor? Son of a bitch, leave. Bear with hardship and hunger, I don't care.)

**Duterte**, October 2017

# 2

## Failure to provide assistance to those who lost their jobs because of the lockdowns

Duterte's above-quoted statement was a warning to the jeepney drivers who protested as the government pushed for jeepney phase-out in the guise of modernization. True enough, jeepney drivers were among the hardest hit during the lockdown and even after transport services were eventually allowed. The jeepney drivers were among the 5.8 million unemployed workers in 2020. They are among the jobless Filipinos denied of financial assistance despite the trillions of loans acquired by the regime supposedly to alleviate the plight of the poor during the pandemic.

READ



**“Ignore human rights! Kill them right away.”**

**Duterte, March 2021**

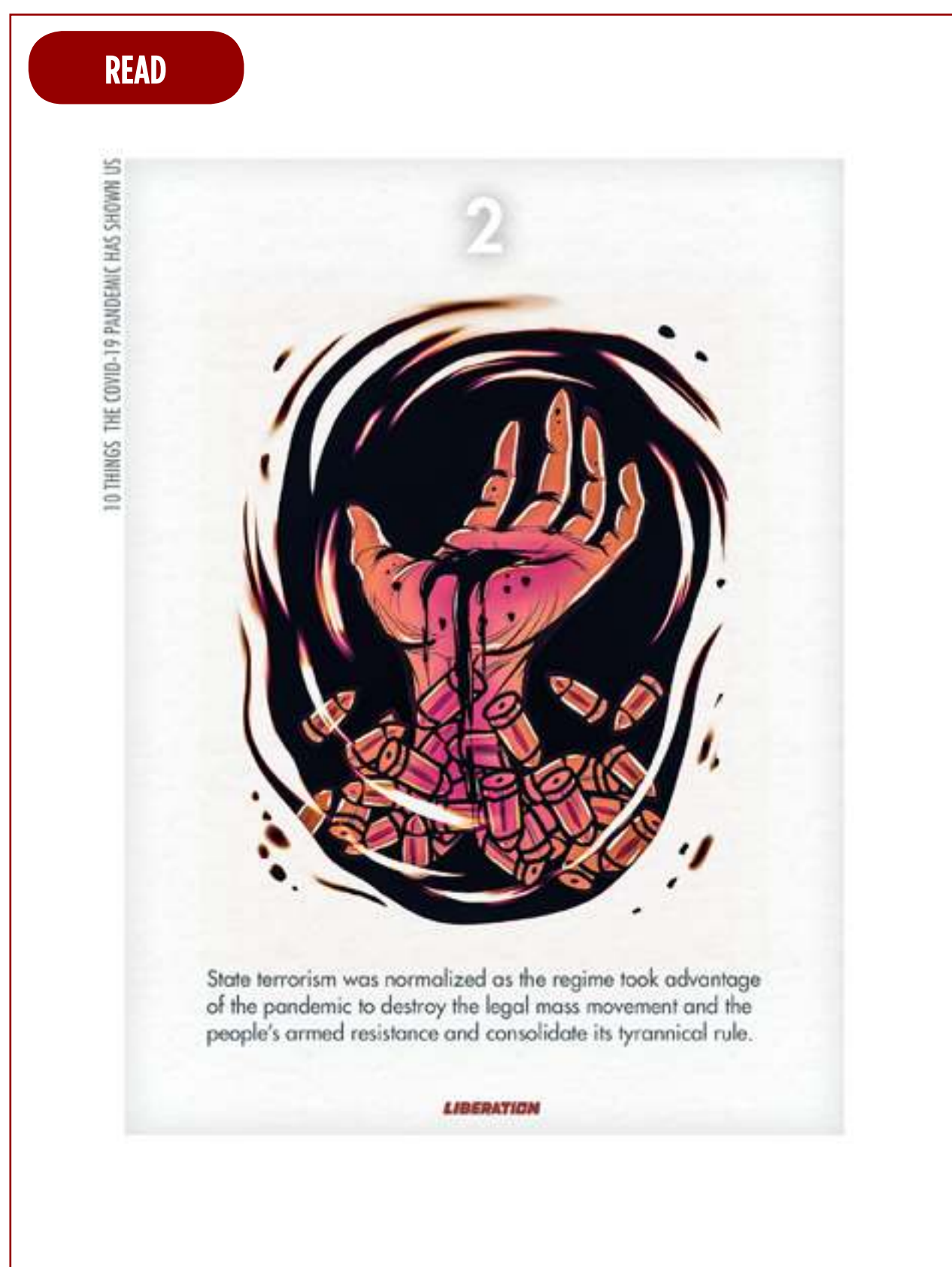
# 3

## Executing *tokhang*-style mass murders, illegal arrests, and detention of civilians

This oft-repeated order by the president, coupled with his regime’s “counterinsurgency” program, has turned the state guns on non-combatants (farmers, fisherfolk, trade unionists, lawyers, journalists, human rights advocates, activists, critics, political opponents) amid its failure to vanquish the five-decade people’s armed revolution.

Thousands of suspected drug users and hundreds of political activists have been killed. With dubious search warrants and planted “evidence” it perpetrated murders, massacres, and arrests and detention of activists. It displaced thousands more as a result of bombings and intensified military operations in areas deemed as mass bases of the revolutionary

movement. Red-tagging was employed and orchestrated by the state’s well-oiled fascist machinery—the NTF-ELCAC and the AFP and PNP which were refurbished with war materiel from imperialist America.



**“For the law-abiding citizen of this country, I am addressing you with all sincerity, do not be afraid if you are not a terrorist.”**

**Duterte, July 2020**

# 4

## Legitimizing repression, exploitation, and tyrannical rule through laws

READ



The Duterte regime has weaponized the laws, and even some courts, against the people.

Having railroaded the passage of an “Anti-Terrorism Act” (ATA) during the pandemic, it has used it as one of its licenses for employing state terrorism, criminalizing dissent, and redefining rebellion. The law violates even the Constitution of the reactionary government. Specifically, it violates the Hernandez doctrine which states that rebellion could not be mixed up with common crimes because rebellion has deep social and economic roots that needed to be addressed. Before the ATA, it issued Executive Order 70 creating the now notorious NTF-ELCAC and Memo No. 32 which effectively declared martial law in the regions of Bicol, Samar, Southern Luzon and the Negros provinces, resulting in hundreds killed and illegally arrested in military-police operations.

Laws pertaining to the economy were also used to institutionalize exploitation and oppression. The Rice Tarrification Law and the proposed changes in the provisions of the reactionary Constitution to allow foreign ownership of the country’s vital industries and other measures to further liberalize the economy will, eventually, kill local industries and producers, especially the farmers.

**“Wala na tayong  
pera.”**

(We have no more money.)

**Duterte, August 2020**

# 5

## **Acquiring trillions of loans to be paid for by the people without accounting for its spending**

As of May 1, 2021, the regime's foreign loans for its Covid-19 war chest had already reached \$18.4 billion (P886 billion), as acknowledged by its finance department. Still, it has yet to satisfactorily implement basic mass testing, contact tracing and isolation, or address widespread calls for ayuda or financial assistance to those who lost their jobs and to the overburdened health workers.

In peso terms, the Philippines' total debt stock hit a new high record of Php11 trillion in May. Every Filipino now has a debt of more than Php 95,000 from these loans. That's almost twice as big when Duterte became president, and his regime is still incurring loans. The regime kept acquiring loans in the name of the people but it scrimped on the needs of the poor majority. Against public demands, Duterte refused to let go of his billions of pesos in intelligence and confidential funds and that of his killing machine.



**“Not even a whiff of  
corruption.”**

**Duterte, 2018**

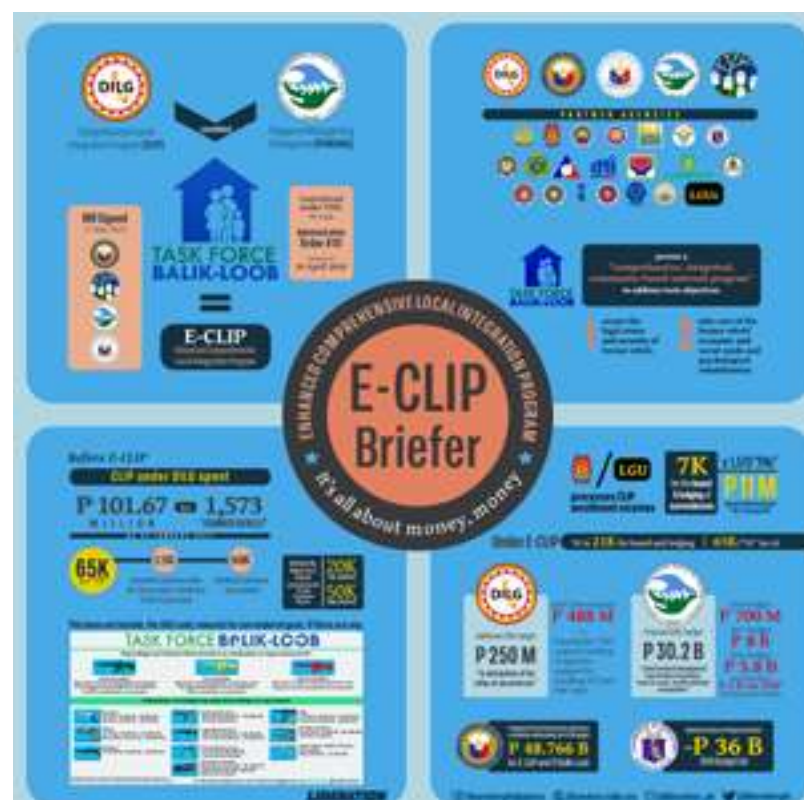
# 6

## Depriving the people of adequate social services in favor of corruption

Pres. Duterte has plundered the economy and caused its bankruptcy. Corruption scandals in the Duterte regime stink that even its own Commission on Audit cannot help but flag government officials and agencies. These funds benefit Duterte allies and cronies and their families and businesses. Also, public funds are grossly misappropriated in favor of its war chest—the presidential intelligence and confidential funds, the “counterinsurgency” budget in the AFP and PNP and several other agencies, the “general’s pork” which is the Php19-billion peso budget of the NTF-ELCAC.

The funds for NTF-ELCAC are “spent”, among others, to assist fake rebel returnees, but actually end up in the military officials’ pockets. A huge amount of money is also wasted on its propaganda materials to red tag the opposition and to vilify the revolutionary movement (but, oftentimes these are simply greeted with loud guffaws by the public).

READ



**“Nag-file sila ng kaso nanalo tayo... Sa totoong buhay, between nation, ‘yang papel wala iyan.... Actually... bigay mo sa kin iyan sabihin ko ‘P\*t\*ng-ina papel lang iyan.’ Itatapon ko iyan sa waste basket.”**

(They filed a case and we won. In real life, between nations, that paper is nothing. Actually, if you give that to me, I will tell you ‘Son of a \*\*\*\*\* that is just paper.’ I will throw that in a waste basket.)

**Duterte, May 2021**

# 7

## Sell out of the country's sovereignty

Duterte has kept denying he promised to defend the West Philippine Sea (WPS). He even called those who voted for him stupid for believing what said on television—which he claimed was supposed to be a joke—during a presidential campaign debate in 2016.

He warned of “bloodshed” if the Filipinos were to retake the West Philippine Sea (China has illegally occupied the Panatag/Scarborough Shoal since 2012). No wonder, his regime has long looked the other way when the Chinese held reclamation and dredging activities in the Spratly Islands in the WPS, leading to the Chinese military’s nearly unopposed illegal occupation of some islets within Philippine territory. Not only are Filipino fisherfolk being bullied out of their fishing grounds. They are losing a territory said to be rich in oil and mineral deposits. This year, Beijing even issued a controversial ban on fishing on these portions acknowledged by the UN as Philippine territory. Duterte has only reportedly told China to “kindly” allow Filipinos to fish in the WPS.



While Duterte is all but ceding the WPS to China, it is at the same time “strengthening” relations with the USA, a fierce rival of China. The Philippines has been hosting US troops under a Visiting Forces Agreement in 1999 and sharing military bases. It periodically holds joint military exercises to enhance “interoperability” between the two countries’ armed forces. Much of the Philippine armed forces’ war supplies are from the US government. **LIB**

READ



**T**he new national democratic revolution has been going on for over half a century. It has been targeted by tyrants who attempted to crush it through billions of arms procured from US imperialist and with no small amount of lies and vilification.

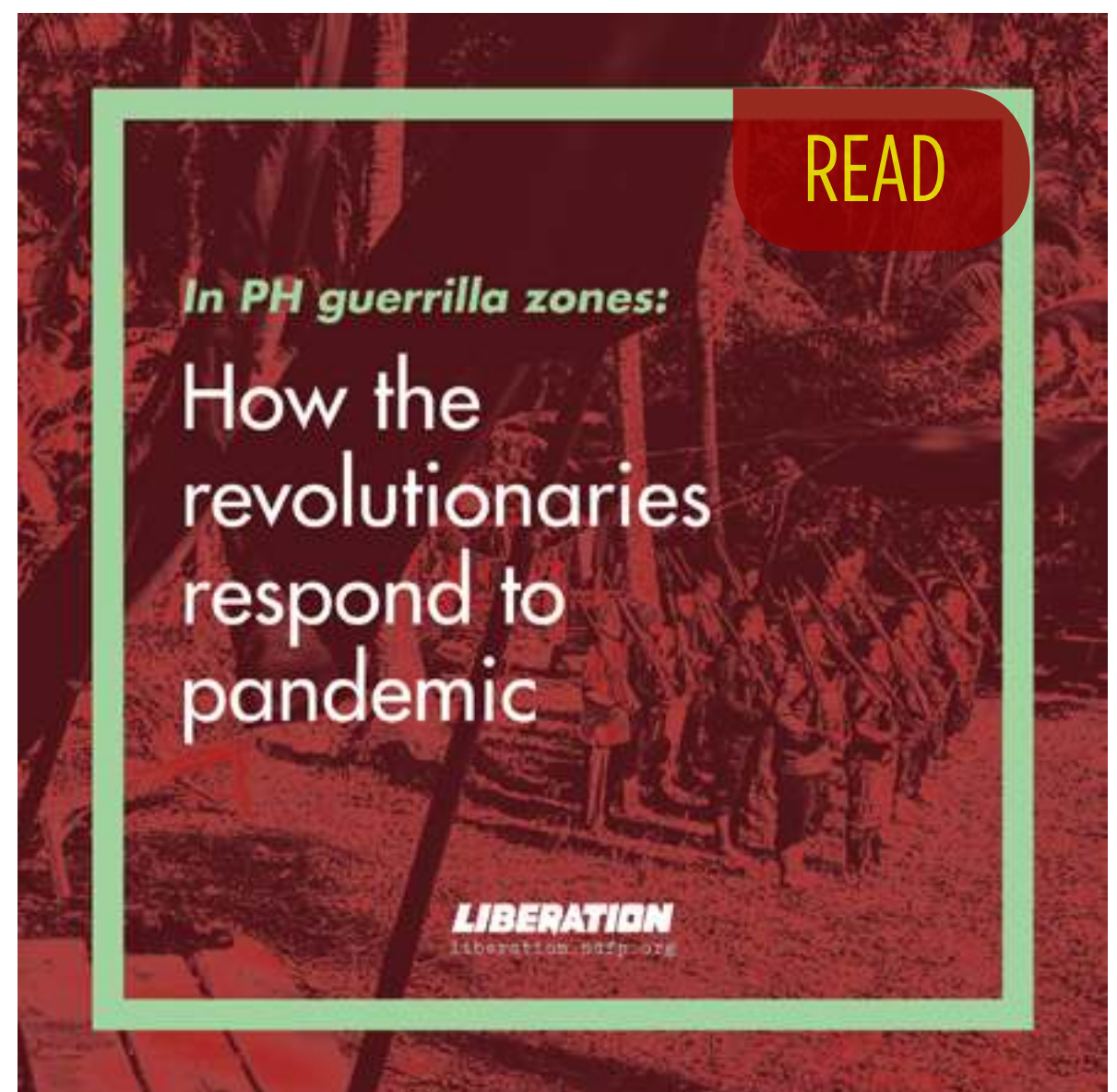
Bombs, cannons, and drones however “hi-tech” these are—for as long as they are used by the reactionary army against the masses and the people’s army—can neither shock nor awe the people’s will to fight for a better society, defend the victories, and make their aspiration become a reality for the whole country.

To borrow and tweak the lyrics of an old song: The hills are alive with songs of revolution. It is the sound of empowered voices of the masses and the New People’s Army (NPA) resolutely craving revolutionary change.

The #hashtag *di matalo-talo* (undefeatable) referring to the Philippine revolutionary movement is an apt slogan because even during the pandemic, and despite intensified military operations of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and Philippine National Police (AFP-PNP), the red fighters of the NPA and the masses successfully implemented health measures to protect the guerrilla bases from Covid-19 and ensured a steady food supply for every household.

Under the guidance of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), the NPA is tasked not only to engage in armed struggle but also to conduct agrarian revolution and to continuously build, consolidate, and expand the mass base of the revolutionary forces in the countryside. These are three-pronged tasks that complement each other and guarantee the victory of the people's war.

Amid the pandemic and intensified focused military operations against the revolutionary and democratic forces, the people's army carried out these tasks. Notably, those who persisted where in regions



and provinces considered as priority areas of the regime's "counterinsurgency" program. To these guerrilla fronts the reactionary government deployed the most number of battalions of the AFP and PNP.

Considering all obstacles, revolutionary work in the countryside continued. Contrary to military claims that the revolutionary NPA has weakened, it continues to operate in 110 guerrilla fronts all over the country. Here are some of the activities carried out by the people's army, the revolutionary mass organizations, the organs of political power in the guerrilla zones collated from articles of *Ang Bayan*, the official publication of the CPP.

## Expansion and recovery work

Currently, some 22 battalions are deployed in Southern Luzon—a combination of forces from the AFP, PNP and its paramilitary group Citizen Armed Forces Geographical Unit (CAFGU). If the NPA had already been defeated, why are there 22 enemy battalions in Southern Tagalog (ST) region, asked Patnubay de Guia, regional spokesperson of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines.

Still, recovery of areas with previous revolutionary work was conducted. In 2020, the region was cited by the CPP Central Committee as among those who had outstanding experience in the expansion of the guerrilla mass base. One of these areas was in Maro which used to be the “wellspring of members of revolutionary mass organizations, as well as Red fighters and commanders.”

For almost 10 years, Maro bore the heavy presence of paramilitary and vigilante groups of the AFP. The people’s unity, built through years of revolutionary work, was overwhelmed by military terror. A CAFGU detachment and vigilante groups in the area were set-up. As a result the NPA units were forced to temporarily pull out and stayed in the periphery.

But with the help of the masses, the NPA returned to Maro in 2020. Holding on to the revolutionary tradition of the area, they reached

out to the masses who warmly welcomed them and told them of their continuing hardships—primarily, the same landlessness and unequal sharing scheme with the landlords.

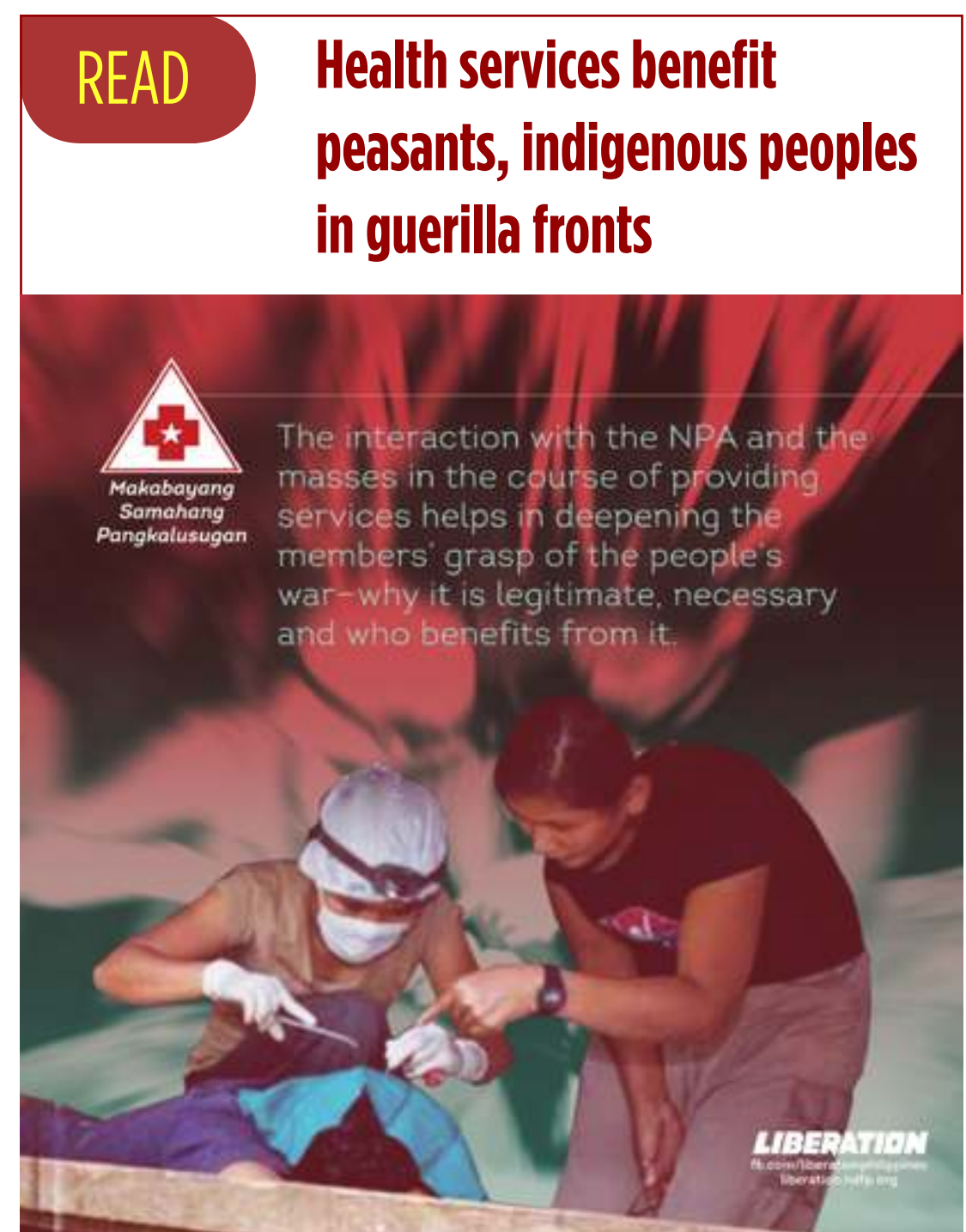
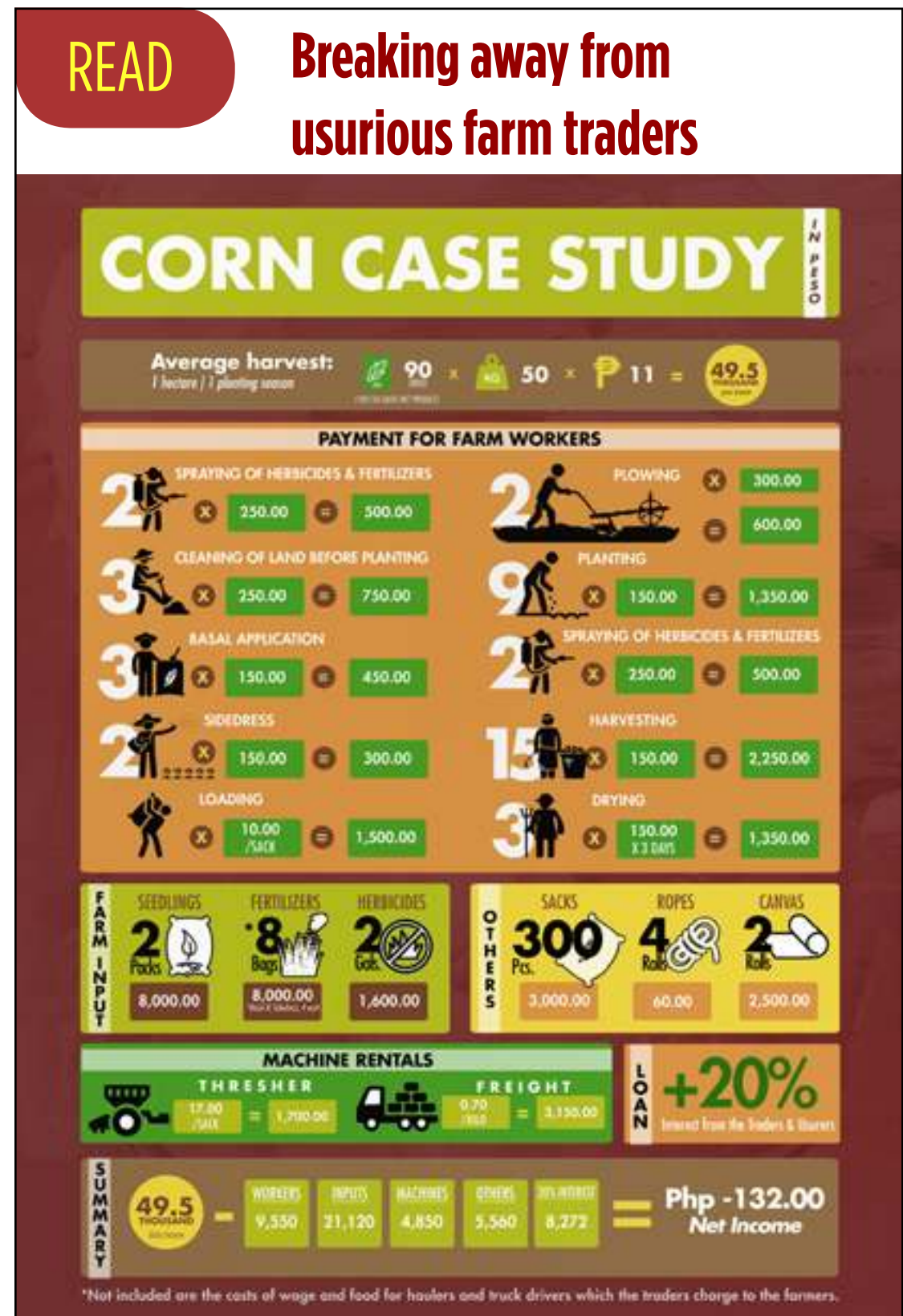
The Fortunato Camus Command of the NPA in Cagayan Valley also has this experience. In a statement, its political officer, Elias Almazan, declared the enemy forces’ failure to “foil the expansion and consolidation of the revolutionary mass base in the region” even as battalion- and brigade-sized military operations were launched against the red fighters in the region. He commended the people’s army for the expansion and recovery of territories in barrios and towns resulting in the increase of mass base by several thousands in 2020. Also, NPA platoons were able to touch base with residents in the plains, near highways, and in coastal areas. Meanwhile, smaller NPA units were deployed in villages where there are military operations to reach out to the masses and strengthen the mass base.

“It is to the advantage of the people’s army that revolutionary ideas have for decades been sown and taken root among the masses. Its territories are expanding and more and more revolutionary mass organizations and organs of political power are established in villages and clusters of barrios,” said Almazan.

## Education and training, conferences

In April 2021, a guerrilla front in Samar successfully concluded the study of the Basic Party Course among farmers in a barrio. The course is required of new recruits to the Party.

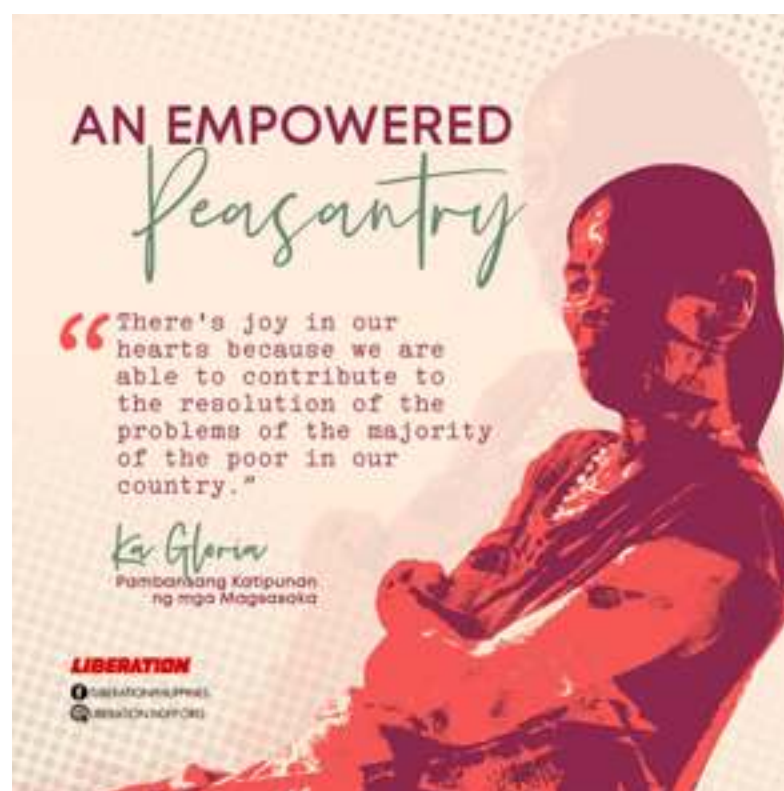
It also held Level-2 medical training among 10 medical staff of the NPA. Some 28 residents joined the discussion as part of their consolidation activities. (Level-2 or the intermediate course on health is part of the three-tiered health training of the NPA jointly developed with the members of MASAPA, an allied organization of the NDFP, whose members are doctors, nurses and health workers, and medical students. Included in Level-2 course are the “study of anatomy, child birthing, herbal medicine production, and special procedures that include tooth extraction, simple surgery, trauma and mental health care. A number of communities now produce their own capsules and ointments from plants and herbs.”





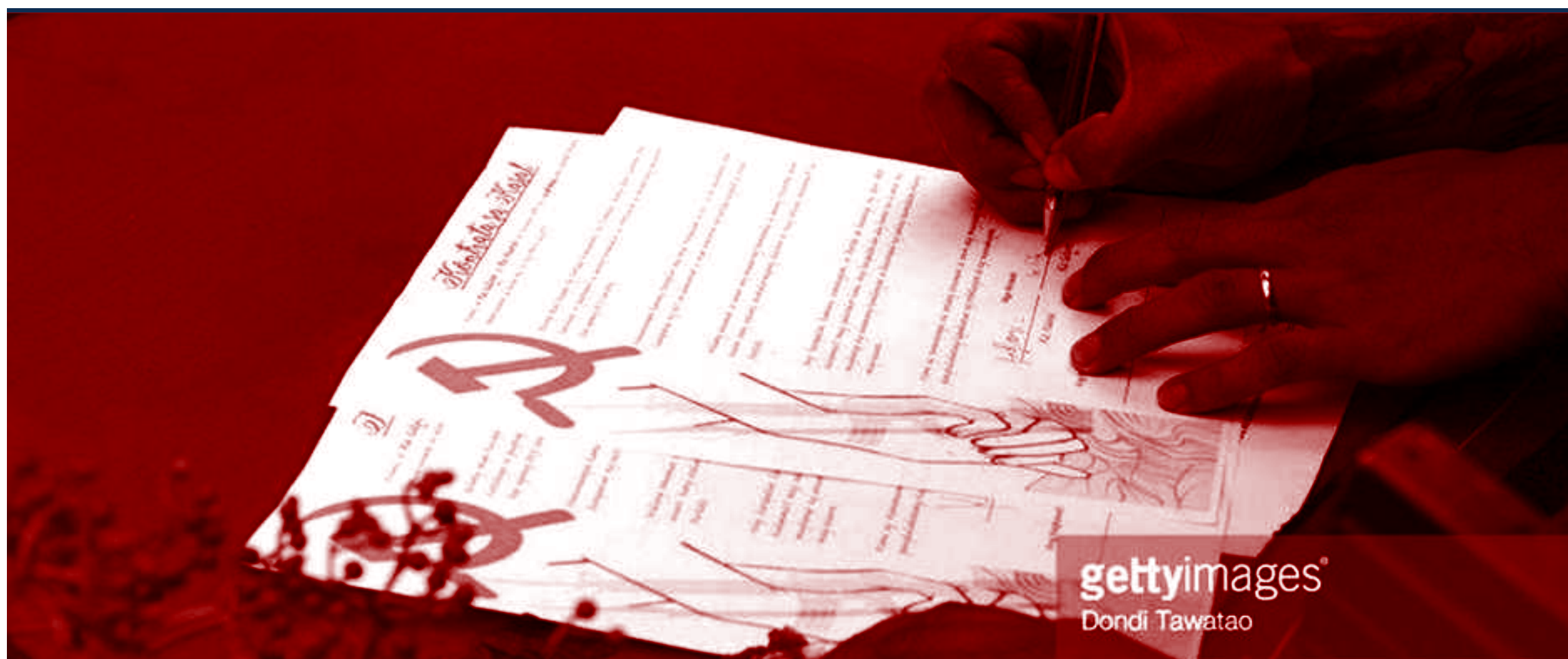
READ

An Empowered Peasantry



Also in Samar, 50 members of the people’s militia finished the basic political-military training. They were representatives from five barrios in a guerrilla zone and 32 new regular members of the NPA. The revolutionary youth organization *Kabataang Makabayan* (KM) provided the technical and logistical support for the training. According to the trainers, the number of people’s militia who joined was an indication of the people’s determination to advance the people’s war. Many of the trainees showed potentials to be military cadres. The training was part of the overall plan of the NPA regional command to intensify guerrilla warfare and conduct more tactical offensives against state forces that continue to batter the region in its “counterinsurgency” operations.

A year ago, in June 2020, some 40 members of the revolutionary youth organization *Kabataang Makabayan* from various communities, towns, and cities in Bukidnon province held a conference in one of the guerrilla zones in the province. The KM members discussed the role of the youth in the issues affecting the country, including the Covid-19 pandemic. The immediate need to reach out to unorganized youth and draw them in to respond to the needs brought about by the pandemic and the regime’s sustained attacks against the people were among the actions forwarded by the conference. The conference was successfully concluded despite the presence of at least four AFP battalions deployed in the province.



## Cultural activities

Cultural activities and celebrations have always figured significantly in revolutionary life in the countryside. Founding anniversaries, weddings, end of trainings and conferences, were among the most celebrated events.

The celebration of the 48<sup>th</sup> founding anniversary of the NDFP in April 24 took different forms. In Northern Samar, the peasant masses and the people's army held an activity to commemorate the NDFP's event in the face of intense military operations that have been going on for six months already.

Led by the PKM, the revolutionary organization of peasants, residents of six barrios and their allies used the occasion to strengthen their unity against the onslaught of military offensives. They pledged anew their commitment to the revolution as the only solution to the day-to-day dire situation they live in. Also, during the program, policies of the revolutionary government in the villages were explained and reiterated.

Love could move mountains, as the saying goes. Even the presence of four AFP battalions could “not deter the couples’ long-time dream of walking under the ‘arms gate,’ the customary passage of wedded couples under crossed rifles,” said a red commander.

In June 2020, some 200 villagers from different communities witnessed the wedding ceremony of several couples held in an undisclosed village in Bukidnon province. The wedding was officiated by members of the local revolutionary government. And, as in any community endeavor in guerrilla fronts, the village folk and members of the revolutionary mass organizations prepared the food, the stage, and presentations. The members of the red army performed a dance number.

Before the flag of the CPP, the couples pledged their commitment to love each other, “a love that was forged in the middle of the people's war,” said the article. “Marriage in the revolution encompasses not only the romantic love towards a comrade, but also the genuine love and service to the masses.”

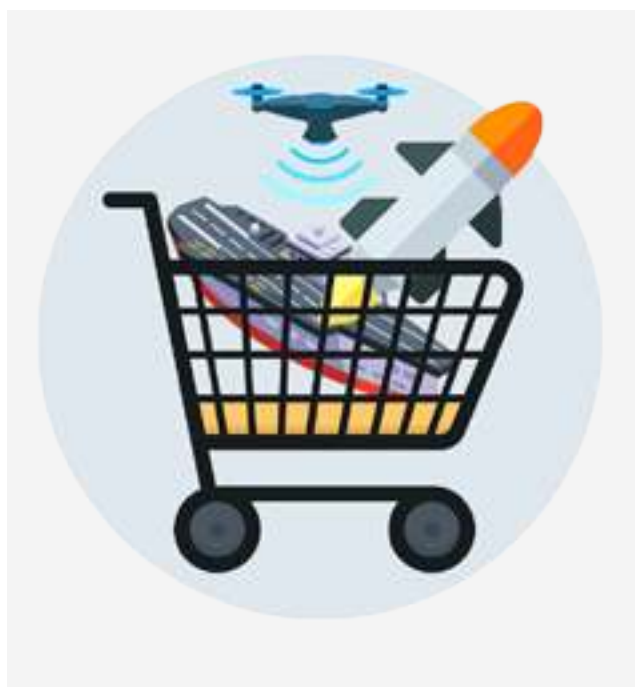
Indeed, love and service to the people and the burning desire for a better tomorrow move mountains better than tyranny and terror. That's the way things go in the guerrilla zones where people's revolutionary organizations and organs of political power continue to multiply and advance. **LIB**

# DUTERTE'S SHOPAHOLIC ARMED FORCES STRIKE AGAIN

How 'Kill Kill Kill' misuses people's funds then harms them

*by Pinky Ang*

In February, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) celebrated what it called “a momentous feat” in its history—the delivery of its second new missile-enabled warship.



The first two in their fleet to be “purpose-built”, each new ship is 107 meters long, has 2,600-ton standard displacement, can accommodate up to 125 personnel, a helicopter or two, four missile launchers, and torpedo launchers.

Contracted by the Duterte administration in 2016 to the tune of PhP 16 billion, plus another PhP 2 billion for weapons system and munitions, the warships were smaller versions of what Hyundai contractors are building for South Korea’s navy.

These warships just form a part of the newly acquired war machines of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP). Duterte’s generals are flushed from checking off their shopping list, one after another, orders for fighter jets, drones, assault helicopters, various firearms, missiles, and other equipment aimed at boosting their “shock-and-awe” and killing capabilities.

ADD TO KILL

But not all these armament procurements are intended to defend and protect Philippine sovereignty against any perceived foreign threat of attack or invasion. Instead, much of these war machines are procured to enhance the firepower of the AFP in its ambitious goal of wiping out or reducing to “irrelevance” the fighting capability of the Left revolutionary forces, which have survived and frustrated various US-designed operational plans over more than five decades.

In 2017 Duterte arbitrarily ended the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations—which he had promised to resume and complete, after several years of suspension under previous administrations—despite the highly positive advances the formal negotiations had achieved in just eight months.

Henceforth, he started mislabeling the revolutionaries as “terrorists,” then formally declared them as such through a presidential proclamation in December 2018.

Since then, the Duterte regime abandoned all pretenses of seeking peace. Unrelentingly, it pursued instead an “all-out war” against the revolutionary forces. It formally adopted a US-designed “whole-of-nation” approach, carried out by a national task force nominally headed by Duterte, which aimed to overcome the revolutionary forces before the end of its term in June 2022.

By now the Duterte regime is nearly crazed to beat its nth deadline for finishing off the revolutionary movement. It sees red everywhere, treating as “enemies of the state” not only the armed revolutionaries but also the unarmed activists, workers, peasants, indigenous peoples, students, urban poor, workers in government agencies, artists and cultural workers, journalists, lawyers, political oppositionists, government critics, and church people.

**The regime adds weapons—  
for whom and for what?**

## A few are for show

In the last four years since Duterte came to power, he bought off the military's loyalty with juicy and powerful positions in the civilian bureaucracy. Raising the salaries and allowances of the rank and file, he kept the fascist machinery well-oiled not only with a constantly increasing budget but also with the acquisition of new and more lethal weapons.

The recently bought warships are brand new and modern, so they cost much more than any of the refurbished and aging war vessels passed on by the US, which the Filipino people were made to pay for. Under the military assistance agreement with the US, practically all the war vessels and equipment the latter supplied had been discarded warships of World War II vintage. Thus, it's a stretch to qualify the Philippine Navy's fleet to approximate a "minimum credible defense posture" in the West Philippine Sea/South China Sea.

But then, the AFP has never been an institution capable of taking the lead in facing external threats to Philippine sovereignty. On the contrary, it performs the role of welcoming foreign troops, sharing

their camps with the American military. The AFP looked on helplessly when China annexed most of our islets in the West Philippine Sea and dug out our sandbars near Panatag Shoal. AFP units and paramilitary forces have also provided the "investment defense forces" to foreign investors and landgrabbers.

So, what are the new expensive warships for?

Will these new combat ships be used to defend, say, the Filipino fisherfolk who have long been bullied away from their fishing grounds at Panatag Shoal and other parts of its extended economic zone (EEZ)? Will they be used to stop the Chinese military basing, dredging and reclamation of Philippine territory in certain portions of the West Philippine Sea?

Not at all: Consider the AFP's track record in upending Philippine sovereignty and its public statements on the use of the new frigates. A week after the delivery of the second missile-enabled frigate, Navy Chief Vice Admiral Giovanni Carlo Bacordo said the vessels will play a big role in "naval diplomacy."

**Kill!**

**Kill!**

**Kill!**



The new frigates will be used to participate in multilateral maritime training activities and naval exercises; to conduct port visits in allied navies; to conduct “sovereignty patrols and show-the-flag missions” covering the whole archipelago. If the warships will have to go into war operations, it will be up to the top brass of the AFP.

In short, the warships are mostly just for show and military PR. It's also just a way to placate the Filipino people's restiveness at government inaction vis-a-vis infringements on our sovereignty in the West Philippine Sea.

Of course, it's not farfetched for one to think that kickbacks and commissions must have enriched the bureaucrat capitalists involved in the transactions, from Duterte to the military top brass.

## **The bulk of the weapons are for intensifying dirty war against the people**

In 2020, amid the lockdown and widespread hunger in the countryside, several communities of farmers and indigenous peoples suffered through a series of destructive bombing raids. These were enabled by the Duterte regime's newly acquired attack helicopters and medium-lift aircraft.

This time last year, the regime which could not provide free mass testing to the people, defended the US\$1.5-billion arms deal with the US government that included attack helicopters.

Yet, this 2021, they are continuing and have even signaled a new intensification in their bombing and strafing runs. They would follow these up with tokhang-style “Simultaneous Anti Criminality Law Enforcement Operations” (SACLEO) like last March 7 in Calabarzon.

The 2021 budget is a war budget. It has wrested from social services up to Php 539 billion for “security and defense.” They allotted nearly half of it (Php215-B) just for the AFP, some Php 58-billion for AFP modernization of arms and war equipment, over Php 19-billion pork for the NTF-ELCAC’s (National Task Force-End Local Communist Armed Conflict) “development projects” in “NPA-cleared” barangays, not to mention the NTF-ELCAC’s budget itself; and, Php 8.3 billion in Confidential and Intelligence Fund directly handled by Malacanang (and free from examination by the Commission on Audit or COA).

The Duterte regime gives highest priority to all-out release of resources and machinery for its fascist reign of terror in cities and countryside, even as the country is all but collapsing from its inadequate and inappropriate responses to Covid-19 pandemic; and, even as it remained pathetic toward China’s encroachment in the West Philippine Sea.

Since February, towns in southern Quezon province have raised alarms and many

residents have evacuated due to bombing and strafing runs by the AFP Southern Luzon Command, headed by Lt. Gen. Antonio Parlade, who’s recently retired from service. This was followed by extrajudicial killings and arrests carried out by the AFP and PNP across Southern Tagalog and Bicol regions, killing at least 11 mostly peasant activists last March 7.

These operations followed the pattern of coordinated attacks carried out by the military and police against legal mass organizations—dubbed as Synchronized Enhanced Managing of Police Operations (SEMPO)-Oplan Sauron 1 and 2—in Negros and Panay, National Capital Region, Northern Mindanao and other regions over the past years.

“These attacks confirm that Duterte is the number one terrorist in the country today—in killing unarmed people, Duterte continues to prove himself a big fascist coward,” said the CPP in a statement released last March 7.

## More “defense” aid, war equipment from the US

The Philippines is the largest recipient of US military assistance in the Indo-Pacific region. Despite Duterte's repeated anti-US rhetoric, US military aid to the fascist regime has tripled from US \$76 million in 2017 to US\$ 216 million in 2019. Now that he's restrengthening alliance with the US, expect more war materiel.

**Php 1.38 billion (\$29 million)  
worth of “defense” gears**

In December 2020, the US government turned over to the Philippine military “defense gears” including sniper rifles and anti-IED (Improvised Explosive Device)

equipment. These new equipment will enhance the AFP's joint precision strike, sniper, and counter-improvised explosive device capabilities.

**\$18 million worth of missiles,  
bombs**

In November 2020, the Philippine government received arms including 100 “tube-launched optically tracked, wire-guided” TOW-2A Bunker Buster

missiles, 12 improved target acquisition systems (ITAS), and 24 Mark-82 bombs which may be converted into smart bombs.

**Drone, worth not mentioned**

US Secretary of the Air Force Barbara Barrett handed over to the Philippine Navy a ScanEagle Unmanned Aerial System.

**Supplementary military  
equipment, training worth Php  
868 million (\$18 million)**

US National Security Advisor Robert O'Brien's donated Php 868 million (\$18 million) in supplementary military equipment and training to the AFP.

**US direct involvement in AFP  
operations**

The AFP receives US assistance in aerial surveillance and reconnaissance using their drone and other snoop equipment. Such US surveillance using equipment operated by US troops is a

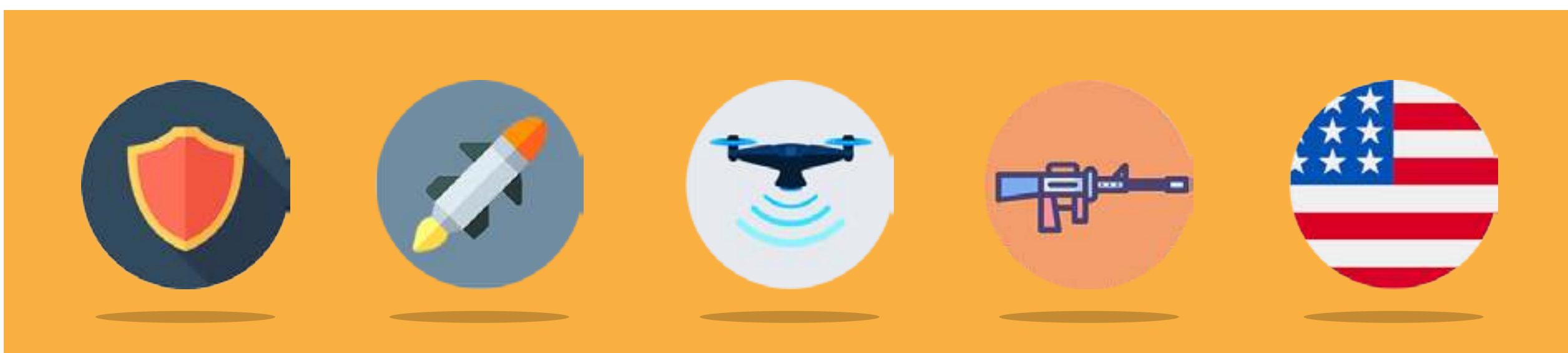
violation of Philippine laws. But there have been persistent reports of US intervention in local military operation and surveillance in the Philippines, such as in the case of the hunt against Abu Sayyaf in Sulu and Basilan, in the Mamasapano operations in Maguindanao, and in the Marawi war that flattened the city.



The drone MQ9 Reaper, the US Air Force's primary offensive strike unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV), was seen hovering over Samar from August to October in 2020.

This 'Reaper' drone is bigger and more heavily armed (than Predator B).

It can attack time-sensitive targets more precisely to destroy or disable it. It can fly at a maximum speed of 480km/hour at 50,000-feet. It is loaded with electro-optical sensors, ground moving indication, infrared etc. The US has frequently used it in drone strikes in Afghanistan.



## What these mean for the Filipino people

Filipino taxpayers' money is being used to fund the arms procurements, as it also finances the growing costs of the long-running "counterinsurgency" war and other "wars" against "threats to the security of the state," which a succession of administrations have failed to appropriately deal with.

Thus, in the yearly national government budgets submitted to and approved by Congress, the Filipino people are justifiably infuriated over the highly scandalous allotment of huge allocations for the military and "counterinsurgency." This has become acutely painful to the people under the Covid-19 pandemic. The Duterte regime's militarized mismanagement of the pandemic response has caused the worst plunge in the economy; the worst damages to life, mental health, livelihood, and others. Compounding these were the damages to housing, infrastructure and environment wreaked by the series of natural

calamities that hit the country last year.

What's also tragic is that despite its rising costs in budget, human lives, and lost opportunities, "counterinsurgency" has repeatedly been proven as a failure. All "counterinsurgency" plans have failed no matter how much funding, resources, and manpower were applied.

Experience has amply shown that the people's sustained support for the revolutionary movement, and not war machines, is the decisive factor in this more than half-century ongoing civil war. The fascist Duterte regime has become so demented thinking it can save itself through arms piling when, in truth, it has been digging its own grave with every crime committed against the people. **LIB**

# Some of the expensive killing machines acquired by the Duterte regime

Demonstrating how cowardly and isolated it is from the people, the Duterte regime opted to acquire, in corruption-laden transactions, war machines designed to kill people from a distance.



## Fast Attack Interdiction Craft with Missiles (FAIC-M)



In January 2021, the AFP placed an order to buy FAIC-M from two Israeli companies, for PhP 10-billion.

Specifically, the attack aircraft cost Php 6.161 billion (\$127.9 million). The accompanying (initial) supply of small and medium calibre remote control weapon stations, missile launchers, machine gun system and surface-to-surface missiles cost Php 3.82 billion (\$79.38 million).

Given the size of the attack aircraft and the range of their missile warheads, they can most likely be for use inter-island in our archipelagic country, targeting the local armed revolutionaries and unarmed communities. The Duterte regime seethes over the revolutionaries' agrarian reform program and calls for national industrialization as this run counter and expose the state-aided landgrabbing, expansion of mining, plantation, and other anti-people projects.

## Black Hawk helicopters (16 to 32 units at Php 1-billion apiece)



In November 2020, the Philippine Air Force (PAF) received six Sikorsky S70i Blackhawks, part of the 16 it bought two years ago at the contract price of \$241,461,699.39.

On February 4, 2021, Duterte approved the purchase of another 15 Black Hawk helicopters, with a total cost of Php 15 billion. Despite the public outcry against Duterte's misdirecting of public funds to procure war machines instead of coronavirus vaccines and stimulus aid, the AFP has been thrown into a frenzy over how to garner public support for its buying 32 units, rather than just 15 Black Hawks. Defense Secretary Lorenzana said he hoped to sign the contract on the choppers this year.

To fool the people into agreeing to its buying the Blackhawks, the AFP is highlighting their usefulness for disaster and humanitarian response. It glosses over how the helicopter itself is a source of disasters—as protector of environmentally destructive “investments,” and aggressor against disaster survivors seeking government relief. The Blackhawk is, first and foremost, an aircraft for military assault. It can also drop off and extract troops and supplies and serve as an armed escort.

## Two units of Bell AH-1S "Cobra" attack helicopters



In November 2019, the PAF received—as “donation” from the government of Jordan—two of these US-built aircraft, said to be among the most lethal attack helicopters in the world.

Nonetheless, the Filipino people were made to pay for them. More than PhP158-million Special Allotment Release Order (SARO) was released, in June 2019, for the acquisition of these “donated” Cobra choppers. The money was distributed among several subcontracts in 2019, according to a blogsite on Ph “defense” resources.

Originally supplied by the US, the Cobra attack helicopters were used against ISIS by Israel and then transferred to the Jordanian government. Equipped with guns and rockets, the Philippine military allocated these helicopters mainly for “close air support” in operations against the revolutionaries.

## Two units of C-130H aircraft, US 'aid'



In January 2021, the PAF received the first of two US-promised C-130H aircraft. This means added military capability to airlift troops and cargoes to wherever it is sowing terror on the Filipino populace.

## Three C295 medium lift aircraft, worth Php 5.29 billion



For use by the PAF, the AFP bought these from Spain in early 2018.

Also for the PAF, in October 2018, the AFP issued a notice of award in favor of Airbus to buy a unit of Command and Control Fixed Wing Turbo Prop Aircraft, with a contract price of Php1.8 billion. **LIB**

# Happiness is in the Revolution

by Iliya Makalipay  
(From the interview of Leon Castro)

It was never what she expected.

After five years in the New People's Army (NPA), Ka Nina, who was a youth activist, admitted a lot of her earlier perceptions of what a Red fighter was had changed.

For one, she thought Red fighters didn't know how to laugh, "*Akala ko laging seryoso. Laging politika ang inilalabas ng bibig. Di marunong tumawa. Kaya laking gulat ko pagpasok ko dito sa sonang gerilya dito sa aming rehiyon (in Bicol) napakakwela pala ng mga kasama (I thought they were always serious, unsmiling, and talking only about politics. So I was surprised they were a cheery bunch when I came to the guerrilla zone here in Bicol),*" she remarked.

They laugh at the littlest of things—such as a dog passing by while they practice new songs—as they do at President Duterte’s periodic pronouncements. “It must be because we know we always face a life-and-death situation. That brings us closer and builds our rapport and camaraderie,” Ka Nina explained.

After finding her way into a guerrilla zone and liking what she saw and heard, she stayed on. “Perhaps it was also because as a student activist, I saw the brutality of the state—in rallies, in picket lines,” she added.

## Life with the masses

Half a decade in the people’s army, Ka Nina’s integration with the masses has sustained her even as she misses her family and friends. “Mayaman kasi sa mass work ang Hukbo. ‘Yun ang isa sa pinakamahalagang salik kung paano namin napapangibabawan yung mga sakrispisyo, mga hirap, mga pisikal na pagod,” she narrated. Sharing stories with the masses erases their tiredness. “*Kahit na wala ka pang kain buong araw.* (Even if we haven’t eaten the whole day).”

“We do a great deal of mass work. That must be one factor why we are able to overcome sacrifices, hardships and physical difficulties,” she said.

She was bursting with stories on her life with the masses. Asked to give a highlight, she begged, “*pwede pong dalawa?* (May I share two?).”

The first story she loved to tell and retell was about experiences when she was still new in the NPA.

*“Nag-ikot kami sa bahaging coastal area. Tapos yung masa doon talagang hirap sila sa pananim. Sabi nila wala raw tumutubo doon sa lupa nila. Hirap din sila sa tubig tapos wala rin silang mga ipantatanim* (As we went around the coastal community we saw the difficulties of the masses to grow plants. Nothing grew on the land. They had no fresh water and they didn’t have anything to plant),” she related. Through the efforts of the comrades and the organized masses, they were able to solicit cassava cuttings and distributed these to the community members for planting. “They were so euphoric. They hugged us. That was great. It was satisfying to have done something for the masses,” Ka Nina exclaimed as she relived that moment.



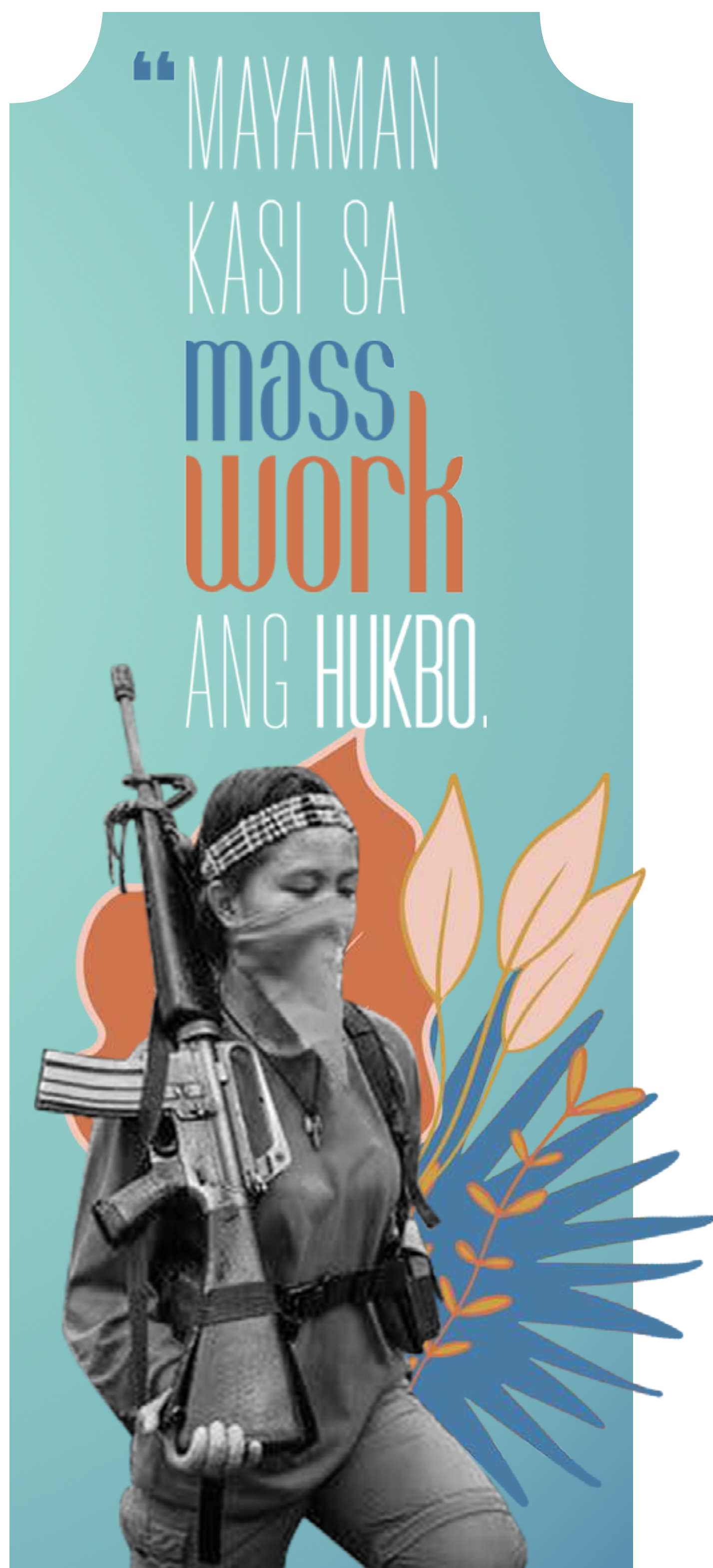
The second story was about when their unit had an encounter with the military. Two comrades fell, recalled Ka Nina. The masses went with their unit to retrieve the remains. “It was a long walk, it was raining, and worse, we had to pass through enemy lines.” When the community members got to the place, they immediately tended to the remains of the comrades, like they were their own kin. “*Bagamat malungkot ang pangalawang halimbawang ibinigay ko, isa po ‘yun sa pinakamatingkad na karanasan ko kung gaano kamahal ng masa ang mga kasama,* (Though my second story is sad, it’s one of my starkest experiences of how the masses love the comrades),” Ka Nina noted.

## Collective life

Like the masses, Ka Nina’s collective carried her through hard times. “When you feel weary and weak because you miss your family, the collective is there to guide you, help you, listen to how you feel.” She said all their concerns are discussed in the collective. “*Lahat ng bagay dito sa Hukbo—problema mo sa pagkain, sa pagdumi, kalungkutan—napag-uusapan, nabubutbot po yung mga ganun tapos nagagawan ng solusyon.* (We discuss everything in the collective—food, poop, loneliness. We dissect and find solution to everything).”

It has also never been a problem that she is a woman. “*Totoo na may pantay na pagtingin sa kababaihan dito sa loob ng rebong kilusan* (It is true. Women in the revolutionary movement are treated equally and fairly).”

In her five years with the NPA, or even when she was still an activist, she claimed she has not experienced gender discrimination.





“Yong simple pong  
pagtawag ng masa  
sa amin na  
**Kasama**  
○ **Kas,**  
○ **anak,**  
ganyan po ang  
tawag nila sa amin.  
Samantalang do’n sa  
kabila ay kaaway.  
Ang sarap sa pakiramdam.

Talagang tama ‘tong  
ipinaglalaman natin.”

*Nina*  
Kasapi ng NPA sa Bicol

She admitted though that this is not true for all the masses they meet and so they have to reorient them on the matter. The same goes for the new recruits in the NPA. But the new recruits, Ka Nina said, immediately catch on, adding, “Also perhaps because we are together 24/7, aware that death is always upon us, we could encounter the enemy anytime, there’s no room to think of gender.”

*“Ang sabi nga ng mga kasama dapat laging maging handa, babae ka man o lalaki kasi di namimili ang punglo. Babae ka o lalaki, tatamaan ka niyan. Sa pagpapaputok ng baril, di mo kailangan macho ka o sobrang lakas mo. Babae ka o lalaki, o anuman ang kasarian mo, ang kailangan mo ay ang kapasyahang iputok ang baril. Kalabitin ang gatilyo (A comrade said we should be prepared, always. It doesn’t matter if you are male or female because bullets don’t discriminate. One need not be macho or tough. Whether you are male, female, or whatever gender preference, the most important is the will to fire the gun, to pull the trigger).”*

## A new generation of cadres

As the CPP and the NPA celebrate its 50th year, Ka Nina recognized the contributions of the revolutionary movement to Philippine society—from understanding its nature to instituting meaningful changes while advancing the people’s war. “In the last five decades we have proven we can rise above all challenges because what we are fighting for is just and right.”

She sees a bright future ahead with the kind of unity among the people’s army, the masses, and the Party members. There was obviously pride and elation as Ka Nina took part in the celebration, “*Masarap sa pakiramdam kasi umabot yung henerasyon namin sa ika-50 anibersaryo. Napakasarap sa pakiramdam* (I feel joyful because our generation made it to the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary).”

As the conversation ended, Ka Nina cracked her third highlight without any prompting: “*Tapos, yung simple po na pagtawag nila lagi sa amin na kasama o Kas, o anak, ganyan po ang tawag nila sa amin. Samantalang dun sa kabila ay kaaway. Ang sarap sa pakiramdam. Talagang tama ‘tong ipinaglalaman natin.*”

When the masses call us “comrade,” or Kas” [short for kasama, meaning comrade], or “my child”, while they call the reactionaries as the enemy. That feels good. We know that what we are fighting for is right. **LIB**

# Huling SONA ni Duterte



**#WakaSONA**  
**#DuterteWakasan**

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the Peoples' Army



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